



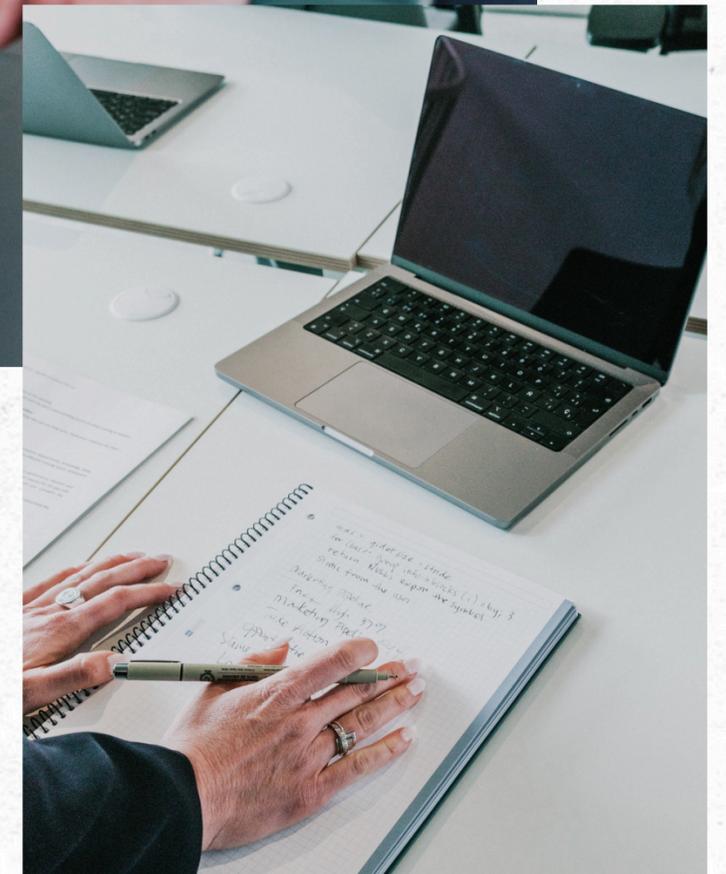
Data in Storytelling

Showcasing Impact Through Multiple Means

Data VLC - September 2024

Agenda

- Welcome
- Why Do Data & Storytelling Matter?
- 6 Steps to Using Data in a Story
- Samples
- Discussion



About us



The Data VLC is committed to addressing data practices that lead to programmatic success. We welcome attendees from diverse roles in Title II programs to engage.



Why is Data in Storytelling Important?

Data can be used not only for programmatic changes and grant compliance but also for advocating to and educating stakeholders. Using data to tell a compelling story involves transforming raw numbers and information into a narrative that captivates and engages the audience.



Data

Shows quantitative impact. Provides an overview of your program's impact.



Shows qualitative impact. Student success stories are powerful.

Story



6 Steps to Effective Data in Storytelling

Define your message
Know your audience

Select the right data
Visualize the data

Provide context
Narrate the data



Define your Message

Explanation:

- Clarify the key takeaway you want the audience to remember. It should be concise and directly tied to the purpose of your data presentation.

Example:

- If you want to showcase the impact of adult literacy programs, your message could be, "Adult literacy programs increase economic opportunities for learners." This message sets the direction for presenting data on how literacy leads to higher employment rates.





Know Your Audience

Explanation:

- Consider who will be viewing the data—whether they are learners, educators, or policymakers—and tailor the message to fit their knowledge level and interests.

Example:

- For policymakers, focus on statistics that show the broader societal impact, like reductions in poverty levels due to adult education. For learners, highlight individual success stories with relatable data, such as average income increases after completing an Illinois HS diploma program.





Select the Right Data

Explanation:

- The data you select must clearly support your message. Irrelevant or overwhelming data can dilute the impact of your message.

Example:

- If your goal is to highlight student retention rates, choose data that compares retention rates in programs with support services (like childcare or tutoring) versus those without. This focuses attention on solutions that improve learner success.





Visualize the Data

Explanation:

- Effective visualization makes data more digestible. Use graphs, charts, or infographics that align with the story you're telling.

Example:

- A simple bar graph comparing literacy levels before and after completing an ABE course can visually demonstrate learner progress. This is more impactful than listing percentages, as it shows a clear improvement trend.





Provide Context

Explanation:

- Context allows the audience to understand why the data matters. Explain any background, trends, or external factors that influenced the data.

Example:

- When showing a rise in learner enrollment, provide context by explaining that this increase occurred after offering online classes, making education more accessible during the pandemic. This shows the adaptability and responsiveness of programs to learner needs.





Narrate the Data

Explanation:

- Telling the story behind the data engages the audience more than simply presenting numbers. Highlight trends, implications, and actions that can be taken based on the data.

Example:

- Instead of just showing that 70% of learners improved their literacy scores, narrate the story by explaining, "This 70% increase means that more learners are gaining the skills they need to secure higher-paying jobs, helping to lift themselves and their families out of poverty." This brings the data to life and connects it to real-world impacts.



Examples - The Data



"The partnership between Waubensee Community College and the Kane County Sheriff's office was built and launched in August 2019 to provide instructional services for individuals currently residing in Kane County Jail. It follows a national trend towards providing educational opportunities to incarcerated individuals to obtain the necessary skills and knowledge to enter high-demand employment fields upon release. Since its inception, the program has served 580 individuals residing at the jail."



"A 2023 study by the Mackinac Center for Public Policy reported that the overall return on investment for education programs in a correctional setting for taxpayers is 122%, factoring in the costs of the program versus the savings from reduced recidivism, increased employment opportunities, and safer communities. Additionally, studies have shown that individuals that participate in education programs have a 43% lower chance of being reincarcerated (recidivism)."



Examples - The Story

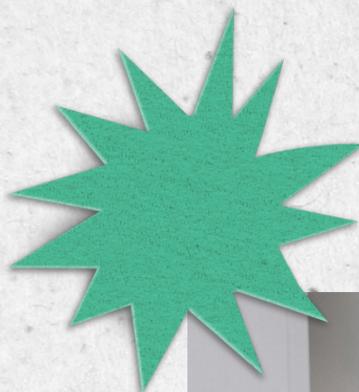


"Graduate David Williams reflected on his personal growth, noting, 'The language arts classes opened a whole new vocabulary to me and have made my writing so much stronger. I am better able to express myself using new words and having greater understanding of their meaning. The classes also made me want to learn more about subjects and gain knowledge in areas I didn't know about before. I am looking forward to learning more and growing stronger as an individual. I used to be the poison, now I want to be the antidote in my community!'"



"Jesus Canales, another graduate, expressed hope for his future, stating, 'I see all the opportunities that have opened now that I have my diploma. The better job opportunities and education opportunities that were once closed have now opened and I want to be able to meet my responsibilities after I am released. 'Difficult roads lead to beautiful destinations.' It was really hard, but we worked together as a team and kept lifting each other up. Mr. Hargot pushed us not only to learn, but to change the way we looked at the world and the possibilities.'" 

Data & Story



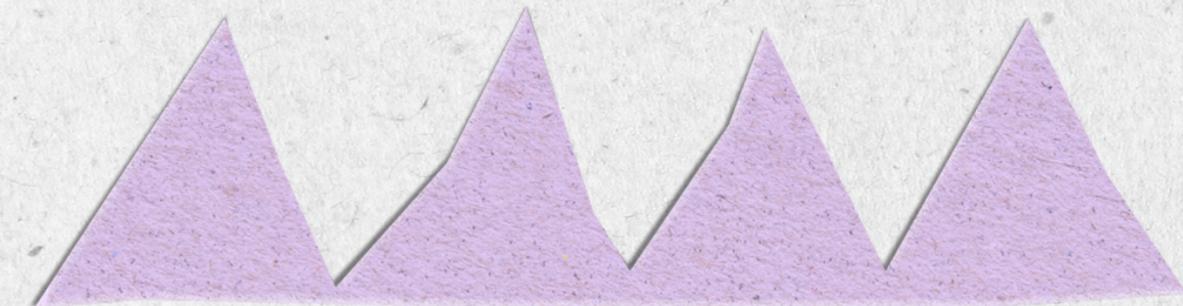
Discussion



Imagine a possible audience (e.g., college president, legislator, mayor, workforce partner, etc.).
What pieces of data from your program/class would be effective with your audience?



Join us next month



<https://excellenceinadulthood.org/learning-communities/data-virtual-learning-community>

