

# THE

**Non-Profit Leaders Brief** bite-sized insights for busy non-profit leaders.

# FACTS ABOUT FACTS

As advocates, we need to provide more than just the facts. Facts are best used to support - not make - our case. Research shows that “unframed” facts do little to win support. To change hearts and minds, facts need to be embedded in a narrative, and prefaced with a value, for context.



“ **Less is more.** If you can use two facts instead of three, use two. Or better yet, **use just one great fact.** ”  
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

## Putting this into practice:

1. Choose one strong, compelling fact that supports your case.
2. Choose a framing value that will provide context for this fact and has been proven to resonate with your audience.
3. The precise combination of the right value paired with an argument for change supported by a fact is the most likely to evoke empathy and motivate to action.

**Example** (messaging that includes a fact about high rates of crime within a value frame of responsible management which tested well with both conservative and progressive audiences):

Lately there has been a lot of talk about how managing the criminal justice system more responsibly can address some problems facing our country. For example, we know that communities with high unemployment, underachieving schools and a lack of other resources have high rates of crime. This problem particularly hurts children and young adults who may end up in the system. If we take a common-sense approach to solving our communities’ problems, we can decrease crime and enhance public safety. A responsible approach to criminal justice will make our country safer and help us all.

These insights and examples are from A New Way to Talk About Social Determinants of Health by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and Framing and Facts by the Frameworks Institute.