

**Storytelling iSchool** is the online way to learn how to tell better stories and use them for advocacy, fundraising, recruitment and more. Classes run one hour a week over four consecutive weeks and can be taken from the convenience of your office or home. Here's what recent graduates had to say:

*I was completely impressed and energized by the class, and can't wait to develop my organization's core stories. I particularly appreciated the real-world examples of how other organizations have used stories and storytelling to communicate their work.*

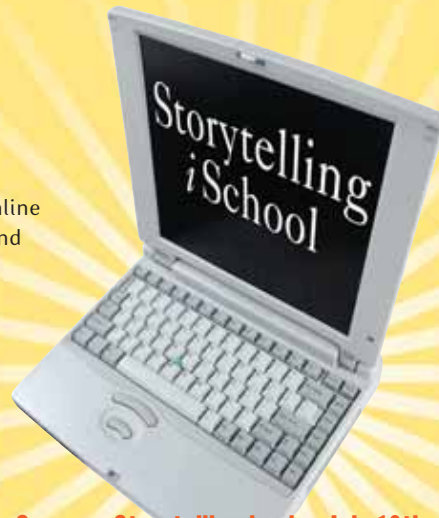
**Beth Mauro, Director for Advancement, New Jersey Historical Society**

*After participating in Storytelling iSchool I began using stories everywhere – at board meetings to get members enthused about the work ahead of us, in solicitation letters, and in our newsletters and annual report. The stories are great for gaining new donors, but I've also found they are great for stewardship of current donors. I can't tell you how easy it is to connect with someone, and how flattered they are when you ask if you can write a story about their experience with your organization. In the end, you not only have a great story to share, but you also have greater insight into the motivations of your donor.*

**Mary Dinsmore, Assoc. Development Officer, Pine Tree State 4H Foundation**

*I have never taken a course – off-line or online – where I learned so much and anticipated the class to the extent that I did. The examples were excellent and very helpful and made it easy to understand difficult concepts. I also liked the tool used to outline a story and the example that was provided.*

**Glenn Michaels, Chief Development Officer, Volunteers of America, Northern New England**



**Summer Storytelling begins July 10th.**  
Registration closes on Friday, July 6th,  
so visit [www.agoodmanonline.com](http://www.agoodmanonline.com)  
to learn more and register online.

# free-range thinking

## The Eighth Annual Summer Reading List



For even the most dedicated doer-of-good, warmer weather signals a time to relax and recharge. We all know the issues never rest, however, so here are five books that can help you work smarter when you return from the beach, the mountains, or just that shady spot in your back yard.



**a goodman**

GOOD IDEAS FOR GOOD CAUSES

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Free-range thinking™ is a monthly newsletter for public interest groups, foundations, and progressive businesses that want to reach more people more effectively. For a free subscription, send your request to: [andy@agoodmanonline.com](mailto:andy@agoodmanonline.com) or call 323.464.3956. Back issues are available on the web at [www.agoodmanonline.com](http://www.agoodmanonline.com).

Free-range thinking™ is written by Andy Goodman and edited by Lori Matsumoto.

### Telling True Stories

Edited by Mark Kramer and Wendy Call  
(Plume © 2007)



Over fifty nonfiction writers – including Gay Talese, Tracy Kidder, Malcolm Gladwell and Tom Wolfe – share their considerable experience in this outstanding compilation of essays. While primarily directed at

aspiring journalists, the wisdom collected in this book will be useful to anyone who tells true stories in their line of work. Roy Peter Clark's essay on "The Ladder of Abstraction," Jack Hart's comparison of journalistic reporting and dramatic storytelling, and Wolfe's piece on "The Emotional Core of the Story" should be particularly relevant for public interest communicators.

► *The greatest potential – still largely unrealized, I believe – of narrative reporting is communicating the very hardest news. Narrative can convey vividly and potently the greater failings of government and industry, inequities of class, and fractures in the infrastructure of opportunities in this country. It can engage the public, almost against its will, in crucial questions of meritocracy and social justice.*

Katherine Boo, "Difficult Journalism That's Slap-Up Fun"

### Send – The Essential Guide to Email for Office and Home

David Shipley and Will Schwalbe  
(Alfred A. Knopf © 2007)

What makes Shipley (an op-ed editor at *The New York Times*) and Schwalbe (editor-

in-chief of Hyperion Books) the definitive experts on email? When they can write a book this witty, readable, and chock full of immediately applicable advice, who cares? In just a few hours, I learned some interesting history (the first spam was sent nearly thirty years ago), why I need to spend more time on subject lines (of the authors' "Twelve Useless Subject Lines," I have regularly used four), when writing words in all capital letters is appropriate (rarely), and much more.

► *...the speed of email doesn't just make it easier to lose our cool – it actually eggs us on. On email, people aren't quite themselves: they are angrier, less sympathetic, less aware, more easily wounded, even more gossipy and duplicitous. Email has a tendency to encourage the lesser angels of our nature.*



### Beautiful Evidence

Edward Tufte (Graphics Press, LLC © 2006)

The green cover of Tufte's latest work is appropriate since its author clearly has a penchant for recycling. His analysis of Charles Minard's graphic rendering of Napoleon's retreat from Moscow (a classic of information design), which first appeared in *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information*, is repeated and expanded upon here. Tufte's acerbic monograph, "The Cognitive Style of PowerPoint," published in 2004, has found a second life here as well, occupying an entire chapter. The good news is that Tufte's perspective on design – in print, PowerPoint, and beyond – is well



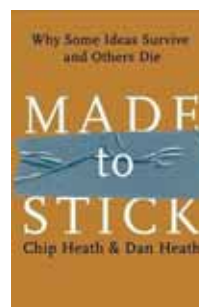
worth a second read, and there's plenty of original material here to enjoy as well.

► *Microsoft Excel and PowerPoint produce, ineptly, many of the data graphics and tables used in presentations today. Filled with chartjunk, the default graph templates in these programs are useful for constructing deceptive investment and weight-loss pitches. Excel chartjunk can sometimes be finessed by skilled users; PowerPoint graph templates are broken beyond repair.*

### Made to Stick – Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die

Chip Heath and Dan Heath  
(Random House © 2007)

Ever since Everett Rogers published *Diffusion of Innovations* in 1962, much has been written about why some ideas catch fire while others flame out. Rogers' book remains the foundational text, Malcolm Gladwell's *The Tipping Point* delivered a more accessible and contemporary take in 2000, and now the Heath brothers have made another valuable contribution to this growing body of literature. I can't claim complete objectivity in evaluating this book – the Heaths make storytelling a cornerstone of their why-things-stick theory, and anyone who does that is always going to have a fan in this corner. But I will add this: since *Made to Stick* was published



earlier this year, no book has been recommended to me more often by friends and colleagues in the public interest sector than this one.

► *Concrete language helps people, especially novices, understand new concepts. Abstraction is the luxury of the expert. If you're going to teach an idea to a room full of people, and you aren't certain what they know, concreteness is the only safe language.*

### The Art of Innovation

by Tom Kelley (Doubleday © 2001)



*Fast Company* magazine called IDEO "the world's most celebrated design firm," which sounds like hyperbole but probably isn't for a company that boasts clients such as Apple, Microsoft, Pepsi, Procter & Gamble and

Bank of America. Kelley, IDEO's general manager, demystifies some of his company's processes in creating designs that sell, and along the way there is plenty of good advice for non-designers interested in creativity and innovation in general. For anyone who leads or participates in brainstorming, Chapter 4, "The Perfect Brainstorm," is worth the cover price all by itself.

► *Try writing the print advertisement as you're developing your product or service. This forces you to find your unique selling proposition. [This] focuses your team in a way no design or marketing plan ever could. If you can't make a compelling [ad], maybe it's better to go back to the drawing board.*