



HOW TO TELL THE INTERCULTURAL STORY

Engaging the audience in the human story

Checklist

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This checklist provides guidance on do's and don'ts in intercultural storytelling and is linked to the policy brief [Telling the intercultural story](#).

Do	Don't
Decide if the timing is right for voicing interculturalism	Don't expect support for interculturalism in times of intercultural conflict
Understand your own values and use them when communicating	Don't retell stories you don't agree with
Describe yourself, your audience or your story's characters as complex overlapping human beings	Don't describe others (and yourself) as stereotypes - it will denigrate the individual
Call your characters and audience humans, people, residents, citizens or by name/profession	Don't call your audience by ethnic/national/racial labels as it serves to strengthen differences
Refer to concrete persons and stories	Don't use abstract numbers or statistics as they will be made to fit established ideas
Start your speech by identifying with the values of your sceptics	Don't criticize the values of the audience – it will create opposition
Argue your case using the values of those you want to persuade	Don't try to change the values of the audience
Show them that it can be done by demonstrating that it has been done before	Don't ask the audience to do something entirely new or to break from tradition without support or concrete ideas on how this can be done
Refer to the audience's children, grandchildren, or a future self	Don't let your message be forgotten as vague and long term
Define a collective identity and link it to your message	Don't ask people to break from their in-group and their social identity
Use the story structure: Status quo – trouble/hardship – solution/lesson.	Don't tell loosely structured anecdotes and expect strategic results
Tell a personal story of how you came to believe in your message	Don't ask the audience to change when you yourself have not
Tell a story making the case for positive diversity in your city's past	Don't accept the story of a declining present from a homogenous past
Tell a case story about a minority citizen sharing the values of your sceptics	Don't miss the chance to demonstrate overlap of values and shared humanity
Tell a case story about crossing from sceptic to believer in diversity	Don't let the audience take the path without a road map
Give your story an open ending with a problem only the audience can solve	Don't cast yourself as the hero resolving the story – either negative or positive.
Consider asking the audience to publicly commit to take action, if that is the objective of your speech	Don't expect the audience to change alone and without commitment