

How to Make an Awesome Testimonial Video for CCC

What You Will Need...

- ✓ Cell phone, video camera, or any camera with quality video capabilities
- ✓ Good lighting
- ✓ Relevant backdrop or step and repeat signage (large banner)
- ✓ Willing participants
- ✓ Phone and camera power cords/batteries
- ✓ SD card with lots of storage

#1 – Know Your Phone

Get familiar with your cell phone device's video features or video features on your camera. You can find more information about your device by going to YouTube and searching your phone or camera features.

Here are some links to get you started:

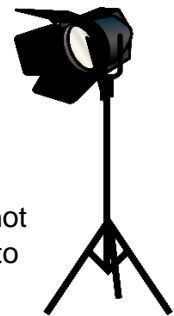
[iPhone Video Recording Tips](#)

[Android Video Recording Tips on YouTube](#)

#2 – Good Lighting is Critical

Proper lighting has a huge impact on smartphone cameras because they have smaller image sensors and lenses. Try as much as possible to shoot your video in brightly lit areas. This will help avoid unnecessary shadows and grainy areas in your video. Conversely, be careful not to point the camera directly at bright light sources, which will cause unusable overexposed footage.

Lighting should be stable and steady; the image sensors in most smartphones do not react to dramatic changes in lighting very quickly. If the light is still making it tough to shoot your video, try working with back-lighting and white balance settings if your phone or app provides them. Most phones also offer "touch focusing" in the event your camera is focusing on the wrong area of your composition. After setting the focus on the most important aspect of the video, the automatic exposure control will have an easier time making small adjustments if the lighting condition begins to change.



#3 – Stay Steady

If you don't want your video footage to come out distorted or blurred, the best thing to do is to keep your phone steady while recording. Use both hands to hold your smartphone as close as possible to your body as you record the video. Stabilizers, tripods and camera cages also allow you to keep your smartphone or mobile device still when taking a video with it; they have perfect handles to accomplish this. If a smartphone tripod or stabilizer is a little too costly or not practical for you in your circumstances, you can rest your phone on other physical supports like tables, chairs, desks, shelves, etc.





#4 – The Audio Matters as Much as the Video

While you want your video to look good, the quality of your audio is more important than the video – so it should matter as much, if not more. Unfortunately, the built-in microphone in most smartphones (if not all of them) is both low quality and improperly placed.



It is very common to catch wind and unnecessary environmental noise that will compete with or drown out any important audio while shooting video outside. Therefore, it is advisable to shoot your video in a quiet place, preferably indoors when possible with less ambient noise. For exceptional quality videos with superb audio, you should get an external recording device or at least a directional microphone that will work with your smartphone. If using an external microphone isn't possible or practical, then stay as close to the audio source as possible and try this little trick: use your hand to cover around the phone's microphone (but don't cover it). This way, unwanted noise can be reduced, which might give your final product a chance.



#5 – Get Close to Your Subject

Staying physically closer to your subject ensures better image quality, less digital noise, and better focus in your videos since most smartphones use a digital zoom rather than optical zoom.

#6 – Avoid Vertical Video Syndrome.

Some videographers who use their smartphones for digital filmmaking often make the mistake of holding their phones vertically, that is to say up and down rather than sideways, while recording. Hold your phone horizontally so that videos played back on other screens (virtually everywhere) will look their best.



#7 – Be Prepared for the Shoot.

Before you begin recording your videos, make sure that you have all of the gear, props (like the I Support... Template), talking points, and shooting location/backdrops ready to go. Additionally, make sure your phone is charged and that you have enough storage space (available memory) to store the footage – high definition (HD) video files can get large and will drain a battery quickly.

#8 – Share Your Video!

Share the video with your agency's employees by posting it on your agency intranet or as a link in an email message. Be sure to get permission first! To share the video more widely, send it to Bryan Shelton Bryan.Shelton@uwcentralohio.org or post it to the Ohio CCC Coordinator Group on Facebook using #OhioCCC.