2020 Pro Bono Publico Award

Virtual Video Shoot Information Via Zoom

1. Know your equipment

- Plan to use your laptop or desktop device (iPad or tablet). Use your cell phone as a last resort since ideal positioning is difficult.
- Locate the webcam (a tiny pinhole usually at the top edge of your screen).
- Position the lens directly opposite (in front of) your eyes.
  - Imagine that tiny pinhole as the eyes of a human being and get used to the idea that you are making eye contact with that imaginary person. If necessary, place a tiny Post-It note or sticky dot adjacent to the lens to remind you to “maintain eye contact.”
  - To ensure your eyes and the lens are on the same level, you may have to adjust either your chair or use books or other items to raise or lower your screen.
- Familiarize yourself with Zoom, if that’s the application you’ll be using.
- Click here to watch a basic tutorial on “Joining a Zoom Call for the First Time.”
  - Activate the Touch Up My Appearance filter, which is designed to “smooth out the skin tone on your face, to present a more polished-looking appearance.”

2. Create the ideal setting

- Find a quiet, well-lit room.
- Choose a neutral background with no windows.
  - Place your chair at least 3 feet from the wall, allowing you to maneuver for ideal positioning.
  - Position yourself in the center of the screen.
  - Pay attention to what’s behind you. You want to ensure the viewer is paying attention to what you’re saying, rather than admiring your high school trophies and family photos in the background. Make sure there are no doorknobs or light switches “growing” out of your head.
- Present yourself in the best possible light.
  - Natural, soft lighting is ideal, such as lamps and other indirect sources. Harsh overhead lights tend to accentuate under-eye shadows and dark circles.
  - Experiment to get light that illuminates your face in a flattering way but isn't too harsh or too dim.
  - Position lights on either side of the webcam to illuminate your face.
  - Avoid sitting with your back to a window (or make sure you have light-blocking window treatments). When light from behind you hits a webcam, it compensates by going dark, making you look like a shadowy silhouette.

3. Dress for success

- Avoid white, bright red and all-black outfits. All three of these colors pose technical problems.
- Stick to solids or simple patterns. Loud patterns are too distracting.
- Avoid stripes and herringbone patterns and shiny fabric.
- Stay classic.
- Keep jewelry simple.

4. Minimize distractions
• Ensure your internet connection is strong and reliable.
• Close any computer programs you don’t need. Random background programs can slow down your connection, reduce the quality of the broadcast and make it hard to see and hear you.
• Turn off your cell phone and any other devices that may produce disrupting sounds that could throw you off message.
• Tape a “Do Not Disturb” sign to the door to keep out any unwarranted, unwitting visitors.
• You and others on the call should keep your microphone on mute when you are not talking. Practice taking your phone on and off mute before an interview begins.

The bottom line

Your goal is to clearly convey your message to the viewers. They should not have to strain their eyes or ears to see and hear what you’re saying. They should be able to concentrate on your words and not be distracted by your surroundings or dazzled by your designer wardrobe. Wowing them by making it all look effortless will give you a winning webcam experience!
Find a quiet place to film.

While recording, focus on speaking clearly, slowly, and loudly. Pretend as if you are making a presentation to a small group of people, and project your voice accordingly.

If using a phone/iPad/tablet, please set it up horizontally - see green check marked photo below for reference. If using a webcam it should automatically be recording horizontally.

If utilizing a phone/iPad/tablet, please keep it stationary while filming. The best way to do this is to set/prop it up in a stable spot.

Address the camera directly while you are speaking. Pretend the camera is a person you are having a conversation with, and try to avoid staring off to the left or the right of it. Looking away/breaking eye contact occasionally is okay, but avoiding looking at the camera for long stretches is not.
Please review the framing guidelines below. Avoid framing your shot like the examples below that have a RED X on them. **Please do try to frame your shot as much like the photo with the GREEN CHECK MARK as possible.** The key characteristics of the framing for the green check marked photo are:

- A comfortable, but not too large gap between the top of the speaker's head and the top of the frame.
- The camera is either level, or aiming slightly downward at the speaker. This is a universally more flattering angle than if the camera is looking up at the speaker.
- The speaker is right in the middle of the frame, with a comfortable amount of space on either side of them.

PLEASE DO NOT FILM WITH A WINDOW OR BRIGHT SOURCE OF LIGHT BEHIND YOU.