

Basic Videography Checklist

Do you have enough light?

What to look for: Even and broad lighting on the subject. Natural light is usually best, but more important is thorough lighting that avoids harsh shadows.

Why you need it: Low lighting will cause poor quality video, even if you have the ability to raise the brightness with video editing. The camera will have trouble keeping focus, and it is likely to automatically reduce the frame rate, which will cause a jerky-looking final video that cannot be corrected.

Is your image stable and framed well?

What to look for: A stable image, either from a tripod or placing your camera on a stable surface slightly above your eye level. It is advisable to follow the rule of thirds and when framing your shot. Tip: Use the grid function on your camera.

Why you need it: Taking advantage of the natural focus points of the human visual experience and reducing strain on the eye will give an underlying professionalism to your videos. This will make the viewer much more engaged.

Are you thinking of the background?

What to look for: Clean background that does not distract the viewer. You may need to hang a sheet or move to a blank wall. Be sure to keep windows and reflective surfaces out of the background.

Why you need it: A viewer will be easily distracted by a cluttered background or movement in a mirror. An unfocused audience will not receive your message.

Did you map out your dialogue?

What to look for: A way to keep you on track for your dialogue and not reading from a script. Make sure to practice your message.

Why you need it: Keeping on track will keep your voice smooth and allow for your point to come across. Grasping for points and stumbling over words will detract from your message, possibly forcing you to re-record the video.

Are you using open body language?

What to look for: Straight posture, relaxed muscles, shoulders pulled back, and a smile. Speak slower than you think you should, and be sure to enunciate.

Why you need it: Body language communicates a lot, even through a video message. People are more likely to trust you and be open to your message if you appear confident, relaxed, and excited about your subject.