How to Frame Your Narrative
 Harnessing your powerful story
to make meaningful change

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Who am I?
Why do I think communications is so darned important?
Our world runs on stories

• We are in the middle of a huge global, national, state, and local conversation about where we get our information
• Decision-makers use constituent stories to make laws and regulations
• Stories help us make sense of data
• But...
Stories aren’t told in a vacuum

• “If everyone was getting their information from my favorite news source, they’d understand what’s really going on.”

• “If other people would do x, then we could accomplish y.”

• “Why won’t anyone listen to me?”
We might need to try different frames.
Listening

• Athletes, musicians practice skills
• Listening is a critical component of storytelling – it informs WHAT and HOW we convey our information
• Let’s practice this skill!
Listening Activity
What happens when we tell stories?

• They are a way to build trust
• They can help our credibility
• They can place you and your work in context of a larger issue or community
Know your audience

• With whom are you communicating?
  – Friends, neighbors, church members
  – City councils, county commissions
  – State Legislators
  – Other governmental agencies
  – Customers
  – Strangers
Know your audience

• What do you know about the people with whom you are communicating?
  – Where do they work?
  – How old are they?
  – Where do they live?
  – What might you have in common?
Know your audience

• What might others say about you?
• What might others say about your industry or your organization?
• Use the Golden Rule
• Measure your success: if you don’t have another yardstick, try the Grocery Store Test
Building your story
What’s next?

• Ask for feedback from someone whose honest opinion you trust
• Practice, practice, practice!
Thank you!

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