



ELEVATE
KANSAS
A Health Coalition Community

Mic-Drop Moment

Storytelling with Data





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Uniting Coalitions to Advance Health

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Sunflower Foundation



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- All microphones have been muted. Please enter your questions/comments into the chat.
- Handouts will be shared via the Zoom chat during the presentation.
- Slides and resources will be shared via email after the session.
- Presentation recording and resources will be housed on elevatekansas.org
- Application Lab immediately following this presentation



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Taylor Carter is a Public Health Program Specialist at the Wichita State University Community Engagement Institute. Taylor supports local and state public health initiatives through data storytelling, survey design, and informatics capacity-building. With a passion for making data meaningful and accessible, Taylor helps public health teams use information to drive change in their communities.

Mic-Drop Moment: Storytelling for Impact

Elevate Kansas Coalition Compass Series - June 25, 2025

by Taylor Carter, MPH



Howdy!



Taylor Carter, M.P.H.

Public Health Program Specialist

Expertise:

Epidemiology, Data Analysis, Storytelling

Interests:

AI, Public Health Informatics, Improv, Stand-up Comedy

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**What makes a
story stick?**



The Case for Storytelling



Makes data relatable & memorable



Builds empathy & urgency

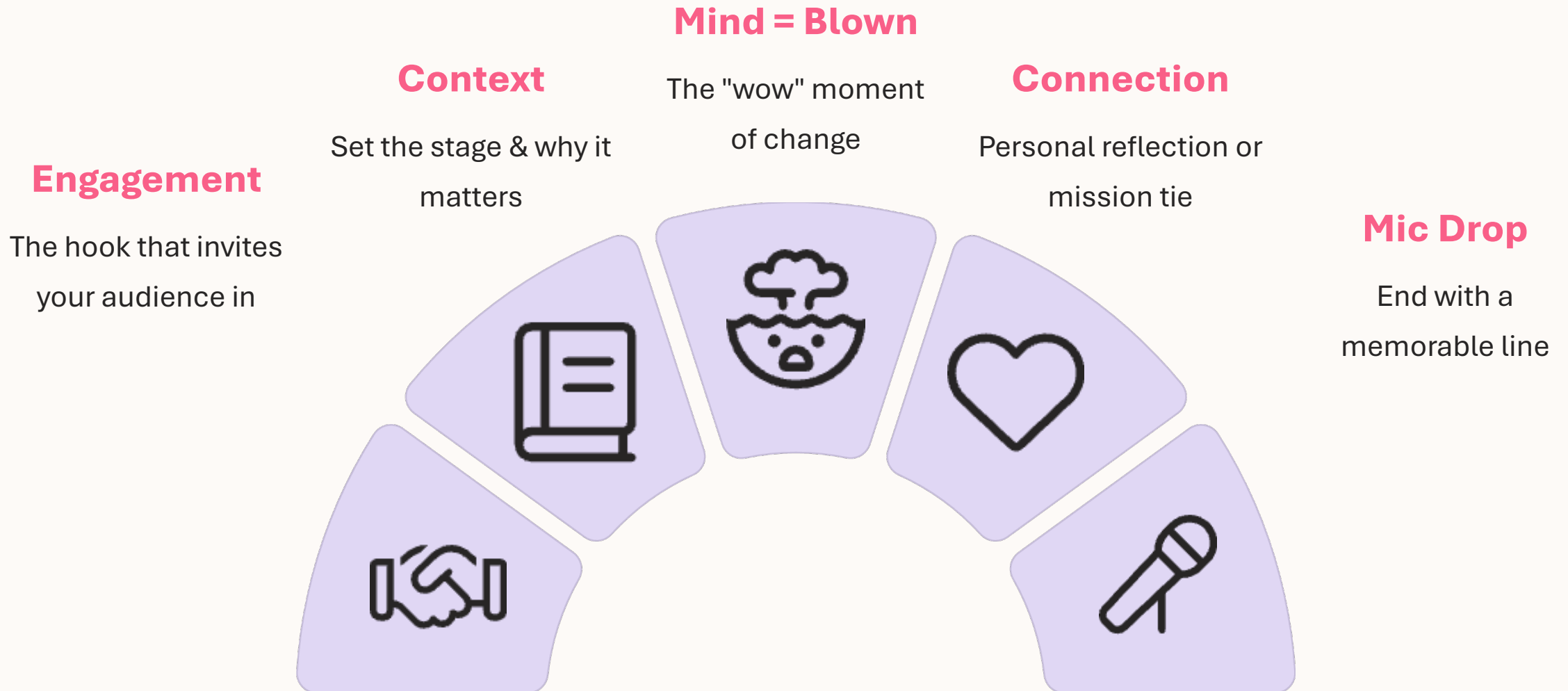


Shows impact beyond numbers



Communities own their data

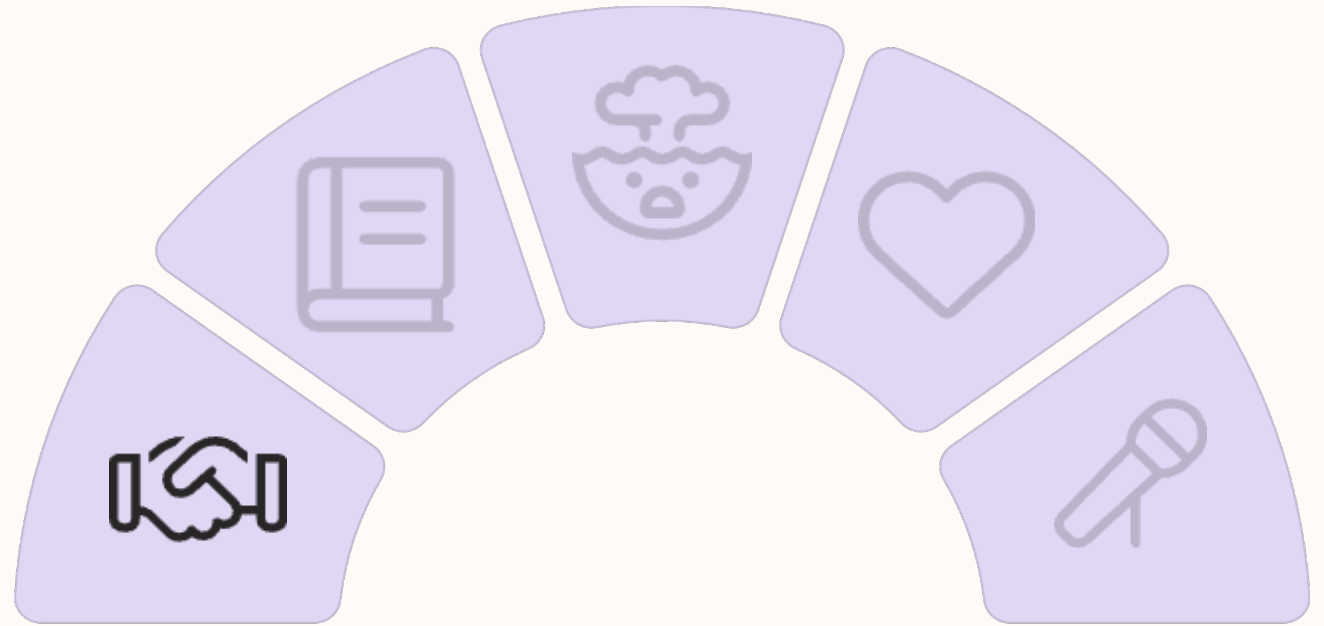
The 5 Elements of a Story



Engagement

The hook that invites your audience in.

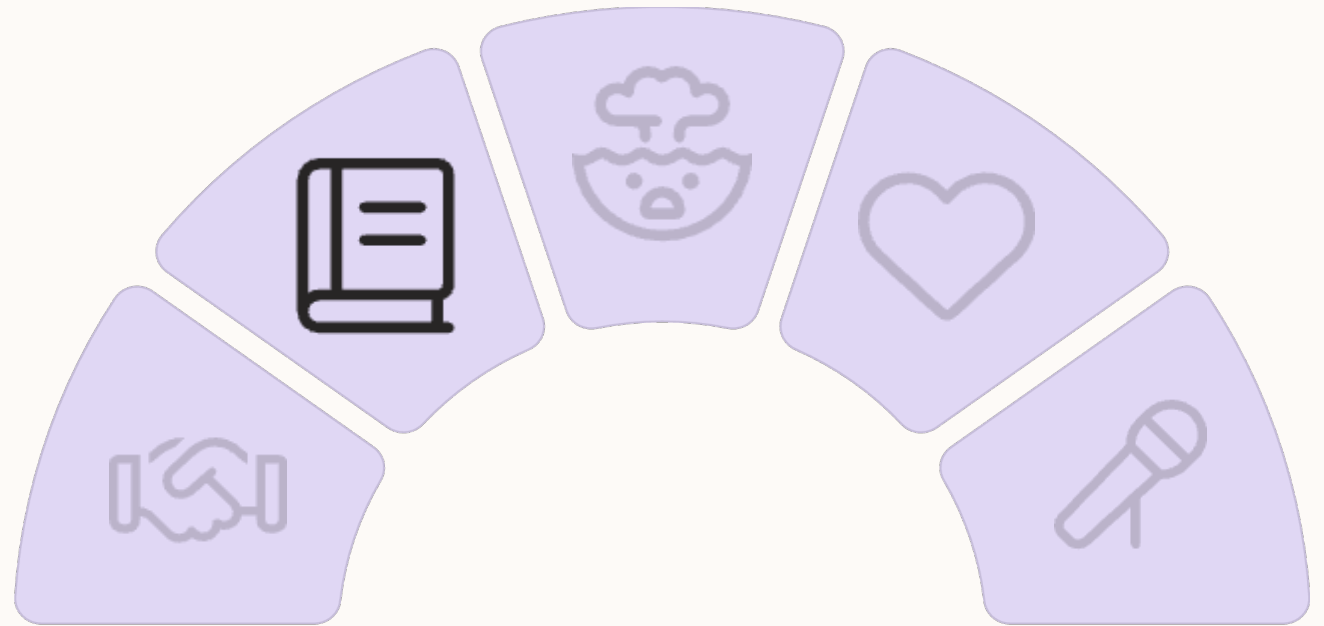
- Audience participation
 - Bonus points if it involves movement
- Goal: Pique interest
- Keep it lighthearted



Context

Set the stage or why this matters

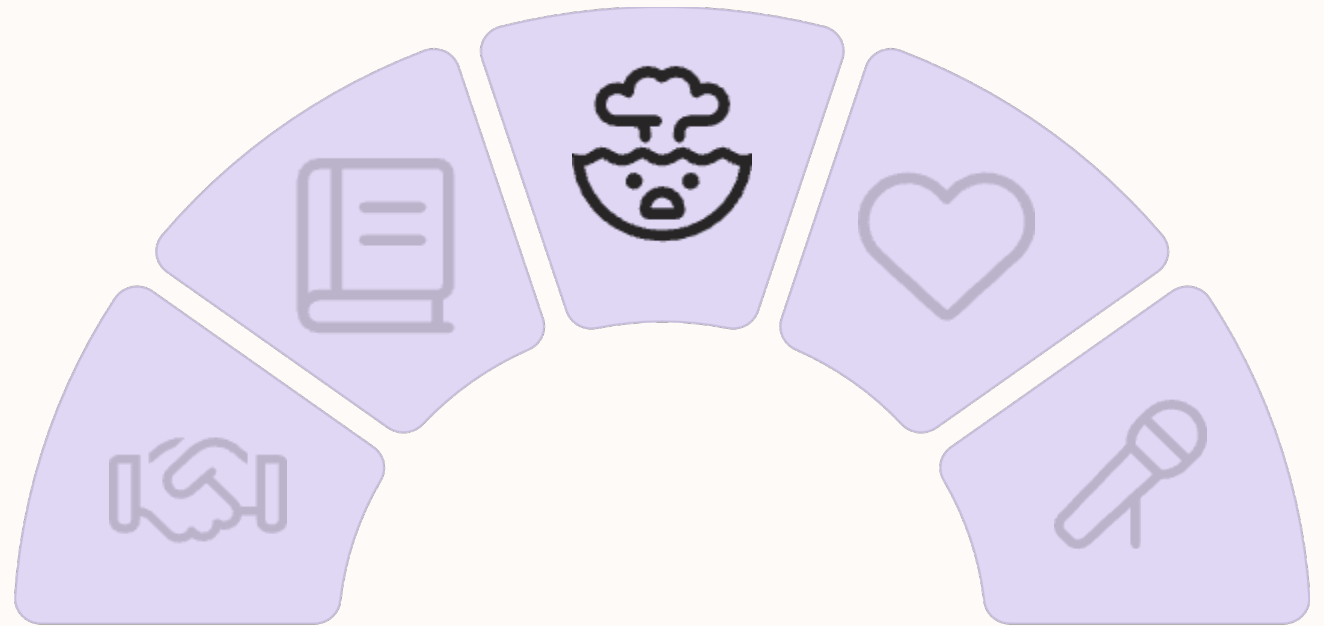
- Build up to the big takeaway with necessary background
- Clear and simple to understand



Mind = Blown

The “WOW” moment of change

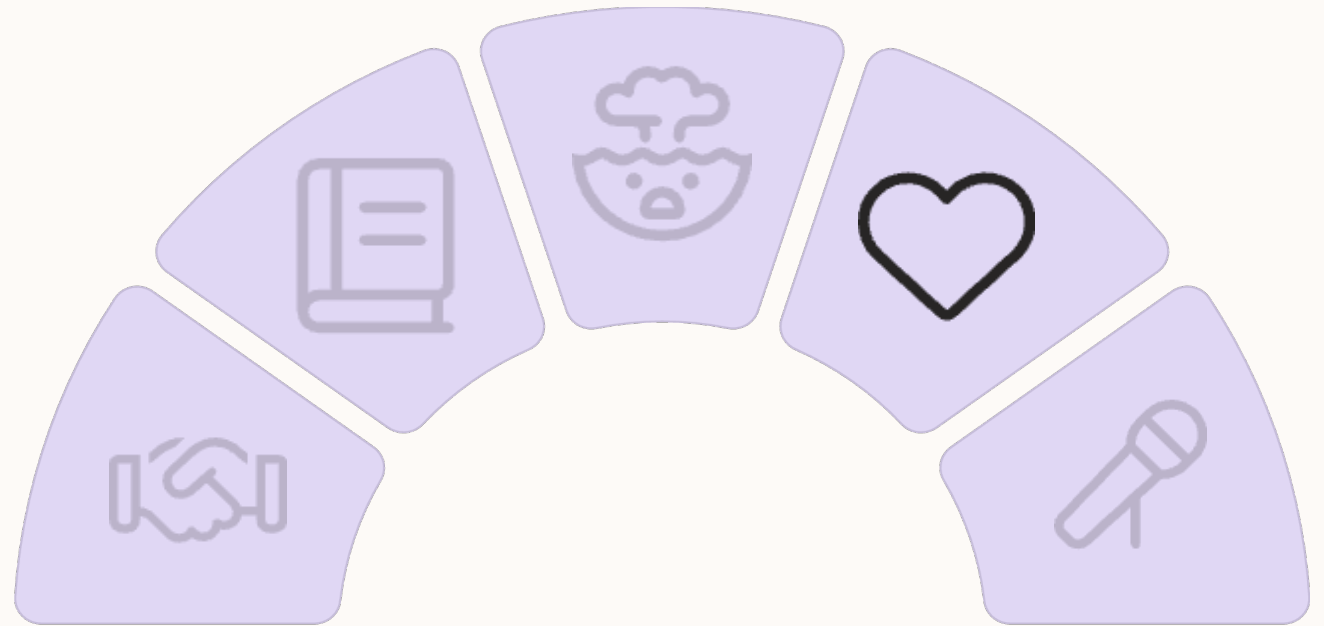
- What you want your audience to remember
- Strong, clear, easy to identify
- Best place to start when crafting stories
- Data!



Connection

Personal reflection or tie to the mission

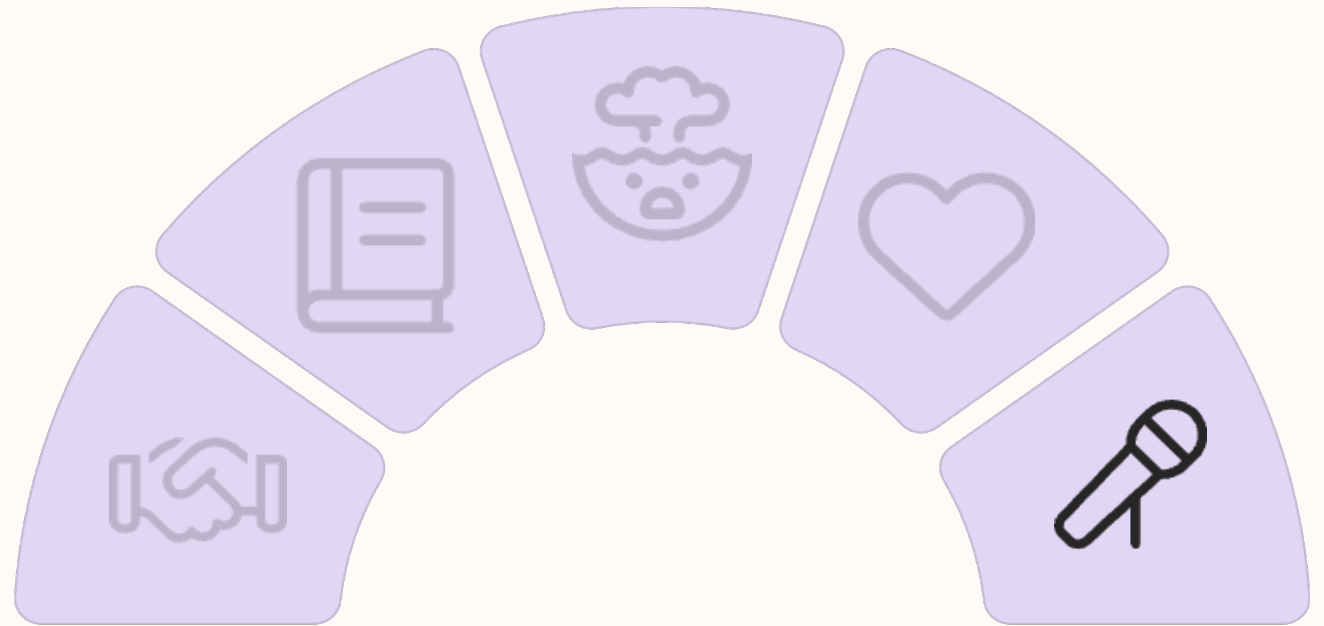
- How do you feel about it?
- How does the information connect to the bigger picture?
- Use “I” statements here



Mic Drop

End with a memorable line

- Sharp 1-2 sentences
- Clear your story is complete
- Put the ball in your audience's court. It's their turn to ask questions and continue conversation





The 5 Elements in Action

Example 1: Kaboom!



Outputs Focused Story

"Kaboom! worked with partners to build three playgrounds in underserved neighborhoods. We held several community meetings to gather input and recruited volunteers to help with construction. The playgrounds were completed on schedule and are now open to the public."



Glow-Up Version

Engagement: What if your child's only place to play was a parking lot?

Context: In many neighborhoods, safe playgrounds are miles away, and families have no access to public parks.

Mind=Blown: After mapping play deserts, KABOOM! and partners built three new playgrounds, giving 1,200 children a safe place to play—many for the first time in their lives.

Connection: As a parent, seeing my kids play safely in our own neighborhood brought me to tears. It's more than a playground—it's hope.

Mic-Drop: Imagine if every child grew up with a place to play, dream, and belong.



The 5 Elements in Action

Example 2: Kansas CHW Coalition

Outputs Focused Story

"The Kansas Community Health Worker Coalition held regular meetings and provided training for CHWs across the state. The coalition supported the development of a certification program and helped CHWs make referrals to health and social services. During the grant period, CHWs made referrals for clients to primary care, food resources, and insurance programs."



Glow-Up Version

Engagement: What if, every time you needed to see a doctor or pick up medicine, you had to choose between paying for a ride or buying groceries for your family?

Context: Across Kansas, thousands of families face tough choices like this every day. Many live far from clinics or don't speak the language, making it hard to access even basic care. That's where Community Health Workers (CHWs) step in—trusted neighbors who help people navigate the health system.

Mind=Blown: Last year, Kansas CHWs made more than 39,000 referrals, connecting families to primary care, food programs, and insurance they didn't know they could get. For many, it was the first time they'd had real help getting the care they needed.

Connection: One CHW shared, 'I used to think awareness was enough—but what people really needed was someone in their corner. Now, I get to be that person for my community.'

Mic-Drop: Imagine if every Kansas family had a champion in their corner—how much healthier could our communities be?"





Let's Practice!

“We hosted four community meetings to raise awareness about healthy food access. We handed out flyers and created a survey. We are planning more events.”

Mind = Blown (The Wow Moment)

What's the moment of insight, shift, or outcome?

Starters:

- “In just one month, over 100 residents shaped a community-led plan to bring fresh food closer to home.”
- “Our meetings sparked a partnership that will launch a new farmers market this summer.”
- “We discovered that 4 out of 5 families in our neighborhood worry about running out of food.”



Engagement

What's a hook that would invite your audience in?

Starters:

- What if your only grocery store was a gas station?
- Have you ever had to skip meals so your kids could eat?
- Imagine planning dinner when the nearest store is 20 miles away.



Context

What background or lived experience makes this compelling?

Starters:

- In our town, many families live miles from a real grocery store.
- Food deserts aren't just in big cities – they're here, too.
- Hundreds of our neighbors struggle to find fresh produce each week.



Connection (Personal or Broader Meaning)

What does this mean to you or your coalition?

Starters:

- As a parent, I know how stressful it is to wonder where your next meal will come from.
- I used to think food insecurity was rare – until I saw how many of my neighbors are affected.
- This isn't just about food – it's about dignity and hope.



Mic Drop (Memorable Close)

What's the closing line that leaves people thinking?

Starters:

- Imagine if every family could put fresh food on the table – what would our community look like then?
- What if no one in our town had to choose between dinner and paying the bills?
- Change starts with conversation – and we're just getting started.





Practice: Glow Up Version

Tips & Tools for Authentic Storytelling



Resources to Check Out

mySidewalk

Data visualization/storytelling platform

The logo for mySidewalk, featuring the word "my" in a green sans-serif font and "Sidewalk" in a blue serif font.

Dr. Stephanie Evergreen

THE Data visualization expert
(and a personal hero)



Telling Authentic Stories



Start with people

Not programs or organizations



Be strength-based

Focus on assets, not deficits



Let values lead

Why do you care?



K.I.S.S.

Keep It Simple Smartypants





Find the Heart of the Story



Ask: "So what?"



Center those directly affected



Focus on impact, not outputs



One story > ten stats:
Quality over quantity

Once you've found the heart, *show it*



- Turn numbers into pictures
- Pick visuals that feel human
- Follow the golden rules:
 - High contrast
 - Minimal colors
 - Big labels
- Pair EVERY visual with a one-line headline
 - Newspaper headline/caption
- **NOT ALL DATA IS QUANTITATIVE**
- Build accessibility from the start



Adapt for Your Audience

- Know your audience - are you speaking to funders, community members, or partners? Tailor your tone, language, and emphasis to match their values.
- Use emotion and evidence - powerful stories can move hearts and open wallets.
- Keep it short and memorable - less is often more when it comes to making an impact.



Your Story Is Waiting

What will your mic-drop moment be?

Thank You!



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Resources:

Museum Hack (Storytelling Resource)

<https://museumhack.com/about/>

Uses storytelling framework to make museum tours more engaging.

KABOOM! (Playground Equity & Community Projects)

<https://kaboom.org/>

National nonprofit building playgrounds in underserved communities.

KABOOM! + mySidewalk Data Storytelling Partnership

<https://www.mysidewalk.com/blog/introducing-kaboom-playspace-partnership-assessment>

How KABOOM! uses data and mapping to identify play deserts.

Kansas Community Health Worker Coalition

<https://kschw.org/>

Statewide coalition advancing health equity through CHWs.

Kansas CHW Impact Story (ASTHO Blog)

<https://www.astho.org/communications/blog/how-community-health-workers-are-impacting-rural-communities/>

Example of how Kansas CHWs make a difference





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Future Coalition Compass Sessions

July 30th

Beyond the Surface: Asking the Right Questions & Moving to Action

August 20th

Power in Partnership: Engaging with Community Decision Makers the Right Way