

SLOW FOOD STORYTELLING TOOLKIT

Telling a story is part art, part science. Through this tool kit you will learn how to effectively tell a Slow Food Story.

OUTLINE

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- C. Shaping Perspectives
- D. Slow Storytelling
- E. Keys To Success

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- E. Communication



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Keep It Fun!

Resources



A. POWER OF STORYTELLING

Since time immemorial, stories have been a way that we recount our lives as individuals and collectively as communities. Stories allow us to travel through space and time experiencing the lives and perspectives of others. They are a way to connect the past to the present and the present to the future. Through stories we can change perspectives, evoke emotion and action, educate, identify, and find meaning to our lives. With all of this power, storytelling becomes a responsibility.

B. AUTHENTIC STORYTELLING

The key components of good storytelling are honesty, integrity, and acknowledging complexity. There is rarely one true version of a story – people will have different viewpoints and interpretations of the same information. As storytellers, it is our responsibility to sieve and weigh the facts and opinions, and find a suitable way to communicate a balanced account.

C. SHAPING PERSPECTIVES

It's important to remember that the way in which people grow, cook and eat food plays a huge role in their cultural and personal identity. Bear in mind that the way in which we tell food stories will shape the way in which our audience perceives and understands the community/culture we are working with. So telling food stories is an amazing opportunity to change misconceptions or prejudices, but there is always the risk that we may accidentally propagate or reinforce stereotypes. We need to work hard to make sure that contributors are represented in a way that they would choose to share with others. This might mean sending them a preview or draft before publishing, but more than anything, it means listening carefully and observing how they tell their own stories.





D. "SLOW STORYTELLING"

You can approach storytelling with the same philosophy as Slow Food. It should be Good, Clean and Fair.

GOOD

storytelling that triggers your senses, is well researched, and artfully produced.

CLEAN

storytelling that has a positive effect or message for the environment, sustainability, animal welfare, and our health.

FAIR

Storytelling that gives back to the subject (individual/community that the story is about) by honoring them or by providing them with a valuable new medium to represent themselves.

Storytelling that is accessible and understandable to your subject and audience.

Storytelling that is true to the subject's real life situation and circumstances.

Slow stories are not about reaching the most popular hashtag or telling the most popular stories. Slow stories take time and are meant to leave lasting impressions.

Interestingly, the Slow Food ideology is now influencing some groups within the media. These groups are focusing more on quality than quantity, taking their time to present a story that is well researched and produced. As Slow Food storytellers, we must bring the same mind-set about food to our storytelling practice (promoting quality, sustainability, and fairness over price or fashion). With this attitude, we have the potential to shape the future of storytelling and the broader media landscape around the world!



VS



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E. KEYS TO SUCCESS

1. PASSION

The best storytellers are those who believe in the importance of their story, and in the value of sharing that story with a wider community. What do you care about most in the Slow Food movement? What experiences have helped shape your Slow Food mentality? Passion is contagious, share your passion through your story.

2. TIME

Doing anything well requires time and energy, so think about how you could incorporate storytelling into your existing schedule and routines. What might you need to change/give up/reduce/increase in order to take on this new project?

3. RESEARCH

Research your subject and your audience in order to communicate the best information in the most effective way.

4. PRACTICE

Storytelling is very much a trial-and-error exercise, so don't expect to nail it from the start. With experience, you'll start to figure out what works for you, what doesn't, which skills you're lacking and which bring out your best. Enjoy the learning process, and don't beat yourself up if you think you've made mistakes. The best ways to improve are to be honest, open, and willing to receive feedback whenever possible.



TOPIC

CHOOSING YOUR TOPIC

Have you ever had a Slow Food experience that was so impactful that you wanted to share it with the rest of the world? This is where storytelling begins and this is where change happens.

We need to share our Slow Food stories so that other people can be inspired to grow, make and share clean, healthy, fair food. Food that represents more than a meal, but a culture and a sustainable way of life. We want you to find inspiration in your own food communities to tell your stories.

Good stories go beyond answering who, what, why, when, where, and how. They create an **emotional response with their audience**, **eliciting a new connection between the audience and the character or subject.**

Good stories balance between relatable situations and characters, compelling plots, and interesting perspectives. If you had a choice, would you rather read a story about how peppers are cultivated or about how a group of 13 indigenous women banded together to empower themselves through chile cultivation and salsa making?



CHOOSING YOUR MEDIUM

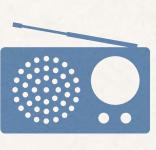






FILM





AUDIO

Slow Food stories can be told in various ways, and using various platforms. You may have a preference or natural talent for one way of communicating (you might be a brilliant photographer, or an aspiring journalist), but in recent years, **multi-platform strategies for storytelling have become increasing popular and effective in engaging a wider audience**. Major news outlets now have a presence on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, on top of their website/TV channel/newspaper. Chefs share "behind the scenes" of their food stories on social media, while continuing to serve bespoke offline experiences. Instagrammers have blossomed into vloggers, authors, and entrepreneurs.

In order to maximize the reach and impact of your storytelling, you may want to consider a multi-platform approach, perhaps collaborating with a friend or connection who could assist with communicating your Slow Food stories through more than one domain.

If you have a smartphone then you are probably already an intermediate user of that camera technology. A smart phone can record audio, video, and take pictures. When telling a story, great content will trump great devices. Think about some stories that have gone viral, they were probably told with smartphones capturing the moment. A great story is 95% of the work, the device is a mere 5%.

"The most important aspect to making production and post production successful and efficient is being prepared and organized."

A. RESEARCH

Research your topic beforehand so that you have a basic understanding of what you will be covering and making sure it fits your brand. Does the person or group follow the Slow Food ideology? Don't just google, hit the library. The best research is performed when the storyteller has a genuine interest to learn more about the subject. Researching allows you to visualize what you will be confronted with so that you can delve deeper into the story. It also shows your subject that you genuinely care and respect their time and their story.

B. STORYBOARD

Come up with a rough draft of a storyline for your concept outlining how you would like your story to be told from beginning to end. Writing out a storyline often helps to organize your thoughts and content (see example in resources of a video storyboard).

Prepare a list of questions. Be sure to include questions that answer the who, what, where, when, why, and how. These questions prompt the participant to tell the story and also to elaborate.

PREPRODUCTION



C. LOGISTICS

PREPRODUCTION

Logistics is the detailed coordination of the story, where you tackle many moving components: traveling, equipment, timing, places to stay, seasonality, language, etc. This is where you organize and plan for all of the different components that comprise of production.

Here are a list of questions we recommend you consider when planning logistics:

- How much time is needed to collect the material for your story?
- When is the participant available?
- What equipment (e.g. cooking equipment, ingredients) would I need on day of production?
- Is this story seasonal? If so, when is the harvest?
- How do you arrive at the location? Parking?
- How much will it cost to get there? Flights, renting a car, public transport, tolls, etc.?
- How long do you need to stay there?
- Visa requirements? Vaccination requirements?
- Where will you stay?
- How will you communicate with the people? Do we need a translator?
- Local cell phone plans and wifi details?
- Are there aspects of the storytelling that you will need to "fake-do" (time lapse like cheese making or wine making)?

- Are there aspects of the story that you will only have one chance at getting? (ex. Adding rennet in cheese)
- Are there specific customs that you should be aware of and sensitive towards?
- Are you able to visit the location beforehand?
- * As you answer these questions, you will be determining how realistic it is for you to tell the story that you are envisioning and other questions will come up along the way.



D. BUDGETING

When receiving funding for a project or when grant writing, the funder will always ask for a list of projected expenses. Once you have an idea of the details of logistics, you can approximate what your expenses will be. The more accurate you can be with your expenses, the easier it is for people to co-fund you and the easier it is to garner support from your community.

Chances are, you will be pleasantly surprised at how many people will be there to support you in a good cause...especially in the Slow Food World. This support can be in the form of direct financial support to cover costs or help in reducing your expenses by providing free services, such as a place to stay and food to eat! When budgeting, don't forget to include an estimate of how much time you are going to spend on the project including post-production. This understanding allows you to determine whether or not the scope of the proposed project is realistic.

PREPRODUCTION

E. COMMUNICATION

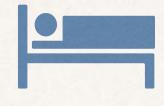
Communicate and coordinate with your subjects so that they understand what you need and have the right expectations. Also communicate why you are doing this so that they understand. This communication stage also helps you see if the person or recipe is a good candidate to represent the Slow Food ethos.

Here is a list of items to communicate before production:

- We need permission from everyone to be on camera and to be recorded.
 Release Form Example
- We ask if they have a translator.
- We show examples of our work so they know what to expect.
- We communicate that the story we will be telling is their story and that they are co-creators in the process.
- Key logistical details e.g. contact details, locations, equipment you need them to bring, any specifications for clothing (e.g. avoiding branded t-shirts), and the schedule for the day.

PRODUCTION

A. GETTING READY FOR THE BIG DAY!!



Sleep well



Eat a Big Breakfast







B. ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

Active Participation: We encourage anyone who is trying to tell a story to be an active participant in the life or experience of the story being told. For instance, there is a coffee maker in your community. Instead of interviewing him and taking pictures of his coffee beans, spend a few days shadowing him in his work or living with him.

Active participation does the following:

- deepens your perspective,
- gives you better insight to the questions you want to ask,
- furthers your interest and commitment to telling the story,
- and it creates a stronger bond with the people you are telling the story about.

C. PRODUCTION GUIDELINES

- **Be observant.** During the experience you need to think about all of the content that you need to collect in order to recreate that experience in a story. Be mindful of everything that is going on.
- Be aware of your surroundings If you see better locations to be gathering content, suggest that you go
 there. For instance, lighting, noise, scenery. Remove distracting props.
- Be on your toes. Never say, "Oh will ask that later or take that picture later." If you think of it, do it.
 Ask it now. Take it now. Chances are you will forget to do it later.
- Don't leave anything until the last minute. Try to record the bulk of the content in the beginning so that you can fill in the cracks later.
- Be the director and don't be shy. If you missed a shot, or a piece of information, ask for it again. This also shows your professionalism and makes the participants take you more seriously.
- Extra time. Give yourself time after an interview to capture some more content that might have been mentioned as you think of the storyline (location shots, wide shots, a book that was mentioned etc.)
- Take notes. You will thank yourself later.
- Review the recorded content at the end of each day. This will allow you to see what you missed, what you need more of, and what you need to do better.

PRODUCTION



PRODUCTION

D. NOTES FOR FILMING

- Always hold your shot for at least 15 second before panning or moving.
- Use a tripod to keep your shots steady
- Take both micro and macro shots. Macro shots develop a scene and give depth, while micro shots makes the viewer think that they are there.
- Take shots where your camera is still but action is developing, even if it is just someone walking by.

E. NOTES FOR WRITING

However you choose to tell your story (visually, verbally, orally), being able to communicate in writing is hugely valuable when it comes to spreading the news of your video/photography/podcast/article/magazine etc. Of course, if you want to tell your stories through blogging or print journalism, your writing skills will be even more important! Depending on who you want to engage with your storytelling, you may need to communicate in English. But regardless of what language you're working in, the keys to good writing involve:



Finding your voice: Find a writing style that feels natural to you, and don't worry about trying to write like someone else. One of the best ways to improve your writing is to read as much by other people as possible, and expose yourself to lots of different voices so you can figure out what sounds best to you. Once you've found your style, try to be consistent.

Knowing your audience: How and what you communicate in writing should be tailored according to the person/people you're writing to. Different audiences will want and need different information, and different tones may be more appropriate for different groups. Try to find a way to remain true to your unique writing voice, while communicating in a way that suits your target readership.

Believing in your purpose: Having a clear sense of purpose, and a clear message to communicate, is critical to effective writing. Not only will this keep you motivated to spread the message, but it will also make your writing much more interesting to read!

F. THE INTERVIEW

PRODUCTION

An interview is a great way to keep your story authentic by using first person testaments. Interviews often prove to be the backbone of non-fiction storytelling. When it comes to interviewing people, the goal is to make the interviewee feel as comfortable as possible so that they feel like they are talking to a friend.

- **Build rapport** with the people you're interviewing, either in advance of the interview, or on the day. The best conversations usually start from places of warmth and relaxation, so try to find a way to build trust and respect before you begin. This might mean meeting or calling for a chat before the interview, or spending some time to warm up on the day.
- Come prepared with a clear sense of what you want to ask, and how you want to ask it. You may want to print a script, or just rehearse this in your mind.
- After you ask a question give your interviewee time to think about the answer and respond. Don't make them feel rushed.
- Focus on what's being said don't be afraid to improvise! If someone says something interesting that inspires another question, or takes the conversation in a new direction, you can choose to follow that lead. The best interviewers are those who listen and respond to what the interviewee is really saying. But remember to stay in control, and steer the conversation back to the key topics if you're wandering off-track.

- Try to have a conversation. Be relatable. Tell them why you want to make this film. How you felt when you watched them work. Ask them meaningful questions.
- Be respectful but don't be afraid to ask the questions that come to your mind or questions that feel sensitive or controversial. If the interviewee knows that you are asking from a positive/good-hearted perspective, they will open up to you and provide you with the answers.
- Putting a camera in front of someone will almost always change their responses so it's the interviewer's charm and fun nature that gets their interviewee to feel like they can be themselves. Sometimes you need to ask random questions, fun questions, or just joke around so that the people open up their minds and feel more comfortable.
- We always begin with telling people to answer the questions back to us in **full sentences**. This way when we are in production, the interviewees statements will have context and our voices will not be needed.
- **Do not interrupt** or affirm the interviewee when recording audio. Although it is natural to affirm someone when interviewing, be careful to never talk over someone, just give a nod or a smile.
- Record a preliminary test of sound. Make sure there is no ambient noise that includes loud refrigerators, air conditioning, busy streets, etc.

POST PRODUCTION

A. REASSESS STORYBOARD

Before delving into making your story, take a step back and get to know the pieces. Whether it be audio recordings, video clips, photographs, or notes. After you have the material in your working mind, see how it fits into your storyboard. There are usually two outcomes here:

Material fits with the storyboard.

If you kept the storyline in your head the whole time during production and there were no new characters or surprises, chances are you will be able to fit the material into the storyboard. This goes for writing, podcasts, films, and photo based journalism.

Material better fits another storyboard.

Re-craft or rework the storyboard according to the new angle that you want to take. This has happened to us many times. We begin a film about a recipe but instead the most compelling story to be told is of the history of the person in relation to the food. This is when we recraft our storyboard.

B. EDITING

Editing is an ongoing process. It takes time, thought, and reworking. The goal is to make the story succinct and organized. Sometimes it helps to step away from the content and revisit it with a clear mind. Edit, re-edit, edit again. This process is an art and you should not underestimate the time it takes to do so. Keep it simple and relatable. As you edit, think about the person who will read or watch your content. Make your story accessible. The story should answer the 5 W's & H (who, what, why, when, where, and how) and anyone who watches or reads your story should be able to understand it.



A. SOCIAL MEDIA

You may have the best story to tell but what if no one hears it? How do you get your story in front of more people? In front of the right people?

Social media is a wonderful way to get your story out into wider world, but as with the rest of your storytelling practice, the keys to success on social media are consistency, authenticity and research. How can you make your stories distinctive among all the thousands of other users in your area? How can you make the most of your content on different platforms (e.g. breaking down a story into segments of beautiful imagery, short videos, great quotes)? One of the best things about social media is the networking opportunities: are there other food storytellers on social media from which you can learn, or with which you could collaborate? Think about how to keep up the momentum of each story by giving people a way to take action or respond to your content in some way (e.g. petitions to sign, organize to follow.)

You can tell your story in various ways an across various platforms. For instance, if you are telling a story through film, you can produce longer versions of the film that can be shared on vimeo/youtube/facebook and shorter versions for instagram. You can continue to pump up your story over a longer period of time through breaking down a story into multiple posts. This allows for slow media to act in a fast media world.

Give people a way to follow up/take action to keep the momentum going. Come up with a hashtag that you consistently use and share. Be active in your social media groups.

MARKETING



B. PUBLIC RELATIONS

You might find a Slow Food story that you want to share with a wider audience in your city, region, country or beyond. If so, the mainstream media (TV, newspapers, and radio) can be a really valuable collaborator.

The key to working with journalists is **understanding their target audiences.** Each programme or publication will be targeting a different group of people with a particular style, theme, or tone to their storytelling, so your story won't be relevant to them all. The best way to judge whether or not they might be interested is to listen to, watch or read the kind of food stories they've published before.

Once you understand the **format in which they tell their stories**, you should have a clearer sense of the kind of information a journalist will need in order to decide whether or not they are interested in your idea. **TV** will want to know what they can see. **Radio** will want to know what they can hear. **Different newspapers** will want different content, and some Slow Food stories will be better suited to long-form journalism ("slow media") rather than tabloid or fast news.

Don't be discouraged if you don't hear back from journalists. If your story doesn't make it into the local or national press, it can still have a valuable impact on other platforms.

MARKETING

C. IMPACT MEASUREMENT

Quality over Quantity: It's tempting to get caught up aiming for more followers, more views, more likes, more subscribers, but ultimately, the quality of engagement is much more important than the quantity. Think about who you want to be reaching with your stories – growers, chefs, politicians, consumers? How can you have maximal impact with this target audience?

Define your own success: Be clear on what you want to achieve with your storytelling, as this defines the criteria for success! Do you hope to change consumer behaviour, improve cultural understanding, sign up more members to the Slow Food movement? Find ways to measure these impacts – you may need to collaborate with others to achieve facts and figures, but anecdotal evidence may be enough.

TIPS

- Tell the stories you're passionate about! Storytelling comes to life when the storyteller is engaged and enthusiastic, but we can't all be experts in all areas of the Slow Food movement, so focus on the topics you're most curious or concerned about in your local community.
- A lot of the fun of storytelling comes in the experiences themselves. Learning new information, witnessing a craft, hearing someone's life hardships or successes, and trying new foods!! These firsthand experiences will have a lasting effect on you that you are trying to capture into a story. Stories will naturally be easier to tell if they invoke an emotion. Once you start experiencing and telling stories, it may even become addictive. Just think of all the people you'll meet, the food you'll try, all the places you'll go!!! (thanks for that last one Dr. Seuss)



 Get fun people involved. Perhaps you know someone who's a brilliant photographer, or who can help with audio editing. Sharing the storytelling practice can make it so much more enjoyable, and more manageable alongside your other work, hobbies and commitments.

KEEP IT FUN!



OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

RESOURCES

- There are some great blogs out there which have shared their top tips on getting started:
 - * Pinch of Yum
 - * Moral Fibres
- Video & Photography Editing:
 - * Lynda online courses—we have been able to access this for free via our local library
- To Watch:
 - * TedX video: The slow journalism revolution | Rob Orchard "being first has become much more important than being right"
- Further Reading:
 - * Kitchen Literacy by Ann Vileisis
 - * Virtues of The Table by Julian Baggani
 - * Cooked by Michael Pollan
 - * Slow Media by Jennifer Rauch

Create Your Own Website:

- * www.squarespace.com
- * www.wix.com
- * weebly.com
- * wordspace a little more complicated



STORY BOARD EXAMPLE



RELEASE FORM EXAMPLE

BBC Radio Scotland's Let's Grow it, Cook it, Eat It! series aimed to spread inspirational stories from Scotland's community growing spaces.

Through the summer of 2018, we embedded ourselves in the lives of 8 community gardens across Scotland with the aim to inspire the growth of community through the growth of community food and gardening. In a world where many people can feel increasingly isolated from their communities, growing spaces provide an inspiring and refreshing form of community glue: a place where locals can come together to share stories, knowledge, food and support for one another. As well as gathering ingredients to cook and eat together, the programmes gathered stories from behind the scenes about the volunteers, their lives and the life of the community garden. Our presenter provided expert gardening advice while a local chef/cook provided the know-how for getting the best from the food once it hits the kitchen. Over the 8-part series, Let's Grow It, Cook it, Eat it provided a seasonal celebration of how sharing space, food and skills can grow stronger, healthier communities.

The	Concrete	Garden
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Scene 1: Setting the Scene

Description of garden.

Meet 1* volunteer ...describe plot he's working at...... What's he doing today /what the garden means to him......what have they been harvesting so far this season....

Continue your walk through the garden......

Walk to meet Moira, project manager

Discuss the scale of the project....what it's achieved so far......what the site was before it became a garden...challenges they've faced along the way.....revamp four years ago....how much did the volunteers get involved in that.

Apart from the food, has she seen the volunteers benefit in other ways (e.g. less stressed/ more contented/better able to deal with issues).

Scene 2: Meet the Chef

Meet chef at the pizza oven......his impression of the gardens......What have his eyes been drawn to......possible pizza toppings......talk about clever cooking, extracting as much flavour and value out of your ingredients.

Meet second project manager who keeps the cooking part of the operation under her wing. Talk about the importance of putting the produce grown to good use......how do they use the food....what's popular......Describe the monthly potluck lunches.

Fire up the oven

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within an unrestricted geographic				
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ABOUT US

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We are Anthony and Leila of The Recipe Hunters!! We travel around the world telling Slow Food stories that stem from a local ingredient or involve a traditional food making process. We tell those stories through photojournalism and film which we publish on our website and social media platforms. We are part of a non-profit whose mission is to promote cultural pluralism through food media. Follow us @therecipehunters

I'm Frankie, a freelance nutritionist and researcher for TV and radio. I'm currently based in the Scottish highlands, where I'm working on a community food programme for BBC Radio Scotland. I've always been curious about the roles that food plays in our lives, and I love finding and telling those stories. Follow me @thevictualist

WWW.THEVICTUALIST.COM

IN COLLABORATION WITH



We are the world's future leaders, entrepreneurs, farmers and consumers. The Slow Food Youth Network (SFYN) was founded to make youth familiar with Slow Food's philosophy that says that all food should be Good, Clean and Fair. This means that food should be prepared with care and respect, grown as sustainable as possible and that the farmers and producers should get a fair wage.

SFYN raises awareness among young citizens and consumers to encourage and mobilize them in making responsible choices. It wants them to take part in the public debate about current issues, such as how to feed the world, what to do about food waste, and how to produce food as sustainable as possible.



I'm Simone and I work as head of communication for the global Slow Food Youth Network. Just as much as I love to share food, I love to share the stories connected to it. With my job, I'm lucky enough to get incredible daily updates from young people who are crazy and passionate about Slow Food. But a lot of times, I am the only one who hears them. That's why I believe that everybody has a good story to tell; but sometimes we just need the right tools to tell it. Follow me @slowfoodyouthnetwork

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