



How to Tell Your Story with a Purpose: Nine Components of Your Story

Do you want to change the way a system works? Do you have a story to prove why it needs to be changed? Then you are on your way to becoming an advocate! All you need to do is follow these 8 steps when writing or telling your story to a decision maker. Ready, set, go!

1. Who are you addressing?

- Address the Representative or Senator who represents you
- Use their title (Dear Representative Something)

Dear... _____

2. Who are you?

- Name
- Experience with Mental Illness
- Legislative District
- 1 sentence

My name is...

3. Do you have something in common with this legislator?

- Does the legislator have a family member with mental illness?
- Do they live in your neighborhood?
- Did they go to the same school?
- Or something else!
- 1 sentence, if applicable.



4. What issue does your story demonstrate?

- Clearly describe the problem
- 1 sentence

5. Why is this issue important to you?

- Only use the parts of your story which help explain the issue you have identified.
- 3-4 sentences

6. What do you want the legislator to do about it?

- As clearly and specifically as possible, tell them what you'd like to see changed.
- Legislators want to hear your creative solutions because you may have a unique perspective or solution to a problem.
- 3 sentences



7. What are YOU going to do?

- Tell the legislator that you will help them solve the problem.
 - You do NOT need all the answers, just willingness to help!
 - 1 sentence
-
-

8. What are they doing right?

- Legislators are very rarely thanked for the work they do, end on a positive note and acknowledge their hard work.
 - Committee role or other position in leadership
 - Did you see them at a previous town hall?
 - Did they vote for a bill you agreed with?
 - 1 sentence
-
-

9. How do they contact you?

- End your letter and sign it
- Give them one or two ways to contact you.
- Phone, email address, physical address (place to receive mail)

Thank you for your consideration.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Example:

Thank you for your consideration.

Best,

Darya Farivar

206-324-1521

daryaf@dr-wa.org

315 5th Ave S, Suite 850

Seattle, WA 98104