



THE BATTLE OF THE STORY WORKSHEET

This exercise is intended to help grassroots activists create more compelling narratives to communicate their campaigns. The Battle of the Story is the framework through which we can analyze the current media climate around an issue – whether it’s the story that the power holders are telling about the issue or just the accepted status quo perception. The worksheet asks you to apply three different elements of story telling (conflict, sympathetic characters and show don’t tell) to both the power holder’s story and then our story as grassroots activists. Once you have articulated these elements, use the logic of the story to identify the assumptions that allow each of the stories to operate. The final row of the chart – the points of intervention - is the place to identify weaknesses in each story and rhetorical strategies for challenging each story’s assumptions. This could take the form of challenging the story’s framing, contrasting alternate visions of the future, articulating hopes, dispelling fears or exposing hidden agendas. At the completion of this exercise you should be able to revisit each story’s core messages in terms of headlines and sound bytes and see how they need to be adjusted to help **Win the Battle of the Story!**

STORY	Power Holders/Status Quo	Change Agents
<p>CONFLICT How is the problem being framed? Who is the conflict between? Who are the good guys and the bad guys?</p>		



	<u>Power Holders/Status Quo</u>	<u>Change Agents</u>
<p>SYMPATHETIC CHARACTERS Who are the victims? Who are the messengers that tell the story?</p>		
<p>SHOW DON'T TELL How does the story use images or anecdotes to convince without being preachy? How does the story engage our values and encourage us to choose sides?</p>		
<p>ASSUMPTIONS What are the unstated assumptions? What does someone have to believe to accept the story?</p>		
<p>POINTS OF INTERVENTION How can we challenge the other story's assumptions? What are the other story's vulnerabilities? Limits? Contradictions? Lies?</p>		