



▶ Best Practices in Creating
Instructional Video

For the Instructor



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Purpose and Objectives

Instructional video can be used for various purposes. It can introduce new topics or “bridge” units or for use video as segmented, focused lecture.

Whatever the purpose, you need defined objectives for the content. Keep in mind what you want to accomplish with the video and what you want your students to be able to accomplish once they have viewed it.

Video should never be used as filler or just to show interesting information. It wastes your time and the students. Video should be focused on content and help students achieve learning objectives.

Audience

Know your audience. Where are they in the academic process (freshmen – seniors – graduate -- peers)? This information is critical when crafting the structure of the video. Do you need to start with foundational material or can you get right to the point? Do you need visuals or other support materials? These are all questions that must be addressed when creating a quality video.

Length

Most instructional videos should be short, concise and last no more than five to ten minutes. If a longer video is needed, it should be segmented or have planned breaks or pauses.

Interactivity

Your video should include several interactive features. When you develop your script, you can place these as necessary, and determine how it will impact the length of the video. Interactivity includes:

- Moments of planned, defined reflection
- Questions based on prior knowledge
- Questions based on video content
- Thought provoking questions tied to current content
- Directions or guidance on the instructional material covered in the video (how it will be used, etc.)
- An assignment
- Interaction with readings
- Interactions with graphics

Script



Figure 1. Example of laptop teleprompter.

Yes a script. It's additional work, but it will save you time in the end and ...

- It will help you keep focused and achieve your purpose and objectives
- Permits practice and refinement of content
- Help you avoid “uh” or “ah” moments
- Keeps it professional
- Allows for closed captioning or text alternatives
- It provides students support visuals

- Limits the process to one attempt instead of three or more

You need to place your script near the lens, but not in the viewing area. There are numerous free teleprompters available on the web to make this is an easier process. They allow you to adjust font type, size, and speed.

Space

Remember, location (space) is critical. A studio is nice, but there is something to be said about being in a location that matches the topic. Making a video on scene can add a value to your presentation. But, regardless of where you “shoot” the video, make an effort to have ...

- Permission to video on site
- A quiet environment or body-mounted microphone
- Control of potential intrusions
- The best possible lighting
- Turned off cellphones, office phones and equipment
- Have an appropriate background

Attire and Movement

Dress for the occasion. We recommend neutral (earth tone) or solid colors, no stripes or busy patterns. Avoid reflective materials that flash, bounce light, or make noise when you move.

Once the video is “rolling,” avoid fast movement, shifting, swaying, or nervous fidgeting. You want to say the right thing and look confident when you say it.

Working with the Audience

Make eye contact with camera. This creates a connection with the audience ... presence.

Combine your presence with an image of what you are talking about, if possible. This can be accomplished with embedded PowerPoint presentations or physical objects. This adds another dimension to the video and aids in the student’s long-term retention of information.



Figure 2. Eye contact is an essential element in producing an effective video.

Post Production Actions

Conduct a showing with a trusted colleague.

Save a back-up copy on DVD for later retrieval, if needed.

Save a copy of the script with the DVD video.

Place the video on the institution’s streaming server for online delivery, not directly in the course. Several videos can hamper course archiving and replication processes.