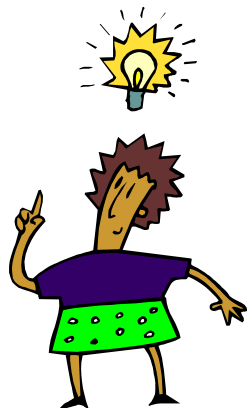


Writing a Good Success Story*

The primary goal of a national service program is to bring about positive change in the lives of those they serve. A good success story not only illustrates the outcomes of your program; it also makes the service recipients come alive in the reader's mind through your descriptions.



Before you write your success story, think about the following questions:	Example
Who is the individual or group you serve?	<i>Consider age, gender, ethnic group, physical appearance, demeanor, social status, income group, etc. "Nick, a second grade student from Greenbow County, stands just under 4 ft. tall. He is full of energy and quick to smile."</i>
What change has come into this recipient's life because of your service?	<i>Think of painting a picture of the recipient before and after the service was provided. Look for significant changes that have occurred, consider measured results. "Nick went from never completing his homework to successfully completing his homework 90% of the time."</i>
When (over what time span) did the change occur?	<i>Consider the length of the program or the time the individual or group participated in the program. "This change occurred during the course of the school year."</i>
Where did this occur?	<i>Pinpoint the location of the recipient, such as city, state, and program. "SCORE (Students Can Obtain Reading Enlightenment) is at Clarkstonburg Elementary School, Clarkstonburg, California."</i>
How did the service that your program provided initiate change?	<i>Describe the service your program provided to create the experience of the recipient. "Our program provided one-on-one tutoring twice a week for one hour."</i>
Why does the recipient feel that his/her life is better?	<i>A direct quote can give greater impact to the story. "My tutor helps me learn new things. She makes learning fun!" – Frieda Smyth, national service participant.</i>



Tips:

- ➔ Before using someone's name in a story, get permission. Share with them what you are going to write and who is going to read this information. It is okay to use a fictitious name, as long as you state this in your story. You could also just use the first name of the individual.
- ➔ Although we celebrate when an AmeriCorps member's life changes due to the experience of service, success stories should be about a primary beneficiary's experience.

* Adapted from Writing A Good Success Story by Al Schneider from Arkansas Commission on National and Community Service.