

Mesa County Spellbinders
Planning Session
September 20, 2011

4:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Emerson School

There were three topics discussed during this Planning Session. To remind you, here are the subjects:

Recruitment
Retention
Education and Training for the Tellers

See the questions posed and the follow-up reported comments collected from each of the four focus groups. [Note: the colors indicate one group from the other. No attention was paid to ensure an exact grouping from one topic to the next, as in the blue group was always the blue group.] Tellers talked amongst and between themselves to create top of the mind points, suggestions, ideas and thoughts.

I hope you enjoy reading through. There was much energy around this work during our time together. Several questions were posed on each topic to get the conversations rolling. You'll find group comments that are duplicated and repeated throughout, yet look for those silver linings – I believe that some comment will just pop right out at you. We can't wait for your thoughts, and priority setting.

A request for each of you: Rank your top three comments 'only' in each reported and comment sections. You can place an asterisk by those you feel are most important. Then you can send your list on to me. Please use this copy as I don't want to have to guess where your priorities fit even if it is a long report.

I will compile a master report for the group's and board consideration in moving forward. Know that your input is valued and appreciated. We already have a list of priorities created at the close of the Planning Session. No fair in sharing as we want you to mark your personal preferences.

An example is shown here in choosing three choices for one of the comment sections:

TOPIC: Recruitment

QUESTION # 1: *How were you recruited?*

*Someone invited me to attend the workshop

Personal previous interest

Word of mouth

*Encourage friends and those known socially

Senior Fair

*Word of mouth

See the report that follows ---

TOPIC: Recruitment

QUESTION # 1: *How were you recruited?*

Someone invited me to attend the workshop
Personal previous interest
Word of mouth
Encourage friends and those known socially
Senior Fair
Word of mouth
Advertisement
Booth at Senior Fair
Word of mouth

QUESTION #2: *What was the 'thing' that inspired you to call?*

Inspired and challenged to learn to tell
Knew training was coming
Friend gave me some information, needed more
Another way to entertain
Fit with my interests and skills
Past experience (and exposure to storytelling festivals)
Working with children theatre
Belief in the power of storytelling

QUESTION#3: *What would you suggest Mesa County Spellbinders do to recruit people like you?*

Business cards vs. flyers
Call person who shows an interest (suggestion is to have another teller call the interested caller)
Other venues- for adult tellings – such as Service Clubs or Nursing homes – let others in on Spellbinders.
More publicity
Presenters to group
Invite prospective members to meetings and or watch a Spellbinder Storytelling session

QUESTION#4: *What would a new Spellbinder recruitment process look like?*

Have members assigned to call prospective members
Excite interested persons by inviting them to a workshop
Word of mouth
Adult nerves – big group
Use kids we tell to recommend to others (You Tube, etc.)
Teacher recommendations
Bridge Clubs
Training offered other than fall season
Dealing with teachers and classroom settings trainings

'Ask Me" button – When was the last time you got applause (credited to Barbara Scott)

Focus on shorter stories, flexibility

More people to organize us

Communicate how fun it is

Benefits: Tell the how 'they' will benefit

Require attendance at workshop

Observe a classroom - People would know the expectations

TOPIC: Retention

QUESTION #1: *How satisfied are you as a 'teller?'*

Very satisfied

Growing artists, enjoying

Very satisfied

Satisfied, yet want more to expand, improve, and try new things

We're artful

QUESTION#2 *What is missing in our work to keep our membership up or sustained?*

Have a boundaries training from school professionals

Socialization – more time at meeting

Propose two different workshop times – smaller group more intimate

Exit Interviews – follow up

Go to a local coffee shop for sharing, story development ideas from peers

Be aware of volunteer burn-out; don't put subtle pressure on volunteers

Look for talent

Encourage, support ongoing training, camaraderie

4 demo stories each workshop

New story – challenge/inspire

Reward storytellers for instant involvement: newly trained tellers

QUESTION#3 *Where (or What) are your go-to resources for guidance?*

Go to trainers, chapter leaders, fellow storytellers, veterans

Newsletter

Websites

Ask at workshops

Google

You Tube

Need CDs in Chapter library

Comfort persons – Ruthmary and Anne

Workshop members would like designated mentors

Professional trainings offered

QUESTION #4 *If you were 'in charge' what teller resources would you make readily available?*

Alternative social meeting

Coaching

Small focus groups, age group to pictures at workshop
CDs and tapes of good tellers
Buddy/Mentor
Shadow
Tandem Telling
Faculty Meeting
Discipline Challenges - training
New tellers would be assigned a mentor
Build natural relationships with stewardship
Money for trainings
More professionals available for workshops
Resources to send members to conferences, professional training events

TOPIC: Education and Teller Training

QUESTION #1: *What more can Mesa County Spellbinders do to help you develop your talents?*

More professional storytellers
DVDs available
Then, lesson hands-on as a follow-up – great benefit to watching someone else gets coached
View tape yourself, to watch yourself to discover bad habits/good habits
Force me to tell at workshops
Bring in trainers or make videos available
You Tube videos as demos at workshop
Invite guests, tellers from other chapters
More telling time, experiences
Maintain a good library for tellers
Provide feedback standards
Bring in outside tellers to watch, offer additional skills pertaining to us
Force me out of lethargy
Workshops, games, outside preschoolers
Professional storyteller 1 or 2x a yr
Continue sharing stories

QUESTION #2: *How do you see 'ongoing' storyteller training?*

Small focus groups during workshop
More storyteller mentors
Weekend workshop/retreat with other state chapters
Coaching – one person tells to others, critique and what went right
Workshops and Presentations
Offer more telling experiences to adult audiences
Find a way to get feedback for yourself
Tell stories for critiquing time during workshop
Encourage people to report back from conferences, training events, etc.
Take advantage of our own teller talents
Workshop presentation
Professional speakers
Mentor new tellers to tell at workshop

Remind tellers they can ask for feedback
Smaller groups at workshop with practical activities

QUESTION#3: When you go home from a workshop, what part did you

1) most enjoy?

1-Stories, laughter, vary for meetings, hands-on training
1-Enjoy the telling
1-Useful information
1-More telling
1-Appreciate information documents
1-Listening to stories, camaraderie
1-Stories and share training stories

2)feel was a waste of time

Refreshments need to be simpler
Workshop should begin on time
Consider some monopolize meeting time – not good for group
Drop having everyone say who they are – instruct to wear nametags
People interrupt off topic and side conversation
Better meeting venue

3)have other thoughts, suggestions, and ideas?

Schedule workshop business, then a storyteller, more business, another storyteller
Encourage tellers to be concise when presenting an issue – don't need full history
Ground rules for meetings
Mime workshop
Voice coaching workshop
Puppets prop workshop
Training on 'how to tell your own developed story'
Anonymous questions being answered by people there (get more professional insights?)
Publicize Timpanogos event
List of names of those telling at conferences – tellers can put in their plan, binder, etc.
Sessions on telling your own story
How to transform a Professional's story to make it your own
Support for travel expense reimbursements

Closing:

Do you want to sustain Spellbinders membership or Grow it

**--- Results: Grow = 12
 Sustain = 3**

Overall, the group is pleased with our current membership knowing our limited workshop capacity. If the school district were to request adding more schools, we would certainly have to grow our numbers and adjust ongoing training offerings, relationship building, and significant coaching and collaboration that occur at the monthly workshop.

What did we forget?

'Tellabration' of our own

More public relations: photos online, You Tube videos

Get principals to review a You Tube on Spellbinders to encourage adding to their school's priority

Get 'You Said It' in the Sentinel

More press in the Sentinel and Free Press (Encouraging news on this front. A Daily Sentinel reporter, Rachel Sauer, parents were each trained in the recent Spellbinder training class. – Great news!)

Thank you for reading through and in making your priorities known. A report will be compiled and distributed via e-mail on the results of tellers indicating their 'top three' priorities in each section.