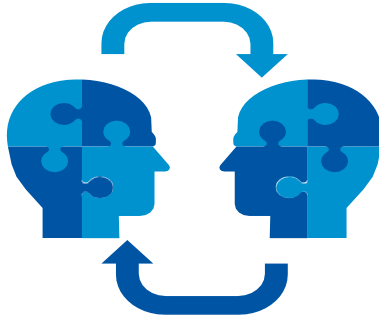# Hard-Wired for Stories:
Translating Complex Information into Broad Understanding through Storytelling

Stories and storytelling are essential for turning our evidence into action. How people understand their communities, their environment, their politics, and even themselves is driven in significant part by story.

Course developed and led by:

American Planning Association

APA

Course details: Stories provide the opportunity for environmental professionals to help leaders and decision-makers address critical issues and understand key trends. In a time of deep polarization, stories provide a way to help people find common ground and understand change. This workshop will provide practical solutions to help you harness the power of real stories to influence public outlook, professional practice, and political decision-making.

Uniquely, stories provide people with meaning and shape their ideas and opinions. New neuroscience insights confirm that stories change minds and trigger powerful responses. It seems people are hard-wired for the impact of stories.

Unlocking effective storytelling is a powerful tool for influencing decision-makers and public opinion. Effective stories can be contagious and have the power to be central to social change; changes in perceptions of risk, ecological impacts, and public policy are consistently driven by powerful narrative. Recognizing the importance of this impact, major cities are beginning to hire Chief Storytellers.

In this two-day workshop you will:

- Examine the growing science behind storytelling with insights from economics, epidemiology, and neuroscience showing why stories are so effective.

- Provide lessons from campaigns and advertising that demonstrate how stories and narrative framing influence people, and how these approaches can be adapted for your own use.

- Explore how to turn data and analysis into compelling stories for use in your work, and how to shape the stories that surround you into the building blocks of powerful narratives, as well as methods for connecting with key audiences.

- Engage in how to create and deliver stories that can change perceptions and shape the vision people have for the future.

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