Change the Story, Change the World
Story Structure Worksheet

Select one point about your organization's work that you would commonly make to a target audience and choose a story that will illustrate that point – *something that actually happened*, whether it's an incident in which you were involved, something you observed, or simply a story you heard about from a colleague.

Follow the directions below and answer the questions in the spaces provided to outline your story. You do not need to write out the entire story word for word.

THE POINT

What one point do you want listeners to take away upon hearing this story? *(While this may not be evident to your audience until the end of the story, you must be clear on your intended message from the beginning.)*

YOUR AUDIENCE

To whom would you tell this story? *(Your audience affects how you tell the story – i.e., the language you choose – as well as which parts you need to emphasize, so be clear on this as well.)*

BEGINNING (Act One)

Who is the protagonist of your story? (Who is driving the action? With whom is your audience likely to identify? *Remember, you have to begin with one person and tell us enough about him or her so the audience has a picture of them.)*

What is the setting for your story? (Where and when does it take place? Any other important circumstances or conditions?)

What is the protagonist's goal? (What do they want to do? What challenge or problem are they trying to overcome?)

MIDDLE (Act Two)

What is the first barrier standing in the protagonist's way? (What are the internal or external barriers?)

How does your protagonist pursue the goal? (What happens as the protagonist encounters subsequent barriers, and if there are no barriers, what is keeping the narrative interesting for the audience?)

END (Act Three)

What is the resolution of the story? (Does your protagonist achieve his/her/their goal or is there another outcome?)

What is the meaning of the story? (Go back to the first question about the point you intend to make and confirm you have delivered on that promise.)