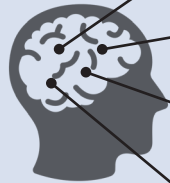


» UNDERSTANDING WHY STORIES ARE SO POWERFUL

The best stories lead policymakers to be more attentive, remember what they hear, connect with the storyteller, and trust the message delivered. Information presented outside of a narrative format, however compelling the data or impressive the rhetoric, is unlikely to have the same lasting impact on policymakers.

The Science of Storytelling



Focused Attention

Narrative tension causes distress, to which the body responds by releasing the hormone cortisol into the bloodstream. Cortisol heightens an individual's focus, as a response to stress.

Improved Memory

Information told in a narrative format activates numerous parts of the brain at once – including the motor cortex, sensory cortex, and frontal cortex – improving overall memory function.

Connected Emotions

Telling a story can cause the listener to experience similar brain patterns as the storyteller, a process called neural coupling that connects the speaker and audience on an emotional level.

Increased Trust

Character-based stories sustain audience attention and cause the brain to synthesize oxytocin, encouraging individuals to empathize better, be more trusting, and be more willing to help.