

2017 Leadership Advance Conference

Getting Your Story Told

November 29, 2017

A PRACTITIONER'S PRINCIPLE #1

The best stories evolve from inside out, from a clear and shared identity – mission, metaphor, and culture.

A PRACTITIONER'S PRINCIPLE #1 *(continued)*

Mission – clear, shared, embraced.

- The **good** echo chamber: *we tell each other this is who we are and this is what we do. BTW, this is who we are not.*
- Whitworth example:
 - » Mission – “...Honor God, follow Christ, serve humanity.”
 - » Identity – Christ-centered and open-minded.
- NWCCU 2009 accreditation report – Commendation 1
 - » The Committee commends Whitworth University for articulating, communicating, and enacting its mission with exceptional clarity, integrity, and dedication.

A PRACTITIONER'S PRINCIPLE #1 *(continued)*

Metaphors and stories we tell each other.

- Metaphors – aligned and sticky.
- “The Narrow Ridge,” “Grace and Truth”

Cultural Embrace

- We flat out love this mission that George Whitworth gave us and that God has allowed us to pursue.

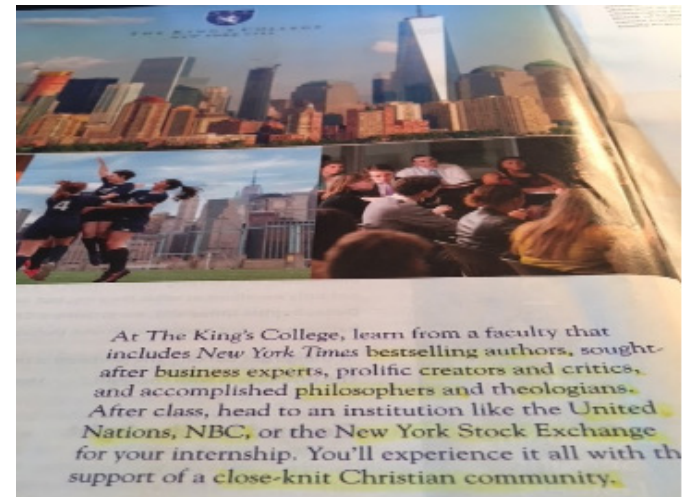
A PRACTITIONER'S PRINCIPLE #2

General awareness can be inferred from a specific story better than a specific story can be inferred from general awareness.

A PRACTITIONER'S PRINCIPLE #2 (continued)

Getting our story out **generally** (current CT).

Telling our story **specifically** (current CT).



A CONSULTANT'S APPROACH #1

“The beholder searches for order.”

– György Kepes, *Language of Vision*

- Making sense of things.
- Get on your playing field (communication management).
- If you don't tell your story, someone else will.

A CONSULTANT'S APPROACH #2

The Rule of Three

- For sale. Baby shoes. Never worn.

A CONSULTANT'S APPROACH #2 (continued)

PATIENT STORIES

[Eye Institute](#)
[Liver Care and Transplantation Services](#)
[Obstetrics](#)
[Primary Care](#)
[Regional Heart Center](#)
[Regional Vascular Center](#)
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[UW Medicine Pituitary Program](#)
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Patient Stories

Featured Stories



A LIFE IN TURMOIL. A DEDICATED TEAM. A HAPPY MOM-TO-BE.

Sometimes it's amazing how something so small can impact your life. In my case, that "something small" was a 4 x 5mm pituitary tumor. It was non-cancerous and didn't seem to be growing fast, so on paper, it didn't seem like anything to be too worried about. But my life isn't just on paper. Let me back...

[Read the full story](#)



A RUNNER. A HURDLE. AN UNEXPECTED COACH.

If I were to offer my top three tips to anybody looking to get serious about running, I think they'd be: eat right, get new shoes and find a good doctor. The funny thing for me is that I needed to find the good doctor before I figured out the other two. My experience with UW Medicine...

[Read the full story](#)



A PRACTITIONER'S PRINCIPLE #3

We have more than one story, but our stories should all be connected to our mission.

A PRACTITIONER'S PRINCIPLE #3 *(continued)*

Telling your stories relies on finding your stories.

- Identifying the kind of stories that:
 - » Reflect the mission-driven value you provide.
 - » Differentiate you from similar organizations.
 - » Show benefit to the target market.
- Being attentive to stories that compel.
 - » “Shoot for the heart.”
- Retaining fresh eyes that can see great stories that insiders are too close to notice (consultants, focus groups, et al).

A CONSULTANT'S APPROACH #3

“Design is corporate strategy made visible.”

– Wally Olins, *Corporate Identity*

- Align your story with your behavior.

A PRACTITIONER'S PRINCIPLE #4

Media are best used to create awareness of the organization; people are best used to create investment in the organization.



A PRACTITIONER'S PRINCIPLE #5

We choose our stories by working backward – from audience to impact to benefit to story to medium.

Audience	Impact	Benefit	Story	Medium
Prospective students	Apply	Grad school	Alumni walking down Nassau Street	Media ads
Parents	Look at net costs	Great value	Parent with WW student	Parents meeting at campus visit
Alumni	_____	_____	_____	_____
Donors	_____	_____	_____	_____

Some Guidelines for Dealing with the Media

State of the Media

- Digital media has transformed the landscape.
- Success is measured in clicks, shares, comments, etc.
- Significant consolidation / Need you more than ever /
Not inclined to admit it.

Know Your Media

- Follow, read, listen, watch.
- Note, for example – digital dailies love lists.
- Send occasional note to reporters.
- Send background materials.

Pitch a Story, Not a Press Release – Better Yet, Present a Story

- Avoid press conferences.
- Make the story particular to you / Humanize it / Explain why it matters.
- Weave in your messages (this may be what matters most to you).
- Use plain English - avoid jargon.

Earned vs. Editorial vs. Owned Media

- “News is what somebody wants to suppress – everything else is advertising.” – Lord Northcliffe
- Editorial boards / Op-Eds / Letters to the Editor
- Build your own audience – make it your highest priority.

Final Words of Advice

- Practitioner: Repeat.
- Consultant: Repeat with variation.

2017 Leadership Advance Conference

Telling Your Story in Times of Crisis

November 30, 2017

A Practitioner's Advice and Counsel

- Have protocols and a general plan.
- Tell the truth.
- Human nature abhors a vacuum – information vacuums will be filled with speculation.
- Speculation is better than misinformation.
- Test your initial communication to make sure the meaning you intend is what people hear (ultimately, the public decides what you mean).
- The voice of the president/executive director should rarely be the first voice.

A Consultant's Principles

- “Act with prudence, discretion, intelligence and regard for the safety of capital as well as income.” – Judge Samuel Putnam
- “Be quick, but don't hurry.” – John Wooden
- “There is nothing more consoling during a disaster than a group of soldiers behaving in a disciplined manner.”
– Arturo Pérez-Reverte, *Pirates of the Levant*

Current Political and Media Environment

- Fragmented, angry, accusatory, righteous.
- Quotes from two adversaries passes for objectivity – increases readership.
- Overarching stories / Litmus tests / Outrage as a routine tactic.

Immediate Response – A Negative Media Inquiry

- Holding statement / Assess risk.
- Crisis team: CEO, legal, human resources, communications (counter effect of emotion on decision making).

Get on the Playing Field on Which You Can Win

- Understand situation – set realistic goal.
- Understand antagonists and supporters and relationship to issue and the environment you are in.
- Strategy – how to get from where you are to where you want to be / Keep it simple and straightforward.

A Few Final Tips

- One story is a success.
- Get to the follow-up as soon as possible because you control it.
- Never assume a community of friends.
- You are likely to come through a crisis better off than you were before.