

Hints for better video location recording

These hints will help you prepare for a typical “simple” location recording such as, an interview or series of interviews, *talking head* style presentation or other actual event. You may have the responsibility for organising pre-production arrangements and/or appearing on-camera.

The following will give you some insight into what to expect on location and will make it easier for you to work with the camera crew.

Before the shoot...

Plan

- Have a definite plan in mind about the construction of your program.
- Things will change along the way – but at least have an outline and a list of **must get** shots.

Wardrobe

- Choose a wardrobe that will last for 2 – 3 days continuously.
- Don't wear heavily patterned clothes or overly bright colours – pastels work best.
- Spectacles on chains or long necklaces only get in the way of the radio microphone.
- A jacket with pockets or, for women, a banded skirt or slacks allow for radio microphone hook-up.
- Lightweight tops will cause the clip-on microphone to droop.

Interview

Plan your interview questions carefully. You'll make a lot of work for yourself if you conduct a 30 minute interview and use only 20 seconds. Ten minutes should be long enough to get the facts that you need.

Overlay

After recording an interview or *talking head* presentation allow time for overlay shots to be captured. It takes up to 30 minutes to get 10 minutes of (good) overlay. You'll need to factor in this time when planning the location shoot.

Set-up

Also, factor in travel and set up time. It takes at least 15 minutes to set up lights/mics/batteries and white balance, before shooting starts. What about windy/rainy days? Be prepared for the unexpected.

Appointments

- Confirm, reconfirm and re-reconfirm dates, times, places and authorisation with your talent.
- Make sure the person at the front desk is made aware that a videotaping session is being conducted (hold phone calls etc.)

On the Shoot...

Being Stood-up

Prepare for the fact that talent may stand you up, or at least be late.

Noisy Environments

Try to select (or ask for) quiet areas to conduct interviews. Also check to see if it's okay to videotape (eg. privacy, security of technology/processes) for overlays and cutaways.

Stand-ups

A *stand-up* refers to an interviewer speaking directly to the camera. Memorise and practice your stand-ups in front of a mirror. Be aware that you may have to rewrite your stand-up script on the fly.

Interview Cutaways

- After an interview some “noddies”, “two-shots”, hands shots, writing shots (bring notepad/pen) will be recorded for possible use in the final edit.
- Be practiced at convincing “noddies”. Memorise a few questions as you may have to ask them directly to camera.

Microphone Etiquette

When conducting an interview gently move the microphone between yourself and the talent. The microphone is sensitive so there is no need to hold it above waist height.

After the Shoot...

- You will be given a time-coded copy of all the recorded material.
- Use this to compile a shot-list. Send or bring the shot-lists to your video editor before your scheduled edit sessions. The shot-list codes will be captured onto the video post-production computer ready for editing.
- Write and rehearse any *Voice Over* pieces ready for recording. This will be the first task during the editing sessions.

Have a clear plan in mind – especially for when you run out of shots!!!!