

HOW TO CREATE STORIES FOR LASTING CHANGE

Building Meaningful Relationships with Policymakers

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STORIES MAKE US HUMAN

OUR BRAINS...



SEEK CONTROL, DETECT CHANGE, DRAWN TO CHARACTER.

OUR BRAINS...

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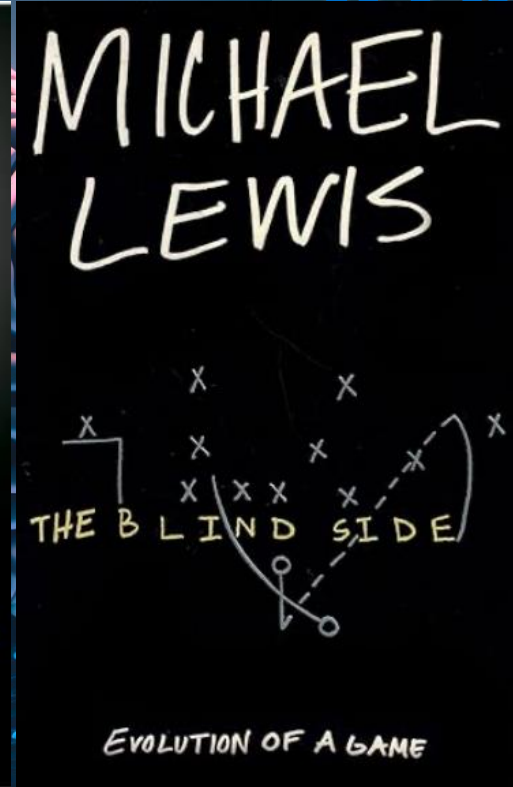
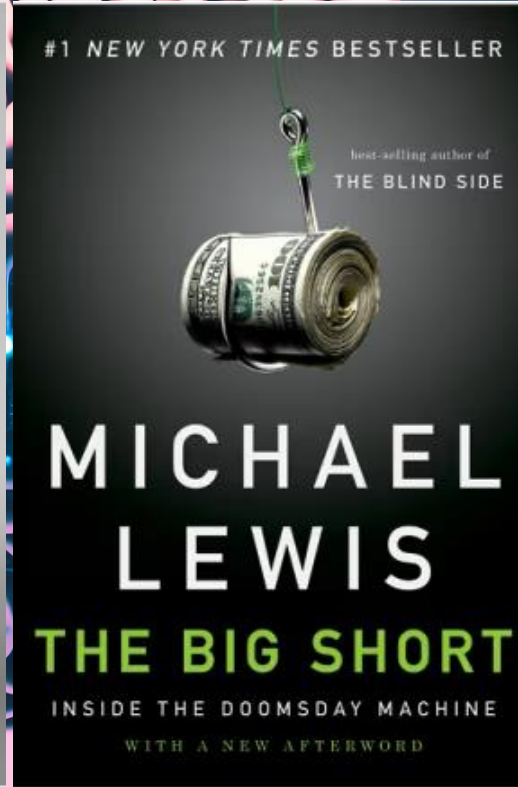


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WHAT MAKES A GOOD STORY?



1. REVISIT YOUR PRE-WORK

(Individual Reflection)

2. APPLY STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

(Peer-to-peer Discussion)

3. EMPOWER YOU TO CREATE CHANGE

REVISIT YOUR PRE-WORK

(60 sec. Reflection + Walk Through)

1. **Who is the child** or family behind an issue you care about? (No names; protect confidentiality)
2. **Why should people care** about this issue?
3. **What system gap** does this issue reveal?
4. **What policy change** would help?
5. **What specific policymaker** should care about this issue?

PRACTICAL INSIGHTS FOR POLICY ENGAGEMENT

Strategic Skills Series for Public Health Practice



KNOW YOUR WHY: What is the issue you are passionate about and why does it matter?

KNOW THE WHO: Who has the power to make a policy decision about your issue?

KNOW WHAT MATTERS: How does your issue connect to their priorities, their constituents, their values?

APPLY STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK (STEP 1 OF 2)

(15-minutes Peer-to-peer Discussion)

- What is your ask?
 - Can you say it in one sentence.
- Who is your policymaker?
 - Can you describe what matters to them in two sentences.
- Why does it matter?
 - 1 - 3 sentences on why your ask is relevant to the policymaker's interests.



Give feedback to your partner— What was clear, what was not, helpful suggestions to make it better? **After receiving feedback, try again.**

APPLY STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK (STEP 2 OF 2)

(15-minutes of Peer-to-peer Discussion)

Person: [Who is the character in your story?]

Problem: [What is the challenge they face?]

System Gap: [Is their challenge systemic?]

Policy Relevance: [What needs to change?]

Shared Value: [Why would your policymaker care?]

Next Step: [Invitation to continue the conversation.]

Give feedback to your partner

- Did you see the child or family?
- Was the system gap clear?
- Was alignment with shared values clear?
- Were the next steps collaborative?

TIP 1: RECOGNIZE YOUR POLICYMAKER'S DYNAMIC

| | Decisionmaker | Advocate |
|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Perceived importance of the health issue | Never thought about it | Consider it essential |
| Knowledge of the health intervention | Non-existent | Extensive |
| Understanding of budget demands | Keenly aware of many demands | Aware but lacks details |
| Subject to interest group pressure | Feels pressure constantly | Knows about some groups |
| Interest in the health issue | Not interested | Core part of profession |
| Time available for action | Very limited; measured in minutes | As much as is needed |



TIP 2: JOIN THEIR FELLOWSHIP AS A CHARACTER IN THEIR STORY

TIP 3: CONNECT WHO THEY ARE TO WHAT YOU'RE ASKING OF THEM

What is your policy ask?



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TIP 4: CAUSE & EFFECT MAKE STORIES EASIER TO FOLLOW

TIP 5: BUILD A MODEL THEY CAN FEEL, INSTEAD OF UNDERSTAND



Policy engagement can take many forms ranging in the degree of effort or commitment. Below are some examples of policy engagement activities:

SPECTRUM OF ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES FOR PUBLIC HEALTH PROFESSIONALS



WHAT ARE YOUR NEXT STEPS?

- What additional research will you do?
- What are some interim steps you can take to gather the skills or relationships you need?
- Are there any opportunities (open public comment or legislative hearings) to be aware of?

A woman with curly hair, wearing a blue blazer, is speaking into a microphone. She is gesturing with her right hand. In the foreground, a woman with dark hair, wearing a blue blazer, is looking towards the speaker and holding a notebook. The background shows other people in a conference setting. The entire image has a yellow overlay with a large orange graphic element resembling a stylized 'L' or a bracket.

When YOU lead, our children move forward.

GET MORE RESOURCES



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