

Interviewing

The abbreviated version?



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Choosing the Correct Mic

- Camera Mic?
 - NO!!! If you can avoid it, avoid it.
- Lavalier/Lapel Mic?
 - Okay for long, sit-down, one-on-one interviews
 - Not okay for fast “man on the street” format
- Handheld Mic?
 - Most commonly used for interviews

Check Your Sound

- Check your sound WHILE you're setting up and shooting!
- If your camcorder has a headphone jack, use it!
- Camcorder sound meter isn't good enough



Check Your Sound

- There are few worse feelings than having to ask someone to re-do an interview because YOU didn't check the sound.
- Would you shoot your video with your eyes closed?



How to frame your shot

- Interviewee will talk to YOU
- We want them to look just off-screen and not at the camera itself
- It's weird when the interviewee stares straight into the camera



How to frame your shot

- Interviewer stands ***beside*** the camera
 - Not in front
 - We shouldn't see you
 - Not in back
 - If you're directly behind the camera, that's where the interviewee will look



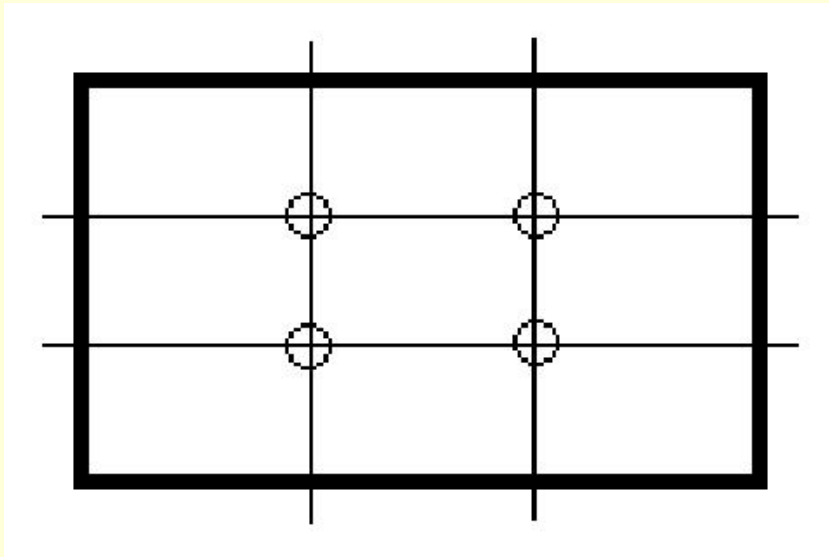
How to frame your shot

- If you're shooting by yourself...
 - Get your shot first
 - Hit record
 - Then get in your interview position



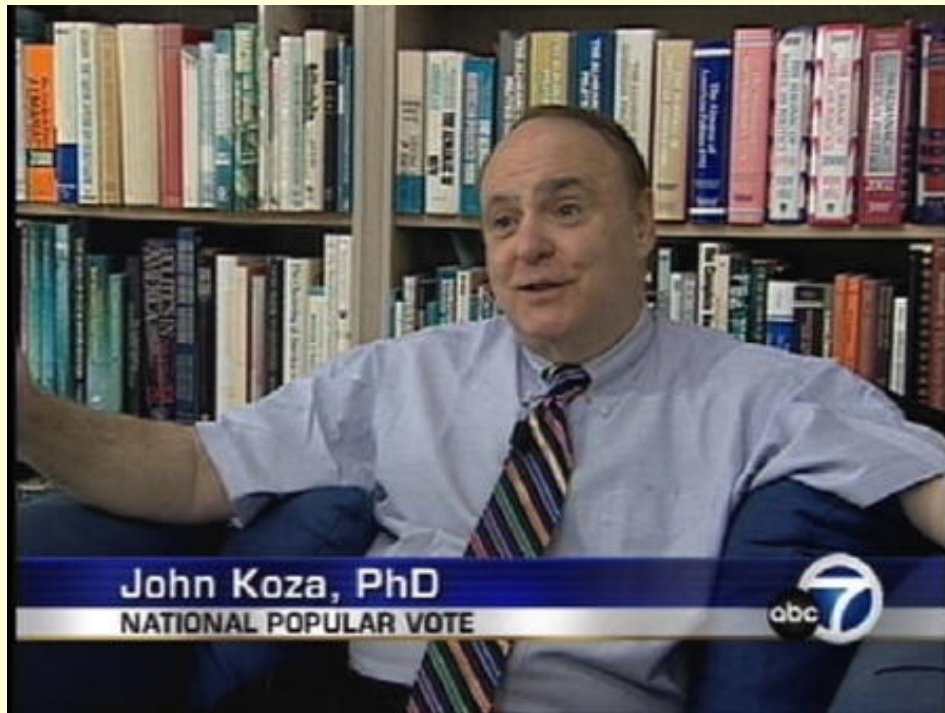
How to frame your shot

- Apply the **Rule of Thirds**
 - Imagine a tic-tac-toe grid on your viewfinder
 - Place your interviewee's eyes at one of the upper cross sections



How to frame your shot

- Be sure to give plenty of look/nose room



How to frame your shot

- Avoid mug/profile shots



How to frame your shot

- Interview shots are usually close-ups (CU), medium close-ups (MCU), or medium shots (MS).
 - MS: a shot from the waist up
 - MCU: from the elbows up
 - CU: from the shoulders up
 - In a CU, it's okay to cut off a forehead, but it's not okay to cut off a chin

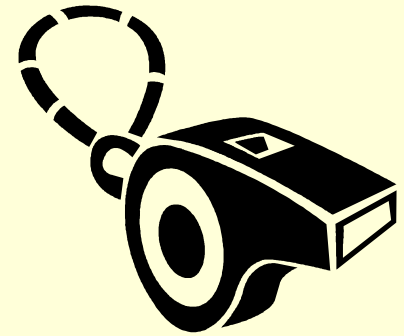
Backgrounds

- Nothing distracting, like kids making funny faces behind your interviewee
- Nothing boring, like hall walls or lockers
- Find settings that are relevant to your story
 - If the story is about basketball, go to the gym!



Coaching

- Sometimes you need to coach your interviewee
 - “Don’t worry about the camera or the mic”
 - “Talk to me, I’ll hold the mic”



First questions

- Once you've framed your shot, tested your sound, and started recording, **ALWAYS** ask these questions first:
 - “Say and spell your name”
 - “What grade are you in?” or “How old are you?” or “What position do you play?”
- Use these answers to create your name graphics (aka Lower Thirds)

Questions

- Avoid CLOSED questions
 - Closed questions will elicit one-word responses
 - For example:
 - How was the game?
 - What's your favorite color?
 - Did you have fun?
 - Are school lunches too expensive?

Questions

- Force your interviewee to talk!
- Ask OPEN questions.
 - Use “Describe” or “Explain” or “Why”
 - For example:
 - Describe the game.
 - Why should people join your club?
 - Describe the best part of today’s event.
 - Explain your pick for President

Questions

- Avoid two-part questions
- When people are asked two parts back-to-back, they often only answer the second part.
 - BAD: “Describe tonight’s game, and tell me about your next opponent” (answer)
 - GOOD: “Describe tonight’s game.” (answer)
“Tell me about your next opponent.” (answer)

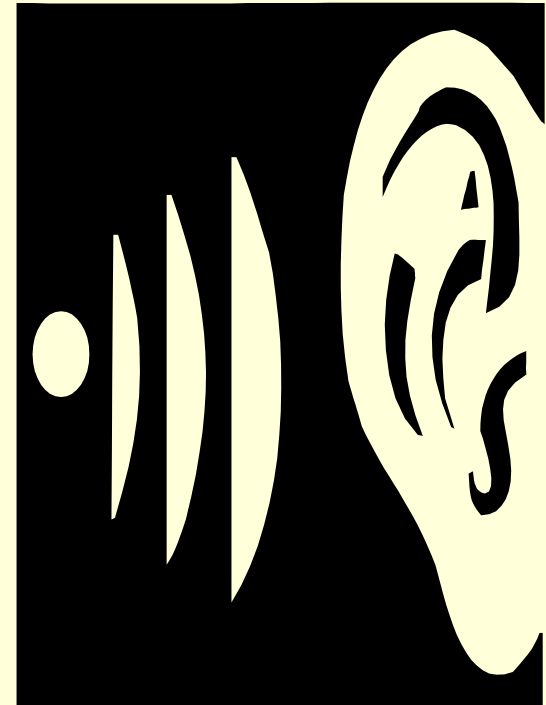
LISTEN!

- Listen to his/her answers
- You don't want to ask a question which they just answered!
 - (embarrassing and unprofessional!)



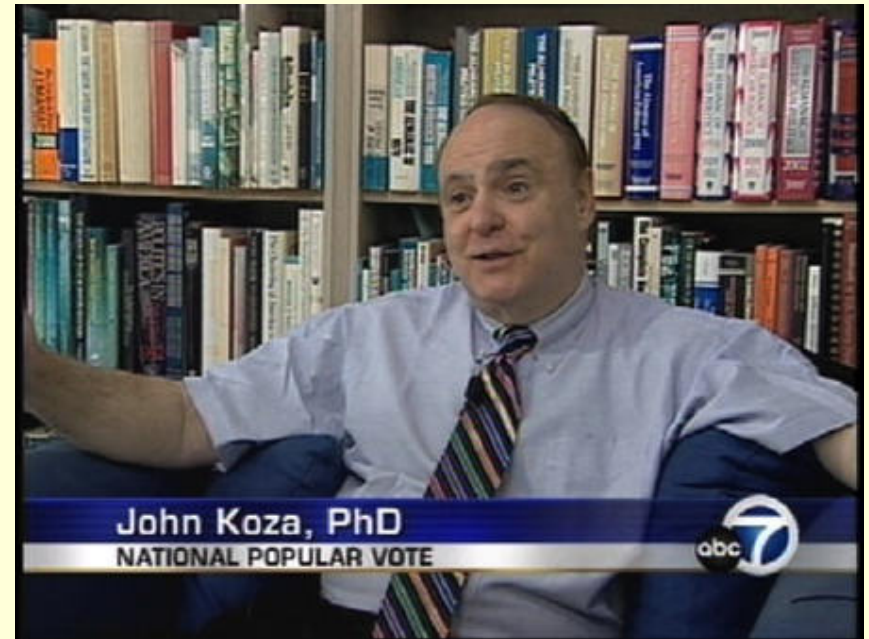
LISTEN!

- They might lead you to the next question
- Don't leave natural questions unanswered
 - Ex: “I can't wait to get a car for my birthday.”
 - Next question should be???
 - “Describe your new car.”
 - “Why are you getting a new car?”



When you edit...

- Use the name spelling & age for graphics
- Don't actually include them saying "My name is XXX" in your piece



When you edit...

- If you do a montage of people answering the same question, we don't need to hear you ask the question every time
- We don't need to hear you say "Thank you" each time

When you edit...

- Choose the most important piece(s) of each person's response, and only include that part(s)
- Use B-roll footage to cover up any jump cuts and to make your interview more interesting
 - Watching the same person talk for more than a few seconds gets very boring