



Inspired Giving

Using Stories
for Nonprofit Fundraising

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Advantages

- If you learn what I'm about to show you, you'll avoid:
 - ✓ Sounding like everyone else
 - ✓ Disengaged audiences
 - ✓ Donors not knowing the return on their investments
 - ✓ Not being able to demonstrate the impact of your work



Why Fundraising Projects Fail (content)

- Deadened by data
- People avoiding you (guilt, pain, pity)
- Sounding like everyone else
- Being easily forgettable
- Developing only short-term relationships



The Difference

- Nonprofit fundraising research
- We are all in the connection business



Goal

- To connect, inspire, & influence on purpose



Added Bonus

- You'll never forget what you are going to say!
 - Your stories are unique
 - Stories demonstrate your VALUE
 - People buy the relationship, not your information
 - Personal professional development



What Makes Stories Work?





**No one ever marched on
Washington because of charts,
graphs, or bullet points**



The Brain

Left Brain: Analytic

Linear

Logical

Language

Reasoning

Skeptical

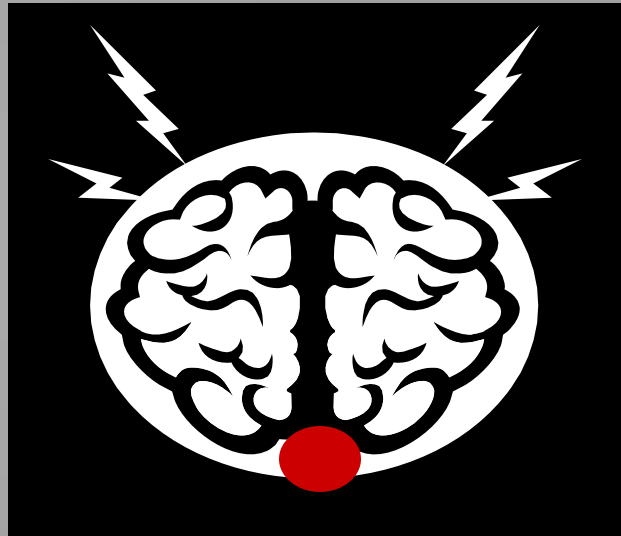
#'s & Facts

Emotionally

Neutral

Needs More

Info



Limbic: the Emotional Brain

Where decisions are made

Feelings of trust, loyalty, hope

Right Brain: Sensory

Creative,
Imaginative

Non-verbal
Signals

Intuition

Social
Cognition

Fills Gaps

Path to Senses

Path to Limbic



Making Decisions

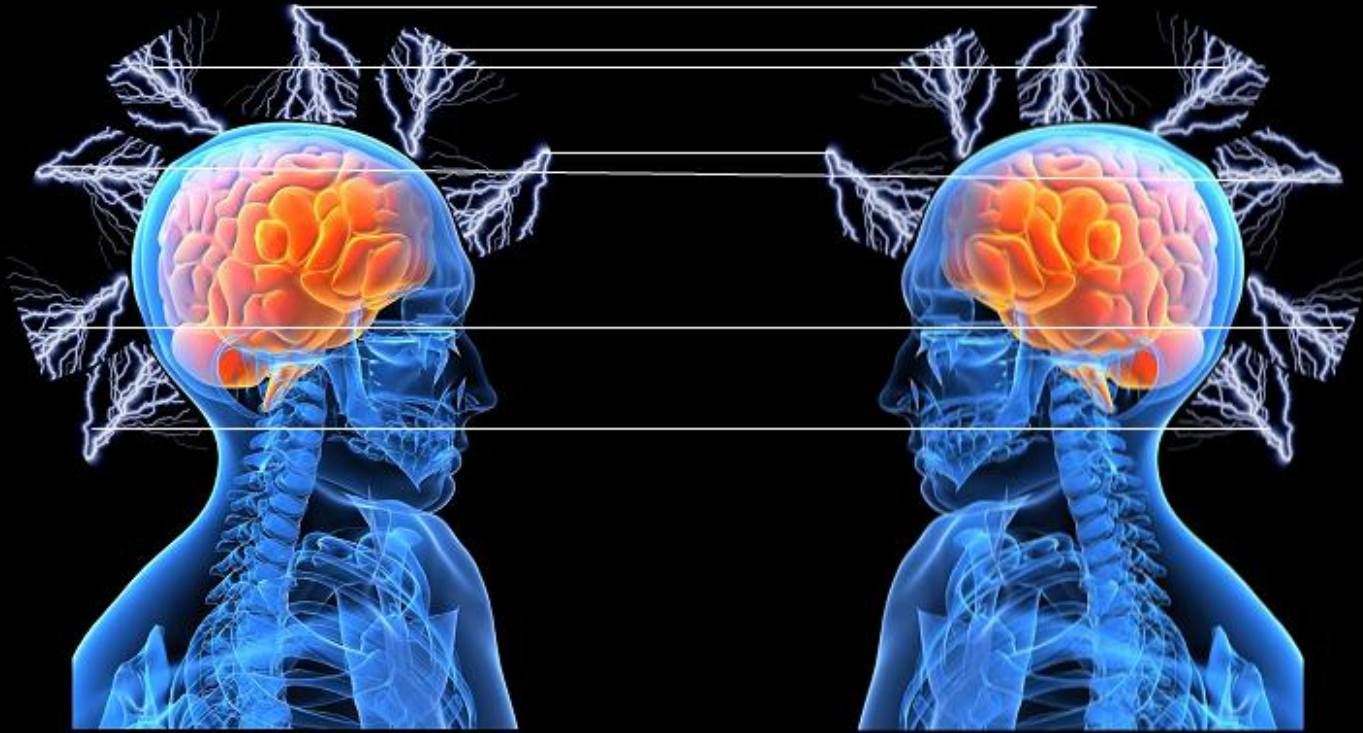
- People make emotional decisions with logical reasons
- When people hear stories, they typically feel safe, relaxed, and anticipate enjoyment



Your Brain on Stories



Two Brains on Stories



Your Brain on Data



So How Do You Do THAT?

- People give because they are emotionally touched and feel connected to the stories
 1. Listen for stories
 2. Tell your stories



What Stories?

1. The founding of your nonprofit & the challenge you are addressing
2. People & results
3. The future you are creating
4. What's my passion & commitment?



So What Is A Story?

- At it's most basic level, every compelling story has:
 - Beginning, middle, end
 - Problem — resolution
 - Character (s) & Goal
 - Challenges/trouble
 - Key message
 - **Sensory material**



Taking Action

- Here are the 4 action steps to solve being in bland land and increasing your donations
 - Identify your core stories
 - Pull key images and phrases from the stories to help form your visuals and collateral material
 - Practice telling your core stories so you'll know how to talk about you and your nonprofit
 - Decide what media to use to share your stories



Where to Share Stories

1. Website
2. Video & audio files
3. Blogs & social networks
4. Grant proposals
5. Press releases
6. Annual reports
7. Newsletters
8. Fundraising letters
9. Brochures
10. Meetings
11. Fundraising events



How Do I Practice My Stories?

1. Trusted partner
2. Listening delightedly -- Suspend the critical mind – write down key phrases
3. Reflective questions – to go deep
4. Identify key message
5. Appreciations – positive psychology



Common Mistakes

1. Not using true stories
2. Telling ABOUT a story
3. Not having a powerful key message
4. Lack of sensory material
5. Not practicing with a partner
6. Not finding opportunities for sharing them orally



Take Action Right Now

- Here's what to do RIGHT NOW to make sure you stand out from the crowd:
 1. IDENTIFY The 4 core stories every nonprofit needs to tell
 2. Craft and practice your core stories!
 - Expand & contract them



What This Means For You

- You'll get better at sharing stories
- More impact & memorability
- You will have greater success with your fundraising projects
- You'll engage donors in deeper and more meaningful ways
- You'll have a stronger foundation for building longer-term relationships



Don't Wait

- You can get started right now in crafting and telling your stories
 - Speed to implementation
 - Iterative process

In all of us there's a storyteller waiting to be uncovered and brought into our professional life

Each one of you has inspiring stories to tell & and I can't wait to hear yours



Supporting Materials

- www.polaris-associates.com/downloads
 - PPT & Recording
 - Core Stories Worksheet
 - Story Listening Worksheet
- Contact me with questions contact-us@polaris-associates.com



Thank You!

- Upcoming events:
 - 5-week e-learning series on fundraising for nonprofits
 - Workshops in San Diego
 - Esalen 5-day workshop
- Sign up for our newsletter – www.polaris-associates.com



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- Karen is an organizational development professional specializing in stories. She is a business consultant, facilitator, trainer, storyteller, story coach to senior executives, and the former Executive Director of the National Storytelling Network.
- She has worked with organizations for over 25 years, and clients include Fortune 500 companies, business leaders, nonprofits, and community advocates.

