



It's a Soundbite World

According to recent research, our attention span has markedly decreased in just 15 years. In 2000, it was 12 seconds. Now, 15 years later, it's shrunk significantly to 8.25 seconds. In fact, scientists reckon we now have shorter attention spans than goldfish, who are able to focus on a task or object for nine seconds. This means that when marketing your business or services, you have to keep the messaging short and sweet. It is also well known that a video is more likely to attract attention on social media platforms, websites, newsletters and other digital marketing than the printed word or still photography.

This all means that the soundbite, which is defined as "a brief and catchy recorded comment, saying or statement which is broadcast, especially on TV" is of paramount importance. Making a positive impact with the way you look, sound and act in a promotional video or interview and keeping it brief and to the point has never been more important. When your nonverbal signals match up with the words you're saying, they increase trust, clarity, and rapport.

I thought I would share a few tips for being on camera for interviews and appearing in promotional videos:

- **Practice** – say your key messages out loud in advance and have an 'elevator speech' ready – a clear, brief message which is typically about 30 seconds, the time it takes people to ride from the top to the bottom of a building in an elevator. Get comfortable with what you have to say so you can breeze through it when the time comes and remember to start strong and to the point when people are paying the most attention.
- **Know your audience** and try to be relaxed and friendly but polite and professional. Mention positives about your organization and be politically correct but natural.
- **Dress simply** and be professional looking as appropriate for your job description – branded polo shirts or similar are good in today's less formal world. Too much white or black is not advisable on camera, and don't wear a hat, patterns, small checks, large print, herringbone, stripes polka dots or loud colors. Instead, wear safe colors like dark blues, grays, and earth tones. It is always a good idea to have a spare outfit in the car or office in case you spill coffee or similar.
- **Keep an open body posture** and remember not to look nervous, don't cross your arms and legs and protect the torso as it makes you look stressed. Don't wave your hands around or fidget, and remember to sit up straight.
- **Speak clearly**, a little louder and slower than normal but keep your tone conversational and sincere – the more confident you appear the better you will come across. Remember to breathe and relax. Also remember – especially if you are broadcasting live - the camera is on so don't pick your teeth, fiddle with your hair, fidget, etc. If you do stumble, don't panic just smile and correct yourself. Try to enjoy it.



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Website: www.lesleyfrancispr.com

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