

TIP SHEET



SEE IT
FILM IT
CHANGE IT

TIPS FOR:

CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS

FILMING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS CAN BE DANGEROUS: BE SAFE. BE ETHICAL. BE EFFECTIVE.

1. ASSESS RISK

Make sure you, your interviewee and the community you are part of are safe. Determine whether or not you will need to conceal identities. Consider the security implications if the interview is shared online or publicly.

2. CONCEAL IDENTITY

Before beginning, communicate how and where the video will be used. If anonymity is needed, film interviewees' hands while they speak, have the subject wrap their face in a scarf, or adjust the focus to blur the image. Do not film identifying marks such as scars or tattoos.



FILM HANDS



COVER FACE



BLUR FOCUS

3. PREPARE QUESTIONS

Research your interviewee. Prepare and arrange your questions in advance so that you get the answers you need. Ask open-ended questions that begin with "why," "how" or "tell me." Avoid questions that can be answered "yes" or "no."

4. CHOOSE THE RIGHT LOCATION

Conduct the interview in a safe and comfortable place. Choose a quiet location. Avoid interruptions. Remove items positioned behind your subject that might distract a viewer. Avoid using chairs that roll or swivel. If revealing the location of the interview puts your subject at risk, do not capture landmarks or identifying details.

5. SOUND

Bad audio can ruin good video. Use headphones to clearly hear what your camera is recording. Turn off background noises – like fans or electronics – that you can control. Turn off all phones in the room. Do not leave cell phones on vibrate as it can interfere with the audio. If possible, use an external microphone or lavalier and record in a quiet place.

6. GOOD LIGHTING

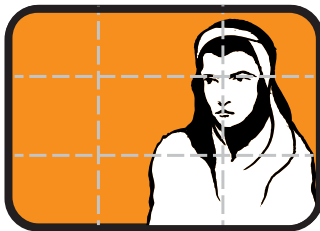
Your light source should always be behind you when you are facing the interviewee. Avoid shadows on your interviewee and be mindful of cloud and sun flares when filming outdoors.

7. STABILIZE THE CAMERA

Use a tripod or a flat surface to steady your camera. Never move the camera or zoom unless absolutely necessary, especially while the subject is speaking.

8. FRAME THE SHOT

Your camera should be at eye level with the subject. Do not film up or down at them. Film your subject from the waist or chest to the top of the head. For medium and wide shots, position the subject slightly to the left or to the right of the frame. Don't place the subject right in the middle of the frame.



**CORRECT MEDIUM
CLOSE-UP**



**INCORRECT
CLOSE-UP**



**CORRECT
CLOSE-UP**

9. OBTAIN INFORMED CONSENT

Clearly explain the purpose of the video, how it will be used, shared and who may see it. Confirm that the interviewee accepts the risks of being recorded and ask them to explain how the video will be used in their own words. Record them providing on-camera consent. In a high-risk situation, the interviewee can choose to conceal their identity, or they can opt to not participate.

10. INTRODUCTIONS

Have your interviewee say and spell their name at the start of the interview, and state how they want to be identified (e.g., mother, doctor, survivor, etc.) in the video. If there are security risks and the subject prefers to remain anonymous, consider using a pseudonym.

11. CONDUCT THE INTERVIEW

Listen actively! Re-word questions as needed. Ask your interviewee to speak in full sentences and incorporate your questions into their answers. Allow a 3-second pause between the end of your interviewee's answer and your next question. This will help during the editing process.

12. LET INTERVIEWEE SPEAK

Do not interrupt your interviewee unless it is absolutely essential. Use nonverbal cues to help your interviewee stay engaged, such as nodding your head. Avoid saying "yes" or "aha." Invite your interviewee to add any additional points or thoughts that they wish to be recorded.

13. CAPTURE B-ROLL

Supplemental footage, or b-roll, provides contextualizing details and helps develop the personal narrative. When possible, record scenes of your interviewee's daily life, such as interacting with their friends, family, work colleagues or in a community meeting. When safe, include shots of locations or details discussed in the interview.