

TECHNICAL TIP SHEET FOR VIDEO INTERVIEWS

PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW

- » Always check your equipment beforehand and bring extra batteries and tapes or disks.
- » Find a well-lit location without sound distractions (usually natural light is better but outdoors or a busy café is often too noisy).
- » Unplug any machines that may vibrate or hum in the background (refrigerators, computers, air conditioners). Shut windows to avoid cars or sirens, turn off cell phones, and disconnect the phone.

SETTING UP AN INTERVIEW

- » It is best to use a **tripod** to record your interview.
- » Always wear **headphones** to check audio levels and make sure you are actually recording sound.
- » Use a lavalier (tie clip) microphone to achieve the best audio. Make sure that the microphone is well placed and will not be disturbed by jewelry or gestures.
- » Set the camera at eye level and position the interviewer so that the eye line between interviewee and interviewer is close to the camera. You want your interviewee to be looking close to, but not directly into the camera.
- » Remember good composition rules including the rule of thirds, talking space and head space (refer to PowerPoint on Composition). Whenever possible don't position someone right up against a wall.
- » Before recording make sure there are no distracting shadows and that the face is in focus.



PowerPoint on
Composition

CONDUCTING AN INTERVIEW

- » Ask open questions that do not require a yes or no response. For example: "Can you tell me about...?"
- » Explain to your interviewee how to incorporate your questions into their answers and that this is important for the editing process. For example: Question— How long were you involved with the group? Answer— I was involved with the group for over five years.
- » Be careful not to ask leading questions like "Wouldn't you say that the media had a role in the crisis?" It's better to ask, "What are your thoughts about the role of the media at that time?"

- » Always keep silent during the interview. Avoid using sounds such as, “Aha” or “I see”. Use a visual response such as a nod or a smile instead.
- » Allow spaces between questions and answers. Pauses permit individuals to reflect.
- » Ask follow up questions. Use your outline questions as a guide but be open to explore new but relevant topics that your interviewee might introduce.
- » Do not be afraid to stop the interview if you are experiencing technical problems or if there is distracting noise in the background. You may only have one chance to film an interview so make sure that everything you need is recorded properly.
- » Always ask your interviewee at the end if there is anything else that they would like to say, or that you haven’t addressed.

Interview tips were adapted from Witness resources (www.witness.org)

www.mappingmemories.ca

