Filming tips for webinars, pieces to camera, interviews, talks or sermons with equipment suggestions

To produce a good quality recording you need three things

- o **To be seen**
- o **To be heard**
- o **To connect**

How you are seen on a video is important:

To connect with the viewer you need to be seen in a similar frame by their eyes as they would view you, listening to you, in the same room.

- o So head and shoulders should always be visible.
- o The camera should be **at** you eye line not above or below it. (i.e. you should not be looking up or down into the lens.
- o Good lighting is very important.

Straight-on lighting is best for video calls, especially if you sit facing a light source. This ensures your face is well illuminated and clearly visible. Using natural light from the window to fill in the sides also creates pleasing, accurate skin tones in the camera and renders accurate colors. But it isn't enough……

Just like our eyes, cameras need light to render a good image. When there's not enough light, too much light or a light is pointed in the wrong direction, it can cause cameras to render a lower quality image. It's important to know how to set up and use proper lighting in order to optimize your video calls.

So you will need a daylight ring light.

This will

1. Illuminate Facial Expressions

2. Minimize Distraction from flares and glares and noise from low light

3. Render Realistic Colors

4. Achieve the Highest Quality Video -High quality images rely on more than just the camera's resolution.

There are some reasonably priced ring lights, there are more expensive ones out there, but one like this from amazon will work just fine.

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Extendable-Dimmable-Photography-Compatible-Smartphone/dp/B088635TJM

7 Lighting Tips for the Perfect Video

1. Sit or Stand facing a Light Source

Sitting with your back to a window or bright light source can negatively impact the quality of the video call by giving you a harsh silhouette effect. Whenever possible, sit facing the window, desk lamp, or other light source to ensure your face is well illuminated and clearly visible.

2. Optimize Natural Light Sources

Natural daylight creates pleasing, accurate skin tones in the camera and renders accurate colors. Setting up your conferencing system in a room with a lot of window light is useful in creating a well-lit, professional setting.

3. Use Soft Directional Light from a ring light on a daylight setting

.Contrary to popular belief, the closer a source is to a subject, the softer the shadows will play on that subject. So bring the ring light closer to you. This may help boost the camera's exposure on your face as well. The ring light should be set up to the back and side of your screen and angled above you head

4. Create a Three-Point Lighting Setup

Think of a clock: if you're facing noon, try to position light sources at 11 and 2. Adding an overhead light rounds out a great three-point lighting setup. But beware of bulbs that create an orange glow. It may be worth swapping out a bulb for a whiter lighter

5. Use the Right Amount of Light

It is important that there is plenty of light in the room to get maximum clarity. However, it is possible to have too much light. If your window is too bright, lower the blinds or move away from the window to avoid overexposure. If a light source like a lamp is too bright, walk it away from you or dim it with a shade.

6. Choose Bright Colors for Walls

Use white or light-colored walls and tables in your meeting spaces to brighten up the room with reflected light. White surfaces reflect light, whereas black surfaces absorb it. Using a lot of white or bright surfaces and walls in your conference room will brighten up the space by bouncing light around. It is lovely to film yourself with a book case behind, but that saps the light. Move your desk forward so the bookcase is a way behind you or if need be hang a sheet over it.

7. Be aware of glasses. Make sure you angle the light so it doesn't bounce off your glasses

A good microphone makes all the difference to being heard:

You need a microphone that eliminates as much eternal noise and noise bounce as possible.

The microphone on your computer or phone is multi directional and so will pick up all the sounds that it "hears". Also if you are in an empty room or one with stone walls and no

flooring, the sound will bounce around the room as you speak and this will create an echo. Some people say it sounds like you are in a toilet.

The microphone needs to be no further than a foot away from your mouth. You can opt for a label mic or a microphone on a stand. If you are using the latter try to keep it out of shot.

The following are examples of both kinds:

These are both good and reasonably priced:

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Microphone-Fifine-Condenser-Recording-Videos-669B/dp/B06XQ39XCY

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Microphone-Condenser-Recording-Suspension-Adjustable/dp/B07VBJN78Y

This one is more expensive, but has the shield and is good quality: https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B07SYQCT8P/

Or you might prefer a lapel mic which you could use with your phone as well, theer are lots out there, but this will get you started on a search…:

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Professional-Microphone-Omnidirectional-Recording-Conference/dp/B01AG56HYQ

And Finally…… Looking at Camera.

To engage with the viewer you need to be looking at them.

It is so easy to look away from the camera, especially if you have notes. A good autocue App will stop this.

There are various Apps you can buy that mean you can put a script or sermon onto an autocue format. It will scroll as you talk and as it is on screen it will be directly in your eye line – so this stops you looking down or to the side, both of which are very distracting for the viewer.

A couple of Apps to begin your search are:

For a laptop

https://teleprompterpremium.com/

And for an apple phone

https://apps.apple.com/us/app/promptsmart-lite-teleprompter/id922921003

Framing is also important

- o Think about how you frame your background. Make sure there is nothing distracting behind you, like an open door or a wonky picture. (It may look straight on the wall but the angle of the camera may create an illusion that it is tilted, so make it look straight on camera or remove it).
- o Bookshelves where the tiles of the books can be read, or an untidy room can be a distraction for the viewer.
- o Don't be afraid to "dress" the room, add flowers or cover an old pattern chair with a plain colour throw
- o Don't have anything growing out of your head (So nothing behind you that from the camera angle appears to be coming out of your head).
- o Don't wear checks or tight stripes as these strobe on video
- o Where ever you sit make sure you feel relaxed - it will show if you are not.
- o Feeling hot or sleepy – a flat pack wine cooler or picnic ice pack straight out of the freezer down the back of your shirt keeps you cool and awake!