Moving Beyond the Mission Statement

Storytelling in One Sentence

Clear Wisdom Public Relations & Consulting

Robert Austin, APR
Mission Statements Are Overrated
The Mission

“....exists to provide a continuum of community-based services that support the efforts of children and adults with disabilities to live as independently as possible in the least restrictive environment.”
The Mission

“We’re a nonprofit organization bringing clean, safe drinking water to people in developing countries.”
So, what did you see?

Fritz Heider & Marianne Simmel
The Hero’s Journey

Joseph Campbell
Dr. Randy Olson, Houston We Have A Narrative
• Dorothy lives in Kansas with her dog, Toto, **AND** life was pretty boring.

• **BUT**, one day a tornado whisks her away to the strange land of Oz.

• **THEREFORE**, she must rally her new friends around her and undertake a long journey to find her way home.
• Luke is a farm boy who dreamed of bigger things in the universe,

• **BUT** a message that could change the future of the empire changed his life,

• **So**, he joined the band of rebels to save the galaxy.
Little Miss Muffet sat on a tuffet, [AND] eating her curds and whey.

[BUT] Along came a spider who sat down beside her,

And [THEREFORE] scared Miss Muffet away.
Fourscore and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth, on this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty AND dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

[BUT] Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived, and so dedicated, can long endure...

[THEREFORE] ...we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."
The Coffee Shop
I’m a coffee roaster. I visited Guatemala on a coffee tour a few years ago and saw how the smaller farmers couldn’t feed their families. BUT they were also some of the most knowledgeable and dedicated to their craft. So, I put together a coop of these small-scale farmers, which allowed them to make more money, me to get better beans, and my customers to know their purchase made a sustainable difference.
Whose story is this?

I work at University Hospital AND it’s a huge place where people get lost,

BUT we want people to feel at ease no matter why they’re here,

So, I guide them to where they need to be and make sure they know what to expect.
My Story

My first career was in medical laboratory science AND the scientific method was a part of my training.

BUT I also worked as a freelance writer on the side, because of a love for words and the power they have to change perceptions.

SO I found a career that brings science and communication together through strategic public relations.
A volunteer’s personal ABT story...

I’m a project manager AND I did a fun-run with my sister. It was very disorganized.

BUT while waiting in line, I was moved by the stories people told me about why they were there. I more connected to the organization.

SO, the next year I volunteered to put my skills to use and help organize the run. I’ve helped every year since.
What’s your personal story?
The Mission

“To inspire and empower youth through innovative community partnerships.”
The Program

We match at-risk youth with mentors in the business community.
ABT story:

Young people struggling with issues at home have a hard time envisioning a hopeful future **AND** that affects all aspects of their lives.

**BUT** no one looks to the future like entrepreneurs. They understand how big dreams can inspire change in life.

**So,** we pair them up so these kids can have a strong role model for their futures and entrepreneurs can share their life lessons.
The Mission

To provide training, information and technical assistance to equip families of children with any disability with strategies to advocate successfully for their children.
Beyond the Mission:

Ensuring a good education for your kid is hard,

but that’s a huge understatement for a kid with a disability,

So, we help parents navigate the system to ensure a disability doesn’t prevent a quality education.
You make sure kids have the healthiest life possible, despite a disability.

**BUT** their success in life depends on a quality education, despite their disability.

**So,** your referral lets us lead parents through the education system just as you lead them through the healthcare system.
Seventy percent of kids in foster care want to go on to college.

**BUT** only 15% have the chance to enroll AND less than 3% graduate in their lifetime.

**So,** we increase both enrollment and graduation rates through 1:1 mentorships when they age out of foster care.
What’s your organization’s story?

What does your organization do?
Why do you do it?
How does it matter?