

# How to be GREAT on camera.

## PART 1: PLANNING

**“Video increases organic search traffic on a website by 157%”**

*Conversion XL-*



Photo: sam-mcghee

# The camera is just a tool. Ignore it!



Photo By: JL Da Silva

The camera is just a tool. Ignore it!

Have you ever been in a situation where you have to go in front of a camera to deliver that oh so important speech and your mouth is dry, you don't know if you are any good at it and all you want to do is leave as fast as you can? Well so have I, but fortunately for me, my job is to be behind the camera!

The camera is intimidating but the fact of the matter is that it's just an object. What will probably throw you off even more are all the elements around it, the lights, the microphones, the camera and sound crew and the location. You will become suddenly very self aware.

Stop. Pause. Breathe. Ignore everything.



Hi My name is Joao and in this ebook you will have access the techniques tips and tricks to be confident on camera so you can reduce your stress, which means you can go about your day without thinking about it. Well not too much anyway.

Either you're an executive or new to the company, it is fair to say that with the expansion of social media and the growing amount of multi media content a company needs to produce, at some point in your careers you'll have to speak in front of a camera.

According to the Business Consultancy and Digital Agency Insivia, Mobile video consumption rises by 100% every year and viewers can retain up to 95% of the message when they watch it in a video, as opposed to only 10% when reading it in text.

And according to word stream, 59% of executives say they would rather watch a video than read text. Are you one of those? Well video is less taxing on the eyes.

Talking to camera can be a great experience but it can also be very challenging, nerve wracking and intimidating.

Over the last two decades I have filmed Presidents of several countries, prime ministers, stars, and celebrities. They all have their own personal way to prepare to be on camera but there are a series of techniques that are transversal to them all.

The tips in this eBook will help you get rid of the anxiety and help you nail that camera delivery. Curious? good!

As a producer/ director my job is to make you look good and that the information that you are providing is delivered in the best way possible, making sure people can see and hear



Photo By: JL Da Silva

you properly and in a way that they can relate to. But there is a lot of work that happens before stepping in front of my lens and this is what we are going to delve into today.

The success of an on camera delivery depends essentially on 2 factors:

## **Planning and Delivery.**

There is a lot to talk about so in this first part we will delve into the planning process to deliver your ideas, clearly, naturally and successfully.

Here are my 7 tips to be great on Camera:

### **1- Decide your delivery process.**

First we need to decide on how we are going to deliver this message, is it off-the-cuff , scripted, or scripted while reading from a prompter. Note: you need to prepare differently depending on which process you are using.

If you if you are used to talking in public and you're comfortable with it you might want to have a more spontaneous approach with maybe just some bullet points to streamline your though process.

This is more dynamic and more engaging for the audience. However In a corporate environment this approach can be quite tricky as the amount of sign offs and approvals needed for the text to be compliant is usually quite high and might even go mind boggling in some large corporations and unless you're very senior it's going to be very difficult for you to be able to use this approach. in that instance, and for the sake of your sanity you will have to write the script.

## 2- Script writing.

Depending on the size of your organisation you might either, have to write it yourself or your communications team is going to write it for you. If you have an in house team to write it, work with them, make sure that the script is easy to speak. **Simplify the language not the content** so your delivery flows better and sounds more like a conversation than a formal communication.

Now that you have an approved scrip that is compliant, there are two ways you can deliver it, you can either try to memorise and deliver it or read it from a prompter.

## 3- Memorising the script.

Memorising the script can seem for some people a daunting process but there is quite a simple trick that will help you deliver the script in a more dynamic and engaging way but If you are able to memorise the entire Text, even better, you have an awesome Memory!

But for the rest of us there is a trick.

The trick is to Divide the script into segments and only deliver one segment at the time.

Before you take that decision however, It is important that you or someone in your department contacts the film team that will be working with you to make sure they have the resources for that approach as they will need to create coverage using either multiple cameras, cutaways or other techniques.

When you have segmented the script in different parts, memorise the first paragraph or 2, deliver them, stop, memorise the next couple of paragraphs, stop and repeat this process until you finish the script.

The benefits of this approach in contrast with reading from a prompter are that you will look more natural in your delivery, more engaging and it's gonna look more like a conversation.

#### **4- reading from a prompter**

Sometimes memorising the script even in segments can be quite difficult, especially if it's your first time in front of camera, you're nervous or there is simply way too much data to memorise, in this situations you might want to consider reading from a prompter.

You are probably thinking this is the best way, however it only looks simple, it can actually be quite Challenging.

Reading naturally from a prompter will take some practice. If you are not used to reading from a prompter the end result might look a bit stiff. Body posture is going to be tense and stiff with unnatural hand movements , eyes will be open wider than normal and the face features will look contracted.

The delivery can en up being quite robotic, so if you are going to read from a prompter, make sure you rehearse it with your video team until you feel comfortable delivering the content.

**Do not worry about the speed of the prompter as someone will be controlling that for you.**

Speak at your own pace, if you need to stop, to create a pause to call the attention of the audience to a specific point, stop, and the operator will stop the prompter at the same time. Once you have let that point sync in , continue naturally and your operator will continue with the text. It is important to understand that to be able to read from a prompter properly is a team effort, as your delivery will dictate the speed at which the operator will scroll your text and the speed of the prompter will dictate your pace. It's a chicken and egg situation so it is important to rehearse with your film team until it feels right.

## **5- Rehearse the script.**

Now that you have your script and you have decided how to deliver it, it is time to practice.

Set aside some time and record yourself on your phone or on a camera. That will allow you to identify if the script is easy to say, if the language has been simplified properly and if it sounds conversational enough for it to flow. Reading a text and speaking a text are two very different things and the results on camera will be very different.

When you look back at your recording, listen to your delivery but also look at your posture:

1- Is your back straight is your posture natural,

2- is your hand gesture natural,

3- do you sound monotone did you give the inflections you needed to the words that were more important in the script,

4- are you looking straight at the camera, are your eyes looking all over the room and it does look like you are nervous?

5- Are you tripping on some words over and over again?

Systematically tripping on words might be an indication that those words are too difficult to say in that sentence or context, consider changing them.

6- Are you speaking too fast?

Slow down, average speaking pace is between 110 and 115 words per minute, aim for that.



## 6- Use tong twisters.

For your next take consider saying tong twisters out-loud, before you press record.

Tong twisters help you with your delivery and help you control your nerves.

There is a reason why actors use tongue twisters, it warms up the voice, helps them focus on the moment so they can abstract themselves from their surroundings. This Technique allows you to calm down and be ready to actually deliver your speech to camera.

Here are some tongue twisters to help you with this process:

*She sells seashells by the seashore*

*How can a clam cram in a clean cream can?*

*I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice cream*

If you are in the mood for something a bit more complicated try this:

*Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers,*

*A peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked,*

*If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers,*

*Where's the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?*

If you are a non native English speaker , be careful whilst speaking this one out loud:

*I slit a sheet, a sheet I slit and on that slated sheet I sit.*

These tong twisters are also useful just before you walk in front of the camera.

The better you prepare before the recording, the easier, faster and more enjoyable the recording experience will be.



Are you ready to step in front of the camera? Yes, now your are ready!

In the next ebook I will give you 7 tips on how to approach the 2nd step:

**Delivery.**

Thanks for reading and have a great day.

If you need more information or have a question or need a video, I am happy to help.

Feel free to contact me :

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# How to be GREAT on camera, and enjoy it.

## PART 2 : DELIVERY

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*– MarketingSherpa*



Photo By: JL Da Silva

# The Delivery to Camera



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Hi, I hope you enjoyed part 1 and that the tips were helpful.

Okay your script is written and you have rehearsed, you have recorded yourself, you have checked the footage and you have used all the techniques we discussed in the previous eBook.

According to Wordstream, 92% of users watching video on mobile will share it with others.

OK, no pressure then.

It's now time for you to stand in front of the camera and record your speech. let's delve into the second step of our two step process to nail that video recording:



## **DELIVERY.**

Hi My name is Joao and this is the 2nd eBook with my tips and tricks to deliver comfortably and without stress to camera.

### **1- Relax.**

The first tip for a great delivery is to Relax. it's perfectly normal to be a bit nervous before stepping in front of a camera. The tongue twister exercise that we saw in the previous eBook is of great help here, also, as you repeat the tongue twister over and over again you are abstracting yourself from the situation and focusing on what you have to say, as well as warming up your voice.

Another technique is to think of random numbers, really random, the further away from one another the better. This technique allows you to focus your thinking on the logical side of your brain, helping you, therefore, to control your emotional side.

Breathe, well that helps too! deep breathing is proven to relax your body and mind. In a nutshell deep breathing tells your body that there is no danger so it can relax, on the other hand short quick breaths that you take when you are nervous communicates to the primal side of our brain that our body there is danger. So breeeeeeeeaaaathheeeee.

It's also a good idea to drink some water before stepping in front of the camera and to bring a bottle of water with you but I would avoid coffee or any caffeinated drink, if you are hungry grab a bite to eat but avoid sugary foods as those tend to dry up your mouth really quickly. The video recording process will probably take longer than you think, so be prepared.



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## **2- it's a chat not a lecture!**

Once in front of the video camera, The first thing you will probably hear is the videographer asking you to be natural! Well that's much easier said than done isn't it!

The most common advice you will be given when stepping in from of a lens is to treat the camera as a friend . That's easy isn't it? the camera is a very big object and that length is not at all intrusive! Of course it's not easy to picture THAT as your best friend.

But it is nonetheless important to try and look beyond the camera and imagine that you're talking to someone you know or even delivering that presentation to your colleagues in the boardroom. Let it flow, keep it a bit more conversational, if you have prepared the script the way we saw it in part one, and your script is already written in a more conversational way, then Half of your job is done.

## **3 keep your energy high and you volume higher!**

People say the camera adds 10 pounds, well it's not exactly true but the camera does amplify your emotions, if you are shy or speaking softly, in camera it will feel like you are scared or distant and even afraid, you will loose authority and therefore fail to engage your audience.

If you are confident, if you speak louder that you would do usually, if you put more energy into it, then the audience will think that you have authority that you know what you're talking about and that you are someone that is worth listening to. In a nutshell you need to speak slightly louder than you would normally, articulate all the words and don't forget to finish each word making sure the last syllable is audible.

and to get some inspiration try to...

#### **4- ...model people that inspire you.**

we all have people that we love to listen to, that are great speakers, and have a great presence. Pay close attention to the way they speak and how they use their body language, hands movement , Inflection and Pace to keep the audience engaged in what they are talking about.

Unfortunately when it's our turn to step up to the plate we tend to be a bit more robotic with the way we speak. So model the people that inspire you:

The public figures, the speakers, the actors, people you like to listen to, maybe you like the high energy of Tony Robbins or Steve Jobs controlled excitement, maybe your boss is an awesome motivational speaker or you just like the way Christina Ammanpour delivers her pieces to camera. Listen very carefully and try to replicate the way they deliver the script. And that leads us nicely to the Next tip.

#### **5 Inflection and Pace**

When any public figure speaks, their delivery is not monotone, they have variations, they go up they go down, they pause, as a way to enhance certain words, so it is important to do the same when you're delivering to camera. Your delivery will sound more engaging.

Use Inflections, accentuate your most important words, Slow down, create a pause. Your delivery will be more engaging and dynamic. it makes your audience pay attention to what you're saying. Listen to the people you have identified in the previous tip and you will realise that their delivery is usually very dynamic, the intensity and volume may differ but the tone and pace is always very rich to grab the audience attention and to enhance their communication.

## **6- Use your hands, or not!**

When you go through media training, your tutor will tell you to use your hands and will teach you how to use them effectively. However, this is not something you HAVE to do, but if you naturally use your hands day to day, if it's part of your personality, then by all means do so.

Depending on where you're from you will use your hands in different ways. For instance I'm from Portugal and in my part of Europe, we like to use our hands quite a lot. This is a cultural trait common to all southern European people, either from Portugal, Italy or Spain, we all use our hands naturally to communicate, even if some use them more than others.

It's natural for us to be speaking and moving our hands about, but if you're not your cup of tea, if you're not comfortable with moving your hands, if it's not something you usually do, then don't, it can look very robotic, forced and it's actually going to distract from the message you're delivering.

So unless you had some previous media training where you were taught how to use your hands effectively, do not try to use them on camera as you will be making a conscious effort to use them and the audience will see it as the camera amplifies everything you do. Don't do it just because somebody told you 10 minutes before you step into the studio that you have to use your hands, you don't! But if it's part of your personality or you've been trained to use them effectively, then, yes, use them as they add character and personality to your delivery!

If you don't know what you do with your hands here is a safe way to use them:

Start with your hands in a neutral position, put your hands at waist level just in front of your navel, form a triangle and leave them there. It is a good starting point. Then from this point onwards move them as you feel it's right, say, to accentuate an idea for instance. But always come back to your neutral position. Avoid putting your hands in your pockets it's considered too informal.

Avoid crossing your arms as you're creating a barrier between you and the audience and you are distancing yourself from them. If this is still too much, then just leave them

hanging along the side of your body but keep your back straight. Posture is really important.

## 7- Technical Tips

We are fast approaching the last page of this ebook, but before we get there, I would like to talk a bit about the technical side of the interview and your piece to camera.

When you are walking to a set, you will not only have a camera in front of you but you will also have a camera crew, that can range from 1 to 5 or more people, lights, a microphone or two and you might even be in a public environment or place so you will have a lot of distracting elements around you, like your colleagues or even your boss, be prepared for that. If you're the boss, well then, that is one less thing to worry about!

Do not use bright colours like bright blues, reds or greens, and if you are being filmed in front of a blue or green screen, definitely avoid those, as you will disappear in the image. Bright and saturated colours are amplified in the camera and we want people to look at you not at what you're wearing.

Use colours that are a bit more subdued, like pastels, light blues, pearl or coral or pinks especially if you are using a grey suit. It's always good to have a bit of colour but don't go all the way out with the strongest colours you can find. I would say try to avoid using a white shirt, but in corporate environment.. well I know better. All the same, if possible





avoid a white shirt as it overpowers the camera's sensor and it becomes brighter than your face. A pearl or light grey shirt will work a lot better.

Another thing to consider are patterns. Video has come along way since the 80s but patterns can still cause some technical issues. Please try to avoid fine stripes or patterns if you can as they tend to jitter on screen and it will distract the audience.

Stick to solid colors, nothing too flashy and avoid strong patterns. Be careful with jewellery, large earrings, necklace and bracelets as they tend to be very noisy, especially if you are sitting at a table.

We want to avoid all distractions, we want the audience to look at you and focus on your delivery and on what you have to say. Not on what you are wearing.

Finally I will say, smile don't forget smile, smiling is important because it means you're approachable and your audience will engage with you a lot faster if you're smiling.

Definitely smile at the beginning and at the end of the video while thanking your audience for listening to you.

Thanks for taking the time to read this eBook and I hope these tips have been of some help.

If you need more information or need a video I am happy to help.

Feel free to contact me.

Joao

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