






# Core messages

Core messages summarize what an organization is all about. They should quickly and clearly convey an organization's purpose and work, and motivate someone to learn more. Core messages should be known by all team members and should inform all aspects of an organization's communication's efforts, ensuring messaging is consistent and convincing.

## Core messages should be:

- **COMPELLING:** Spark interest. Look for ways to draw people in and grab attention. Compelling messages are creative, emotive, and convincing.
- **CLEAR:** Understandable. The conservation field is full of jargon. Use normal language that a 10 or 90-year-old can understand.
- **SIMPLE:** Get to the heart of what matters. Avoid the urge to over-explain. Core messages are meant to be attention-grabbers. If you do it well, then you'll have other opportunities to explain and provide more details.

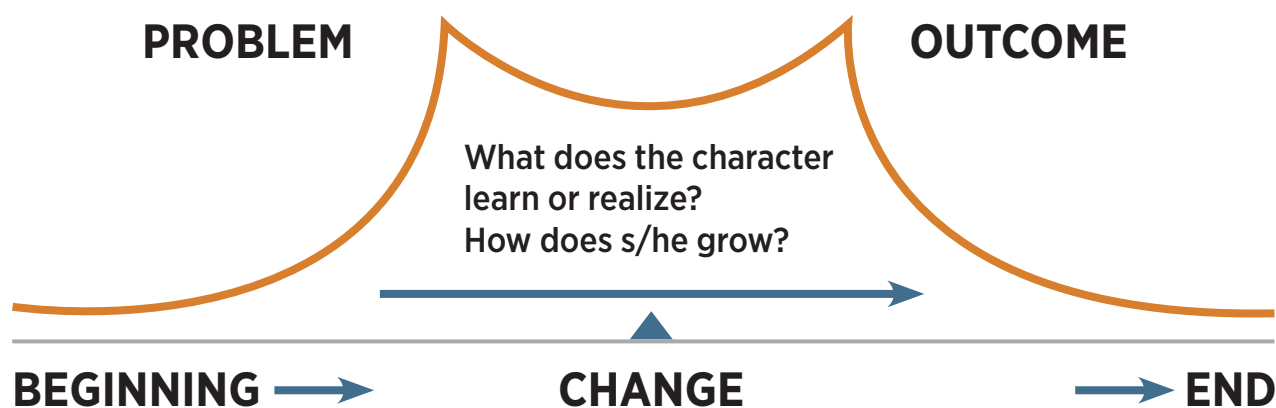
## Developing your core messages:

-  **1. The problem** – what is the big problem you're trying to solve? (1-3 sentences)
-  **2. Your Solution** – what is the solution to that problem?
-  **3. What you're already doing** – what work are you doing that is contributing to the solution?
-  **4. What you want to do next** – what more do you want to do?
-  **5. Who you are** – why do you exist and what do you do? (1-2 sentences)

# Storytelling

Stories are one of humans oldest and most powerful communications tools. Our brains are essentially hard-wired to process information through stories, igniting different parts of our brains that assist us with recall, emotion, and a feeling to act. Stories are a proven communications tool to get people to care and act.

- **THE PROBLEM:** Describe the environment, the emotions of the person or individuals involved, the background of the problem – try to make it feel real and exciting to the audience by adding details
- **THE CHANGE:** What helped solve the problem? What did a person start or stop doing?
- **THE OUTCOME:** What was the outcome and how did it impact the person or the community? What did the person in the story learn? What did you learn?



(Dillingham, 2003, with Changes (Ohler, 2004))

## Find your own story...

1. What message do you want to share?
2. What experiences, interactions, impacts have inspired and excited you that helped get that message across?
3. Is there a specific individual involved (perhaps you)?
4. What happened? What problem did they have to overcome?
5. How did they do that?
6. What changed?