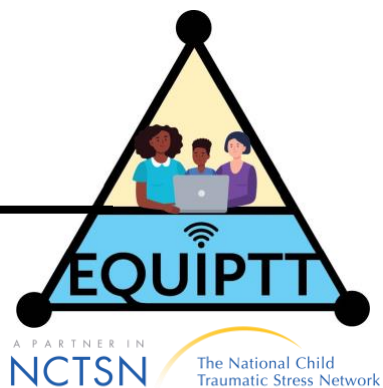# Considerations for Creating E-Learning Course Video Content

This TIP Sheet offers general guidance for those in the planning and development stages of creating video for an e-learning course.

Be thoughtful about what kinds of videos you are creating

- Is your video content primarily informational or educational?
- Do your videos demonstrate a skill or a pathway?
- What is the emotional impact you are hoping to achieve with the videos? Are you looking to evoke an emotional response in the audience?

The answers to these questions will inform how you create videos for your course. If you plan to hire a videographer, make sure that you discuss these decisions with them in advance.

You can create different looks for your videos depending on their purpose. For example:

- Demonstrations should focus on the technique being taught. Avoid adding unusual camera angles, lighting, or supplementary sounds, which could detract from the demonstration.
- Informational videos may need some visually interesting elements (on-screen graphics, perspective changes, close-ups, etc.) to maintain learner attention.
- Emotional appeals/calls to action might benefit from evocative content, like background sound, outside imagery, or other elements.

Keep videos brief enough to be engaging

- Listening to even the most entertaining speaker is difficult for long stretches if nothing else is happening on screen – including PowerPoint slides. Be concise and strive for shorter, more information-dense videos.
- If longer videos are necessary, good use of imagery, sound, camera perspective shifts, etc., may make it easier for the viewer to stay tuned in.

Actors vs Experts vs "Real People"

There are many options for "casting" your videos. There isn't one right answer, but you should think about the purpose of the video and who might be best to achieve that goal.

- Actors/Presenters/Voice Talent
    - PROs: Trained to be on camera; trained to use their voices to convey emotion
    - CONs: May provide "actor-y" (non-believable) reactions in demonstration scenes; may not understand language and message of the content
- Experts
    - PROs: Knowledge of subject and skill demonstration; can engage in discussions about a topic without guidance; won't need to memorize information because they already know it

- o CONs: Not always comfortable on camera; can lecture instead of talk; can use vocabulary that might confuse the audience
- "Real" people
  - o PROs: May provide more "natural" reactions in demonstrations where the goal is to represent a real clinical situation; tend to follow instructions well
  - o CONs: Comfort level on camera will vary; "natural" reactions are not desirable in all situations (ums, ers, and uhs may be okay in demonstrations, but not in other contexts)

Using Scripts (or Not)
- Deciding whether to use a script or let the people speak 'off the cuff' is an important decision that, like most others, often depends on the purpose of the video. Scripted clinical demonstrations may seem rehearsed and non-believable. A scripted introductory video, on the other hand, can be executed pretty well. In any situation, though, when the speaker is obviously reading (e.g., looking down at notes, looking off camera), it is off-putting to the audience and will likely decrease engagement.
- In demonstration videos, it may be better to tell the participants what the demonstration is about and have the "patient" act as normally as possible. Whenever a script is needed, teleprompter devices can help speakers maintain eye contact with the camera while viewing the script.

Some Final Tips
- Ultimately, creating video content for e-learning courses is critically important. It can make a big difference in learner response to the course.
- Planning is the most important part of the process. It can ensure you end up with the high-quality video you want and save you time, money, and resources. Returning to the purpose behind each video as you plan and execute them can keep you and your team on the same page.
- Videography professionals can be incredibly helpful in assisting, but final decisions about the content should be made by you. You know best whether a video will achieve your goal of communicating course content with your specific learners.

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