



Nonprofit Founder's Society

Implementation Guide

April 2023 | Write Your Founder's Story for Fundraising Success

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Video Content

Introduction

Hi and welcome to this lesson: Write Your Founder's Story for Fundraising Success. This month we are learning how to write your Founder's Story to get more funding.

What is a Founder's Story?

A Founder's story is a powerful narrative for nonprofit organizations to connect with potential donors and build relationships that increase funding. It's a personal narrative that shares the origins of the organization and the journey that led to its formation. As a nonprofit founder, your story is a key asset in fundraising because it provides insight into your motivation and passion for the cause you support.

It should explain how you got started with your nonprofit organization, what motivated you to take action, and some of the challenges you faced along the way. It should be personal, engaging, and authentic, helping your audience relate to the same issues that you and your organization are fighting to address.

Why Do We Need To Write A Founder's Story?

A Founder's Story is essential to convey the passion, drive, and vision of a nonprofit organization's leaders. It is a personal account of how and why the founder(s) created their organization and the problems they wanted to solve. Telling a compelling story that resonates with potential donors is an effective way to connect with them emotionally and gain their trust.

As a nonprofit founder, you may find yourself struggling to connect with potential donors and explain to them why your work is so important. One of the best ways to overcome this challenge is by telling your Founder's story. This story provides a personal connection between you and your audience and helps them understand why you are so passionate about your cause.

There are some other benefits to writing and relaying your Founder's story. And they may surprise you. Bottom line: your Founder's story differentiates

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you and your nonprofit in the minds of your clients, employees, and donors. Let's face it, no one else has the same exact reasons for starting a nonprofit. No one else has the same exact solution to the problem either. You can easily win others over to your solution when it's only your organization that provides it.

What Are Some Of The Challenges You May Face When Writing A Founder's Story?

Writing a Founder's Story for your nonprofit organization can be a daunting task, especially if you're not sure where to start. However, telling your story is an essential part of connecting with potential donors and receiving funding to support your cause. In this paragraph, we'll discuss some of the potential challenges you may face when writing your Founder's Story and how to overcome them.

1. **Sharing Vulnerability:** One of the most significant challenges of writing a Founder's Story can be opening up about your own personal experiences and struggles. However, sharing your vulnerabilities is crucial to building a connection with your audience and showing them your passion for your cause.
2. **Finding the Right Balance:** When writing your Founder's Story, it can be challenging to find the right balance between showcasing your passion for your cause and avoiding oversharing. The key is to be authentic and transparent while keeping in mind your audience's expectations and needs.
3. **Communicating Your Vision:** Another potential challenge is effectively communicating your vision and the impact your nonprofit aims to make. You want to make sure that your story inspires trust and confidence in potential donors and highlights the value of their contributions.

To overcome these challenges, it's important to take the time to reflect on your experiences, emotions, and vision for your organization. Connect with the "why" behind your cause, and let that drive the narrative of your Founder's Story. Through honesty, authenticity, and passion, you can create a captivating Founder's Story that will engage potential donors, encourage them to support your cause, and ultimately help you secure the funding you need to make a difference.

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What/How

I would highly recommend you read *Stories that Stick* by Kendra Hall to help you go deeper in understanding the complexities of honing your Founder's story. But for now, let's get your story on paper so it can be refined as you relay the story and build your funding.

Initial Draft: What Do You Write About?

To write your Founder's story, start by brainstorming the key moments, events, and realizations that led you to start your organization. Use sub-headers to break the story into sections, and use bullet points to make it easy to read. Keep in mind why you started the organization and provide relevant quotes and statistics to support your cause. Always focus on the main idea and avoid straying off-topic.

Once you have an outline, start writing your story in a conversational and engaging style. Use personal pronouns, and keep your tone genuine and true to your personality. Use active voice to make it more compelling and use rhetorical questions, analogies, and metaphors to drive your message home.

1. Start with a hook: Begin with an attention-grabbing sentence. This line should be interesting enough to intrigue the reader and pique their interest in the story.
2. Introduce yourself: Begin by introducing yourself; give a brief summary that describes who you are, what inspired you to start a nonprofit, and what the organization did differently.
3. Explain the problem: Explain the problem that your organization addresses and what motivated you to tackle it.
4. Develop your vision: Discuss your vision of how your nonprofit could make a difference in the world. Highlight the journey of how you turned your vision into reality.
5. Share your journey: Using anecdotes, describe your journey in establishing the nonprofit. Talk about any ups and downs, hardships, successes, and milestones.

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6. Celebrate impact: Share some of the fantastic work done by the organization along the way, the success stories of those who have benefitted, and the impact of collaboration with volunteers and supporters.

7. Call to donate: Once you have completed your Founder's story, have a clear call to action that encourages readers to donate or help your nonprofit in some way.

Go Deeper in Your Writing

In her book, Kendra Hall identifies four elements needed to write the story. They are:

1. Identifiable Character- That is you, the Founder. You should establish yourself as the right captain for this idea's ship.
2. Authentic Emotion- Consider what the respective audience cares about. How do you want them to feel?
3. A Single Moment- a specific place, point, or time. This adds authenticity and helps bring the audience along.
4. Specific Details- These details should be audience specific. This is where knowing your ideal donor really comes in handy.

That's all for this lesson! Download the Implementation Guide to help you think through your story and get it written. It also has some extra tips and ways to think about your story so you can craft a story that is totally unique to you.

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Steps to Writing Your Founder's Story

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Concluding Your Founder's Story

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After crafting your nonprofit founder's story, it's essential to wrap it up in a way that leaves a lasting impression on your readers. Your conclusion should summarize the key points of your story and leave your audience with a sense of your organization's mission, values, and impact. Here are a few tips for concluding your founder's story:

1. **Emphasize Your Mission:** Highlight the core mission of your nonprofit organization and how it relates to your founder's story.
2. **Call to Action:** Include a clear call-to-action at the end of your story, urging your audience to support your organization's mission and make a difference.
3. **Use Quotes:** Pull a powerful quote or two from your founder's story or use quotes from beneficiaries of your organization's work to reinforce the impact of your mission.
4. **Future Plans:** Share your organization's plans for the future, and how you plan to continue making strides towards your mission.

What Are Some Tips For Writing An Effective Founder's Story?

When it comes to raising funds for your nonprofit, sharing your Founder's story is one of the most effective ways to connect with potential donors. Your story should not only convey your passion for your cause, but also show that you have the skills, experience, and credibility to make an impact on the world. Here are some tips for writing an effective Founder's Story:

1. **Begin with your why:** Start your story by explaining the driving force behind your nonprofit. What inspired you to start this organization? What problem were you trying to solve?
2. **Highlight your background:** Share your experience and expertise in the industry. Discuss the skills and knowledge you've acquired over the years that make you uniquely qualified to lead this organization.
3. **Share your challenges:** Every founder faces obstacles along the way. Share some of the challenges you've faced and the lessons you've learned. This will help donors understand that you're resilient and capable of overcoming adversity.

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4. Include your team: Your nonprofit isn't just about you - it's about the collective effort of your team. Introduce your key team members and explain how their skills and expertise have contributed to your success.

In the words of philanthropist and founder of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Bill Gates, "People give to people." Sharing your Founder's story is one of the most effective ways to engage potential donors and inspire them to support your cause.

How can you use your Founder's Story to make an emotional connection with potential donors?

Your Founder's Story is a powerful tool that can make an emotional connection with potential donors. It tells the story of why you started your nonprofit and the struggles and triumphs you faced along the way. By sharing your story, you can build trust and rapport with potential donors, making them more likely to support your cause. So, how can you use your Founder's Story to make that emotional connection?

- Start with your "Why" -

Begin by sharing why you started your nonprofit. What was the problem you were trying to solve or the passion that drove you to take action? This will help potential donors understand your vision and connect with your purpose.

- Share your struggles -

The next step is to share your journey, including the challenges and obstacles you faced along the way. Be honest and vulnerable about the difficulties you encountered, and how you overcame them. This will help donors see your determination and resilience, making them more likely to support you.

- Include quotes and statistics -

Use quotes from stakeholders, volunteers, and beneficiaries that demonstrate the impact of your work. You can also include relevant statistics that illustrate the need for your organization and the impact of your programs. This will help donors see the value of your nonprofit and the importance of supporting your mission.

- End with your vision -

Finally, end with your vision for the future. What is your ultimate goal for your nonprofit? What impact do you want to create, and how do you plan to

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achieve it? This will inspire potential donors and show them that by supporting your nonprofit, they can make a meaningful difference in the world.

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Get the Book- [Stories that Stick by Kendra Hall](#) (affiliate link)

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Writing Your Story Guide

Brainstorm the key moments, events, and realizations that led you to start your organization.

What details don't you want to reveal? How vulnerable do you want to be?
How can you authentically tell the story and take one step back from it?

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What was the specific event that made you say, "One day, I'm going to help people who..." (Write it out unedited. Just get it on paper).

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Now, clean up your story. Get help if you need it. Edit the story for grammar and content. Create three lengths- short (½ a page), medium (1 page), and long (2 pages) versions.

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How to Promote Your Founder's Story

As a nonprofit founder, you may be struggling to get your organization noticed and funded. One way to potentially overcome this challenge is by sharing your Founder's Story. But when is the right time to do so?

1. Share it on your website

Include your Founder's Story on your nonprofit's website. This helps visitors to understand your organization's mission and values.

2. Share it during fundraising and speaking events

Sharing your Founder's Story during fundraising events can create a personal connection with potential donors. Storytelling can be an effective tool for making your organization more memorable and relatable.

3. Share it with your social media following

You can also share your Founder's Story on social media to provide more insight into your organization's background and values. This can help increase engagement with your followers and potentially attract new ones.