SOWING YOUR NARRATIVE

TRAINING WORKBOOK

CREATED BY PEOPLE’S BUDGET BIRMINGHAM
HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

People’s Budget Birmingham invites you to use this workbook to develop, strengthen, and operationalize your personal narrative.

Stories sow the seeds of resistance and our goal with this workbook is to give you the space and guidance to realize your personal and political liberation.
People’s Budget Birmingham believes governments should be accountable, accessible, and transparent to the people they represent and that a budget for the public should be apportioned by the public.

Our mission is to implement participatory budgeting as a cornerstone of municipal governance and to empower constituents to challenge their governments to meet this end.
**ON YOUR TERMS**

Don’t fall into the trap of using your opponents language, concepts, and values. You want to contrast your values against the values of your opponent. Speak on your terms and offer an alternative to the existing harmful narratives.

**AFFIRMATIVE**

Remember that you are taking a position in favor of something. This doesn’t mean you can’t critique the opponent’s narrative, but that your narrative should give your audience a way out of the opposing narrative.

**REPETITION**

Repetition reinforces your values in your audience’s mind. Repetition is how we win the brain game. So, repeat your values clearly and often.

**KNOW YOUR FACTS**

Prepare. Being and appearing knowledgeable is critical to the delivery of your narrative. Select and memorize 3 facts you will come back to when sharing your narrative, and never make things up on the spot.

Pro tip: “I don’t know the answer to that, I’ll connect you with someone who does” is an appropriate response when you don’t know the answer to a question.

**VALUES V. FACTS**

We want to believe that people will change their minds if they, “just knew the facts.” But, research suggests that people often bury themselves deeper into their false beliefs when challenged with accurate information.

Luckily, audiences consistently respond to values-grounded narratives. And are motivated to learn more if they fell connected to the values you are sharing.

Connecting with your audience through values has a lasting effect, builds trust, and forms the foundation for relationship building. In other words, shared values build power.

**BRING IT BACK**

Where many new spokespeople stumble is staying on message. There are so many complex ideas and emotions that new spokespeople get off track.

If there is any skill you practice, it is to be clear, precise, and concise. Just as you can choose your message [see above], you can choose your direction. You have the power to determine where the conversation will go.
Write down 3-5 VALUES that you will use to shape your narrative.

Values function as lenses through which we interpret the world and are usually shaped through relationships, faith, political analysis, and much more.

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 
Write down 3-5 FACTS that you will use to shape your narrative.

Facts can be experiential, material, numerical, or more. They should reference something that can be observed.

1. _______________________________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________

2. _______________________________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________

3. _______________________________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________

4. _______________________________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________

5. _______________________________________________________________________
Build your narrative elements: Who, What, When, Where, Why

Reference your workshop constructor questions. Ex. “Where is this taking place?” or “Who are the characters in this story?”

**WHO**

**WHAT**

**WHEN**

**WHERE**

**WHY**
Do more with your narrative

Now make your story emotionally compelling, highlight the urgency, and call your audience to action.

**URGENCY**

**FEEL**

**ACTION**

**MEDIUM**

Be sure to plant your seeds in the right conditions. Every tone, style, and approach isn’t for every medium. What you say to your supporters isn’t going to be what you say to a room of opponents. How you say something on TV isn’t the same as you say it on social media. Trust your instincts, but challenge yourself. Be precise, be clear, be concise.

**What medium(s) are you preparing for?**
Bring everything together.

Write your narrative with all of the elements you have prepared.

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THANK YOU!
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