

MEDIA TIPS & TRICKS - by WHITEHEAD HD

PATIENCE: Don't rush, even though your time is precious a good video presentation can save you time and exponentially increase your presence. Take time to perfect your presentation, every minute that you spend on perfecting your presentation will pay hundreds of hours dividends as your video is replayed throughout your organization, often for months.

TRUST: Trust your director, he's a professional who has mastered his craft and excelled to the top of the trade just as you have in yours. Your director is focused on making you look your best, feeling relaxed and being focused on your presentation.

RELAX: Get to know the team, talk on a first name basis. Sets are often informal and the crews tend to dress casually so the command structure may not be apparent, you can fit in and make the crew more relaxed by introducing yourself on a first name basis and treating the crew with equanimity.

LOCATION LOCATION: Chances are that your producer would have already found a suitable location for your PTC (piece to camera). However you may know of another location that may be more suitable for the subject matter that you will be discussing, perhaps the factory line or in front of a construction site. Try to stage the shot so that you can move through it and look like you have a purpose being there. Remember video is an audio visual medium, use both to maximum communicative advantage.

BE SPECIFIC: Try not to deal in broad, general issues and strategies, this can often be misinterpreted and portray you as being vague and disconnected. Try to cite specific issues and individuals in your company that exemplify your strategies and underscore your awareness of opportunities at all levels.

NEWS INTERVIEWS: In a news interview try not to ramble on, keep your answers short and to the point, remember the journalist is always looking for that good sound bite, sometimes I will re-ask a question just to give the talent the opportunity to repackage their answer if I think they are rambling a bit. Try not to fall into the habit of ummms and aaahs, simply substitute this with silence and pause.

EYE CONTACT: Unless this is a news interview you will have to face the lens and deliver your lines "down the barrel" Although not the easiest of tasks, it can have a dramatic effect on the outcome of your video. Allowing your eyes to wander even for a second can make you look shifty and creates the impression that you can not be trusted. I once interviewed a politician that refused to take his sunglasses off despite my protests, needless to say he is now in the political wasteland.

SIT UP: Even the best tailored jacket looks best when pulled tightly down in the back, this should remove the hump of fabric behind the neck. Stand up, pull your jacket tails down, and sit on them for a razor sharp shoulder line.

TRUE COLOURS: The colour red tends to bleed so it's a good idea to stay away from it. Also avoid thin stripes, which tend to create annoying moire effects as they interfere with the horizontal lines that compose a TV picture. The best colour to wear is solid blues. White shirts should be avoided since video is not kind to bright, colourless contrasts.

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ACCESSORIES: Dangling jewellery, beeping wristwatches, squeaky chairs or swivel chairs and even jangling pockets full of change are just some of the annoying sounds that will prompt your soundman to call the shoot to a halt just as you are delivering that well rehearsed line. Your normal speech level will be fine so leave the competition behind.

CUE CARDS: I have never seen cue cards work, if you have a large amount of text to deliver insist on a Tele prompter even if it means a slight increase in the budget. After all would you buy or be convinced about a product when the company representative looks like they are only learning about it for the first time.

MAKE UP: If it's available make use of it. A sweaty brow, a shiny bald spot, blemishes, bags under the eyes can all disappear with a good make up job. Several clients I work with carry their own compacts to dull down the hot shiny spots on their bald heads.

BUTTERFLYS: We all suffer from them some time or another, try this Japanese technique- take a deep breath, press the tips of your fingers into your abdomen, just under and following the arch of your ribs where they join at the sternum. Bend over slightly and count to ten. Straighten up and exhale.

ROLL TAPE: Your first indication of this will be your sound man asking you for a few words so he can set his levels. This is usually followed by the director saying "roll tape", sometimes the camera operator will say "rolling tape" in response, but don't speak yet, your cue is "action".

More questions?

Contact us direct and we will try and fill in the answers for you.