

Teleprompter Tips & Tricks

The prompter operator will maintain YOUR pace, not the other way around. If you are reading fast, the prompter operator will be forced to speed up. Same for if you read too slowly. An experienced operator knows to vary the speed of the scrolling text to keep up with, but never rush, the announcer.

Before the shoot, each on-camera speaker MUST have a printed version of the script. It's best to rehearse the script out-loud because the printed word and spoken word can be two very different things. If there are any names or terms that could have more than one pronunciation, you'll have time to decide which pronunciation is correct or most appropriate.

1. Writing Your Script

- Most importantly, write your script to be spoken, not read.
- Keep in mind that your audience will hear your words rather than see them, so it's important to write in a way that when spoken it sounds natural.
- Examples:
- Use **we've** . . . not **we have**
- Use **haven't** . . . not **have not**

2. Practice, Practice and More Practice

- There's no substitute for practice. The more you practice and personalize the text, the more you'll put meaning to the words.

3. Passion and Energy

- Give your performance passion by upping the energy. Television squashes your energy level . . . what seems like 'over the top' translates wonderfully onto the screen.
- So 'turn yourself up' . . . not in volume, but in emotion, and instantly become more interesting and appealing to watch.

4. Smile!

- Don't forget to smile. smiling is perhaps the simplest way to connect with your audience. The warmth of a smile is a must at the very least at the beginning and very end of your performance.
- A smile can also be used throughout the delivery, almost regardless of the subject matter, as though you're telling a funny story.
- A smile creates an attitude that's captivating to watch . . . although of course there may be some occasions when a smile is not appropriate - you'll have to gauge your audience on that.

5. Maintain Eye Contact

- The magic of the teleprompter is that it enables you to look directly into the camera lens, creating the illusion of eye contact with your audience.
- Take full advantage of this by not looking away. Your continuous gaze really does engage your audience. Eye movements away from the camera can make you look a little bit 'shifty'.

6. Use Non Verbal Communication

- Appropriate facial expressions and hand gestures are critical to your performance.
- And loosen up . . . there's nothing more distracting to an audience than a 'rabbit caught in the headlights' - the person who is frozen except for their moving lips delivering a speech.
- Use gestures and expressions to amplify your words, stress important points to show that you are passionate about what you're saying.
- Move your head . . . but not too much.

7. Don't Shout

- Address your presentation as if you were speaking to just one person.
- Even if the tape will be watched by a massive audience, your intention should be to connect with each person individually, as though you were speaking only to them.

8. Don't Follow the Teleprompter

- Your teleprompter operator is trained to follow you, so deliver your speech with pacing that's appropriate and comfortable for you.
- Be confident that the words will always be there.
- When you pause, or even improvise - off script - your next word will be there on the teleprompter, waiting for you to pick it up.

9. Don't Panic

- For many people, the studio, or being confronted by their camera and having to perform, can be scary, resulting in the loss of speech and all reasonable thought.
- If you stumble, regroup and keep going. Don't draw attention to your mistake by making noises or facial expressions that you just messed up.
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10. Enjoy

- Enjoy the experience . . . after all, it's only television! And it's supposed to be FUN!