



Knowledge to lead

## ■ Storytelling Techniques

### General Guidelines

#### Choice of the story

- **Type of story:**
  - *Folktale*, meaning a story from oral tradition
  - *Literary Tale*, by a single author, made for publishing
  - *Real Life Story*, from history and personal experiences
- **Characteristics of the story**
  - It should be simple, with a single, clearly defined theme, and powerful
  - It should be in response to a demand, and timed with specific opportunities.
  - It should have a nice style, with vivid word picture, pleasing sounds and rhythm,
  - It should provide a solution to both immediate and broader problems;
  - It should be targeted at people with the power to make decisions and change things;
  - It should play to what is already in people's mind.

#### Preparation

- Read the story several times
- Analyze the words, thinking about the pictures you want the listener to see and the mood you want to create.
- Research background and cultural meaning of the story
- Learn the story as a whole and not in fragments, without memorizing it.
- Map out the story line:
  - Beginning: When the characters are introduced,
  - Body: In which the plot gets to the climax
  - Resolution: Where the conflicts are solved



**unitar**

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

- **Characteristics of the narration:**
  - Emphasis
  - Repetition
  - Transition
  - Pause
  - Proportion
  
- **Tricks to keep the attention:**
  - Involvement or participation of listeners
  - Distinct changes in pace, voice or mood
  - Unusual or unexpected twist in narrations

### Storytelling Techniques

---

There are different techniques to conduct a storytelling session; two are illustrated below, using storytelling in different ways:

#### Technique 1

- Introduce the workshop and the theme for storytelling. It's important to provide the participants a context on which they can reflect and that permits them to select the story they are going to tell.
- Make participants reflect on a story and think about details of before, during and after.
- Ask participants to form pair and to share the story they have prepared.
- Ask the participant that is listening in each moment to interview the partner and fill the [Story Template](#) as a guide, so that as much details as possible will be collected.
- Form bigger groups of two pairs, where each participant will tell the story that was previously told by the partner.
- Make participants reflect on common points and contradictions of each one of the stories.
- Ask every small group to present to the whole group their findings and conclusions.



**unitar**

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

## Technique 2

- Divide the participants in groups of 6.
- Ask the participants to think of a concrete and specific story, related to the objective of the workshop or project.
- Each participant has 90 seconds to tell his/her own story within the group.
- When everyone has finished ask the participants to recall the story that they consider more powerful and to remember who told that story.
- Ask participants to change groups.
- Ask them to tell their story again in 20 seconds, observing how it changes and improves in telling it again.
- Repeat the task of thinking which story they liked the most and who told it.
- Create new groups and go on with the exercise, in case there are many participants.
- Ask everyone to remember the person who told the most powerful story, go to that person and put the hand on his/her shoulder. A network of people will form, revealing a few of high-impact stories.
- Ask the people who told those stories to tell them again in front of the whole group.



**unitar**

United Nations Institute for Training and Research