

The Basic Building Blocks

- What are your goals and objectives?
- Whose hearts and minds do you need to win over (elected officials, donors, volunteers, etc.)?
- What channels and tactics will you use to reach them?

The Story Development

- What is the moral of your story, or “message?” Consider this formula:
Persuasive communications = shared values + a problem or opportunity + a solution or call to action
- What story, or set of stories, can carry your message, pull your audience in and help them make sense of the situation? Who is the hero? Who is the villain? What is the conflict or challenge facing the hero?
- What is your resolution or call to action?
- What emotions or desires will move your audience to action?
Joy? Hope? Empowerment? Anger? Fear? Surprise?

Visual Checklist

- Identify visual elements that tell your story:
 - Setting: Where and when?
 - Characters: Who is involved?
 - Emotions: Why should we care?
- How can you test to ensure the images resonate with your audience?
- Are your images authentic and original, not stock?
- Think about target audiences when selecting the people in your photos and video. Will they trust, identify with, and relate to these characters?
- What is the first impression you want to create with your audience, or the hook? Select your lead photo accordingly.
- What captions will reinforce and elaborate on your visual message?
- Are you giving credit where credit is due? Double-check permissions and attributions.
- Are you reinforcing your brand identity with these pictures? Are you being consistent in the quality, size, color and composition of your visuals? If not, time to develop a style guide!

Visit visualstorylab.org for additional tip sheets on how to create high impact visual communications and to share your own success stories and lessons learned.