



Presentation Tips for Stage and Camera

Appearing on camera can be an intimidating prospect. Whether you are in a one-on-one interview or live onstage, you want to be aware of your body language and the message it conveys. The primary body language that sets a professional presenter apart from a novice is eye contact. When you maintain eye contact, you are clearly telling your audience, "I am confident, credible, and trustworthy."

Eye Contact - Interview

When you are interviewed on camera, keep your gaze focused directly on the interviewer at all times. Do not shift your eyes to the camera or to anything behind-the-scenes. Subtle glances up or to the side are magnified on screen and can make you appear nervous and uncomfortable. If you must look away to take a break, it is best to look down, appearing as though in thought.

Eye Contact - Direct-to-Camera

In some instances, you will deliver a message directly to the camera. The camera lens is your audience, so the same focused intensity is required. If you hold your gaze a few seconds before you start to speak and after you finish your comments, the editors will thank you..

Eye Contact - Panel Discussion

When you are seated on a panel, keep your focus and body language forward. Acknowledge the moderator or panelist who is speaking with an occasional glance, but remember your audience and the camera are in front of you. Even when you aren't speaking, you are being watched by the audience and the camera, so stay engaged in the conversation.

Delivery

In short, take your time. Use a good, strong speaking voice. Wait just a moment before you respond to a question, and try not to "step" on the interviewer. Organize your thoughts, and keep your responses brief and complete.

Posture

The chair for an interview or onstage appearance should not be too plush or too low, preventing you from practicing good posture. If you are seated at a table, do not use the table or your elbows to prop yourself up. Hand gestures are fine, but keep fairly still in your chair. Rocking back and forth or shifting from side to side can be distracting to the audience and bring you in and out of the camera shot.

Seating

Avoid "splayed" legs or placing your ankle over your knee. Cross your legs at the ankles, or place your feet on the floor with your legs together. If room permits, crossing your legs at the knee may be acceptable. Barstools and director chairs can be a challenge to good posture. Perch instead of sit, if possible. Women should never wear a short skirt to an interview or an event where they may be seated on stage.