

## Recommendations for instructional film-makers

© 2016 Ross Younger. For discussion and sources, refer to “What are the key techniques required to create instructional videos?” from <http://preview.tinyurl.com/zdztpyb>

### Planning

- Each video should have a rationale and a set of learning objectives.
- Promote and re-promote the objectives.
- Seduce the viewer: express goals as promises of what they will learn or accomplish.

### Format

- Students prefer tutorial videos to lectures.
- If you do make a lecture, consider an informal face-to-face setting.
- Tailor the material for duration and delivery format.
- Consider making lots of small, specific videos.

### Duration

- Keep it short. Aim for three minutes per video; don't go above six.
- If you break a long task into a series of shorter videos, each must form a logical unit on its own.

### Scripting

- Use a storyboard or at least an outline script.
- Make goals relevant and contextual to learners. Why should they watch?
- *Demonstrate* procedures: show and explain at the same time.
- Keep subtasks clear and simple.
- Match the learner's mental plan for the broader task.
- Keep cause and effect linked.
- Reassure the viewer.
- In a tutorial, use the imperative voice.

### Production

- Use film-making tools well.

- Work in HD where possible.
- Everything that appears in the cut must be correct. Rehearse. Edit out any stumbles.
- Narration or voice-over must be in synch with the video.
- Use visual highlighting.
- Animations can provide a change of pace.

### Cinematography

- Light the scene effectively.
- Choose shooting angles to give a sensation of depth.
- Preserve visual continuity and flow.
- Establish with long shots, then use close-ups for detail. Consider a master shot.
- Keep the visuals faithful to what the learner will see when they do it for real. Consider the point-of-view close-up.
- In an extreme close-up, keep fingers or tools in shot for scale, but don't let them flash in and out of shot.
- Know the viewing format. If learners will watch on mobile devices, make sure the pictures will work on small screens.

### Talent

- Talent should appear enthusiastic and credible about the subject.
- Use a conversational tempo, unless you know your audience will prefer something else.
- Use a confident tone.

### Video Delivery

- The platform should support interactivity: skimming videos, repeating sections, perhaps transcripts and variable playback speed.
- Design for findability with good metadata: title, description, keywords.