

# How to Submit a Portal Story

## How do I start writing a Portal Story?

Portal stories are a recounting of the lived events that have transformed or broadened a person's perspective. Portal stories contain basic elements that everyone can relate to. To tell your story in its most usable form for others, you should include things that will help readers "paint a picture" of where you were and what you were experiencing. For example, some items that will help readers identify with you are:

- Your age and experience level at the time of the event, the month (or season) and year of the event
- Where you were, the sequence of events that put you in a pivotal position
- A brief description of the people who are with or around you or those who had an impact on your experience whether they ever knew it or not
- How you reacted, what you thought about afterward and what changed as a result

Not all of the above named elements are appropriate for every story, you must decide what is pertinent and what is not. One good rule to go by is that the shortest, most succinct route to the end of the story is usually the best one to take. Many studies have concluded that anything over one page is often an insurmountable challenge for readers, but if your story is compelling readers will keep reading. Tell the story that begs to be told and keep writing until you reach the end of it. Lessons Learned Center (LLC) staff will review your story before posting and notify you if any changes are recommended. If you have supporting documents or photos that would help tell your story, please consider including them. A picture of the author and brief biographical summary would be welcome additions to your story submission.

## Already have your Portal Story written and ready to send in?

The LLC maintains a secure system that provides credible information. To do this, we require that you log in before submitting a Portal Story.

- If you have not yet added yourself to the Member Directory, you need to create a profile to log in. On the same page that begins the [Submit A Document](#) process there is a link to "create a login account now."
- If you are already in the MyFireCommunity.net Member Directory, just log in at **Center Library > [Submit A Document](#)**. Then use the document submission process checking the radio button that says this is a Portal Story in step three and should appear on the Portal Experiences page in step four.
- Click on the button to "Submit Document" at the bottom of the step four page and your Portal story will be submitted for approval.
- The LLC also carefully edits your Portal Story as a professional writing service for you. Even if you just have a rough draft or just some thoughts and would like to see them developed, please submit them. Your Portal Story draft will be reviewed and returned to you for your approval until it works both for you and the Center.

Once a Portal story is posted, anyone can read it by visiting the Portal Experiences page. A Portal Story entry stays in the Portal Experiences page for one year, after which it is moved to the archives.