



CAGA Storytelling Model for Engagement

Mike Ward, CFRE with
thanks to Mitzie Schafer who
developed the CAGA model.





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Deposits Vs. Withdrawals

Donor First



CAGA

- **CHANGE**
- **AGENT** of Change
- **GIFT** that funded the agent of change
- **ASK** for the next gift to fund the next agent of change



What to Listen For

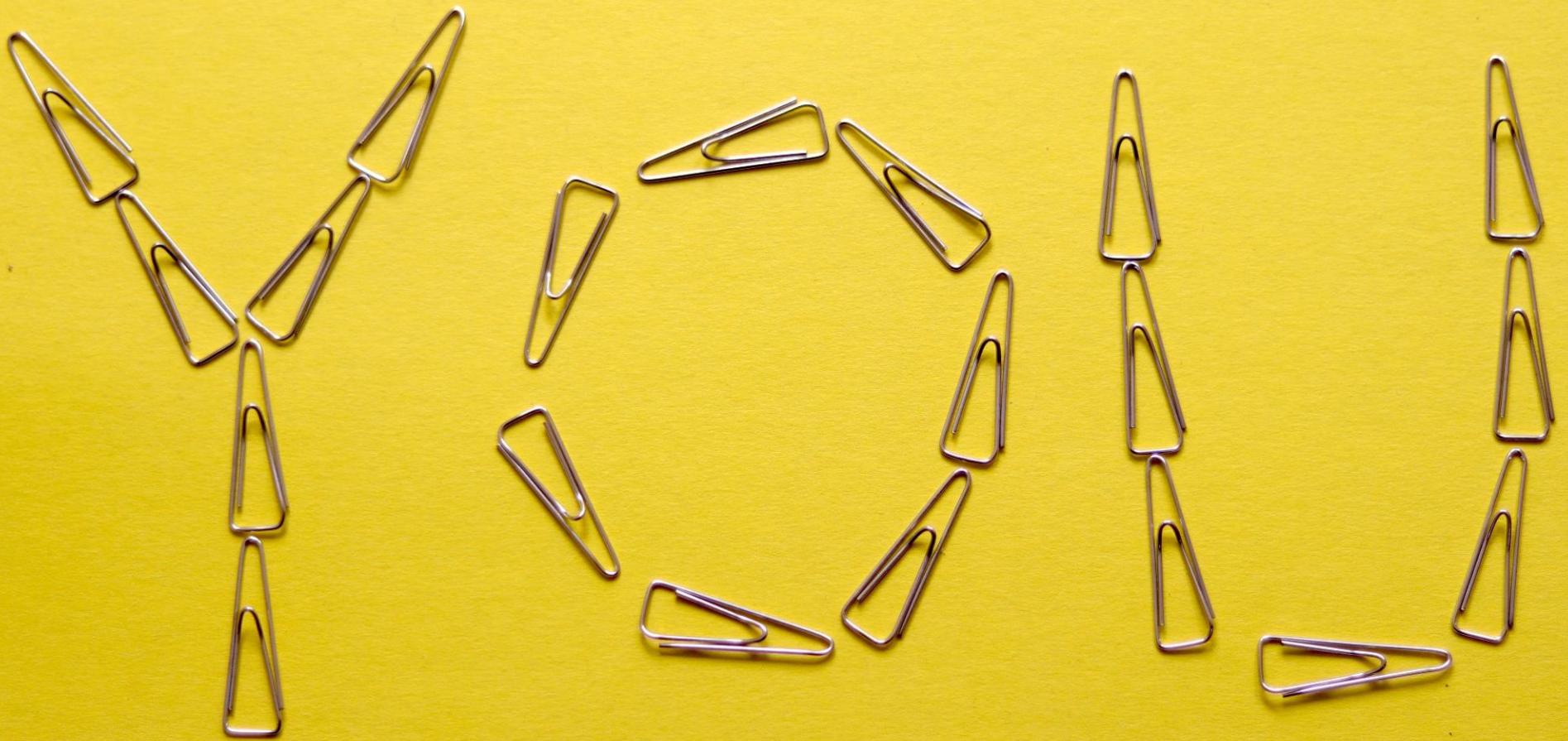
- **Before the Change**
 - What are the behaviors or feelings?
- **Agent of Change**
 - What was done specifically and how was it provided by the agency?
 - Was it a program that a person carried out?
 - Was it a system of activities?
 - Was it intentional relationship building?
- **After the Change**
 - What are the new behaviors or feelings?



Questions to Start With

- How did you find/come to be part of?
- Tell me about life before?
- What are you most thankful for?
- What was missing in your life before?
- How long have you been involved?
- Did you want to be here?
- What were you looking for?





Questions to Get at the Agent of Change

- What moment/person stands out the most for you as having an impact?
- What made you stay here?
- What means the most to you about?
- How are things different for you now?

Questions for a Deeper Dive

- Say more about that?
- Can you say that differently?
- What would you tell someone else considering?



Story Structure

- **Identify the Person(s)**
 - 1-2 Sentences that give an image of the person in the story
- **Before the Change**
 - 2-4 Sentences that give an image to the reader about where the person was in life.
- **Agent of Change**
 - 2-6 Sentences that explain what the organization offered that helped transform the person or make them feel belonging?
- **After the Change**
 - 2-6 Sentences that give an image to the reader where the person is now in life. Be clear about the change.
- **The Gift**
 - 1-3 Sentences about how giving to the organization paid for the Agent of Change.

WRITE
WITHOUT
FEAR.

EDIT
WITHOUT
MERCY.

Capturing an Image

- Clean your lens
- Take close up pictures turned both ways
- Make sure the camera is on jpeg
- Capture Emotion



Avoid

- Giving a life history or timeline
- Giving the impression the person was interviewed
- Including details that you thought were important but that distract from the CHANGE or AGENT of CHANGE

Remember

- To always honor the dignity of the person
- To make the CHANGE and the AGENT of CHANGE the focus



Strategically Communicated

- Prevents reactionary or panicked messaging
- Strategically tell your stories around emotional pivot times
- Creates a repeatable and measurable system
- Builds consistency with donors
- Builds annual fund expectations & projections that help you plan your budget
- Consistently promotes your organization



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Interactions

- Newsletters
- Email
- Social Media
- Notes and cards
- Ask letters
- Events



Honest Evaluation

- Does every word of your newsletter inspire giving and belonging?
- Do your emails have an emotional draw?
 - What is your call to action (ONE primary)
- Does social media encourage a “join me” culture?
- Are you making enough deposits for the level of withdrawals?
- Are your notes and cards personal? AND Timely?
- Does your ask letter *ask* for impact or stuff?



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Gratitude Grounded

- As a Donor First model, we rate the value of telling the story equal to our sharing of gratitude for the donor's response.
- Gratitude shared provides a deposit each and every time.





Your Turn

- Think of 1-3 people you think might have a story to tell. People who love your work or community.
- Invite them each for a 30 minute interview.
- Interview them using the CAGA model.
- Draft a story for each of them using the CAGA model outline.
- Email them to Mike at Ward@gsbfr.com



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Questions?

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