

A close-up photograph of a hand placing wooden letters on a sandy surface. The letters 'I', 'C', 'A', and 'N' are visible, with the hand currently positioning the letter 'N'. The scene is lit with warm, golden light, creating soft shadows on the sand.

# HOW TO WRITE A STRONG NARRATIVE

*Your organization's story begins with YOU!*

*LISCIF Training Webinar  
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Connor Yakaitis - CTLCV*



# *A Special Thanks To:*

## *People:*

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*The Long Island Sound Community  
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*Long Island Sound Study (LISS)*

*Connecticut League of Conservation  
Voters*

***And YOU!!!***





# FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

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*(1) What would I change in the world?*

*(2) What gives me hope?*

*(3) How can I share my story with others to make the biggest impact?*





## MY RESUME:

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- Current Development Director for the CT League Of Conservation Voters (CTLCV)
- Developed Four-Year Strategic Plan For CTLCV
- 4+ years of grant writing experience, 8+ years fundraising experience
- Previous fundraiser/organizer for political candidates
- Current Volunteer Fundraising Coordinator for Jericho Project





"There is no greater agony than  
bearing an untold story inside you."

*-Maya Angelou*





## MY NARRATIVE:

- .....
- I'm a dog dad (Meet Dakota!)
- I'm in a band with my cousin called Primo
- I spent a year traveling the country with my family and visited 35 national parks
- I spent several weeks at Standing Rock fighting for water rights for the Lakota Nation
- My happy place is the ocean, particularly the Long Island Sound



# THINK OF IT AS A JOB INTERVIEW!

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## Narrative: Your Cover Letter (Letter Of Intent, LOI)

- Personal, emotional and concise.
- Connect authentically with your audience.
- Grab their attention and bring it home!

## Grant Application: Your Resume

- Data & research driven.
- Emphasize audience and funding potential.
- Longterm thinking.





**YOUR PERSONAL STORY**



**IS YOUR  
ORGANIZATION'S  
STORY**





# GOOD STORIES SHOULD

- **Make people feel** - people act when they feel
- **Be remembered**- people will remember a powerful story
- **Create understanding** - stories are how we've communicated since the dawn of time
- **Cut through clutter** - too much online (dis)information these days, people crave genuine stories
- **Build organizational structure** - it shows your audience you hear them and appreciate them
- **Wake people up** - stories create emotion, they inspire, they anger and most importantly they give hope



# TIPS FOR BUILDING A NARRATIVE

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- **Short & Sweet** - People naturally have short attention spans, especially in today's world. The simpler the better.
- **Show, Don't Tell** - Use senses and emotions to tell your story. If you get too caught up in the details, you'll bore your audience.
- **Think story versus an essay** - clear and concise is key
- **Be original** - unique stories get noticed and we are ALL unique!
- **Limit your data** - numbers will come later, pick a few (3 max) figures to include in your narrative.
- **Look ahead** - A good story can reminisce about the past while looking towards the future. Funders want to visualize their impact!
- **Diversity & Equity** - How does your story relate/impact others?



# NEXT STEPS

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- Write down 5 reasons why you love your job and think about mission/values/goals etc.
- What stories have emerged from your experience?
- Ask each board & staff member to do the same.
- Identify patterns, similarities etc. and, as an organization, combine your list into a collective 3 values.
- These values will shape your ultimate goals, mission and reasons why you deserve funding.
- Each person finds three more people to join the conversation and make a huge difference!



**THANK YOU!**

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*Now let's hear your story*