



**ENTERPRISING VENTURES OF COLOR**  
**SPITFIRE STRATEGIES STORY PLANNER**

**STEP 1: GROUND YOUR STORY IN YOUR COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

**What organizational objective will this story support?**

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**Who is the priority audience for this story (be specific)?**

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**What do you want your audience to think, feel and do after hearing this story?**

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**What messages will your story reinforce?**

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**Who is the messenger?**

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**What is the purpose of the story?**

- Simplify the complex
- Change behavior
- Build an emotional connection
- Change policies
- Build credibility
- Demonstrate impact
- Change the narrative

**What type of story do you need to tell to fulfill that purpose?**

- Nature of our challenge
- How we got started
- Performance
- Where we are going (vision)
- Emblematic success
- Striving to improve

**STEP 2: BUILD YOUR STORY.**

**CHARACTERS**

**Who or what is the hero?** Is the hero a person? If not, what is it? What is the hero's name? Describe the hero with vivid details. Provide context on their life and state their aspirations/dreams.

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**Who or what is the villain (or challenge to overcome)?** Is the villain a person? Is it a problem or a systemic issue? Name the villain. Describe the villain or the problem in detail.

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**PLOT**

**Where is the conflict?** Why are the hero and villain in conflict? What obstacles must the hero overcome? What's at stake for the hero?

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**What developments carry the story from beginning to end?** Share details of steps along the way.

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**What is the resolution of the story (how does the protagonist overcome the barriers) and what is the call to action?**

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**Summarize the story in one sentence (what is the headline?).**

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## STRUCTURE

**Once upon a time...** (How does the story capture the audience's attention? Introduce the hero? Set the scene?)

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**And then what happened?** (How does the conflict build?)

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**And what finally happened to resolve the conflict?**

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**Why does it matter?** (What is the result? Link it to your ask.)

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## STEP 3: CONDUCT A FINAL CHECK.

**How many elements of good storytelling does your story have?**

- Attention-getting beginning
- Hero your audience can relate to and respect
- Villain that represents a real problem you are trying to solve
- Vivid details that bring the story to life
- Evokes a specific emotion
- Conflict that creates tension
- One clear plot line
- A surprise or unexpected twist
- Does not hide or gloss over critical moments
- Ending where conflict is resolved
- A central lesson
- No soul-killing jargon
- Brevity (You can tell it in three minutes or less.)
- Repeatable (Will other messengers be able to retell it?)

**STEP 4: PRACTICE TELLING YOUR STORY.**

\_\_\_ Share your story with your training partner

\_\_\_ Listen for feedback and make adjustments

\_\_\_ Now listen to their story. What more did you want to hear? What did not work for you?

**STEP 4: FINDING AND SHARING STORIES ETHICALLY.**

\_\_\_ How will you find stories from your clients or staff?

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\_\_\_ Does the protagonist have the opportunity to write or co-create the story?

\_\_\_ Do you have permission to share their story? Have you shared the final version with them?

\_\_\_ Who is the protagonist and antagonist in the story? Does the story subject have agency to succeed (or does your organization step in)?

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\_\_\_ Are you using person-first language in the story and asset framing?

\_\_\_ How will you use photos, videos and quotes to illustrate the story? Have waivers been signed?

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\_\_\_ Is the story subject prepared to have their name and story shared in the media or social media?

\_\_\_ How long will the story be shared by your organization (every month, year etc.)? When is the expiration date on the story?

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\_\_\_ How are you compensating them for their time sharing the story?

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\_\_\_ Does this story reinforce any harmful narratives about the individual or community? Will the subject of the story be the 'face' of the problem in your materials?

\_\_\_ Are you using person-first language in the story and asset framing?

\_\_\_ What are the narratives that you are countering or reinforcing in this story?

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