

# Beginner's Guide To Instructional Videos

## Video Procedures – Getting Started

### Step 1

Decide whether you need to script or storyboard (many videos do both). Begin with a script if the shoot involves actors or if your clients will need to recite their own lines. Once you have the script, you can choose the shots based on those scenes and lines. Storyboard if your shoot involves multiple camera angles or action sequences.

### Step 2

Create storyboard sheets. Draw a series of small boxes to represent the camera shot on a sheet of paper, or lay them out on your computer. Include space for descriptive writing under each frame. Print or photocopy duplicates.

### Step 3

Create visuals of the camera shots and scenes. You don't have to draw. You can take pictures or sketch stick figures. Sketch in pencil to make corrections, and jot short notes under the frame.

### Step 4

Illustrate the action. Use arrows to indicate camera motion. Sketch the same background across several frames to indicate position changes. Annotate transitions such as fades and dissolves.

### Step 5

Number your shots. You can use them to create a shot list and refer back to them during editing.

### Step 6

Draw an overhead plan view. Indicate camera location, actor location and lights. If you can scout the location first, it might give you a better idea of the layout.

- *Don't spend a lot of time drawing. This isn't art. All you need is enough information to position actors and indicate camera motion and angles.*
- *Storyboards should inspire, not restrain. They're a starting point. You can always change your storyboards or revise the shot while you're shooting if a better idea presents itself.*

# The Storyboard

## Step 1

Read the script several times. Take notes about the characters so you can identify them and create their physical personas. Then split the script up into scenes by drawing a line across the page at the end of each scene.

## Step 2

Take one scene at a time and break the scene up into shots. Draw a line across the page in a different color to define a different scene. If using the old fashioned method of pencil and paper get your supplies out and with a ruler, draw several boxes on a page, leaving room underneath the boxes to write in the dialogue, special F/X and directorial comments. If using software then just set up your blank page or new project. If using software simply go through the tutorial to get started. It's very simple to use.

## Step 3

Write the name of the show/movie and the scene number at the top of the page. Starting with the first box at the left of the page, draw your image in pencil. Under the box write in the scene's action and dialogue. If there are any special notes as far as graphics and directorial comments (such as do a reverse shot), those should be written below as well.

## Step 4

Continue through the scene drawing each separate shot in individual boxes. After you have drawn everything in pencil carefully go over it in pen. Then, if you would like to use color, take out your colored pencils or markers and fill in the drawings.

## Step 5

Type the written action, direction, dialogue and commentary then print them on large address labels. Afterwards, take the labels and place them over the written area below the drawing boxes. Congratulations, you have a visual representation of your scene.

## Step 6

Repeat steps two through five for each scene in your project.

# Lights - Camera - Action

*Note: The following procedures are guidelines and depending on the video, equipment, department and content may or may not be followed.*

## **Location:**

Try and choose a location that allows for the best camera angles and focus distance. If possible always scout the shooting location to avoid surprises on the day of the shoot. The more room for actors, props, lighting and anything else required to convey the purpose of the video the better. If possible choose a location with little or no background noise. HVAC equipment, construction, even nature itself can be a distraction when filming and block out the actors voices. Lighting should be a consideration when choosing a location if there isn't enough ambient light plan on having enough space to set up additional lighting. A power source is a must if additional lighting kits are to be utilized.

## **Equipment:**

Equipment varies in availability and level of quality. If possible use the highest quality of camera available, the old adage of "Garbage in Garbage Out" really holds true when filming. There's nothing worse than filming all day only to find out the image quality is blurry and grainy. A 3CCD camera such as the Canon GL2 will give you the best quality but may not be an option due to cost or availability. A tripod is a must for stability and zoom shots in addition to a tripod a stabilizing wheel for the camera should be used if the video includes any kind of handheld shots. Lighting kits should be used if the location has poor natural light or tight shots are required. If light kits are unavailable supplemental light can be obtained by using construction trouble lights available at most hardware stores such as Lowe's, Home Depot or even Walmart. A power strip can be very useful not only for the lighting but most locations will have limited outlets. An extension cord is also a very good idea in case the outlets are a fair distance from the action. You can never have too much equipment, but a shoot can become a disaster if you don't have the equipment necessary.

If the video is complex and includes multiple participants the use of multiple cameras is suggested. This technique allows for multiple shots to be mixed in the editing process and can enhance the overall video quality to convey the intended video message.

## **Sound:**

Depending on the type of filming to be done the use of external microphones should be considered. Although most video cameras have built-in condenser microphones these will also pick up any ambient noise in or around the room. Using an external microphone will assure the subject is being picked up on the audio. This is where a quality camera is a must as not all low-end video cameras have an external microphone jack. A wireless microphone is best as it doesn't restrict the actors movements and can be located on their person to capture their voice with the least amount of ambient noise. If more than one actor needs to be recorded the use of a sound board or mixer can be used to feed all audio into the camera. Always check the audio level going into the camera with the use of headphones, nothing worse than finding out you have no audio to go with your video.

If the video is such that a recorded sound track or voice over can be used always use the best recorder available. Again, Garbage in Garbage Out. A digital recorder if available, works great and can be captured and easily edited in the computer. If using the voice over technique a script is a must, as this allows the person doing the audio to actually read the script and avoid mistakes and fumbling through the narration.

**Editing:**

Depending on the software used to edit the video this can be a complex procedure. First you must capture the video before any editing can be done. Again depending on the camera the most standard way to capture the video is through a firewire connection. Most video cameras will have a firewire or USB connection to allow capturing by the computer. If available a separate DV tape deck should be used to avoid wear and tear on the camera heads. Once the RAW video has been captured a back-up should be made. By backing up the original footage you will always have something to fall back on if additional editing is required. Some cameras record directly to disk or CD and will have to be converted in some cases before you can edit the footage. Multiple converters are available via the internet and will convert between numerous video formats. Choose which format your software will accept and make a back up of the original footage as mentioned above. If adding an intro to your video something less than 10 seconds is recommended which includes a title any pertinent information about the video a logo and any copyright information. Some type of music background usually adds to any intro or opening. Scene transitions are up to the editor's discretion but can add to the overall rendering time. Transitions may or may not be available depending on the software used for editing. Most editing software will however include some minimal transitions.

**Rendering:**

Once you have finished the editing and it has been approved for finalization it needs to be rendered in to a final format. Most editing takes place in an AVI format. If the video is to be included in the CER site it needs to be in Real Player or .rm format. The standard video size for inclusion in the CER site is 320 x 240 allowing for better streaming over the internet. Again various video converters are available on the internet. Video format is dependent on the final use of the video. If the video is to be used as a stand-alone product then determine what size is best for it's intended purpose. If developing a DVD the standard size should be 720 x 480. Another factor to consider is that of file size. If the video is to be streamed via the internet the smaller the better, smaller file sizes stream faster and take up less bandwidth than larger files. If burning to DVD then consider a DVD will hold 4.7 GB but if menus titles and chapters are to be included this will lower the available space on a DVD.

**Conclusion:**

These are by no means the ONLY way to produce a quality video, and each video has its own obstacles and merits. The procedures above are meant to be used as guidelines when producing a video for use in the CER site. Each department will undoubtedly have their own procedures in place and if not these procedures may be adapted to supplement their needs.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

If you have any questions regarding this document or would like to request assistance filming your video you may contact:

Rick Fisher College Of Nursing – E-Mail [rfisher@unmc.edu](mailto:rfisher@unmc.edu)