



## **Telling the Story of Our Success**

Patricia Cumbie

[patriaciacumbie@cdsconsulting.coop](mailto:patriaciacumbie@cdsconsulting.coop)

## **Five Narrative Ingredients for Successful Co-op Storytelling**

Storytelling is where your passion for your co-op really comes through. Use the elements of literature: character, change, action, context, and emotion to tell the story. The messages you focus on are ultimately the meaning you impart. Design your stories around what you want people to remember about the co-op.

### **Action**

Describe what your co-op is doing (advocacy, activism, partnering, etc.) to change things. Give people a good understanding of your co-op by bringing to life instances of what you do.

### **Change**

Use change to say something important or to prove the co-op's value and benefit. What is your co-op attempting to change and why?

### **Strong Characters**

Illustrate your co-op's character traits (honest, trustworthy, etc.), and explain your cooperative identity (local ownership). Additionally, who are the heroes in your cooperative and our cooperative movement?

### **Context**

Define how your co-op differentiates from the competition. Are there economic or historical forces at work?

### **Emotion**

Create a connection and demonstrate your authenticity through personal portrayals. Since relationships are paramount in cooperatives, your story needs to be infused with how people are connected to the co-op and community. How does the co-op impact you and others personally?