

IGNITE360

STORYMASTERS SOLUTIONS

Use Stories to Tell Stories



The power of a story lies within the stories you are telling.

It all sounds really meta, and it is. Like a set of nesting dolls, a great story has smaller stories tucked inside. The dolls are thematically connected to one another, but each is fully formed and can stand on its own.

The largest doll is your Big Idea – the framework for your story. Within that, all the other stories fit.

The challenge for the storyteller, you in this case, is to make sure the other stories relate to and support the Big Idea.



Line Up Your 5 Sub-Stories

Our insights and strategy reports typically have **5 different types of “sub-stories”** that we have to make sure line up to the Big Idea.

- 1 Supporting points
- 2 Numerical data
- 3 First-person narrative (e.g. quotations, audio/visual clips)
- 4 Implications and Recommendations
- 5 Visuals

For this edition of Storymasters, **let’s take a look at how to use first-person stories.**



Head + Heart = Inspiration and Action

Data can be impactful:

250,000 people died in the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami.

First-person stories make the data meaningful:

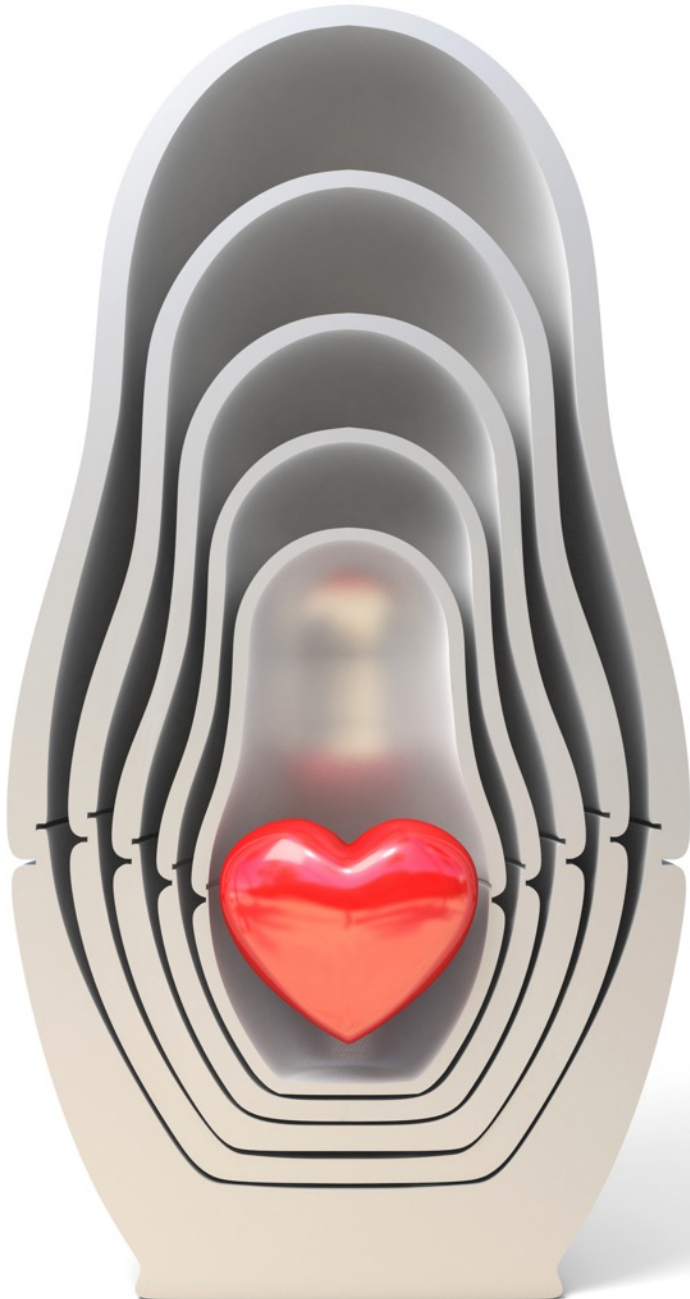
*"It was a life or death moment because the water was right behind us. We ran to a two-storey building, and the next moment I saw the first wave take hundreds of people." - Nazaruddin Musa, 42, from Darussalam, Banda Aceh**

**Source: [The Guardian](#)*

The data is the 'head' – the **intellectual information**.

The story is the 'heart' – the **emotion**.

Each piece of information is important. The data gives you a sense of scale. The story delivers the humanity. **Combined, the audience is inspired to take action.**



First-Person Stories **Delivered 3 Ways**

People share stories all the time, in language that is emotional and relatable.

Leverage those words as quotes within your presentations to help bring the data to life and inspire action!

The Soundbite

A few words or a short sentence that makes your point.



The Middle Ground

A couple of sentences that provide more context, a richer understanding of an issue or need, build empathy, and paint a broader picture.



The Deep Dive

A paragraph or a page, or even more. Long quotations deliver empathy, tell a rich story, draw in the audience, help people hear their brand champion, and cover more emotional topics or complex thoughts. We'll often use video or audio clips for deep dives, and/or give proper space within a report.



The Long and Short of it

Let's look at the same quotation 3 different ways. This example is taken from our multi-generational, cross-geographical, nationally-representative quantitative and qualitative research study *Navigating to a New 'Normal.'*

The interview is with Jennifer from rural South Carolina. She's discussing shopping at her local Walmart as her area began opening up in late April.

SHORT “

Walmart is back to being Walmart.

MEDIUM “

So I felt like they really stepped up and, "Oh wow, look, they're cleaning our carts and everything. It's nice. Okay." And now it's like, "Okay, Walmart is back to being Walmart." And also it was like, "I guess it isn't as big of a deal as everybody says because they're not even out here cleaning carts."

LONG “

So we went to Walmart. And it was really interesting. Remember how I went to Walmart several weeks ago and they were cleaning the carts and you had a queue coming in and they were counting. They still had the partition up where you have to walk around. But nobody was there cleaning carts. Nobody was counting people. It was just like, "Yeah, whatever." And so we went in and I figured it out, halfway through the shopping trip that they had done aisles where it's go up this aisle and go down this aisle. I didn't realize that before. I'm just going wherever. Because I felt like, have you ever seen that 1980s grocery game? Where people are grabbing the groceries and like... That's what we ended up doing because we got there so late and they were closing at 8:30. And we're not used to that anymore. And I was trying to explain that to the little cashier who was, she's 18. And I'm like, "You've never seen where Walmart closed at nine o'clock." I remember that as a child when Walmart would close at nine o'clock.

Rob: You said they weren't cleaning the carts down. So how'd you feel the experience this week at Walmart?

Jennifer: So I felt like "Wow, you know Walmart, you did this." And in a way it was kind of shocking because you think about Walmart and it's just like the low price leader. They're going to just get it from Canada, they're going to get it from wherever, the cheapest place possible. And now they want you to check your own bags out and groceries and stuff

because they're just trying to cut costs, cut costs, cut costs. So I felt like they really stepped up and, "Oh wow, look, they're cleaning our carts and everything. It's nice. Okay." And now it's like, "Okay, Walmart is back to being Walmart." And also it was like, "I guess it isn't as big of a deal as everybody says because they're not even out here cleaning carts."

Rob: Okay. So if they had been cleaning the carts and you saw them properly wearing masks, what would that have told you?

Jennifer: That maybe people were still thinking that this was serious.

Rob: Okay. Okay. I'm just curious, you're making me think about this. What's the role of a company in terms of communicating this is serious compared to like other. Like we've talked about the government and things like that. What's the role of a company? A store?

Jennifer: Role of the companies ... I guess setting standards for everybody.

Rob: Tell me more about that.

Jennifer: So I guess when you think about the company and their image, you know ... Are they going to set the standard, are they going to set the bar for everybody else to follow, or are they just going to do whatever, or are they just gonna fall in between?

Walmart Is Back to Being Walmart

What did you notice about your response to each of the same quotations?

It got the same point across but *as it got longer, it helped build more empathy and deliver more context.*

The point is still the same, but it is so much richer by the time you get to the longer quote, including more about the role of corporations during the pandemic and how Walmart actually let Jennifer down. *A video clip of this long quote would also convey the emotion behind what she's discussing.*

To see more examples of short, medium and long quotations or clips, check out our content from *Navigating to a New Normal*:



Chapter 3: Now, Next, Future

Examples of medium and long video/audio clips



Chapter 4: Our Scary, Risky, Evolutionary Need to Connect

Examples of short and medium quotations



Chapter 5: Listening – Black Lives Matter

Examples of short and long quotations

Making Stories More Human

When we build profiles of consumers, whether in text or video, we like to use the person’s own language and details to bring them to life.

When you are sketching a profile of someone and trying to connect, what sets people apart aren’t the defining characteristics from a segmentation. It’s the nuanced details of a person’s life that makes them distinct and what makes them memorable.

A fully formed picture of an individual* gives you something more tangible to present and use as inspiration to build better products and services.

*Use the 5 Steps to Empathy to help your audience connect: 1) Dismantle Judgment, 2) Ask Good Questions, 3) Actively Listen, 4) Integrate into Understanding, 5) Use Solution Imagination



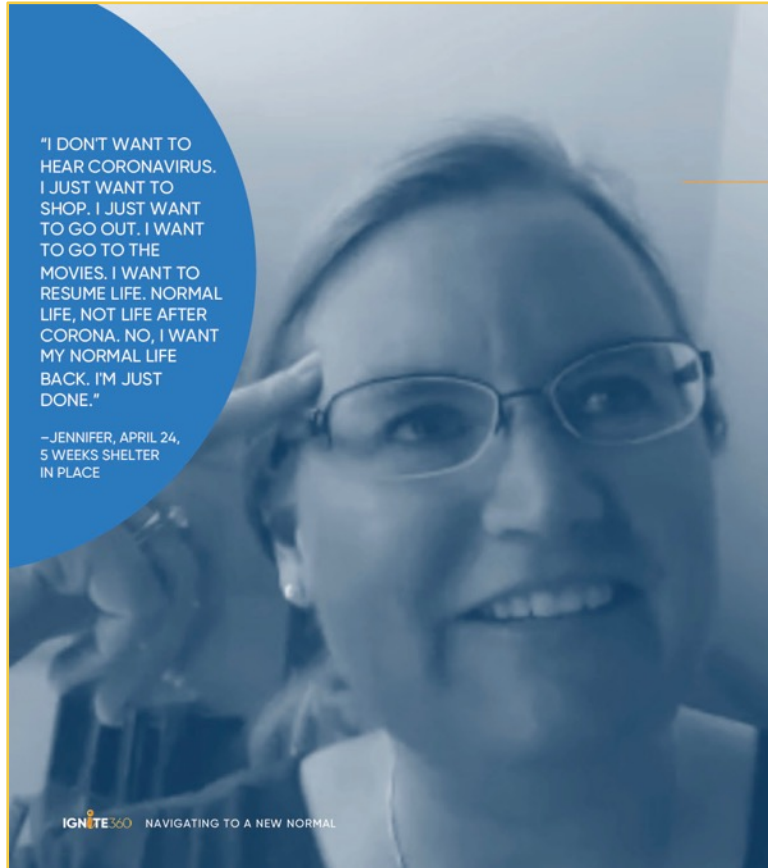
Following is a list of all the characteristics of Jennifer from South Carolina. Which ones describe her as an individual versus a segment?

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Breeds Nigerian Pygmy Goats• 41 years old• Fan of Discovery of Witches• Disney travel agent• From South Carolina	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Catholic• Loves Zaxby’s, loathes McDonald’s• Mother of 3 kids• Lives in rural area• Scout troop mom	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Former horse trainer• Raises heritage breed chickens• Married• Anti-vaxxer• White	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Home-schools her kids• Cans her own food• Likes late 50’s A-line dresses• Female• Walmart = necessary evil of living in rural area
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Putting it Together

Jennifer, like all of us, is a complex combination of attributes, beliefs, opinions and experiences that make her unique. **Bring your audience in closer to that rich texture with quotations.**

Here's the profile page of her that we produced for [*Navigating to a New Normal, Chapter 2*](#). Notice how we used quotations to bring forward some of her more distinct characteristics, in her own words.



"I DON'T WANT TO HEAR CORONAVIRUS. I JUST WANT TO SHOP. I JUST WANT TO GO OUT. I WANT TO GO TO THE MOVIES. I WANT TO RESUME LIFE. NORMAL LIFE, NOT LIFE AFTER CORONA. NO, I WANT MY NORMAL LIFE BACK. I'M JUST DONE."

—JENNIFER, APRIL 24, 5 WEEKS SHELTER IN PLACE

JENNIFER


Rural South Carolina, 41 years old, married mother of 3 with her disabled father living with her family.

"It really was that week when Disney and Universal... all of a sudden they're like, 'We're closing the parks.' And we're going, 'Disney's closing.' It's huge. That's when it really starts to hit you. When you think about this big massive operation that's going to close. And the same day we start hearing from Scouts, 'Oh we're stopping meetings.' I'm seeing friends over in Italy and in Britain saying, 'You guys need to start taking this seriously. Y'all need to stock up.' So we said, 'Okay.'"


"My husband and I went to the grocery store on [March] 22nd. We went to a Walmart, and I felt like I had walked into a grocery store in Russia back during the Cold War."

"And then this last drop where [Disney's] like, 'We're closed indefinitely.' That, when they did that, that was just such a huge blow to me."


Jennifer, a travel agent specializing in Disney trips, immediately went to work rebooking and refunding her client's long-planned vacations. "I'm kind of an empath where I'm feeling it with them because not only did they put a lot of work into planning, but I've put a lot of work into planning it for them... So that was kind of hard. I told my husband, I've got to get out of the house, come with me. And we walked up the road and we went on a three mile walk and I've got to get it out. I've got to get away from this. I got to get away from my computer."



A planner, Jennifer laid out all of her food in the house. She planned meals for 4 weeks of shelter-in-place.



Adorable baby goats began arriving by our second interview. The 26 kids are for shows or breeding. Rumors of a meat shortage in the fall has forced her to consider saving the less desirable males for meat.



Rural living means being, "cut off from town. When we come home, it's just us, that's it." A low case count in their county and normal traffic on their rural road makes her yearn for her normal life again.

"I'm getting so sick of certain things that I had planned for four weeks ago. It's like *Chopped*, I'm like, what can I make with [this] that's not my normal?"

—JENNIFER

IGNITE360 NAVIGATING TO A NEW NORMAL

Let's reiterate: The power of a story lies within the stories you are telling.

- **Leverage the voice of the consumer** when you can.
- **Use the consumer's own words** to explain their position.
- Select the **length of quotation to fit the use case.**
- Keep the quotation on point, **supporting the larger story or Big Idea.**
- **Utilize the 5 Steps to Empathy** to help your audience overcome their judgment.



In Action

Now take what you've learned and check our work.

Step 1: Download Navigating to a New Normal: Chapter 4

Step 2: Grab a red pen and critique the story. Write in the margins, circle the quotations that you feel did (or didn't) support the Big Idea, circle the quotations that felt just right (or not), note where your sense of empathy was engaged, etc.

Step 3: Keep practicing and using first-person stories to support your Big Ideas!

I TRUST YOU THEREFORE I WILL CHEAT

Moving into the third month of safety guidelines is starting to take its toll. People are feeling 'antsy' to be with other people and are willing to take a very calculated risk. Francia, in Minneapolis, has made her peace with the fact that she won't be frequenting any restaurants or public spaces for years. She's waiting for a vaccine. She'll watch others to test out the waters before her. She is enjoying being at home, building a stronger bond with her husband and her daughter but she really misses her baby brother.

"This weekend I did a kind of 'cheating'... because my brother called me last week and said, 'What are you going to do for Mother's Day?' ... [He said], 'I don't care about this Covid-19 stuff, I have a present for you and I can come over and give it to you.' I told him I need to ask my husband first because of his medical condition. He said, 'No, that he was not comfortable with people coming over to the house.' ... My brother said, 'Why don't we meet in a park?' But I told my brother, 'Why don't I go to your house? You have a big backyard. We can sit in the yard and be together.' He said, 'Yes.' He made hot dogs on the grill, he has a fire pit in the backyard, so I bought marshmallows and we made s'mores. It was cold but we all sat around the fire pit and we toasted the marshmallows and had such a good time. I went with my daughter and Miguel. Miguel was keeping his distance but he enjoyed himself as well. It was so nice to be there even though it was cold. His wife also made me a cheesecake, so it was a really good Mother's Day."

"I forgot about Covid-19 when I was there. It was part of the 'normal' of before Covid-19 ... because we were with more people, with family, we had fun ... it was a nice break ... I don't do things sometimes if people don't ask me first ... my brother had the idea first. He said he didn't care ... I thought, if my brother doesn't mind, I think we will do it more [with him] because it was *chiverisimo* [amazing]. We even stopped by the store and bought a fire pit on the way home."

I don't think I'd go to a friend's house even if she had a backyard. I wouldn't go to any other house. I think I'd only go with my brother because he's my brother and I don't know, I miss him, so, it's worth it, I think."

**SOUNDBITE TO
REINFORCE YOUR POINT**

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Thank you for joining us for the
Storymasters: Solutions series.

Do you have more questions about the
best way to use stories to tell a story?
We've got answers!

Email us at
storymasters@ignite-360.com

