

PREPARE TO TELL YOUR STORY

Writing Your Story

Your history, current situation and future aspirations should be the main elements in your story. Telling your story begins with understanding your history and identifying elements that describe your accomplishments, potential and aspirations. The way in which you describe important events can impact the extent to which others relate with your story. How others perceive and welcome the information you share depends in large part on how you describe the pivotal moments in your life. Everything you share should be described in a positive tone. Your story should use clear and concise language and help others understand what you stand for, who you are and what you're capable of.

Answer the questions included in these worksheets and then develop your story. Your story should contain an opening, a foundation, your current situation and vision or future aspirations. Strive to create your story in 2,000 characters or less. As of this writing this is the current character limit for a LinkedIn® profile. Check their website to confirm current character limits or other requirements if you plan to use a version of your story on your profile. Include keywords in your summary but be careful not intentionally overuse them in your story, summary or in talking points.

You may find working from an outline useful as well as developing different themes to help guide your story. Themes often appear after reflecting upon the questions provided throughout the worksheets. Modify the process and worksheets for your individual situation and comfort level. You may not be comfortable sharing your key life events. Develop a story you will want to share with others. Then share your story with others, seek their feedback and make edits as necessary.

Opening

Your opening line should be a hook that grabs the attention of others and makes them instantly want to keep reading to learn more about you. Strive to create a single phrase with a vivid image. An example: *For me, success involves using technology to improve and save lives. I believe in the power of hard work combined with a focus on relationships and lifelong learning.* From this example we can envision someone who takes action and is comfortable with change. What do you want others to take away from your opening line? Do you want to be known as a big picture thinker who motivates others? If so, you could develop a version of: *"I believe in the power of teams. My experience has taught me that there's nothing stronger or more productive as a diverse group of individuals who unite together to achieve a shared goal that benefits society.* This type of statement can intrigue readers and make them want to learn more about you.

Foundation

Your history serves as the foundation for your story. The foundation of your story involves your values, passions, setbacks and challenges and accomplishments. Answer the following to help create the foundation for your story.

Describe a significant life event from your childhood that impacted you:

Describe a setback or challenge that impacted you as a professional:

Describe a circumstance in which you were influenced by an event or individual in a workplace:

Name a professional who has influenced you since you've been in the workforce:

In what way did they influence you?

An example that includes history, values, passions, setbacks and challenges and accomplishments:

My experiences impressed upon me the power and importance of technology. Completing my graduate studies while working full-time, I developed the work ethic and ability to focus on value added activities to fulfill aggressive goals. My career path in the medical devices industry has been reinforced by family illness and I've committed my life's work to serving others.

Current Situation

Your current situation involves your knowledge, skills and abilities, talents and aspirations. Answer the questions to help distill these elements.

Who are you now? Examples include: An experienced professional; a student; a parent; a graduate student who is also employed; a grandparent; service member; leader or manager; or a business owner.

What do you value?

Have you increased your knowledge, skills or abilities? If so, in what ways?

How do you add value to others in your professional role?

How do you add value to others in your personal life?

What talents do you have? Have you developed your talents in the past few years? Do you use your talents to benefit others?

An example that include knowledge, skills and abilities and talents:

I am inspired by science, my peers and the medical devices that improve the quality and longevity of lives. To me, no greater need exists than to enable global access to life improving and saving devices. I've been quite fortunate to attend one of the leading business schools in the nation for both my undergraduate and graduate studies. The first five years of my career have inspired and motivated me to acquire the knowledge and skill set to be a major contributor one day to the field. I quickly advanced from an entry level role to assume a leadership position working under the mentorship of one of the top five scientists in the state. I've learned how to learn and the importance of relationships to my career.

Aspirations for the Future

Your aspirations for the future involve understanding what aligns with your values, passion, talents and dreams.

What do you really aspire to do in your life? Why?

An example that describes aspirations for the future:

My career path embodies service and lifelong learning. I'm in the zone professionally when helping advance science and discovering new ways to improve the quality of life for others. I aspire to continue my quest to contribute at increased levels every year and plan to one day be one of the top leaders in my state mentoring the next generation of young professionals entering the medical devices industry.

Consider including a closing statement and call to action if you plan to include a summary of your story on your LinkedIn profile.

An example: *Learn more on my blog @ MaxWKelley.com (persona for illustration only)*

Story Summary Example:

For me, success involves using technology to improve and save lives. I believe in the power of hard work combined with a focus on relationships and lifelong learning.

My experiences impressed upon me the power and importance of technology. Completing my graduate studies while working full-time, I developed the work ethic and ability to focus on value added activities to fulfill aggressive goals. My career path in the medical devices industry has been reinforced by family illness and I've committed my life's work to serving others. I am inspired by science, my peers and the noninvasive medical devices that improve the quality and longevity of lives. To me, no greater need exists than to enable global access to life improving and saving devices.

I've been quite fortunate to attend one of the leading business schools in the nation for both my undergraduate and graduate studies. The first five years of my career have inspired and motivated me to acquire the knowledge and skill set to be a major contributor one day to the field. I quickly advanced from an entry level role to assume a leadership position working under the mentorship of one of the top five scientists in the state. I've learned how to learn and the importance of relationships to my career. My career path embodies service and lifelong learning. I'm in the zone professionally when helping advance science and discovering new ways to improve the quality of life for others. I aspire to continue my quest to contribute at increased levels every year and plan to one day be one of the top scientists in my state mentoring the next generation of young professionals entering the medical devices industry.

Learn more on my blog @ MaxWKelley.com (persona for illustration only)

Use the space provided to write your story.
