Amplifying Our Voice: Leading Boldly for Our Students, Our Professions, and Our Union

COM312
Narrative for Change:
Theory of Change + Story of Self

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NEA Leadership Competencies: COMMUNICATIONS and ORGANIZING

• Indicate all of the NEA Leadership Competency progression level(s).
  • Level 2: Mobilizing & Power Building
  • Level 3: Agenda Driving

• Leadership Competency themes for each Level
  • Identifies and utilizes appropriate messages in acting as a compelling advocate for the organization
  • Acts as a powerful and passionate speaker who can influence agendas and actions through speeches, presentations, and media interviews
Strategic Goal and NEA Organizational Priorities

**NEA Strategic Goal**

- advancing opportunities that will identify, organize, and engage new and early career educators; amplify the voices of all educators, support our members’ professional growth, and promote social justice for our students, communities and our nation;
- securing a pro-public education environment for students, educators, and families

**NEA Organizational Priorities**

- Early Career Educator
- Racial Justice in Education
- My School, My Voice
- Supporting Professional Excellence
Goals/Expected Outcomes

You should be able to:

• Drive strategic messages for ANY type of organizing effort
• Be more strategic in why you are doing something and limit actions that don’t actually help you meet your goal.
• Help your members and supporters tell engaging stories that will drive action.
Agenda:

1. Setting Your Foundation
2. What is a Strategy (Theory of Change?)
3. Narratives of Change
4. Exercise
Setting Your Foundation

Your Reality ...

• The Education World as it is ...
• The Education World as it should be ...
• What are some of the challenges your team will face in moving from the world as it is to the world as it should be?
Problems

• The pain your people are feeling
• Unmistakable and easy to identify
• For example: Stress, Poverty, Underpaid, Lack of respect, Unsafe, Harassed, Racism, No leadership, Overworked, Disconnected, Unsupported, Distrusted, Low Morale, Fearful
Issues

• Specific situational causes of the pain
• Have a clear win
• Make a measurable, significant change in the day-to-day lives of our members
• Are specific and actionable
• Help us build our Union
• Examples: Lack of planning time, duty during lunch, curriculum alignment, lack of textbooks, salary schedule, school technology
Set your goal

What are you organizing to win? What are you trying to accomplish?

SMART Goal:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Relevant
- Time-Bound
What is a Theory of Change?

A Theory of Change needs to answer the following questions:

1. What is/are the change(s) you want to create to achieve your goal?
2. Who has the resources to create change and what do they want?
3. What is your strategy to create change?
4. What is the role people must play to create change?
If \([\text{audience}]\) takes \([\text{action}]\), then \([\text{target}]\) will \([\text{do something}]\) that will \([\text{meet goal}]\).
Define your audience

What’s the difference between your audience and target?

**Targets:** The people who can enact the change we want.
- For example:
  - A school board to pass a resolution regarding school safety.
  - A member of State Leg to introduce a bill

**Audience:** The group of people we are talking to and asking to take an action that will apply pressure on our target.
A strong Theory of Change is...

**Plausible:** Stakeholder believe it’s logic and the model is correct. If we do these things, we’ll get the result we want.

**Doable:** Human, political, and economic resources are sufficient to implement the actions.

**Testable:** Stakeholders believe there’s a credible way to discover whether the results are as predicted.

**Meaningful:** Stakeholders see the outcomes as important and the magnitude of change in these outcomes being pushed as worthy.
Narrative for Change

To move people to action, your Theory of Change needs to be strongly linked to a Narrative of Change.

Theory of Change
- Roadmap for change
- Preconditions
- Underpinning assumptions
- Change process
- Outcomes

Story/Narrative
- Connecting to a bigger purpose
- Creating meaning
- Commitment to change
- Engagement / mobilizing
- Compelling people to act
What does storytelling have to do with organizing?
Storytelling in Organizing …

• Source of inspiration
• Articulate shared values
• Connect us with others
• Motivate others to join us by tapping in to anger, hope, frustration or ambition
Stories teach us lessons, moral values, and how to make choices. They also inspire others to be part of our movement.
The Anatomy of a Story
Good Stories Have an Arc:
Story of Self
Two ways of understanding the world:
WHY

Story Motivation
Heart and head together equals action.
Elements of a Public Story

A story of self: why you were called to what you have been called to.

A story of us: what your constituency, community, organization has been called to its shared purposes, goals, vision.

A story of now: the challenge this community now faces, the choices it must make, and the hope to which “we” can aspire.
Public Narrative

- **story of self**: call to leadership
- **story of now**: strategy & action
- **story of us**: shared values & shared experience

- **PURPOSE**
- **COMMUNITY**
- **URGENCY**
On July 27, 2004, Barack Obama was introduced to the nation ...
Putting it all together

Ramona,

I've been marching for 52 years.

From Selma to Montgomery to Washington, D.C. — they've brutally beaten me, they've imprisoned me ... but they cannot stop me.

Because the remarkable progress we have made is worth fighting for. The rights of every human being are worth fighting for.

So, we march. And we march again ... and again ... and again.

Today I call on you to personally pledge to continue to take action every time our rights and democracy are at risk! *Never stop marching — join with millions of others unifying for LGBTQ equality now.*

We are living in a time of great consequence, and it requires each of us to act. We must be willing to go out of our comfort zones ... educate ourselves on the issues ... speak out against injustice ... and turn our beliefs into action.

Those of us who believe in liberty and justice for all must gear up for what lies ahead. It's not going to be easy, but united, we the people have more power than the people in power. We are stronger than this president — remember that, and use it to energize yourself for the next battle.

The future is not certain. Our destiny is not preordained. But we have the ability to shape our path, and I'm proud to stand right alongside you, and everyone at the Human Rights Campaign, as we march forward.

*Join me today — pledge to continue to fight for LGBTQ equality for as long as it takes.*

We have a moral obligation to make this world a better place — and with persistence, we can do it.

Thank you,

Congressman John Lewis
Exercise
Teamwork:

1. Develop your story silently, using the worksheet.

2. In groups of two, tell your story to your partner, and give feedback.

3. Go around the circle, each person taking 3 minutes to tell your story then get 2-minutes of feedback from the group (go deep with coaching questions).
Let’s share!

The Vision
Message Frame
The How
Theory of Change

The Why
Story of Self, Us and Now
Integrating the Story of Us and Now (what we are fighting for and why it’s important to do something immediately) into your story of self makes every communication and organizing opportunity.

The Narrative for Change is the one phrase or sentence that everyone can incorporate into their personal story to drive to the action you need people to take.
Session Outcomes

The content from this session can be used in the following ways in your current position/role:

• Drive strategic messages for ANY type of organizing effort
• Be more strategic in why you are doing something and limit actions that don’t actually help you meet your goal.
• Help your members and supporters tell engaging stories that will drive action.
Please complete the evaluation for **COM312** by using the NEA Summit Mobile App!

Please visit the Leadership Development Resources website at [www.nea.org/leadershipdevelopment](http://www.nea.org/leadershipdevelopment)

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