



Great Public Schools for Every Student

Organizing Best Practices: Story of Self

Leader effectively uses their story of self as an organizing skill.

Key Method

The leader crafts a story of self based on values, emotion, and story structure. The leader understands that narrating a story of self motivates others to join them in creating change.

Method Components

What is leadership?

Leaders are those who take responsibility for enabling others to achieve purpose in the face of uncertainty (Ganz).

What is a story of self?

- A story of self captures the details of one choice point, such as a specific experience when you faced a challenge, made a difficult choice, experienced an outcome, and/or learned a lesson.
- Stories of self are meant to be 2-3 minutes long. Because stories allow us to express our values not as abstract principles but as lived experience, they have the power to move others.
- Stories are specific—they evoke a very particular time, place, setting, mood, color, sound, texture, and taste. The more you can communicate this specificity, the more power your story will have to engage others (Ganz).

How do leaders use strategy and motivation to craft a story of self?

We use our head (strategy and analysis) and our heart (story and motivation) to understand the world. Leaders engage educators in interpreting why they should change their world (motivation) and how they can act to change it (their strategy). Leaders must use both the head and heart of their constituency to mobilize others to act, based on their shared values and purpose (Ganz). Stories help us feel the emotions that remind us of our values.

How do I dig deeper into who I am and why I am here as a leader?

- Consider where you came from as an educator:
 - Where were you born, and where did you grow up?

- Are there people that made an impact on you while growing up (family members, community members, role models, friends)?
- Are there significant childhood experiences that stick out for you (early memories, coming of-age experiences)?

- Consider who you are as an educator:

- What are you passionate about (interests, talents, hobbies)?
- Are there significant experiences that have had an impact on your choices (school, travel, work, family, or partners)?

- Consider how you became involved as an educator:

- Are there people or significant experiences that stick out for you (social movement leaders, role models, books, or knowledge) that spurred you into taking action for the first time?
- What was your first experience of getting involved in organizing (volunteering in your community, supporting an organization, voting, attending a rally or protest)?

Supporting Research

National Education Association. *NEA Leadership Competencies Guide*. Washington, DC: 2015. Web. <https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/CompetencyGuide_2015.pdf>.

Rationale: The competencies are designed to prepare NEA members to lead relevant and thriving education associations and define for our association what leaders should know and be able to do in the areas of professional practice, organizing, advocacy, communications, business, and governance and leadership.

Andrews, Kenneth A. T., Marshall Ganz, Matthew Baggetta, Hahrie Han, and Chaeyoon Lim. "Leadership, Membership, and Voice: Civic Associations That Work." *American Journal of Sociology* 115.4 (2010): 1191-242. Web. <https://scholar.harvard.edu/hahrie/files/AndrewsEtAl2010.pdf>

Rationale: Researchers discovered that associations with more committed activists, that build organizational capacity, that carry out strong programmatic activity, and whose leaders work independently generate greater effectiveness across outcomes.

Ganz, M. (2010). Leading change: Leadership, organization, and social movements. *Handbook of leadership theory and practice*, 19.

<http://marshallganz.usmblogs.com/files/2012/08/Chapter-19-Leading-Change-Leadership-Organization-and-Social-Movements.pdf>

Sinnott, S. and Gibbs P. (2014). Organizing: People, Power, Change. Originally Adapted from the Work of Dr. Marshall Ganz of Harvard University and Resources from the Leading Change Network and the New Organizing Institute, 30-40.

<http://marshallganz.usmblogs.com/files/2012/08/Chapter-19-Leading-Change-Leadership-Organization-and-Social-Movements.pdf>

Resources

Story of Self:

Overview of Story of Self

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ObiztwN2oEU>

Public Narrative

<http://marshallganz.usmblogs.com/files/2012/08/Public-Narrative-Worksheet-Fall-2013-.pdf>

Public Narrative and Story of Self

http://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/aw/cbco/140601_ga317_storiesofself.pdf

How to Tell Your "Story of Self"

<http://billmoyers.com/content/how-to-tell-your-story-of-self/>

Page 42 of The Organizers Handbook

http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/themes/52e6e37401925b6f9f000002/attachments/original/1423171411/Organizers_1423171411

Simon Sinek: How Great Leaders Inspire Action

https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action

Story of self video examples:

President Obama: Story of Self, Us and Now

<https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4571443/story-self-us-now-obama-2004>

James Croft's Harvard LGBT Bullying Speech

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LM-fxPrSZZ8>

Jose Antonio Vargas' Define American Story of Self

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJH1IKqF8PA>

Building relationships and identifying leaders:

The Teacher Leadership Competencies

http://www.nbpts.org/sites/default/files/teacher_leadership_competencies_final.pdf

Leading Change: Leadership, Organization, and Social Movement

<http://marshallganz.usmblogs.com/files/2012/08/Chapter-19-Leading-Change-Leadership-Organization-and-Social-Movements.pdf>

Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

To earn the micro-credential, you must receive a passing score for Parts 1 and 3 and “Proficient” for each component in Part 2.

Part 1. Overview Questions

500 word limit

Please answer the following:

- Why are you called to leadership as an educator?
- As an educator, what values move you to take action around educational policies? Why are those values important to you? Have they always been important to you? If not, when did that change? How might these values inspire others to similar action?
- What stories can you tell from your own life about specific people or events that would show, rather than tell, how you learned or acted on those values?

- **Passing:** Response completely addresses each question using personal examples and supporting evidence that clearly illustrates the values and experiences that calls the educator to leadership. Writing is organized and easy to understand.

Part 2. Work Examples / Artifacts

To earn this micro-credential, please submit the following artifacts:

Artifact #1 (600-word limit):

Identify a specific experience when you faced a challenge, made a choice, experienced an outcome, and learned a lesson. Address the following in your response:

1. Challenge: Why did you feel it was a challenge? What was so challenging about it?
2. Choice: Why did you make the choice you made? How did it feel?
3. Outcome: How did the outcome feel and why? What did it teach you?

Artifact #2:

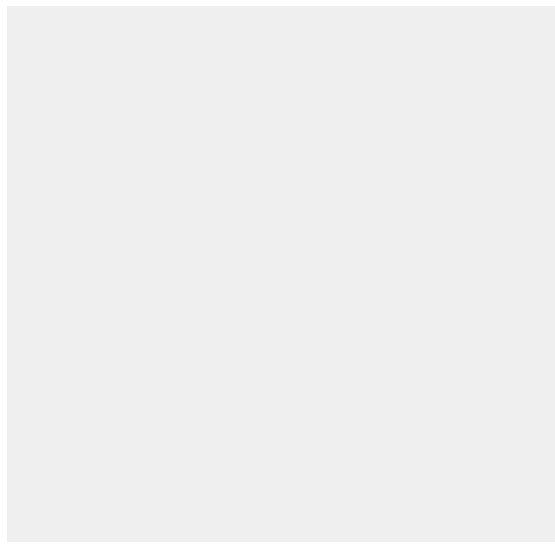
Create a photo essay of 4-6 pictures that reflect your challenge, choice, outcome, and lesson. This can be a slideshow or a document. Caption each picture with details that about your challenge, choice, outcome, and lesson.

Artifact #3:

Create a 2- to 3-minute video narrating your story of self. In your story of self, capture the details of one choice point –a specific experience when you faced a challenge, made a choice, experienced an outcome, and learned a lesson. Your story of self should be specific, evoking a very particular time, place, setting, mood, color, sound, texture, and taste.

	null	Proficient	Basic	Developing
Artifact #1		Explicitly describes a specific experience that	Describes an experience that includes details of a	Describes an experience with such little detail that

<p>Analysis</p>	<p>includes details of a challenge faced, a choice made, an outcome, and a lesson learned.</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure enhance clear communication.</p>	<p>challenge faced, a choice made, an outcome, and a lesson learned. Details are not clear and specific.</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure allow for clear communication.</p>	<p>a clear picture cannot be formed by the evaluator of a challenge, choice, outcome, and lesson learned by the leader.</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure may inhibit clear communication.</p>
<p>Artifact #2</p> <p>Photo Essay</p>	<p>Pictures and captions strongly convey the leader's challenge, choice, outcome, and lesson.</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure enhance clear communication.</p> <p>The photo essay is visually appealing and reflects effort, attention to detail, and care in presentation.</p> <p>Photo essay has 4-6 pictures.</p>	<p>Pictures and captions may convey the leader's challenge, choice, outcome, and lesson.</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure allow for clear communication.</p> <p>The photo essay reflects some effort and care in presentation.</p> <p>Photo essay has 4-6 pictures.</p>	<p>Pictures and captions convey little connection to the leader's challenge, choice, outcome, and lesson.</p> <p>Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure may inhibit clear communication.</p> <p>The photo essay does not reflect effort or care in presentation.</p> <p>Photo essay has fewer than 4 or more than 6 pictures.</p>
<p>Artifact #3</p> <p>Video</p>	<p>Narrates a story of self that explicitly captures details of one choice point, a specific experience when the leader faced a challenge, made a choice, experienced an outcome, and learned a lesson.</p> <p>Story of self is specific and evokes a very particular time, place, setting, mood, color, sound, texture, or taste.</p> <p>Delivery enhances the story of self (posture, eye contact, smooth gestures, facial expressions, volume, pace, etc.). Articulation and pronunciation are clear. Audience members can hear the story of self.</p> <p>Videos are 2-3 minutes.</p>	<p>Narrates a story of self that captures some details of one choice point, a specific experience when the leader faced a challenge, made a choice, experienced an outcome, and learned a lesson.</p> <p>Story of self may include some details that evoke a very particular time, place, setting, mood, color, sound, texture, or taste.</p> <p>The delivery generally seems effective, but effective use of volume, eye contact, vocal control, etc., may not be consistent; some hesitancy may be observed. Generally, articulation and pronunciation are clear.</p>	<p>Narrates a story, but connection to a choice point is unclear. Details regarding the leader's challenge, choice, outcome, and lesson are unclear and vague.</p> <p>Story of self does not include details that evoke a very particular time, place, setting, mood, color, sound, texture, or taste.</p> <p>The delivery detracts from the message; eye contact may be very limited; the presenter may tend to look at the floor, mumble, speak inaudibly, fidget, or read most of the speech; gestures and movements may be jerky or excessive. The delivery may appear inconsistent</p>



Most audience members can hear the presentation.

Videos are 2-3 minutes.

with the message. Articulation and pronunciation tend to be sloppy. Audience members have difficulty hearing the presentation.

Videos are longer than 3 minutes or less than 2 minutes.

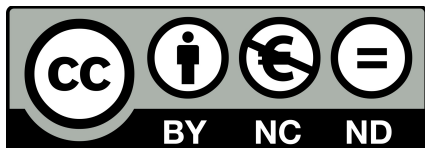
Reflection

300 word limit

Relate your story of self related to a challenge your community is facing. Use specific details from your experience in your reflection. Address the following in your reflection:

- What would my leadership team and union work look like and feel like if everyone worked at sharing their reasons for being in education?
- Compare the values identified in your story of self to those your community has. What are the values you share with your community?
- What experiences have had the greatest impact on your community? What is the urgent challenge your community faces?
- What change does your community hope for and why? What would the future look like if this change is made? What would the future look like if the change isn't made?
- If you were to revise your story of self, what choice would you ask people to make to create the change that the community hopes for?

- **Passing:** Reflection thoughtfully describes the connection between the leader's story of self and a challenge his/her community is facing. The leader uses specific details from experiences and identifies the community's values, challenges, and hopes. Writing is organized and easy to understand.



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