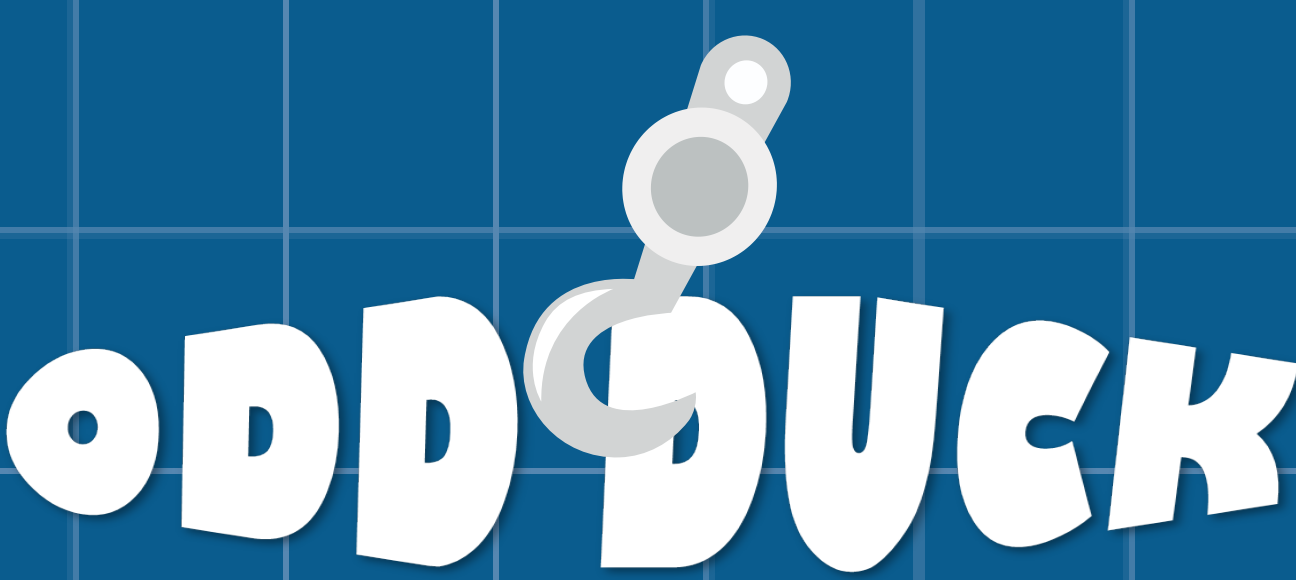




ART OF DATA-DRIVEN STORY BUILDING ARCHITECTURE





ODD DUCK

The Story Builders

Who are we?

Story builders, guided by the desire for social change, who work to capture programmatic stories in an empathetic, respectful, person-first, first-person way.

Our Services:

- Narrative strategy
- 360 degree strategic storytelling
- Content creation
- Training and workshops

How is Story Building different?

1

Involves collecting and sharing of stories.

2

It is a cyclical process updated over time.

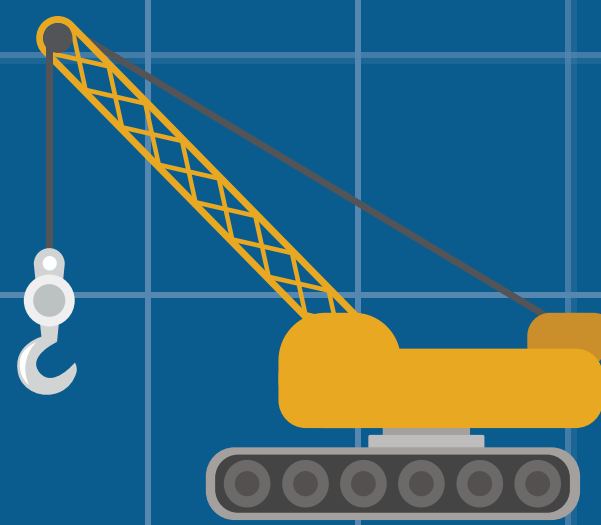
3

It is a communal activity involving a whole organization.

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Construction MATERIALS



for a well-built social change **story**

A well-built story has strategy. It is told to influence an outcome or achieve an aim.



A well-built story has the audience in mind. Who are the listeners that can effect change and what do they need to hear?



A well-built story demonstrates measurable change. It illustrates the quantifiable impact of change.



A well-built story focuses as close to the area of impact as your intervention operates. Who does your program benefit?



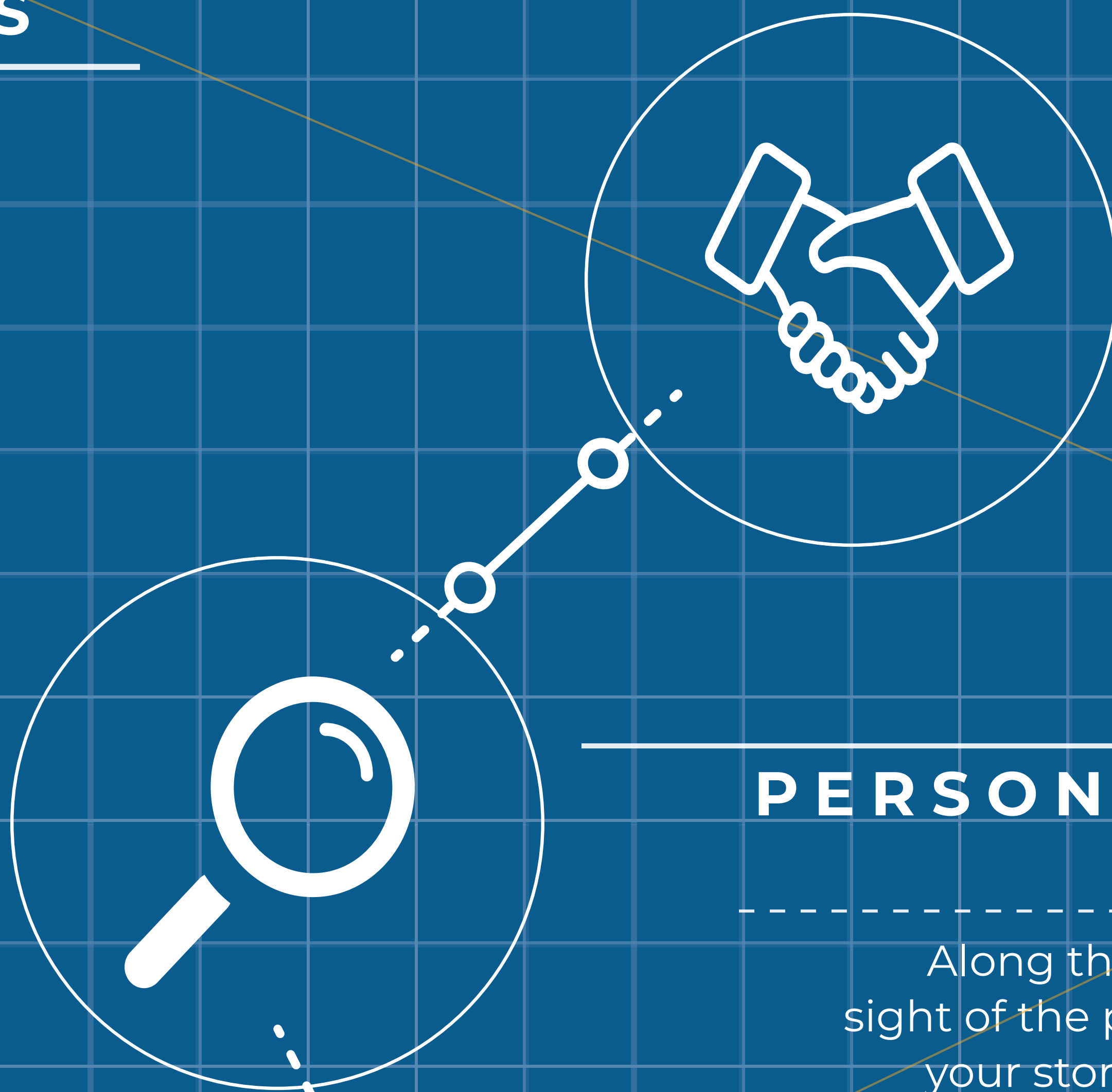
A well-built story has an emotional core. It helps deliver an emotional tone for the audience experiencing it to see what is possible.



STORY BUILDING PROCESS:

RELATIONSHIPS

Start building your story around people. Systems, programs, projects, initiatives focus on people in one way or another at the end of the day. "Area of Impact" is a term we use for focusing in on where a system helps or hinders someone from living a healthy life. This may mean your organization has to cultivate relationships with credible messengers (people with lived experience on a given issue) or an agency that focuses on direct service. A well-built story needs this perspective.



PERSON-FORWARD FOCUS

Along the same lines, never lose sight of the person(s) at the heart of your story. Be careful not to lead with labels reducing someone to their most harrowing experience, the worst thing they did or was done to them, or the attributes by which they are identified. No one is just a legal status, a citizenship, an ethnicity, a tragedy, or sexual orientation for example. As comedian Leo Flowers quips, we should say "a person who is homeless" rather than "homeless people" to always put the person first. Take it a step further to include humanizing details beyond the scope of the story.

LAYERS OF CONSENT

Build in extra layers of consent to make sure the subject of the story is comfortable with it being shared at the beginning, the middle, and the end of the process. Sharing a story is an exercise in trust, so make sure you've earned it by taking care to get the details right.

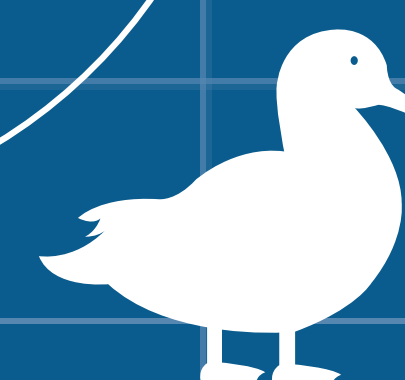


EDITORIAL CONTROL

Show respect to everyone involved by creating opportunities to exercise editorial control. It may slow the process, but it can go a long way to reassuring everyone involved that you respect the story being told.

PREPPING THE STORY

Before you are asked for a story, have an idea of the kind of stories you need to tell, and the pieces required to tell it. Ideally, you can have sharable stories written and ready before they are necessary. Develop your strategy, cultivate relationships, identify contributors, and build trust in advance, so that content is available when needed.



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CHECKLIST FOR DATA-DRIVEN STORY BUILDING:



Assemble your Team

- Data & Evaluation
- Clinical Support
- Frontline Workers
- Communication & Development
- Credible Messengers



Training

Everyone should know how to identify a good story when they see one, use data strategically to advance a perspective, and be on the same page about strategy.



Define your Strategy

What do you want your stories to accomplish?

Cultural shifts? Norm change? Policy adoption? Fundraising?

Know your strategy in advance.



Define your Audience

Who can help you achieve your aim?

If you try and deliver a message to everybody, you succeed in delivering a message to no one at all. Your audience has the most influence over what you are trying to achieve.



Data & Sources

Data needs to be trustworthy.

If you are going to get others to trust it than you need to establish credibility at the source. In an era of fake news where science is suspect, data needs to be shared strategically.



Feelings

What do you want your audience to feel in response to your story?

Emotion is fuel that helps us move through a story and, if done well, gives us a momentum to move from story to action.



Action

What do you want your audience to do after reading your story?



Visualization

How do you want your data depicted?

