



Tips for starring on camera

Weigh the opportunity: Should you do this interview? Never take a TV interview just because they asked you to do it. If you can't clearly identify what you expect to achieve for your department through the opportunity, you can pass it off to someone else. **No 'get', no 'go.'**

Location: Pick your spot. Consider lighting and background. Think about passing people, traffic and other noise. The scene should underscore your 'character' in the story.

Clothes & accessories: Wearing a suit for a field interview looks wrong, and vice versa; colors should complement skin tone. Remove large, distracting jewelry, as well as name badges, lanyards, glasses (if you can), and everything in your pockets. No hats, and no sunglasses. Silence your phone.

Self-inspection: Check your hands, hair, teeth, zipper, and overall appearance before engaging. Visine, lip balm and floss are good to keep handy.

Stand / sit up straight and still: Shoulders squared, chin down slightly. Hold your mark, keeping your head and body still.

Eyes: Never look into the camera. Don't look to heaven or earth for an answer. Talk to the reporter.

Calm: Your mouth talks. Leave the rest of your face out of it.

Hands: Keep them open and at your sides or use them to help you talk.

Words: TV reporters are looking for short, compelling sentence or two that propels or summarizes the story. If your message is longer than eight seconds, It's too long. Stick to your messaging. Every answer should lead back to one of your three messages.

BREATHE: It keeps your pulse down and your brain working.

Watch the chit chat: The interview starts when they arrive and ends when the news van is pulling away. Presume the camera is always on. When you conclude the interview, remove the mic, turn it off and hand it back to the reporter.

Make your own version: Whenever possible, have a colleague join you to stand off-camera and record the interview on a phone. That way, you can review your performance and know what you said.