

Quick Guide to Shooting and Editing Video with a Mobile Device

Adapted from “Go Tell It: How and Why to Report God's Stories in Words, Photos and Videos,” by Jim Killam and Lincoln Brunner (2014, Moody Publishers).

Objective

Shoot and edit a 1- to 2-minute video that tells a story of God’s work.

Equipment you need

- Smartphone, tablet or camera that shoots video.
- Tripod or other stabilizing device
- Video editing app such as iMovie.
- Optional but recommended: External microphone

Before you pick up the camera

Conduct a low-pressure, “practice” interview. Just chat with the person— but work from a list of questions that you intend to ask again later. Let the person get comfortable by formulating answers without camera pressure.

Now, because you know which questions will yield the best responses, you’ll ask those questions on camera. This can shorten your editing time dramatically.

The on-camera interview

Choose a location. The person’s work or ministry setting may be ideal.

Indoors: Find a well-lighted room that’s quiet and padded with carpet, drapes ... anything to absorb sound. Avoid places with a harsh echo; metal or concrete walls produce particularly bad sound.

Outdoors: Find a secluded, evenly lit place free of noise and visual distractions.

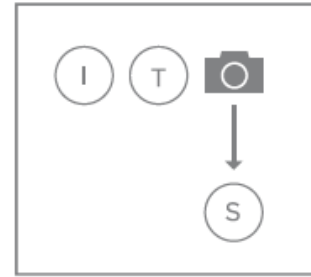
Remember, sound quality is even more important than picture quality.

Be aware of background sound: people talking, fans running, dishes clanking, vehicles roaring by, dogs barking, even birds singing. All of that distracts from what your subject is saying.

Unless you have a separate microphone, keep the camera within 2 meters of your subject.

Always use a tripod. If you don’t have one, set the camera on a stack of books, a piece of furniture ... anything to keep it rock-steady. Any camera shake is distracting for the viewer.

Frame your subject horizontally, slightly off-center (use the rule of thirds) and sit where he or she can look you in the eye without having to look up or down. Tell them to look at you, not the camera.



Interviewer/Translator/Subject

Once the camera is on, ask your subject to state his/her name and what they do. You may need that. Also have them repeat your questions before answering them. It might provide a needed transition for your story.

The goal in a video story is to not need narration, but to let the interviews and B-roll tell the story. This is different from most television journalism, where the reporter speaks on-camera.

Working with language barriers

If you speak the subject's language fluently, one option is to record the interview and translate it later. If you don't speak the language, you'll need a reliable translator.

The translator should sit next to the camera and your subject's eye contact should be with him/her. You as the interviewer should sit next to the translator (see diagram).

Coach your translator. They will hesitate to interrupt your subject, but it's most accurate to have them translate sentence by sentence. Otherwise you'll get a paraphrase rather than direct quotes.

Shooting a quick video of yourself

Sometimes you may need nothing more than a 30- to 60- second video of you talking about your ministry.

- Follow all of the directions above for lighting, audio quality and framing the shot.
- Work from a script, but don't *read* the script to the camera. Memorize it. Maintain eye contact with the camera as you speak.
- Record the video in a quiet place that shows something about your work.

B-Roll

Interview footage is foundational; that's why it's called A-Roll. But viewers don't want to watch a person talk for more than a few seconds. You need B-roll: short clips that play while the person is talking.

- Shoot 10 to 20 seconds at a time. You won't use clips that long, but it will give you flexibility in editing.
- Go for variety. Wide-angle, medium-view, close-up, extreme close-up. And set the scene. If not a security-sensitive area, shoot some clips that clearly show what city and/or country you're in. Famous landmarks work well.
- Shoot more B-roll than you think you'll need. Even a 1-minute video typically needs 10 to 15 B-roll clips.
- Hold the camera steady or use a tripod. Don't pan or zoom.

Editing your video

If someone else will edit your video ...

Simply collect all of your clips into A-roll and B-roll folders and send them to the editor.

If you are editing the video yourself ...

Start with the interviews. Edit them into separate clips. Delete the parts you don't want. Lay the clips end-to-end as one track your software's timeline. Now hit *play*, and listen to how the story unfolds. Move things around as necessary. Cut more; your final story shouldn't be more than two or three minutes.

Next, edit your B-roll. Keep your clips the way you shot them – 10 to 20 seconds each. You needn't cut them to final length until you place them.

Now, start laying your B-roll on a track above the interviews, in 3- to 5-second clips.

Save and export your completed video. Then upload it to the web according to your organization's guidelines.

For specific software training, Google these terms ...

- iMovie tutorial
- Windows video tutorial
- PremierePro tutorial