



Your Girl Scout Heart Story

Your heart story is a concise, easily articulated description of your organization and your personal connection. Ultimately, it is your testimonial for why, out of all the nonprofits in your community, you choose to invest your time with Girl Scouts.

Developing your heart story will help you to effectively communicate key information when engaging with people on behalf of the organization. The goal is to introduce yourself, describe the organization and share about your personal connection to the organization that will grab the attention of the listener in approximately two minutes.

Precautions

- **Don't** anticipate an immediate benefit or response. You are building a relationship --- not asking for favors or immediate action.
- **Don't** focus solely on yourself. Let the listener know you are presenting information that may be of interest or benefit to them.
- **Don't** compare and contrast to other organizations. Present a positive image without degrading others. Listeners will form their own judgements.
- **Don't** rely on acronyms and insider jargon.
- **Don't** get distracted. Deliver a crisp, concise message. If it doesn't go well the first time, you'll have opportunities to practice and improve.

What is my Heart Story?

Your story should be easy to memorize - just four or five sentences. It will come in handy at receptions, meetings or chance encounters with potential girl members and their parents, volunteers, board members and prospective donors. In addition, you never know who may be listening and sharing your heart story may inform a stakeholder or result in action.

Elements

1. Introduce yourself and your role in the organization. Then identify the name of the organization, don't assume everyone knows the acronym. Work in the organization's purpose, also known as the *mission statement*.
2. Segue from the purpose to goals. "We're the preeminent leadership development organization for girls. And with programs for girls from coast to coast and across the globe, Girl Scouts offers every girl a chance to do something amazing." Add one personal element of why you have choose to invest your time in GS.
3. Integrate data such as the age of the organization, number of girls served. If your organization has identified its economic impact, use that data – such as percent of funds support program.
4. In closing, while you have the person's attention, ask for help. You might close with how that person can be involved or get more information.

Finally, it is important to speak with *passion*. Practice communicating your short presentation for comfort and enthusiasm.

Board's Ambassador Role

4 Easy Steps to Promote Your Heart Story and Your Council

One indicator of a well-run nonprofit organization is whether or not the board members, staff, and volunteers consistently and personally promote the organization throughout the community. In part, this is accomplished by dozens of informal conversations (sharing your Heart Story) that are delivered by people involved with Girl Scouts to help build awareness of the Council's value.

The outline below, lists and describes each of the four steps and provides some optional statements that can be used to share your Heart Story. Of course, you can customize these statements or add others with which you are more comfortable. During orientation, each board member should be encouraged to develop her/his own Heart Story and to incorporate it into everyday conversations with family, friends, and business colleagues.

Step 1: Opener - Starts the conversation/States the need.

1. Have I mentioned that I'm involved with /on the board of [insert name of Council]?
2. Are you familiar with [insert name of Council]?
3. Have you heard about [insert name of Council]?
4. Did you realize that (definition of local need) is right here in our town/county/state?

Step 2: Mission - Explain what the Mission of Girls Scouts is and how the Council serves and meets the "needs" of girls today, the impact of Girl Scouts, and the difference made in the lives of girls who participate in Girl Scouts.

1. The mission of [insert name of Council] is.....
2. We focus on....
3. Our major work includes.....
4. You may have seen the newspaper article about our Gold Award/project/fundraiser.....
5. We serve x # _____ and provide them with _____

Step 3: Personal Involvement - links you, the speaker, to the Council and Girl Scouts.

1. I've been involved with [insert name of Council] since _____ (year)
2. I enjoy being a part of [insert name of Council] because.....
3. I am proud of our work because.....
4. I am especially excited about our recent project/accomplishments [great place to tell briefly about a Gold Award Girl Scout].....
5. I first got involved with [insert name of Council] when.....

Step 4: Learn More - How can the listener learn more about the Girl Scout Council?

1. We have a great web site (<http://www.....org/>) where you can learn more about our Council and leadership experiences for girls.
2. If you'd be interested in learning more about GS of [insert name of Council], I would be delighted to give you a call. Here is my business card (or Council's business card); do you have a business card you might share with me?
3. Could I drop off a written brochure to you - or send you via email or regular mail?
4. We are always looking for volunteers/board members to help us with.....
5. Is there anything specific you would be interested in learning more about?

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