

Guidelines for Writing Quality Impact/Success Statements/Stories for Workload and Marketing

Purpose: Impact statements tell the story of UF/IFAS Extension and how our work helps people solve real problems that impact their everyday lives.

Good educators know that getting people interested is the first goal of instruction. Story-telling has long been acknowledged as an effective means of developing interest (Benge & Harder, 2008). Extension faculty can use this same technique to develop strong impact statements that represent the results of their programming.

Writing Your Success Story: Using the Interest Approach

Real Person: Introduce us to the real person or people who were positively impacted because of UF/IFAS Extension. Include enough details to make this person come alive.

Setting: When and where does the story take place? Is there anything important the listener needs to know to understand the rest of the story?

Real Person's Goal: What did this person want to do? What challenge did he/she face? What problem did he/she want to solve? Be succinct.

Barriers: What internal or external barriers were preventing the person from achieving his/her goal?

Extension's Involvement: Describe how Extension became involved in the person's pursuit of his/her goal and how Extension helped that person overcome barriers. Be specific in details; this is the heart of your story.

Resolution: What happened? Did the real person succeed in achieving his/her goal?

What is the meaning of the story? How is this story indicative of the good work being done by UF/IFAS Extension?

What's the Impact? Connecting the Success Story with the Big Picture

Response (750 characters max): The Response section should describe what was done and for whom. This is the section in which you will report "numbers."

- What and how many teaching methods did you use? (field days, workshops, classes, Webinars, publications, day camps, community clubs, consultations)
- Who were the target audience and how many of that audience were reached?
- Who were the principal partners, collaborators, contributors?
 - Including financial contributors, such as funding agencies
 - Include internal (UF, FAMU) and external (other NGOs, community organizations) partners

You should be able to pull information about *anticipated* response from the educational methods section associated with any priority work groups with which you're affiliated, as well as *actual* response from your ROA/POW. If you work in 4-H, you can also use the ES-237.

Results (1000 characters max/ ~1/2 page max): The Results section should focus on what happened because of a program. Using verifiable evidence-based data, describe:

- What knowledge was gained?
- What skills were increased?
- What participants are doing differently now as a result of the program?
- Were there environmental benefits? What? (e.g. reduced water usage, decreased use of pesticides, adoption of xeriscaping, improved water quality)
- Were there economic benefits? What? (e.g. financial savings, increased profits, obtaining a new job or promotion, improving credit score, decreased medical costs)
- Were there social benefits? What? (e.g. improved family or work relationships, resolution of community issue or problem, increased education levels)
- How do you know? (how did you collect data to determine the results?)

A well-written Results section will place more emphasis on what participants are doing differently now, and the environmental, economic, and social benefits of the program. It is not good enough just to report knowledge and skills learned.

Relevance (1000 characters max/~ 1/2 page max): The Relevance section should convince the reader of the need for the program by stating the relevant issues in the community. In language the average citizen can understand, describe:

- What problem are you trying to solve and why is it relevant?

You should be able to pull information about program relevance from the situation statements associated with any priority work groups with which you're affiliated, as well as your ROA/POW. Examples are provided below of State Level Statements, which would be used as a part of an Impact Statement representing the collective work of a Priority Work Group. County Level Statements adapt the State Level Statement using local data.

Example from Priority Work Group 1, Initiative 7:

State Level Statement

Floridians value the development of youth who mature into productive, well-adjusted citizens prepared for the workforce. An estimated 4 million youth live in Florida (United States Census Bureau, 2014). Studies have found that youth who participate in 4-H are less likely to engage in at-risk behaviors (such as smoking, drinking, bullying, etc.), contribute more to their family and community, and state they are more likely to attend college (Lerner et al, 2012). All these factors lead to productive, well-adjusted citizens prepared for the workforce.

Sharing via Social Media

Recap (140 characters/ a "Tweet"): In 140 characters, summarize the three points into one succinct statement that indicates what need was addressed, how, and the impact.

Example:

400 Floridian homeowners who completed a UF/IFAS Extension water program reduced water waste by 50% by adopting better lawn practices.