

## Powerful Speaking

Knowing how to speak powerfully about our issues is essential for effective action. RESULTS advocates use the EPIC format to create powerful messages. EPIC can be used to speak with members of Congress, publish media, or engage others in your community to take action with RESULTS.

### EPIC Laser Talks

EPIC is an acronym to help you remember the basics of a powerful message.

**Engage your audience:** Capture your listener's attention with a dramatic fact, short statement, or personal story.

*We have an affordable housing crisis — that is now acute in the current pandemic — which is hitting families in our community hard.*

**Problem:** Present causes of the problem you introduced in the first section. How widespread or serious is the problem? How has the problem impacted you or your community?

*According to Harvard researchers, since 1960 renters' median earnings have gone up 5 percent while cost of rent went up 61 percent.*

**Inform about solutions:** Inform the listener about a solution to the problem you presented. You might cite a recent study or tell a first-person account of how the solution has impacted you or others you know.

*Right now, millions of American families are struggling to pay rent and put food on the table as layoffs skyrocket. Congress has moved legislation to help address the immediate crisis — including resources for people experiencing homelessness, but given the scale we need a national moratorium on evictions and \$100 billion in emergency rental assistance (building on the bipartisan Eviction Crisis Act, S. 3030).*

**Call to action:** A call to action answers the question “so what do you want me to do about it?” Make the action something specific you can follow up on. Frame it as a yes or no question.

*I am urging the representative to tell leadership to include an eviction moratorium and billions in emergency rental assistance for families facing evictions.*

## Personalize Your Message

Research shows that personalized messages are much more effective than form messages (messages that are pre-written for you to use). While RESULTS provides a sample (form) EPIC message for advocates to use, it's up to you to personalize it and make it truly powerful.

Consider including:

- Why do you care about the issue?
- How is the issue impacting you currently (or how has it impacted you in the past?)
- How does the issue show up in your local community or state?
- What values are motivating you to support solving this issue?

## Delivering Your Laser Talk

Speaking naturally and from the heart is an important advocacy skill. Practicing your message will allow you to feel comfortable delivering it. You may not always deliver your laser talk exactly as you learned it. But if you learn it well, you will be able to use all sections of the talk as you need them.

### **Tips for delivering your EPIC laser talk**

1. Practice your laser talk out loud several times. Practice by yourself and aloud with others.
2. Memorize as many of the details as possible.
3. Deliver your talk without stopping, even if you make a few stumbles along the way.
4. Critique yourself and ask for feedback. Pick two things that you liked about the talk and one thing you would like to improve upon.