



The Four Change Boosters of Innovation: Communication

Sharing Your Success: A Story of Impact

*From our LOMED and I*Express Innovation Initiatives*

One way to share our success is by focusing on the impact of a single learner. Use the template below to tell a compelling story.

Why Tell Your Success:

You need to effectively communicate success:

- To sustain innovation: Boards and Lay Leaders rightfully ask: What results?
- To engage more participants: Families rightfully ask: What results?
- To define yourself as innovative: Perspective members ask: What results?

How to tell the story?

Below you will find a *story template* widely used in advertising, literature and history. It is known as the *Hero's Journey*. The value of the template is that it shows the result in terms of the wrestling and triumph. Research tells us that the arc of the Hero's Journey *sparks emotion for the listener*. It is also more *memorable and sticks with the listener*.

In this case your “hero” is a learner or family who has gone through a journey as a result of your learning model. The learner/hero has changed as a result of your model of education. This is what results!! Your success worth communicating!

Using the Template

Directions: Meet together with your team to uncover your “hero.”

- Each member of your team should read the explanation of the Hero's Journey (below), either silently or out loud as a group.
- Ask each member to tell a story about a learner (child, parent, or family) that has gone through a transformation, growth, or maturing.
- Together, decide on one learner that exemplifies the “gift” your model brings to its learners. Before deciding, your team may want to speak to other teachers for suggestions.
- Fill in the tables below to complete your Hero's Journey Tale. You do not need to fill them out in order; you may have a better understanding of middle or later parts of the story. Look back to the literary and real-world examples to help you.
- Remember, the story is meant to exemplify the power of learning in your congregation.



Your “Hero’s/Learner/Family’s” Journey

Below is an explanation and example of the elements of the Hero’s story or journey.

Note: *As the learner’s story unfolds, we learn about the whole person, knowledge, actions, values and sense of belonging.*

Ordinary World

This is the world your learner lives in. In this template, something isn’t right with the world, but your learner doesn’t yet know he can change that. So you are asking yourself, *what is the challenge this learner is facing in their lives?*

- **Example from literature:** Harry Potter sees injustice in the world but doesn’t believe he has any power to fight it.
- **Example in the real world:** Seth is in middle school, on the verge of adolescence, but has not yet had opportunities to mark his independence. He has heard about “social action” but doesn’t believe he is big enough or able to help others.

Call to Adventure & Meeting the Mentor

The next part of telling the story of your learner includes something or someone enticing your learner to go on a journey – a challenge – that she will most likely refuse at first. The mentor or teacher will offer her a gift (like learning or a skill, or an experience) for the journey ahead.

- **Example from literature:** Harry meets Hagrid (mentor) who invites him to attend Hogwarts (the journey) and takes him to buy a wand (the gift).
- **Example in the real world:** Seth is invited to join a Social Action model (the journey). He doesn’t want to go; it interferes with his sports practice. He meets the educator who hands him a journal (the gift) – the tool he will use to reflect on his experiences and relate them to the Jewish learning happening between service projects.

Crossing the Threshold

The next phase of the story includes how the learner leaves her comfortable Ordinary World behind and cross over into the “special world” where the journey begins.

- **Example in Literature:** Harry Potter must rush through a seemingly solid wall to enter Platform 9¾ and then takes a train to the mysterious Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Harry is nervous; he wonders if he is the only person on the train that has never experienced magic before.
- **Example in the real world:** Seth’s mother drops him off in an unfamiliar place, not the classroom where he went to Sunday school, but a public school in need of great repair, a place very different from his own school grounds. He feels uncomfortable here, not sure what to make of the experience.



The Struggle

Here is the meat of the story. What challenges does the learner face? What must he do that enables growth? Note that the learner must do the act of maturing, the mentor/teacher and only support him on the own journey.

- **Example in Literature:** Harry is sure that someone has a dangerous object (the Sorcerer's Stone) and must be stopped. He spends a long time working out where the stone is hidden. Once he solves the puzzle, no grownup wizards are available to help him. So, he and his friends bravely enter a dangerous and difficult labyrinth of magical obstacles to try to stop the villain before it's too late.
- **Example in the Real World:** Guided by his teacher, Seth visits many sites where people are in need of help – a school in need of repair, a soup kitchen, a child care center at a battered women's shelter. The amount of need and despair in the world become overwhelming. He feels small and helpless, but determined to be a part of repairing the world. Seth *knows* more about the world now and is beginning to learn *actions* that can make a difference.

The Treasure

Coming to the end of the telling of the story: What will your learner bring back at the end of her journey? The struggle will ultimately lead to a new kind of gift or skill(lived action, belief, relationships, knowledge), one that she can take with her in life.

- **Example in Literature:** Harry defeats Voldemort, brings back the stone, and is rewarded for his bravery with the House Cup. His true treasure is friendship and self-worth, both of which he had never experienced previously in his life.
- **Example in the Real World:** Seth chooses to continue going to the daycare center where the children love to sing with him. He continues to volunteer outside of the Social Action model, on his own, without his teacher. He no longer feels overwhelmed by the needs in the world; he feels an *important part* of its repair. And Seth is beginning to feel a new confidence.

The Road Back

Now the story ends: Your learner's journey is represented by a circle. The end is his/her return to the Ordinary World. But, now he is wiser and more mature. The Ordinary World feels a little smaller than when he started.

- **Example in Literature:** Harry rides the train back to King's Cross station where his family waits for him. He feels self-assured and secure with friends and magical skills. His family that once seemed evil now looks timid and silly.
- **Example in the Real World:** When he explains to his friends where he goes on Thursday afternoons, Seth says, "This is what it means to be Jewish. I cannot solve all the world's problems, but I am a part of making the world a better place."



Now it's Your Turn.

Based on the example, use this template to tell the story of your hero.

Your Learner who has shown significant growth or change	
Name	Age
What's special about your learner (e.g. interests, talents, family)? What makes him/her special and interesting?	
Who is the mentor? (e.g., Teacher, Mentor/Guide, Peer learner)	
What is the model (One-two sentence explanation)	

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Your Learner's Journey		
Ordinary World	Call to Adventure & Meeting the Mentor	Crossing the Threshold
<p><i>Describe the world that your learner lives in. What is their day- to -day life like? (you may need to interview your learner)</i></p> <p><i>What challenges (applicable to the learning in your model) do they face in their lives?</i></p> <p><i>As a result what question(s) is she/he asking?</i></p>	<p><i>What journey (powerful experience-opportunity for exploration and growth) does the model offer?</i></p> <p><i>How does the mentor/teacher entice your learner on his journey?</i></p> <p><i>What symbolic gift (e.g. new tools or knowledge or skills or guidance or questions) does the mentor give?</i></p>	<p><i>How is the "special world" (the powerful experience) different than the hero's ordinary world?</i></p> <p><i>What does the learner experience in the learning that is different than her normal experiences?</i></p>
The Struggle	The Treasure	The Road Back
<p><i>What is the hero's struggle? What challenges does the learner have with the learning?</i></p> <p><i>Why is it difficult for him?</i></p> <p><i>The struggle must be one he wrestles with on his own.</i></p>	<p><i>What change did the learner experience from her journey?</i></p> <p><i>What knowledge, skills relationships, new lived action and values did she gain?</i></p>	<p><i>How did the learner integrate her learning into his life?</i></p> <p><i>How has your learner grown and matured?</i></p> <p><i>What action illustrates the change your learner has undergone?</i></p>

