

## Techniques for Shooting Good Interviews

### 1. The Wireless Mic

- Make sure there are batteries in the transmitter.
- Check the mic connection to the transmitter.
- Do a “mic test” before you go to the interview to ensure it’s working.
- Attach the mic to the interviewee:
  - Don’t touch the interviewee without asking first.
  - Ask for help in attaching (run under shirt).
  - Place mic on collar in direction interviewee will be talking.
  - Hide the cord. DON’T let the cord hang down on the front the interviewee’s shirt.

### 2. Production Tips

- When shooting by yourself, set shot a bit wider to contain movement of interviewee during the interview.
- Frame the shot - have interviewee looking at you, not the camera. Remember the rule of thirds. Watch the background. Nothing protruding from interviewee’s head.
- Wear headphones and don’t be afraid to stop and fix a problem.
- Change the shot while you’re asking a question NOT when the interviewee is answering.
- Change the shot size (medium to close up) while a question is being asked NOT while it’s being answered.
- Make sure the interviewee isn’t backlit. DON’T shoot them in front of open window; they’ll be backlit. Ask if you can close the blinds or curtain. Remember -- light source should be on YOUR back.



BAD: Don't shoot with subject in front of and open window. They become silhouetted.



GOOD: Use of rule of thirds and see how the photographer used the background (the sign, in this case) to add more information in the picture.



GOOD: Use of rule of thirds and see how the photographer used the background (the shop equipment, in this case) to add more information in the picture.

### 3. The Interview

- Make the interviewee comfortable; remind them that it’s “pieces” that you use. They can always stop and start if they stumble. However, the ground rules you establish still apply—“please don’t use that” doesn’t apply!
- Listen—and ask follow up questions. You’re doing a lot during the interview. You’re concerned about audio, video but you still need to listen to ask the right follow up questions.
- Ask questions that deliver what you’re after.
- Use silence. Sometimes it pays to wait before you ask the next question. Ask a tough question, they answer, pause while they think about what they just said. People generally feel a need to fill a void. You might be surprised what they come back with.
- Maintain strong eye contact during the interview with the interviewee. Shows you’re interested.
- Learn to respond inaudibly. Don’t be going “uh-huh”... it’ll all be on tape and ruin your interview.
- Maintain control. After all, it is your interview.
- Ask for more... twice.
- Don’t promise the interviewee a copy of the interview or a copy of the final product. They are your reporter’s notes. If you promise a copy of the final product and don’t deliver, next time you need them that’s the first thing they’ll ask you.
- Make notes afterward.

*(Interview notes courtesy: Papper, pages 96-102)*