

Building A Story To Raise Funds

Written by Steve Marr
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The movie Amistad was the true story of a slave ship that was taken over by the slaves and ended up in Boston. The slaves were held as fugitives and the movie focus on several court cases going all the way to the Supreme Court. The slaves didn't speak English, and were able to find one free former slave who spoke the African language. Former President John Quincy Adams became involved and explained the slaves needed to tell their "story." The story was told so well a judge, hand picked to rule against them, was compelled to free them. You can read the account here: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amistad_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amistad_(film))

Another example of a story is a powerful personal testimony of how Christ changes lives. When we create our own testimony, what our life was before Christ, our conversion experience and then explain the joyful changes after accepting Christ others are attracted to accept the Gospel.

Stories are an important part of communication of a ministry message, and in raising money. An effective story contains three distant parts.

First, there must be logic behind the story. As a story unfolds if people can not follow the logic, they will likely not connect. If you are raising funds to help a poor village overseas drill wells for clean, healthy water then build a logical path how this will work, and the impact, in this instance far better health. Showing the need will fall short, you also need to demonstrate how, in a logical way, the need will be executed and generate a large impact.

Next, the story must inspire faith, not just in the Lord but in the program. The story needs to find ways of highlighting how past efforts have worked as evidence that future work, and investment will have an impact. In instances where an organization is breaking new ground, you still need to show past successes. Thus can be accomplished by showing past ministry, business or other accomplishments. Show you are able to follow-through and execute. This establishes faith you will use new funds effectively.

Finally you need to create an effective call to action. After you have laid the foundation of logic and faith you then bring in emotion to encourage action, like writing a check. A Gospel Rescue Mission can build the story of how a program meets needs, food and shelter and then show how those who come in are ministered and provided with opportunities to change their lives. Images, in words and pictures will help create the call to action.

A mistake many make in fundraising efforts is to go immediately to the emotional part and then ask for help. An effective appeal will first build the groundwork of logic and then establish faith before pulling at the heartstrings.

King Solomon wrote, "The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty." (Proverbs 21:5 NIV) Part of a fundraising plan needs to incorporate these steps, take a short cut and only appeal to emotions will bring your efforts up short.

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