

Why are you an advocate?

EXERCISE

SIX-WORD REASON

Objective: Briefly explain how you got here and why you're an advocate (or are about to become one).

Use this exercise to:

- claim your identity as an advocate (if you're just starting out).
- refocus your story (if you're already speaking as an advocate).
- pinpoint the reason you're telling your stories.
- find concise, effective language.
- generate headlines and hooks.

The Exercise

1. Imagine someone asks you, "Why are you an advocate for this cause or organization?"
2. How would you answer them—in just six words? Not five words, not seven. Six.

Here are a few examples:

"An art teacher changed my life."

—Jamal, a board member for an organization that pairs artists with disadvantaged youth

"Bikes opened the world to me."

—David, an advocate for a community-based cycling nonprofit

"I believe nobody should be hungry."

—Roberta, an advocate for ending world hunger

Some Guidelines

- Try to focus on your *personal reason*, not a goal:
 - “I believe nobody should be hungry” vs. “I want to end world hunger.”
 - “Gilda’s Club gave me a home” vs. “We should have a Gilda’s Club.”
- Use your six words however you'd like. Your reason may be one complete sentence, or it may be two three-word phrases. (No one's grading on punctuation, so get creative with your hyphens and dashes; they come in handy!)
- Your Six-Word Reason might capture the one moment that drove you to become an advocate, an entire lifetime, or a core belief.
- Don't worry about finding exactly the right six words. Generate as many reasons as you'd like.
- Give yourself time. Keep track of your work. Save your reasons and return to them later. We bet you'll end up using one or two when you speak.

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