

---

# Welcome to the Performance Improvement Managers Network Call

## The Role of Storytelling in Organizations

April 26, 2012

---

1 888 566 8978 or 1 517 623 4997, code: 3478212



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
Office for State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support

# Agenda

---

Today's Presenter:

Deb Koester

Moderator:

Liza Corso, CDC/OSTLTS



Pixmeo.com 36919331

# The Role of Storytelling in Organizations

**Deb Koester, DNP, MSN, RN**

Consultant to OSTLTS  
Carter Consulting, Inc.



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
Office for State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support

# Objectives

- ❑ **Understand the legitimacy of storytelling and its potential to motivate, engage, and build NPHII and strengthen the PIM network**
- ❑ **Understand the importance of communication through storytelling as a strategy for implementing change in your organization**
- ❑ **Build skills in narrative storytelling for effectively communicating the outcomes of NPHII grant activities**
- ❑ **Follow steps in using the CDC template to develop a NPHII story to its fullest extent**



# Organizational Storytelling

The purposeful use of narrative to achieve a practical outcome within an organization.



Business story



Specific purpose



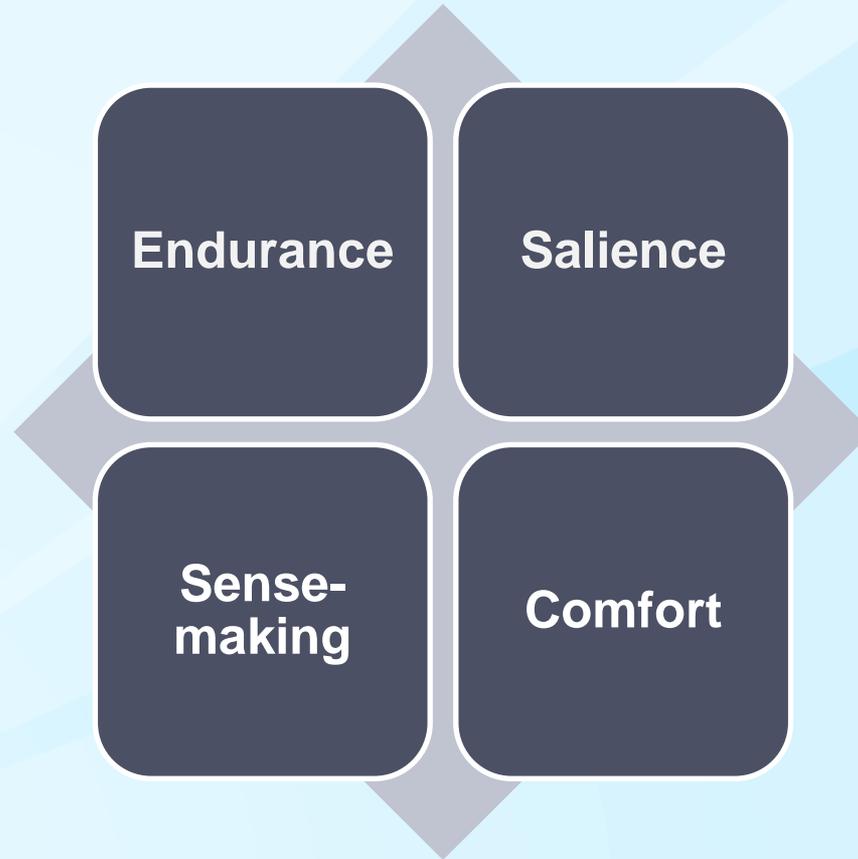
Real results

# Categories of Storytelling in Organizations

- ❑ People
- ❑ Work
- ❑ The organization
- ❑ Social bonding
- ❑ Yourself
- ❑ The past
- ❑ The future



# Attributes of a Good Story



# Stories as an Organization Tool

- ❑ Communication
- ❑ Knowledge management
- ❑ Instill organizational values
- ❑ Culture change
- ❑ Call to action
- ❑ Inspiration
- ❑ Learning
- ❑ Marketing
- ❑ Share your vision



Larry Prusak, executive director of IBM's Institute of Knowledge Management, Retrieved from <http://www.creatingthe21stcentury.org/Larry-I-overview.html>



# The Value of Storytelling to Public Health and NPHII

# Timing Is Everything



**When you tell a story,  
people listen  
and they remember.**

# NPHII Storytelling

- ❑ Establishing new knowledge
- ❑ Capturing innovation
- ❑ Sharing lessons learned
- ❑ Broadening understanding of change



# **OSTLTS *Public Health Practice Stories from the Field***

**Disseminating stories  
about the implementation of  
public health practices in the field**

**Broad Range of  
Public Health Topics**

**Performance Management**

**Quality Improvement**



**[www.cdc.gov/stltpublichealth/phpracticestories/](http://www.cdc.gov/stltpublichealth/phpracticestories/)**

# New Jersey NPHII Story

## Advancing Technology to Improve Efficiency of Reporting Influenza Results

### Public Health Practice Stories from the Field



#### National Public Health Improvement Initiative in New Jersey

Advancing Technology to Improve Efficiency  
of Reporting Influenza Results

##### Improved

performance in  
communicable disease  
reporting, a key essential  
public health service area

##### Reduced

lag time between testing a  
specimen and reporting to  
CDC from 2–3 weeks down to  
2–3 days

##### Identified

achievable and scalable tasks  
with important, measurable  
results

##### Increased

health department workforce  
capacity by eliminating  
redundant tasks

The New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services is the lead public health agency in a densely populated, diverse state. During a typical flu season, New Jersey's Public Health and Environment Laboratory tests about 1,000 specimens. Prior to updating the system, the laboratory reported positive test results electronically to the health department's Communicable Disease Service for epidemiology follow up, and reported all influenza test results manually via web entry to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). When a novel influenza strain is circulating, the number of specimens submitted for testing can more than triple. The manual data entry to CDC was time-consuming, labor intensive, and prone to human error.

With funding from CDC's National Public Health Improvement Initiative (NPHII) and key technical assistance from CDC, the health department convened staff from the public health laboratories, information technology, and epidemiology divisions to develop and implement automated, electronic reporting of influenza test results from the state lab to CDC. The existing electronic reporting to the Communicable Disease Service was modified to include all influenza tests, which were then routed to CDC through a new messaging server built per CDC specifications. This standardized messaging system can be expanded to include all reportable communicable diseases and allows health department staff more time to fulfill other essential responsibilities.



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
Office for State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support



# Tennessee NPHII Story

## Strengthening Public Health Data Systems Through Performance Improvement

### Public Health Practice Stories from the Field

#### National Public Health Improvement Initiative in Tennessee



Strengthening Public Health Data Systems  
Through Performance Improvement

#### Engaged

partners from public  
health and stakeholder  
organizations

#### Developed

a plan for efficient and  
effective vital records  
keeping

#### Identified

strategic opportunities  
for action under difficult  
economic conditions

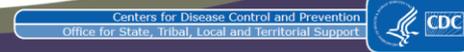
#### Launched

a system that will help  
Tennessee meet national  
public health standards

Efficient data systems are critical to operating a public health system that has the capacity to monitor the public's health and measure progress toward improved health outcomes. To build its monitoring and measurement capacity, strengthen its performance management systems, and prepare for national accreditation, the Tennessee Department of Health is revamping its vital records system.

Funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Public Health Improvement Initiative (NPHII) made it possible for the Tennessee Department of Health to update its antiquated, largely paper-based vital records system. This new online system will improve timeliness and accuracy, replace multiple systems used to track information, expand opportunities to link data systems with standardized data elements, and enable Tennessee to assess and monitor health status more effectively. This is part of a larger initiative to establish a Performance Management Division within the health department's Office of Policy, Planning, and Assessment, which will collaborate with partners to plan, identify performance indicators, assess public health performance, and implement improvements to the system.

Over the past several years, the Tennessee Department of Health has had to adjust to financial insecurity and the loss of key staff, but their continued planning and preparation for the revamped vital records system has and will continue to serve them well as they build management capacity and apply for accreditation.



# Virginia NPHII Story

## Four Quick Wins to Save Money, Increase Efficiency and Improve Public Health

### Public Health Practice Stories from the Field



### National Public Health Improvement Initiative in Virginia

Four Quick Wins to Save Money,  
Increase Efficiency, and Improve Public Health

#### Developed

a performance improvement plan and one comprehensive dashboard system from 119 separate databases for the Virginia Department of Health

#### Identified

strategies to save more than \$1.2 million annually on information technology costs

#### Improved

efficiency of administrative procurement processes by developing an online system and the agency's accountability by establishing a Performance Improvement Council

#### Increased

enrollment in Virginia's Medicaid family planning program by 32 percent through addressing process barriers

Organizational performance improvement requires a strong foundation of leadership, staff, and stakeholder investment, as well as good metrics for measuring success. The Virginia Department of Health put these elements in place to establish a clear understanding of resources and priorities, and to implement key projects that immediately improved efficiency and health service outcomes.

Funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Public Health Improvement Initiative (NPHII) allowed the Virginia Department of Health to hire performance improvement staff, who worked with key leaders across the system to develop performance improvement priorities and specific projects for meeting these priorities. Teams of representatives from all levels of the agency were created and have begun showing measurable success at improving data management, lowering costs of information technology, increasing administrative efficiency around procurement, and boosting enrollment in Plan First, Virginia's Medicaid family planning program.



**OSTLTS**

Office for State, Tribal,  
Local and Territorial Support

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
Office for State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support





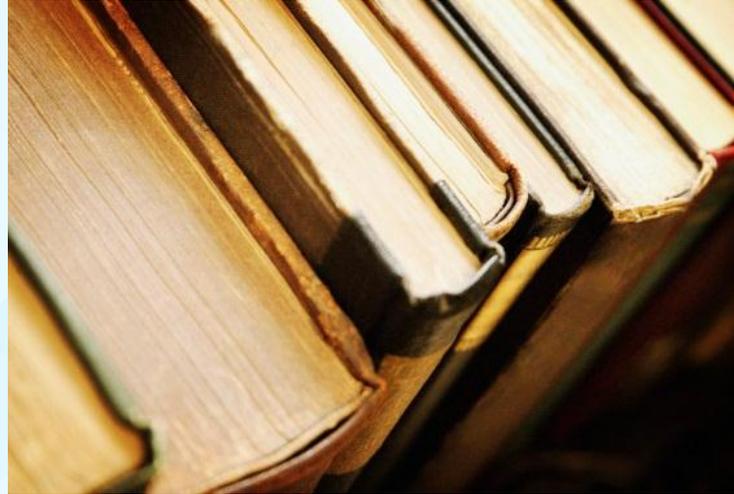
# Story Elements and Writing Tips — Using the CDC Story Template

# OSTLTS *Public Health Practice Stories from the Field*



- General guidelines
- Title
- Issue
- Program
- Accomplishments/impact
- Lessons learned
- Additional information

# Develop a Great Story Title... Last



**Your story title will represent  
your work to the rest of the  
public health practice field!**

# Developing a Great Title

- ❑ **First impression**
- ❑ **Identify main point**
- ❑ **Make it catchy**
- ❑ **Project specific phrase**
- ❑ **Alliteration**

Self-Check — Have you

- Captured the overall message of your story?
- Included an action verb?
- Captured the reader's attention?



# NPHII Story Titles

## New Jersey

*Advancing Technology to Improve Efficiency of Reporting Influenza Results*

## Tennessee

*Strengthening Public Health Data Systems Through Performance Improvement*

## Virginia

*Four Quick Wins to Save Money, Increase Efficiency, and Improve Public Health*



# General Style Guidelines

- ❑ Be specific
- ❑ Use plain language
- ❑ Keep messages simple and concise
- ❑ Use active voice
- ❑ Limit use of acronyms
- ❑ Include direct quotes if they strengthen the story
- ❑ Do not interject an opinion unless you attribute it to someone
- ❑ Avoid broad, sweeping statements



# Writing a Descriptive Paragraph



**Brainstorm details**



**Write the first draft**



**Review for sequence and clarity**



**Vet it**

# Writing a Descriptive Paragraph

- ❑ Build on your problem/AIM statements
- ❑ Provide evidence
- ❑ Current impact of problem/process
- ❑ Rationale or justification
- ❑ Future state

Who

What

When

Where

Why



# Public Health Problem or Performance/ Quality Improvement Issue

## Self-Check — Have you

- Described the scope of the public health problem in your jurisdiction or introduced the problem that performance management/quality improvement addressed?
- Explained why this public health problem issue is important?
- Used data (including references) to frame the problem, including health burden and economic costs?
- Specified the affected population(s)?



# Program Description

- ❑ Create an image for the reader
- ❑ Give concrete details in a logical sequence
- ❑ Include a timeline if appropriate
- ❑ Brainstorm specific observations or key points
- ❑ Include background points that help describe the entire picture



# Program Description (2)

## Self-Check — Have you

- Described how the practice, program, or activity was implemented, including where and when it took place and how it addressed the problem?
- Described the methodology or quality improvement tools used as applicable?
- Identified who was involved, including your partners?
- Identified the target audience of the practice, program, or activity?
- Identified the evidence-base for the practice, program, or activity or described how it is an innovative practice, program, or activity?

# Describing Accomplishments and Impact

Accomplishments are an important foundation for communicating what you have done, why something worked (or didn't), and the value to your organization.

Think of an accomplishment as having three parts:

- ❑ What
- ❑ Who
- ❑ Result



# Accomplishments and Impact

## Self-Check — Have you

- ❑ Described how the progress of the practice, program, or activity was evaluated or how progress will be evaluated?
- ❑ Identified the short-term or intermediate outcomes (include data) that demonstrate how the practice, program, or activity addressed the problem (e.g., change in policy, change in local-level practices, establishment of additional funding)?
- ❑ Included specific numbers to illustrate the scope of the impact (e.g., X of XX health departments, # of days saved in reporting to CDC)?



# Accomplishments and Impact

## Launched

a system that will help Tennessee meet national public health standards

## Identified

strategies to save more than \$1.2 million annually on information technology costs

## Developed

a performance improvement plan and one comprehensive dashboard system from 119 separate databases for the Virginia Department of Health

## Improved

performance in communicable disease reporting, a key essential public health service area

## Reduced

lag time between testing a specimen and reporting to CDC from 2–3 weeks down to 2–3 days

## Developed

a plan for efficient and effective vital records keeping



# Creating Lessons Learned

## Brainstorm

- ❑ What went well
- ❑ What didn't go well
- ❑ What was learned
- ❑ What tools were used



**Recommendations**

# Lessons Learned

## Self-Check — Have you

- ❑ Provided a conclusion to the story that avoids using broad, sweeping statements such as “There was a noticeable decrease in prescription medication abuse”?



# Additional Information

- ❑ Provide key words or phrases
- ❑ Additional documentation
- ❑ Contact information
- ❑ Permission to share
- ❑ Clearance by your agency



# Develop a Great Title: Your Story Headline



**What people see first  
is what people will remember.  
It reflects the content of your story  
and leaves them wanting more.**



# Next Steps

- ❑ Think about the first 18 months of your NPHII work
- ❑ Brainstorm a list of possible stories you can tell
- ❑ Select one story
- ❑ Using the information from today's presentation, and the CDC template, begin to write your story
- ❑ Bring two things to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Grantee Meeting
  1. The number of stories you brainstormed
  2. Your draft story

**“To be a person is to have a story to tell.”**

*Isak Dinesen*



***...to be part of NPHII is to have many stories to tell!***

# Additional Resources

*Storytelling in Organizations: Why Storytelling Is Transforming 21<sup>st</sup> Century Organizations and Management.* Brown, John Seely, Stephen Denning, Katalina Groh, and & Laurence Prusak. Massachusetts: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2005.

*Telling the Public Health Story: How to Affect Policy, Engage Elected Officials and Inspire Citizens.* (Webcast of NALBOH Ned E. Baker Lecture, April 2012).

*The Leader's Guide to Storytelling.* Stephen Denning. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011.

*The Story Factor: Inspiration, Influence, and Persuasion Through the Art of Storytelling.* Simmons, Annette and Doug Lipman. Massachusetts: Basic Books, 2006.



# Questions and Discussion

All lines are now open.

Please remember to use your mute button or #6.





# Thank You!

Please direct your questions and comments to your CDC/NPHII Project Officer.

**For more information please contact Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

1600 Clifton Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30333  
Telephone, 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)/TTY: 1-888-232-6348  
E-mail: [cdcinfo@cdc.gov](mailto:cdcinfo@cdc.gov) Web: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
Office for State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support