



# FILMING INTERVIEWS

## presented by Jennene Riggs & Pauline Bonney

The art of conducting an interview is a very useful thing to know how to do. Interviews can offer an intimate insight into a persons life and an in-depth understanding of a topic that your interviewee knows a lot about.

The main goal of an interview is to inform your audience, to enlighten people on a subject they might not know much about. To shed light on how someone thinks and their passion for, or position on a particular topic.

Interviews can be used to capture knowledge from experts within a specific field or organisation, a community leader or influencer, or you might even want to conduct an interview with a family member to capture your family history. What ever the purpose, an interview builds authority and trust because the audience can relate to seeing the 'real' person, not a pre-meditated scripted version of them. Because its not scripted you might see vulnerability and humanity that otherwise wouldn't be there.

The first thing you'll need to decide is where you are going to film. Try and find a location that's relevant to the person you'll be interviewing - their home with personal items in the background is often a good choice, or their office/workplace if its a work related interview, or maybe at a park. Just make sure the surrounding noise isn't too loud or distracting.

Decide on the type of shot you're going to use. Medium and close-up shots tend to look best when someone is just talking. You want to see their expressions and hand movements for the medium shot, and then crop in to a close-up when the interviewee is expressing a lot of emotion. You can predict if their response is going to be emotional by the questions you're asking them.



Jennene films an interview with Tanya Jenkyn from Mystwood Harvest for her YouTube series <https://youtu.be/bXhX-p6lC3A>

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## How to interview well...

1. Before your interview, try to find out as much information about your interviewee so that you can have an intelligent conversation. Get Your interviewee to send through a brief biography and some relevant information on the subject you are talking about. This Allows you to have the end result in mind.
2. You'll need to make sure your interviewee is calm and comfortable.
3. Pick a quiet, well-lit location
4. Body language - be warm and welcoming! Use mirroring as a technique to show your interviewee that you are hearing them.
5. Put your interviewee at ease. You can do this by allowing time to speak to your interviewee before you start your interview. Reassure your interviewee that they are ok. Remember that people need to feel safe on camera.
6. Ask your interviewee to repeat the question, in the answer.
7. Allow time for a response without you replying (This will make editing easier later on).
8. Use nodding gestures (rather than verbal replies, to show that you are listening).
9. Remember that your job is to connect your audience to the interviewee. You can do this by trying to find relatable answers. Ask yourself will the audience relate to this material.
10. Always try to leave your audience with a positive thought. What are the gems of knowledge that your interviewee can pass on to the audience.

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## Poise and Presenting on Camera

1. Do your research, so that you know your material well.
2. Take a deep breath and think positive before your interview.
3. Sit or stand in such a way that it makes your interviewee feel comfortable. Remember your goal is to make your interviewee feel comfortable enough that they will interview well.
4. Have notes or cue cards to help you remember your main points.
5. Speak clearly and allow pauses in between thoughts.
6. Try to focus on the message rather than how you look. If you are calm, your interviewee and audience will be calm.

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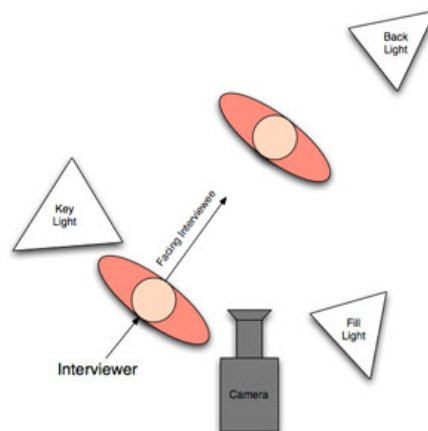
# Sound and Lighting Equipment

It's important to capture good audio in an interview. It's very hard to listen to an interviewee when they're being drowned out by other ambient noise or people in the background, so be sure to use a lavalier microphone, clipped to the inside of their shirt, a boom, or a decent shotgun mic to record the audio. Find a quiet area to film and make sure you don't have distracting background noise such as flickering lights, computer hum, or a dripping tap.



Wear headphones to monitor the sound levels and make sure it's not distorting or too soft. If you can't plug headphones in at the same time as a lavalier mic record your interviewee talking with a sound check, then play back the audio using headphones to make sure your levels are good.

Use the three-point lighting technique if you have lights available, or at least a well-lit room, supplemented with a fill light on the other side of the subjects face.



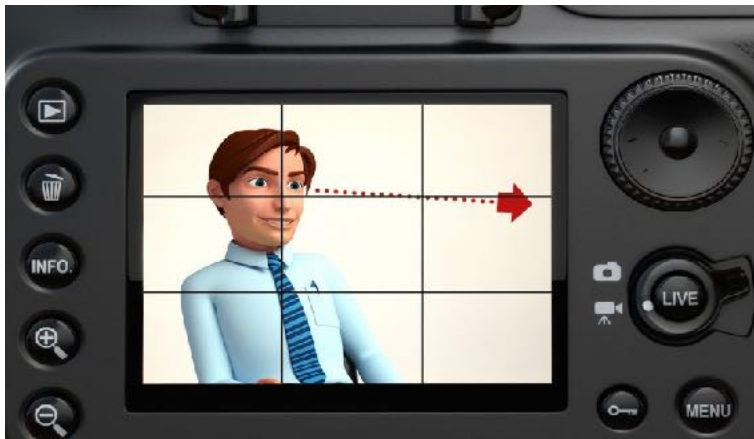
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## Framing up, Composition & Settings

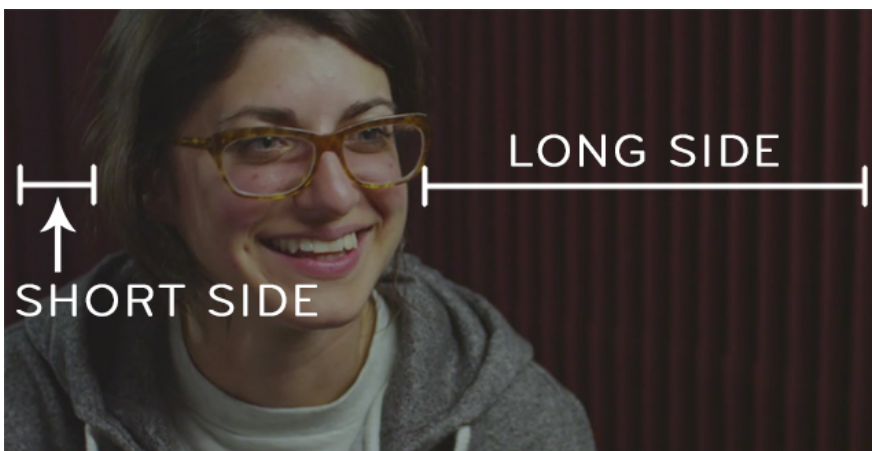
- Position your interviewee as far away from any walls as possible
- Remove any inappropriate items that might be visible in the background of your shot
- Hold your camera as steady as possible, preferably on a tripod
- Position the camera at about the same height as the interviewee's eyes
- Follow the rule of thirds when framing up - either left or right of centre



Position yourself close to your camera and have them look across the frame to your eyes

You should try to avoid framing up your interviewee in the centre of the frame as this creates an unbalanced image, and is best used for tutorials (which are typically scripted, and not interviews)

For a single person on screen interview, compose your shot for a 'Long sided interview'. The space that is larger to the right or left of their head is considered the long side, and the space that is smaller is the short side. In a long sided interview, the subject is looking slightly toward the long side of the frame. This creates a sense of balance and comfort for the viewer



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# Interview questions

In order to elicit interesting answers from your interviewee, you'll need to think carefully about the questions you ask and how to prompt them to talk freely.

You'll want to ask open-ended questions to encourage a conversation about an interviewee's experiences, emotions, or opinions so that you don't get single word answers like 'Yes' or 'No'.

Your questions should cover the 5 Ws (who, what, where, when, why and how)

Some questions or prompts you might ask your interviewee are -

- What do you do for a living?
- What hobbies do you enjoy and why?
- What's something people wouldn't know about you just from looking at you?
- Tell me about someone who has had a big influence on your life.
- Tell me a story about a place that is important to you.
- Tell me about an accomplishment or event from your past that had a significant impact on you.
- Recount an incident or time when you experienced failure. What did you learn from it?
- Tell me about something important to you?
- What's the hardest thing you've ever had to do?
- What are you proudest of?

Don't feel like you need to ask all your questions, or in the order you've written them. Use them as a springboard to new and interesting directions the interview might go in.

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# Interviewing Tips

- Set up a time and place that works for both of you
- Have a purpose and identify the main themes/topics you want to ask
- Do some background research before writing your questions
- Don't feel like you have to stick to your questions if a different tangent starts to evolve
- Bring a recording device with a good microphone, headphones and your written questions
- Make your interviewee comfortable and relaxed
- Make sure they are well lit
- Start with short, simple questions
- Be courteous and thoughtful
- Arrive early to set up before your interviewee arrives
- Listen carefully
- Make eye contact and appropriate gestures
- Ask open ended questions (eg tell me about, describe how, why, tell me more)
- Have them repeat part of the question in their answer
- Spend as much time listening as possible, not talking
- Say Thank you!

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