

Let Me Tell You a Story

In the transformational leadership model we learn how important it is for a leader to articulate his or her vision to others. One way of doing that is through personal stories. This project asks you to develop a “repertoire” of three authentic stories over the term that you can take with you into future leadership situations. The stories should involve lessons you have learned about yourself, about other people, about leadership, or about life in general. Some questions to prompt reflection and recognition:

- What people have had a significant impact on your life and why?
- What hardships have you faced and overcome?
- What are the greatest blessings in your life?
- What do you really, really believe?
- What ideas make your heart skip a beat?
- What do you know about life *now* that you wish you had known in high school?
- What is the one best piece of advice you could give to a person?
- What life lesson would you like to pass on to your children some day?
- If you only had one year left to live, how would you spend it?

Think beyond clichés (e.g. Love makes the world go ‘round) to insights that are unique to you. How might others benefit from hearing your stories? How do the stories point to your vision as a leader?

You will have the opportunity to deliver a “rough draft” of a story in class on _____. We will practice these early versions in small groups, get constructive feedback, and eventually hone each story so that it has drama or interest, and a clear point. At the end you should be able to say, “The reason I am telling this story today is...” and make the connection to a particular circumstance or need. Stories should be 2- 3 minutes long, but no more than 5 minutes. For the final week of class, each student will share one of his or her polished stories with the whole class.

In the practice sessions, listeners should give the following feedback to each speaker:

- What’s the most genuine moment in the story?
- What information is unclear or missing?
- What details have the most impact?
- How well does the point of the story relate to you?
- How could the application be stronger?
- When would this story be useful to tell?
- Suggestions for improving physical delivery