

The Complete Guide to
**Organizational
Storytelling**



PRESENTED BY
STORIES



Table of Contents

03	An Introduction to Organizational Storytelling
05	Case Study: Dell Technologies
07	Organizational Storytelling Use Cases by Department
08	Employer Brand
11	Recruitment Marketing
13	Talent Acquisition
18	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
23	Corporate Communications
24	Internal Communications
26	Chief People Officers & Employee Engagement Agents
28	Business Functional Areas
31	Executive Leadership
34	How to Get Started with Organizational Storytelling
33	Conclusion
35	About Stories Inc.
36	Sources

An Introduction to Organizational Storytelling

Company cultures are always evolving. In the past two years alone, organizations needed to culturally adjust to a global pandemic, a national racial reckoning, industry talent shortages, and market fluctuations. As a result, some organizations have increased remote work and flexibility, doubled down on wellness initiatives, and made bigger investments in corporate diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), all of which impact the lives of their employees. And, that's on top of cultural change that comes with new teammates and natural team and leadership attrition.

Ultimately, companies have had to reconcile, rethink and change how they're supporting their employees...or deliberately choose to ignore it.

For companies who care about developing a unique culture and using it as a competitive advantage, organizational storytelling is one of your most important strategies.

Now is a good time to revisit not only who you are today, but also how you can optimize your story so it resonates with every audience who is invested in your culture: employees, candidates, customers, investors, alumni, and more.

What is Organizational Storytelling?

Organizational storytelling surfaces important cultural moments and corporate decisions that impact people, and uses those stories to engage the audiences interested in your culture. It defines who you are, and also identifies important moments that have built your culture. The output is a content library filled with media that tells your overarching story *and* showcases important moments that bring your culture to life.



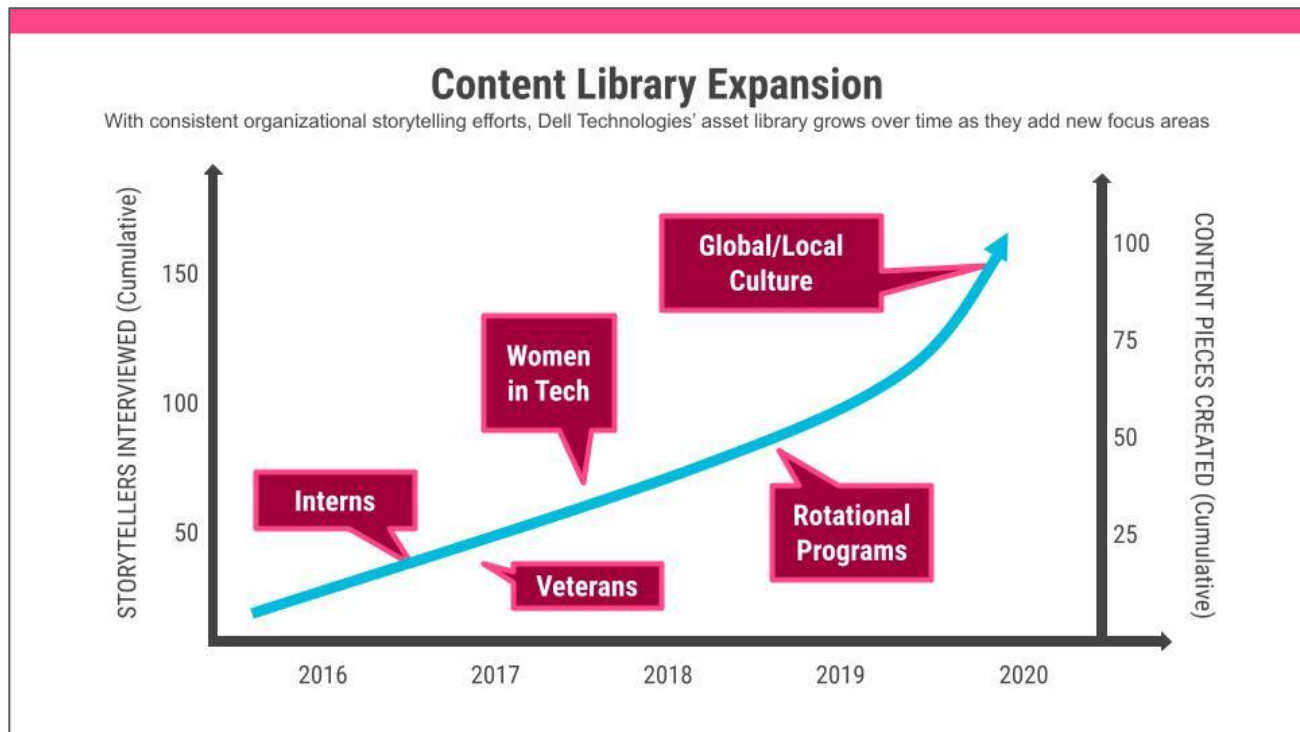
For the most real and authentic picture of your culture, organizational storytelling efforts must include a wide range of employees and leaders as storytellers. The specifics about their individual employee experience at your company are critical to create a realistic picture.

But organizational storytelling isn't just one tagline, one defining story or one video. It's a collection of employee experiences that are both weaved together to illustrate different themes and isolated to prove important points. Ultimately organizational storytelling results in a content library of employee stories that will be used across channels, to engage different audiences. This eBook will talk through all the different ways you can use organizational culture to your competitive advantage.



Case Study: Dell Technologies

Dell Technologies understands the power of organizational storytelling. We have worked together since 2016 to uncover compelling employee stories, organize and theme thousands of employee experiences, and create media that has engaged a variety of audiences.



For example, in one year, the Stories Inc. team interviewed 67 employees and uncovered hundreds of stories that ultimately illustrated Dell Technologies' employee experience, culture and values globally.

Regardless of where in the world someone worked, there were consistencies in the storytellers' experiences. Themes emerged around flexibility, DEI, innovation, social impact, and more.

Gathering important stories from all over the world, across offices, races, ages, tenures, and positions, allowed Dell Technologies and Stories Inc. to "zoom out" and see the big picture.

Dell Technologies Global Project

THEMES FROM STORIES

Universal culture	Work/life balance
Local culture	Women of Dell
Innovation	Social impact
Diversity & inclusion	Graduate greatness
Flexibility	Customer focus

CONTENT CREATED

Long-form videos	Headshot photos
Short-form videos	Individual candid
Social videos	Team portraits
Social ads	Group action shots
Animated videos	Workspace photos



From these stories, we created and added 33 videos for their content library. Each video was captioned in multiple languages and optimized per distribution channel. We also added thousands of professional photographs of storytellers across positions, backgrounds, and levels of seniority. We also added photos of teams in action, office environments and photos that tell the story of regional offices' unique cultures. Dell uses these assets in annual reports, on their careers site, YouTube channels, in digital and print ads, and more. Further, the content library is searchable by topic, location, language, talent category, target audience, content channel, and more.

Stories at Scale

	A	B	C
1	Description	Category	Region
13	Panama (Spanish)	Site video	LATAM
14	Singapore (English)	Site video	APJ
15	Our Women in Action	Themed video	Global
16	Graduate Greatness	Themed video	Global
17	Shaping the Future of Innovation	Themed video	Global
18	Diversity of Thought	Themed video	Global
19	Focus on our Customers	Themed video	Global
20	Work/Life Balance	Themed video	Global
21	Making Progress Real	Themed video	Global
22	Our Women in Action (30 seconds)	Themed video	Global
23	Focus on our Customers (30 seconds)	Themed video	Global
24	Graduate Greatness (30 seconds)	Themed video	Global
25	Diversity in Thought (30 seconds)	Themed video	Global
26	Work/Life Balance (30 seconds)	Themed video	Global
27	Shaping the Future of Innovation (30 seconds)	Themed video	Global
28	Making Progress Real (Instagram animation)	Instagram animation	Global

Content is organized and searchable by...

- Topic
- Channel
- Location
- Demographic

Dell Technologies' stakeholders worldwide actively use the content library to communicate culture. The result: cohesive and compelling organizational storytelling for one of the world's most well-known and admired companies.



Use Cases By Department

From intern to executive, DEI to finance, It's important to involve employee storytellers from all over your organization. You need a wide view of the employee experience, compiled from many perspectives. This is essential to your organizational storytelling efforts.

And, you must also engage key departments **whose jobs rely on connecting with an audience**, whether that's employees, candidates, customers, investors, or all of the above. Organizational storytelling strengthens these relationships by communicating culture correctly and consistently. Because these departments have a nuanced understanding of what resonates with their audiences, they will have ideas on cultural topics they'd like covered. And of course, the more champions you have to your organizational efforts, the better.



Read on to for a detailed exploration of how several functional areas can use organizational storytelling to their advantage.

Employer Brand

A company's employer brand is the perception people inside and outside the organization have of what it is like to work there. Employer brand specialists serve the world in hugely essential ways. They help organizations realize their potential and success by defining who they are to attract the right talent. And, they help candidates make decisions that improve their lives.

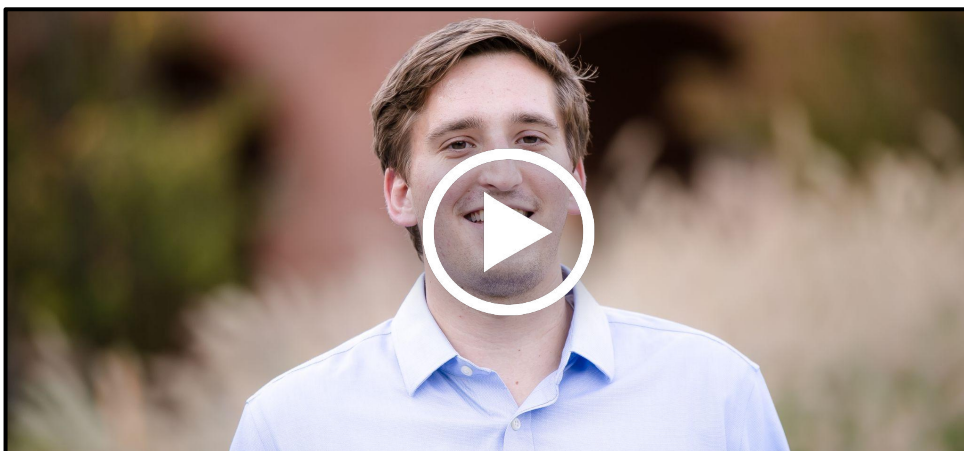
There are 3 specific ways your employer brand team will use organizational storytelling:

1. Activate Your Employer Brand
2. Change Your Brand Perception
3. Grow Brand Awareness

Activate Your Employer Brand

Organizational storytelling is the best approach to employer brand activation because it connects core values, mission statements, Employee Value Propositions (EVPs) and EVP pillars to the lived employee experience. By aligning candidate perception to the reality of the employee experience, you are grounding your employer brand in the actual employee experience. Stories from employees affirm your employer brand and help talent audiences best understand your messages.

Let's look at an example. Global healthcare leader Pfizer's EVP is "Own it!" and has four pillars: Purpose, Community, Quality and Progress. Those words alone might not stick with candidates. But when paired with John's story about a brand new robot innovation that assists patients, it makes it clear to candidates what the Quality looks at Pfizer.



John's story of Quality at Pfizer

Change Your Brand Perception

Sometimes, an organization needs to transform how an audience perceives their employer brand. This need could come after a negative company event forces a company to rebuild its culture from the inside out. Or, when a company has transformed its business and needs to attract a brand new category of talent.

Due to digital transformations in the financial sector, financial services companies have had to reinvent their employer brands to attract essential tech talent and compete with more established technology companies. With an organizational storytelling approach, Stories Incorporated's finance industry clients have sourced stories from technologists across specialties, tenures, and experience levels. They've talked about the projects they're working on, why they came and why they stay. These stories are the key to changing perceptions and convincing technical candidates.

Stories helped Discover Financial Services reach early careers technology candidates. Discover knew that recent graduates might think a credit card company could be "stiff" or "boring." To address these concerns, Discover uncovered stories from employees who have seen the opposite to be true.



Discover Careers: Life at a Fintech

Grow Brand Awareness

Some companies have great cultures that no one knows about...yet. If your company culture is stellar but has low employer brand awareness, organizational storytelling is an innovative growth strategy. In addition to uncovering a wealth of content that will widely communicate your universal employer brand, you'll generate messaging that connects with your niche audiences. Stories from voices throughout your organization bring your culture to life, show what differentiates your workplace from the competition, and build trust with talent.

Stories Inc. worked with Intel to create a series of employee story videos highlighting the experiences of African American women in technology roles.

While the world already knew Intel as a world-class technology innovator, employer brand leaders at the semiconductor company needed to grow brand awareness with African American women in technology. To build strong connections with this audience, Intel worked with Stories Inc. to uncover stories from African American women technologists at Intel about what their experience has been like working there. Stories like this one from LaToya show candidates how working at Intel compares to other tech companies.



LaToya's story of life at Intel

Recruitment Marketing

Recruitment marketing's job is to attract and convert quality candidates to your organization. According to a recent LinkedIn study, 70 percent of the workforce is passive talent and 30 percent is actively pursuing a new job.¹ With this balance in mind, your recruitment marketing team will use organizational storytelling to:

- Convert active candidates
- Nurture passive candidates

Convert Active Candidates

Recruitment marketers need specific, targeted content to convert active candidates at key inflection points throughout the candidate experience: recruiting events, job descriptions, social media ads and talent communities, to name a few.

The more personalized the content, the better. A company culture video embedded in an entry-level engineering job description is a great way to give candidates insight into what they can expect from your organization. A step further: a video featuring an engineer talking about their most recent innovative project. More specific: an early career engineer talking about the transition from education to their first engineering role. The more personalized the content, the stronger connection you are building with the candidate precisely when they are deciding whether to apply.

A library of organizational story content will empower you to scale this personalized approach across your different business areas and key positions. Activision Blizzard used organizational storytelling to bring their engineering roles to life for one of their most popular games, World of Warcraft.



One Small Checkbox: Engineer Elsbeth's Story

Nurture Passive Candidates

Data shows that candidates consume 12-18 messages about a company before submitting an application.² For the 70 percent of the workforce that are passive candidates, one-off campaigns and posts will miss their mark.³ An always-on recruitment marketing strategy that engages across advertisements, social media, blogs, events, and talent communities is necessary to stay top-of-mind with high-performing talent.

To 'feed the beast,' savvy recruitment marketers maximize their organizational storytelling library by repurposing and cross-posting content across channels.

One Story, Four Ways

- 1 Compilation video for consideration phase
- 2 Instagram video post
- 3 Blog post
- 4 Social graphic

ORGANIZATIONAL STORYTELLING: EASY TO REPURPOSE ACROSS CHANNELS



STORIES

Above, see how one story from a Dell employee was used to create four unique pieces of content.

All four of these organizational story content pieces can be shared across the eight major recruitment marketing channels to the left. That's 32 potential candidate touchpoints, just from one story!

Talent Acquisition

Talent acquisition professionals and leaders love organizational storytelling efforts because they are the ultimate storytellers. They already know what stories resonate with specific candidates, and how important good storytelling is to attracting and closing candidates. But, they need help with telling these stories at scale as well as using organizational stories throughout the candidate journey. Organizational storytelling can help some of talent acquisition's toughest challenges.

Global Talent Attraction Strategy

Understanding what's consistent about a workplace culture across the world is incredibly powerful (and assuring) to candidates. What is true about your culture no matter where in the world you work? Topics like mission, purpose, values and benefits are important story topics to cover here.

Because organizational storytelling relies on employee stories and experiences from team members all over the world as an input, you can identify global cultural themes quickly.

When Stories Inc. captured stories from Philips team members, we clearly identified the Philips employee experience. Whether employees were based in North or South America, the United States or Panama or Mexico or Brazil, their unique and shared culture was clear. We also captured lived examples of Philips' EVP and its pillars, and themes emerged around career growth, leadership, and employees' connection to the impact of their work.

As a result, Philips now has a library of content that brings their universal culture to life. Their talent acquisition team uses these content assets to speak to the employee experience globally. They can now tell a broad organizational story to millions of potential candidates.



Stories of how employees experience purpose and impact at Philips



Regional Recruitment Focuses

Cultures can differ even within small teams. The employee experience can be drastically different per location or office, even when the groups are working towards the same organizational purpose. Candidates are inundated with unspecific (and unmemorable) culture content. The more specific you can be, the more insight you give candidates. The example below shows candidates what it's like to work in the Montpellier, France location of Dell Technologies.

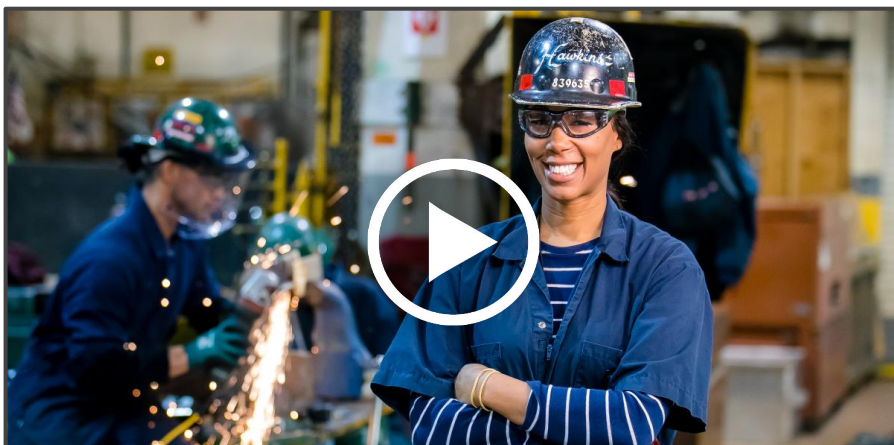
Acknowledging what candidates already know – that their employee experience will depend on the team they're on, the job they do, the place they work – builds trust. Giving them insight into the exact or very similar experience captures interest. Great recruiters know this is the ultimate closing tool: candidates can picture themselves working with you, in that office, with that team.



Life at Dell Technologies in Montpellier, France

Hard-to-Fill Positions

When adding to an organizational storytelling employee storyteller list, make sure you include team members who are thriving in roles that are notoriously hard to recruit for, or for positions for which you're always hiring. When you have employees who speak the exact language of a profession, it's an instant connection for candidates.



Lashika's story of working as welder at BAE Systems, Inc.

Here's an example of a story from a welder at BAE Systems – a skilled trade position that they had a great need to fill.

Ultimately, stories like these from employees thriving in the position will be able to answer candidates' question: "Why do this job at this company?"

Content Along the Candidate Journey

Employee story content should be used throughout the entire candidate journey, from awareness to consideration to closing. You'll have an organizational storytelling content library at your fingertips, and you can use the pieces that best speak to the candidate depending on where they are in that journey.

For example, shorter story content through ads or social media is meant to grab attention and increase awareness of your brand. We captured this story and developed this social video for AstraZeneca to highlight the importance of diversity to their culture.



Social ad video about diversity at AstraZeneca

But once candidates are on your career site or enter an interview process with you, they are in the consideration phase. This is when they need longer and more substantive story content to learn more about you. They are trying to picture themselves in that job, at your company.

Here's another example of content we developed for AstraZeneca. Here, we featured detailed stories from members of the Biopharmaceutical Division (BPD) team.



Stories from BPD team members at AstraZeneca

Your organizational storytelling efforts will fuel your channels for every stage of the candidate journey, too.



Recruiting for specific talent programs

One of the intended and most excellent uses of organizational storytelling is to weave employee experiences together to illustrate a theme or get narrow on a particular talent area. This is particularly helpful for talent programs that are specialized, such as veteran or internships and early career recruiting efforts.

Dell Technologies has a rotational development program for early career candidates and candidates wishing to make a career transition. One of the key elements of the program— and what sets it apart from similar programs at other organizations – is the incredible access to executive leadership that program participants experience.

In this compilation video, four different program members share how they benefited from this aspect of the program.



No limits for program participants at Dell



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Chief Diversity Officers and other team members focused on increasing inclusion and belonging in corporate cultures have some of the most critical roles today. You're the cartographers and guides on your company's continuous DEI journey – a process that never ends. Whether your organization has just begun its inclusion work, or DEI has been a priority for decades, organizational storytelling is necessary for communicating a company's real commitment to diversity, progress towards change, and presence of inclusion.

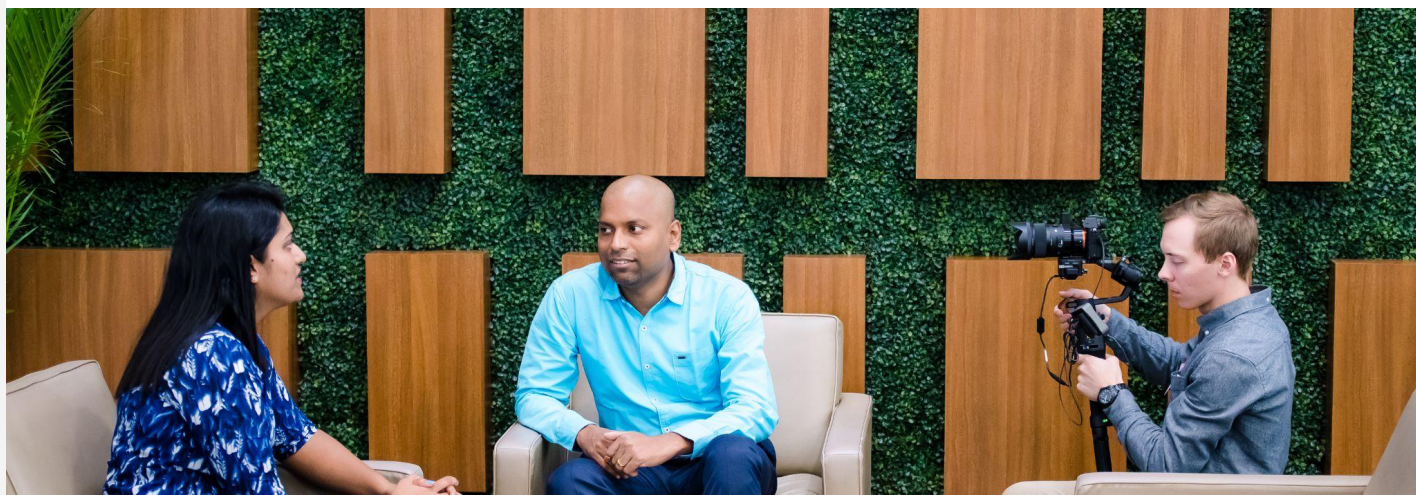
Two DEI Story Requirements

The story you're tasked with telling is complex and sensitive, so let's simplify it as best we can. Every organization's DEI story has two key requirements:

1. **The current DEI story:** Your organization needs to accurately communicate where your culture stands today in providing inclusion, belonging, allyship, and advocacy for its people.
2. **Your DEI plans:** A realistic and clear sharing of your organization's plans for improving upon its current levels of diversity, equity, anti-discrimination, and inclusion for all, especially for members of underrepresented groups.

Your Widest Range of Storytellers

Every company must communicate both of these two requirements by sourcing stories from all over your organization, from every possible perspective. This is a point we stress again and again throughout this resource, but it's especially important when developing compelling DEI content for use by all company stakeholders.



Yes, you will need stories from an array of backgrounds, gender identifications, and locations. But our general ideas of “diversity” – race, ethnicity, geography – are just the beginning. We must think about diversity in multiple dimensions,, as illustrated by veteran DEI leaders Lee Gardenswartz and Anita Rowe in their Diversity Dimensions model.⁴

Diversity Dimensions



Organizational
Diversity of perspective based on what role you play in an organization and where you play it

Inherent
Diversity you are born with

Acquired
Diversity you acquired through experiences, interactions, and surroundings

Look across your organization and consider the many different perspectives across all these dimensions:

- **Inherent:** race, ethnicity, heritage, age, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability
- **Acquired:** location, experience, education, income, parental status
- **Organizational:** work site, department, team, function, seniority, leadership status

Which perspectives, from each intersection of these dimensions, would you be able to find the most of from your employees? Which team member voices would be the most challenging to find?

Your Expert Assessment

But before you begin making a list of all the storytellers you need to round up, put your internal research and DEI expertise to use. Make an assessment of your organization's progress on the DEI journey when contrasted with society as a whole. Some of the questions you may ask include ...

- Does your company have more or less women in leadership than other companies in your industry or size?
- Is your organization ahead or behind others in its regions for employing members of underrepresented racial or ethnic groups?
- Has your company sponsored employee resource groups (ERGs) for a variety of communities?
- What accommodations has your organization made for employees who are physically differently-abled or possess neurodivergencies?
- Has your organization established hiring initiatives internally or communicated them externally? What is their success with these goals?

Telling Your Current DEI Story and Your Future Plans

Now, let's put it all together and combine your two levels of data:

1. **People:** the potential storytellers in your organization, sourced from all three diversity dimensions
2. **Progress:** the realistic audit of your organization's level of development in its DEI evolution

Together, these data sets will determine the most accurate way to present your DEI story in your organizational storytelling. Every company needs to address both but your data will notify which should receive the most attention in your content.





Stories of Inclusion and Diversity, Brought to Life

If your company is an industry leader in levels of inherent, acquired and organizational diversity, with a history of progressive inclusion practices, tell that story. Highlight the ways your culture is excelling in ways its competitors are not when it comes to providing belonging for underrepresented groups and hiring diverse talent. Additionally, your overall organizational storytelling should highlight storytellers sharing specific examples of how they have experienced inclusion and support within the culture, and how they have benefitted from your company's DEI practices.

Stories Expressing DEI Commitment

If your company is not a leader, your organizational storytelling content can weigh more heavily on your in-progress transformation towards increased diversity, equity and inclusion. If that's the case, you're not alone and your efforts and plans provide a compelling story. As DEI leaders, you know that there is an obligation to never paint an inaccurate picture of diversity or inclusion in culture, but neither should we ignore the progress our organizations need to achieve.

Here, your storytellers are your team members responsible for driving this work at your company, like influencers and leaders in talent acquisition and diversity and inclusion. Sourcing stories from a variety of leadership voices and change agents passionate about increasing DEI is also important. These leaders should not be restating corporate EEO statements, but communicating their specific strategies for bringing about real, measurable DEI progress.



Integrating Both Priorities

Here's an example of organizational storytelling content that addresses both DEI story priorities. Stories Inc. helped Capital One uncover unique stories from team members that reflect how identity, perspective, inclusion, and purpose shape the Capital One employee experience in 2022.

These stories include a gay father who felt supported by the company when adopting his two children as well as leadership team members sharing how they're seeking to bridge any gaps in their culture of inclusion and belonging.



Feel seen, heard and valued at Capital One

Every company today has a responsibility to share proof of DEI and strive to build a better workplace for all. With organizational storytelling, you can communicate both of these DEI goals in an integrated strategy. The stories of lived inclusion and plans to increase diversity that you'll uncover will support your courageous and critical work.

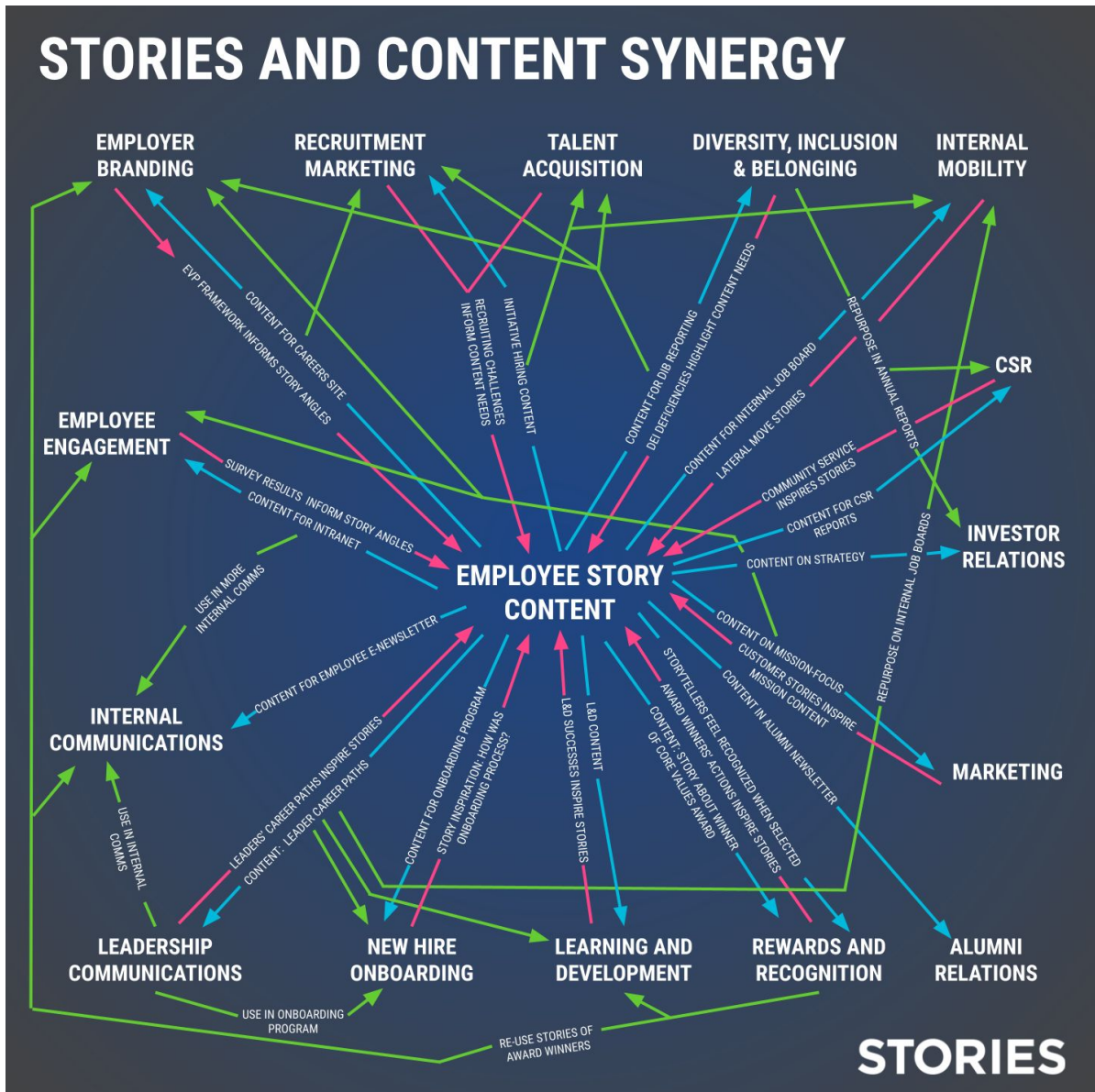


Corporate Communications

Most corporate communications leaders we talk to are focused on developing their organization's storytelling capabilities. You know how important, powerful, and useful story content is (when it's consistent, of good technical quality, and will resonate with your audience).

Corporate communicators often are in the unique position of needing to talk consistently to every audience: potential buyers, current customers, employees, investors and sometimes candidates.

Good news: organizational storytelling is the system and capability this department needs. Culture content engages each audience, because they are all interested in what your company is doing to create and sustain a great culture. And the library of assets assure you can customize and optimize a wide variety of ways, so consistency and content quality is covered.



Internal Communications

Internal communications plays a critical role in reinforcing the culture of an organization and delivering company information. With organizational storytelling, internal communications can bring abstract concepts to life and build connections between team members and your organization.

Specifically, internal communications will use organizational storytelling to:

1. Fuel employee recognition programs and reinforce culture
2. Promote company benefits, events, and programs
3. Reinforce company decisions

Fuel Employee Recognition Programs, Reinforce Culture

Data shows that employee recognition is directly tied to retention: 55 percent of employees seeking to switch jobs list lack of recognition as their top reason for leaving. 69 percent say that better rewards and recognition would encourage them to stay.⁵

Whether your company recognizes an employee of the month, annual core value awards, or prefers an ad-hoc approach to employee recognition, employee stories are the best way to say 'thank you' for a job well done.

At LexisNexis, their internal communications team wanted to feature employees doing incredible work. Marketer Tykori Saunders shares how their experience building a Juneteenth social campaign made them feel seen, appreciated, and included.



LexisNexis team member recognition

Gathering stories at corporate events is a great way to kick off an organizational storytelling effort. At your next all-hands or internal conference, consider collecting stories from employees while they are all in one place and already engaging with your company in a thoughtful way.

Added bonus: interviewing employees to uncover the stories is a fun engagement activity. In addition to gathering great organizational storytelling content, employees will feel proud to be recognized and re-energized by the opportunity to reflect on their experiences.

Bonus: in addition to recognizing a job well done by Tykori, employee stories also reinforce culture concepts by showing colleagues exactly the types of actions and behaviors that make someone successful at the company. In this case, LexisNexis is celebrating creative initiative and bringing one's whole self to work.

Promote Company Events, Benefits, and Programs

From stories of work/life balance to all-hands meetings to development programs, organizational storytelling can be used internally to reinforce your commitment to employees.

It reminds them that you prioritize their well-being and care about them, which is crucial for an engaged and productive workforce.

So rather than sharing just another infographic about your company's parental leave benefits, consider sharing the story of a team member who benefited (pun intended) from the leave.



Parental leave at Van Metre Companies

Reinforce Company Decisions

If your organization has made a major decision - a strategic shift, or adopting virtual/hybrid work, for example - organizational storytelling will communicate the people-impact of these decisions in an engaging way. Employees may be used to hearing from leaders, but they are hungry to hear from and relate to co-workers from all levels.



Making progress real at Dell Technologies

For example, Dell Technologies has a robust social impact plan that includes addressing climate change, digital inequities, and diversity, equity, and inclusion.

In addition to sharing reports and leadership interviews, Dell created this video featuring stories from employees working to make these ambitious goals a reality.

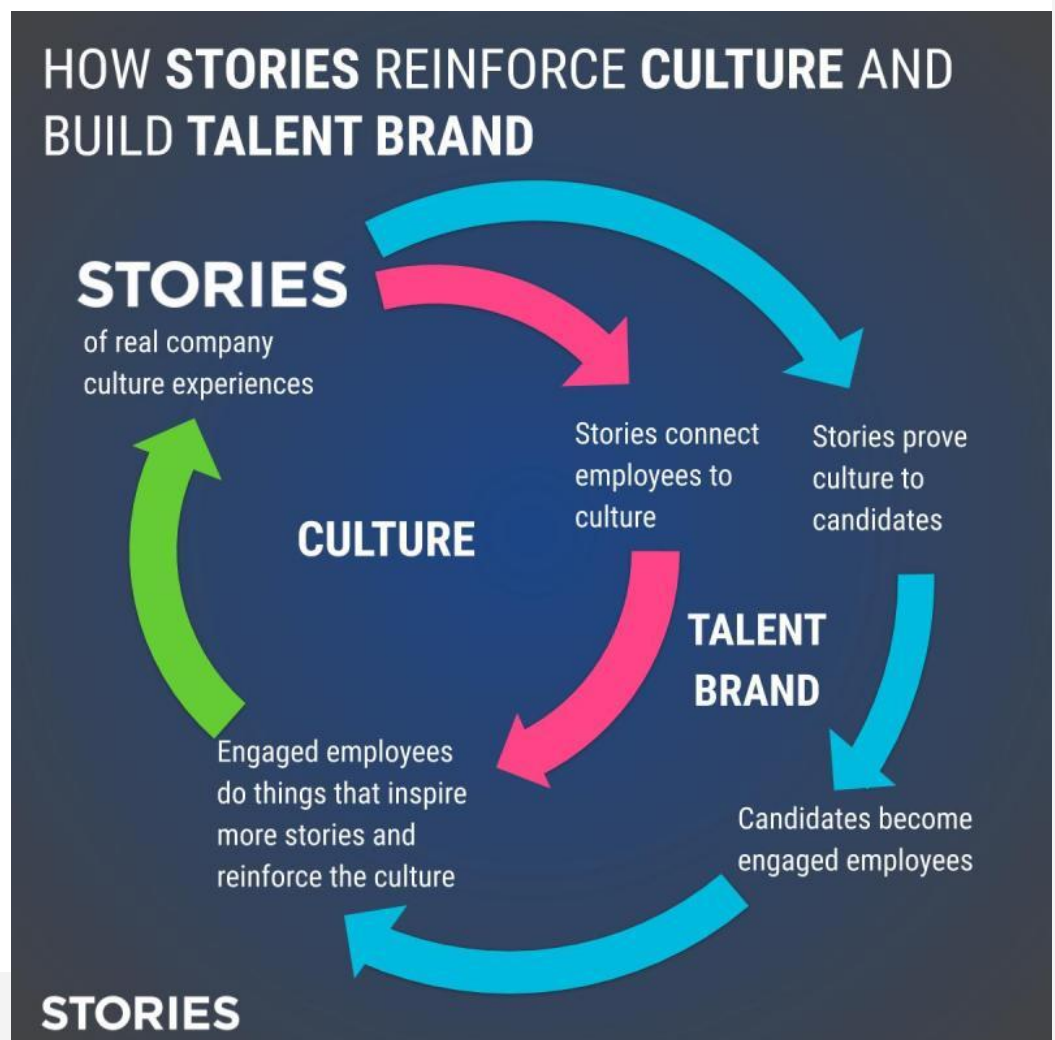
By grounding these goals in employee stories, Dell is keeping their team members engaged and proud of the work they do.

Chief People Officers & Employee Engagement Agents

Your mission is to develop the culture and its people. Organizational storytelling is your not-so-secret weapon to cultivate employee engagement that lasts. It's actually a cycle:

- The employees chosen as storytellers are reminded of why they stay during a facilitated and impactful interview process. This also serves as an engagement and rewards and recognition activity.
- Their experiences are tied to values which reinforce and ground them, then converted into engaging media.
- When the organizational storytelling media is launched internally, their colleagues are reminded of organizational purpose, values, and why they stay. They see specific examples from their colleagues.
- Employees are likely to mirror similar behavior when they see what behaviors are celebrated, expected, and tied to specific values.
- When organizational storytelling content is launched externally, candidates learn from true stories so expectations are set and met.
- When those candidates become employees and have their own experiences, they'll share with you as storytellers...

and the cycle repeats.



Launching and Reinforcing Values

Creating and reinforcing values are one of the most talked about and universally accepted business practices out there. But in reality, core values are often not very well launched or reinforced internally with employees and externally with candidates. Some employees don't even know what the values are, even though they've worked at your company for years! Others might know the words, but they draw a blank when asked for supporting examples in their workplace.

Organizational storytelling will help you redefine, reinforce and constantly promote your values internally and externally. One of its biggest opportunities is to help culture stewards bring their values to life for employees and candidates.

In this example, an employee story brings to life the company's LOVE value.



Kasasa's Love value

And, in this example, employee stories cover all of the values.



The CARFAX values and culture

In an organizational storytelling approach, you'll have tons of real employee examples to isolate or weave together to bring your values to life so they really stick.

Business Functional Areas

From data science to marketing, every team and business functional area has its own unique culture within the context of the greater organization. This “business story” is formed by the team’s strategy, workflow, traditions, communication style, and (most importantly) people.

As a functional business leader, organizational storytelling will be essential to attracting and retaining a high-performing team. Sharing employee stories that bring your specific area of the business to life gives candidates insight into the team and workflows they will be spending the most time with. And when these stories are shared internally for employee engagement, team members are overjoyed to see their specific projects and colleagues celebrated.

Specifically, business functional areas will use organizational storytelling to:


- Celebrate what makes the team unique within the organization
- Showcase what makes the team unique in the marketplace
- Feature always-on or hard-to-hire positions

Celebrate What Makes the Team Unique Within the Organization

From sales to data science to nursing, every team in your organization has a unique role to play. Use organizational storytelling to celebrate how your team embodies company values and how their work contributes to the success of the organization. By sharing these team stories, candidates get insight into their future team...and colleagues feel recognition for a job well done. Win-win.



Nursing team stories from Ochsner Health Systems



As with many pieces of organizational storytelling content, this story works for different audiences. It reveals the nursing team culture at Ochsner for skilled nursing candidates; acts as employee recognition for the nurses featured; and when shared throughout the organization as employee engagement content, the stories reinforce the importance of personal and professional for all employees.

Showcase What Makes the Team Unique in the Marketplace

By celebrating the culture of your specific business area or team, you're likely uncovering culture themes and employee experiences that set your organization apart from others in the marketplace. These stories make for great recruitment marketing content, as they answer a critical question for candidates: "Why should I do this job here?"

If you are hiring for a software engineering role, chances are there are hundreds of positions at other companies out there that require a similar skillset. Why should a candidate bring their skills to your business? What sets your "team culture" apart from other companies?

The sales team at Interactions is highly engaged because their product is cutting edge, works well, and is beloved by clients – three characteristics that set it apart from other sales roles.



The sales team experience at Interactions

Feature Always-On or Hard-to-Hire Positions

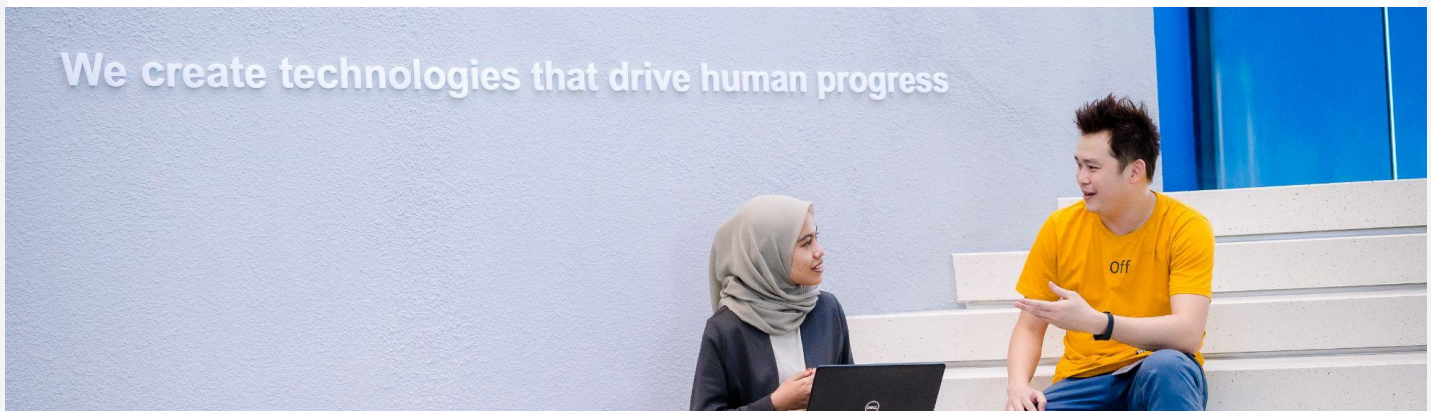
As we discussed in the recruitment marketing use case, organizational storytelling provides candidates with insight into the specific role, exactly when they are making a decision whether or not to apply. By the numbers: companies that add video to their job postings receive a 34 percent higher application rate than those without video.⁶

When creating organizational storytelling content, tap business leaders to include storytellers that are thriving in always-on and hard-to-hire positions. This content will be critical to attracting the right talent to the business.

For example, Children's Mercy Hospital is always hiring nurses. To support these hiring efforts, they partnered with Stories Inc. to uncover stories from highly engaged nurses in the organization.



Nursing employee experience at Children's Mercy



Executive Leadership

Executive leaders know that stories can educate, influence, emotionally impact, and entertain an audience. While its power is acknowledged, using it as a way to accomplish business objectives is less clear. Storytelling has become a corporate buzzword and lost its meaning, because of how accessible and ubiquitous the concept of a story is.

In its most basic form, your company must figure out who it is and what makes your culture unique, and then communicate it to the audiences that ultimately make your business work (potential and current customers, employees, candidates, and more). But organizational storytelling does more than just market your culture.

Organizational storytelling solves a lot of your costly problems. Many organizational storytelling outcomes are tied to corporate awareness and influence across all your audiences, including the ability to attract the right talent, hire them quickly and/or retain them for the medium and long term.

Here's where that's hurting you:

Turnover

- The cost of replacing an individual employee can range from one-half to two times the employee's annual salary (and that's a conservative estimate).⁷

Engagement

- On average, 17.2 percent of an organization's workforce is actively disengaged.⁸
- Disengaged employees have 37 percent higher absenteeism, 18 percent lower productivity and 15 percent lower profitability. When that translates into dollars, you're looking at the cost of 34 percent of a disengaged employee's annual salary, or \$3,400 for every \$10,000 they make.⁹



Many leaders in your company are trying to solve these problems and more, and they need your support. Organizational storytelling is a solution for these common, and critical, exigencies facing company leaders:

- Increasing brand awareness
- Rectifying misalignment between employer brand and employee experience
- Improving retention
- Scaling candidate outreach
- Communicating commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion
- Engaging the talent community

Organizational storytelling dramatically and positively impacts your internal and external employer brand. According to LinkedIn's *Ultimate List of Employer Brand Stats*, a great employer brand results in:

- 28 percent reduction in turnover
- 50 percent cost-per-hire reduction
- 50 percent more qualified applicants
- 1-2x faster time to hire¹⁰

It's important to note that most people have seen a "culture video." However, to make a lasting impact that not only markets your culture, but also attacks serious organizational problems that waste time and money, you need a sustained and thoughtful effort. It's organizational storytelling: uncovering real stories from employees all over your company, creating a visual library of those stories including obvious cultural themes and trends

How Leaders Contribute As Storytellers

As a leader, you are part of the organization's storytelling strategy. If you're a founder, this may feel particularly personal. That's where founding stories are important, to reconnect your employees and customers with your origin story.





Ntiva CEO and Founder Steven Freidkin's founding story

As a corporate leader, your own storyteller contribution can be personal, especially when talking about something that happened at the company that made you proud, or a mistake you made that created growth. Those are humanizing yet work-related topics. Otherwise, in an organizational storytelling framework, while your personal story and lessons learned are interesting and should be shared, you also want your employees to shine.

By stating the overarching strategic statement related to a corporate goal, mission, or purpose, and having your employees support you with their experiences that prove the goal is real or the claim is true, you're building credibility and engaging your audience better than a video of you laying out the points of your plan. In this video, Michael Dell sets the tone and strategy, but lets employees prove his message through stories.



Michael Dell kicks off the Life at Dell Technologies culture story



How to Get Started

Now that you've learned what organizational storytelling is and how it benefits each area of your organization, it's time to give it a try for yourself. Remember, the key to a successful organizational storytelling strategy is stakeholder engagement and alignment across the organization. Aligned stakeholder groups - from employer brand to talent acquisition, DEI, and business leaders - ensure that organizational stories aren't discovered and shared in silos. But rather, shared across channels and audiences to create a cohesive organizational narrative to the audiences you care about most.

With that goal in mind, the best (and only) way to get started on an organizational storytelling strategy is to gather your stakeholders together for a brainstorming session. You'll want to invite department leads and those persons responsible for driving content strategy in each key department.

During the meeting, ask each stakeholder to answer the question: what stories do you need to be telling to strengthen the relationships that matter most? Their answers will help you build a list of important cultural topics that need to be communicated through organizational storytelling.

Conclusion

Organizational storytelling uncovers your employees' stories that best bring to life your unique culture, your big decisions, and those special moments that communicate what it really means to be a team member in your workplace. This approach produces a robust library of content that tells a cohesive, compelling story of your culture. It radically enables you to connect with all the critical audiences invested in your culture.

We're here to support you in your efforts. Let us know if you'd like to chat.





About Stories Inc.

Stories Inc. is an employer branding and recruitment marketing agency and content studio. Since 2012, Stories Inc. has been uncovering powerful stories of employee experiences, and bringing those stories to life through engaging content.

Stories Inc.'s expert team members capture employee stories that show what is unique about an organization's culture, and connect those stories to brand messaging, corporate values and purpose. Using a variety of digital media, Stories Inc. delivers content libraries full of engaging pieces, optimized for all candidate and employee-facing channels.

To learn more, visit storiesincorporated.com





Sources

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