

14. The Story Map

The tool

You could use this tool to plan the stories or case studies you want to include in the fundraising process, such as fundraising online campaigns, emailing or mailing appeals, face-to-face solicitations, writing proposals, etc. The stories can be about your organization, your projects, your clients, your success cases, your struggles, etc.

The Story Map process

Before going into developing the story and collecting your information, answer first to the following questions:

1. Why are you telling the story?

2. Who is your audience?

3. What do you want people to remember? What do you want your audience to do after hearing/watching/reading the story?

4. What is the format of your final story? A video, a text for your website, a post on Facebook, a poster, a case study in a brochure, a success story for your grant proposal, etc.?

Story Map

Main character / the hero	Setting / places / tone & other characters
Problem / challenge	Solution / resolution

Beginning setting, characters, introduce the main conflict / problem (explain the problem you want to solve)	Middle tension increases, it ends with the most tensioned moment of the story, the biggest challenge of the hero (the major crisis)	End the main conflict is solved and success is celebrated

Why using the story map?

Once, you clarified the aspects from above, you are ready now to develop your story using the Story Map. The story map includes the main parts of any story: characters (these could be your clients, or even your donors, depending on the story you want to tell), the problem or the challenge the hero has to face, which generates the main conflict in the story, the settings and other characters, and finally, the solution or resolution to your story. Usually, your organization or your project should be the one that provides the solution or the happy ending to the story or you can ask for help from your donors or supporters in finding the solution and make the happy ending happen.

Also, the map helps you in structuring the story:

- Develop the **beginning**, setting the context;

- Set the tension and the main problem or challenge **in the middle**;

- Show how problem can be solved or was solved, **in the end**.