Mobile storytelling

Filming guide

#AdvocacyLeaders
This document provides some tips to help you capture good quality film footage with minimal equipment.

We recommend using a Smartphone, and a tripod and clip-on microphone if you have them.
GENERAL IMAGERY

- Aim to capture natural, un-posed footage
- Aim to capture action
- Aim to convey hope and happiness
- Aim to inspire with clear messages
- Aim to tell a story
FORMAT

• Footage is best filmed in landscape format, to use space effectively and so the film fits most online templates.
SUBJECT AND BACKGROUND

If your film involves an interview with a subject, there are a few things to consider:

• Ask your Interviewees to stand up for the interview
• Think about what is going on in the background of your film – if you can show context and interest in the background, it will make a more interesting film than footage taken in front of a plain wall or in an office
• However, too much activity in the background can be distracting
• Make sure the person you are filming isn’t stood too close to the background, for example don’t let them stand directly in front of a wall.
DISTANCES

• When filming inside, the subject should be no more than 2 metres away from the phone.
• When filming outside, the subject should be no more than 1.5 metres away from the phone.
FILMING ACTION

• When filming action, such as a dance performance, stand a good distance from the performance to gain a wide view and keep the camera static.
• If you have two cameras, use one for the wide, static view and use one to take close up shots. These can then be edited together.
Try to keep light (whether it is the sun, a lamp or light from a window) behind the person filming, not behind the subject.

Be wary of having light to the side of the subject too, as that can make a film over-exposed.
FRAMING YOUR INTERVIEW

• Keep your subject just to the left or to the right of the mid-point of your screen

• If your subject is standing on the right of your screen, you should stand on the left of your camera, so that their eye line crosses the screen and visa versa

• Decide before the interview whether you will film a mid-shot or close-up. A mid-shot should show from the waist to the top of the head. A close-up should show from the underarms to the top of the head

• By keeping your subject to either the right or left of the screen, you are allowing space for the name tag to appear.
FILMING TIPS

• When filming try to keep your camera still. Let the action take place in the shot. Panning, tilting and moving often makes the shot unclear.

• When filming an interview make sure the sun is behind both you and the camera and in front of the subject. This way the subject will be properly lit.

• If possible use a tripod to keep your camera still and steady. This will make a huge difference to the quality of your footage. If you don’t have a tripod, try balancing your camera on a steady surface.
VIDEO TIPS: SOUND

• Ensure you can hear the person speaking clearly

• Soundtracks: Please avoid having music or other sounds in the background while filming whilst a person is speaking

• It can be difficult to listen to spoken words and music at the same time. It is also not possible to separate the two sound files when you come to edit the film

• Transcripts: If you film a person speaking please send us a transcript of the spoken words within the film, unless you have already included subtitles

• We try to include subtitles in our films to make the content as accessible as possible. If you send us a transcript we also know that you are happy with the content.
INTERVIEW TECHNIQUE

• Ask your interviewee a few unrelated questions to help them relax before you start filming and don’t tell them when you start filming

• Allow time to brief your interviewee before you start and ask them to:
  • Provide complete answers, incorporating your question. For example if you ask ‘what is your favourite colour’ ask them to respond, ‘my favourite colour is blue’ rather than just ‘blue’. This will help to keep the film concise
  • To stand up when answering your questions - they will naturally speak in a more engaging way and with more energy than someone sitting down
  • To smile when answering questions – this will improve the tone / variation of their voice
  • To start from the beginning of their sentence if they make a mistake.
INTERVIEW TECHNIQUE

Your audience are no doubt busy people and there is a lot of competition for their time. Try to tell your story in an interesting, engaging and concise way – to entice your audience, keep them watching and deliver your key messages.

To ensure your audience remembers your most important messages or the action you would like them to take after watching the film, try to:

• Allow your interviewee time to prepare their answers in advance
• Stress the importance of keeping their answers to a maximum of one – two sentences
• Explain to the interviewee that if they prepare short answers to your questions, all of their key messages can be included. If they talk for a few minutes on each point, the editor will have to edit their answers and their key messages may be lost
• If you don’t edit a long answer, the important messages will be diluted. Your messages may be lost and you will loose the attention of your audience.
A AND B ROLLS

• When preparing your interview, for every question you ask, write down three possible supporting B roll shots you could take

• **A Roll**: This is the footage you take of your interview

• **B Roll**: This is all of the supporting footage you take, to help make your video more interesting and entertaining

• You should aim to take around 25% A roll and 75% B roll.
RULES AND PERMISSIONS FOR FILMS OF CHILDREN

• It is our responsibility to ensure that the correct permissions (from a parent or guardian) have been obtained before films of children under 16 are shared with a wider audience.

• Please ensure that electronic files containing children are securely filed in a protected folder with restricted access.

• Images should not be stored on unencrypted portable equipment such as laptops, memory sticks and mobile phones.

• Avoid using any personal equipment to take photos and recordings of children and use only cameras or devices belonging to MannionDaniels.
Good luck and thank you!

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