



## ImpactStory™ Academy

Most small- and medium-sized nonprofit leaders feel strong pressure to *prove* they are making an impact in the world. The stress of this expectation often results in complex, time consuming data collection, or even expensive, one-time, deep-dive program evaluations. This approach involves a lot of staff time, stress, overwhelm, and often leaves nonprofit leaders **STILL** scrambling to tell their impact story. This model of impact measurement is outdated. Nonprofits simply should **NOT** be doing program evaluation.

That's why we've created the straightforward, uncomplicated, 3-step ImpactStory™ strategy for being **clear** about what impact nonprofits are working toward, being **confident** in the data being collected (including how to understand it), and how to tell **convincing** impact stories that move people to action: to give, to volunteer, to change, to expand, to succeed. **Having uncomplicated data and narratives at your fingertips not only allows you to control the story, but it's a goal that's within reach - even in the complex and always moving real-world of nonprofits.**



### What Participants Get

- ✓ Six 90-minute classes, plus 15 minutes before and after each class for questions and networking, and 2 sets of office hours to ask questions over 8 weeks. A total of 14 hours of live learning.
- ✓ Workbook including additional resources. A complete Strategic Impact Map™. A revised survey.
- ✓ All the knowledge needed to build out your nonprofit's ImpactStory™ Strategy and to evolve it over time to meet your changing needs.
- ✓ Lifetime access to the ImpactStory™ Network listserv to ask questions, build relationships, and share information.

### Prerequisites

- Commitment to using data to tell powerful impact stories.
- Ability to come to every class and do the homework. Classes are not recorded.
- Basic Excel skills; not afraid of numbers.
- Curiosity and growth-oriented perspective.

## **STEP 1 – Map Out Your Strategy**

### ***Class 1 - Strong Frameworks (week 1)***

*Introduction to each other and the academy structure; Strategic Impact Map™ Part 1*

- ✓ Lesson: How a Strategic Impact Map™ is helpful; introduce case study
- ✓ Interactive Discussion: Complete and discuss workbook page on community-needs, vision, and mission.
- Take Aways: Knowing how to connect community-level need, vision, and mission as a framework for your organization.
- Homework: Use your workbook to make a list of all your nonprofit's programs and resources.
- Resources Provided: (1) class list, (2) Strategic Impact Map™ Guide (ImpactStory™ exclusive), (3) resources on Logic Model and Theory of Change

### ***Class 2 - Programming that Works (week 2)***

*Strategic Impact Map™ Part 2*

- ✓ Lesson: The power of evidence-based programs and how to adapt them to what you do. Be able to talk about the set of data-driven solutions your nonprofits offers to address the community-level need. Learn how Impact Statements allow you to talk to funders about their long-term return on investment.
- ✓ Interactive Discussion: Workshop writing solutions in your Strategic Impact Map.
- Take Aways: How connecting your solutions to specific impact is key to being clear about your impact story.
- Homework: Use your workbook to complete your Strategic Impact Map™.
- Resources Provided: (1) lists of evidence-based practices websites, (2) free access to Impact Statements (ImpactStory™ exclusive), (2) sample Strategic Impact Map, (3) blank Word templates for Strategic Impact Maps™ (ImpactStory™ exclusive)

### ***Office Hours #1 - Working on your Strategic Impact Map™ (week 3)***

- ✧ Come talk about building your own Strategic Impact Map™. Bring your drafts, bring your questions, learn from others.
- ✧ First come, first serve; 1 hour of group coaching
- ✧ Additional hours will be added depending on the number of Academy participants.

## STEP 2 – Gathering the Pieces

### **Class 4 - Smart Surveys (week 4)**

#### *Essential Survey Do's and Don't's*

- ✓ Lesson: What makes a great survey, how to create survey questions designed to tell your impact story, response rates, and (happy dance!) you only need to do post surveys.
- ✓ Interactive Discussion: We edit some surveys together and share experiences about what survey techniques have worked participants' nonprofits.
- Take Aways: Smart surveys are the basis for getting the statements you need to tell your impact story.
- Homework: Use your immediate impact to write (or edit existing) survey questions that are designed to tell your impact story.
- Resources Provided: (1) additional survey resources, (2) how to conduct focus groups (ImpactStory™ exclusive), (3) how to do interviews (ImpactStory™ exclusive)

### **Class 4 - Painless Data Analysis (week 5)**

#### *No Statistics Required*

- ✓ Lesson: What do you do with surveys once you've collected them?!? Data analysis does not have to be scary: you only need about 6 Excel formulas (no statistics) and three types of graphs. Also learn about the power of Data Insight Teams.
- ✓ Interactive Discussion: Bring your laptop so you can practice creating your own graphs; discuss how to interpret data, what to do with "bad" news, and data ethics.
- Take Aways: How to do manageable data analysis and confidently interpret your results.
- Homework: Use sample raw data file to practice your new skills.
- Resources: (1) Excel lessons in everything taught from Depict Data Studio, (2) a sample Excel workbook with examples of data analysis and graphs, (3) Data Insight Team guide and agenda (ImpactStory™ exclusive)

### **Office Hours #2 – Perfecting your surveys (week 6)**

- ✧ Come talk about building your surveys. Bring your drafts, bring your questions, learn from others.
- ✧ First come, first serve; 1 hour of group coaching
- ✧ Additional hours will be added depending on the number of Academy participants.

## STEP 3 – Tell Your Story

### **Class 5 - Powerful Data Viz (week 7)**

#### *Data that Looks like a Million Bucks*

- ✓ Lesson: Dashboards (inward facing stories) focus on performance metrics which allow for quick assessment of strengths and challenges so decisions can be made about shifting resources or getting more information. Infographics (outward facing stories) focus on a very specific success stories which makes them easily understood and useful for mass marketing/outreach/annual reports. Also learn the essential principals of clear data visualization.
- ✓ Interactive Discussion: Review some data visualization examples and discuss what you like and what you don't like.
- Take Aways: What it takes to have a clear data viz that can be used for inward facing and outward facing impact storytelling.
- Homework: Look at your last annual report and identify three things you'd change.
- Resources Provided: Data visualization resources from Depict Data Studio and others.

### **Class 6 - Masterful Impact Stories**

#### *Impact Stories that Move People to Action*

- ✓ Lesson: Marrying data and narratives for deeper and broader applications of impact stories: (1) internal stories for making daily, monthly, quarterly, annual decisions about readjusting staffing/outreach/resources, including reports to the Board; and external stories including (2) annual reports; (3) general outreach for the organization, and (4) write grants and talk to funders. Impact stories can also be used to motivate staff!
- ✓ Interactive Discussion: Given the case study Strategic Impact Map, a one-page Data Viz for outreach, and the one-page dashboard, practice helping a board member with their elevator pitch.
- ✓ Wrap-Up: Write down the most pressing demand for impact storytelling in your nonprofit right now. Discuss what you have learned that you can now use to meet that demand, and what the very next thing you're going to do to implement the ImpactStory™ Strategy is.
- Take Aways: How to tell an impact story in a way that moves people to take action; a plan for moving forward with the ImpactStory™ Strategy at your nonprofit
- Homework: Take your next step.
- Resources Provided: Invitation to continue to use the ImpactStory™ Network listserv to ask questions, exchange information, and build relationships