Using Stories for Research and Evaluation
by
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Stories are powerful. A well-told story grabs us and keeps us interested. It can help us remember. It can help us understand. It can help us feel. It can help us learn. It can help us share what we know with others. Stories can breathe life into numbers. Stories help lay people understand research—whether it is in medicine, economics, psychology, business, or science. In addition, stories can help organizations convey their goals, successes and needs to the public. But these short narrative accounts are sometimes dismissed as fiction, unreliable, untrue and mere anecdotes. This lecture will present strategies that allow the researcher or evaluators to use stories in a credible, defensible manner using accepted principles of qualitative research.

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