How to be a Decent Phone Videographer

Catalyst 2017

In partnership with...
Why Use Video in HCD Work?
Video Brings People’s Stories and Experiences to Life

• Stakeholders get to experience what the design team experienced with their own eyes and ears.

• Tool to help you capture verbatim quotes & artifacts from your research to help you do more rigorous synthesis of what you learned.

• A way to bring more team members into the research process other than those who were present.

• Great storytelling tool when your own retroactive narration won’t due the story justice.
Before You Film: Prep + Permissions
Prep & Pilot

Figure Out What You Want to Film

- Decide what part of the prototyping experience you want to videotape. Consider the aspect that most impacts the user’s experience.

- Think about exactly what you’d like to capture in 1-2 minutes.

- Walk through what you’re going to film beforehand with the people involved. Assess where you should stand and what you can cover without much movement.

- Do a live run through of two or three minutes. Review the video for framing, lighting, sound and clarity of action.
Inform participants and secure permission to video

Share that you will take video with participants.

Explain its purpose and who you will show it to, e.g. your colleagues, CCI program organizers and participants. It will not be shared publicly without their permission. Share that you’re practicing the skill of visual storytelling as part of this program.

Obtain consent before you begin filming.

Oral consent should be fine if you aren’t using personally identifiable info (i.e. their face). Sample consent form is available on Catalyst portal.
Tips + Tricks for Taking Great Videos
Holding Your Phone

Hold it horizontally.

Identify the location of the camera lens, flash and microphone.

Grasp phone with thumbs and index fingers. Spread others away.

Brace elbows against your body for stability.
Holding Your Phone

- **Fingers clear of the camera lens**
- **Hands cupped to reflect sound**
- **Phone held horizontally**
- **Elbows tucked against your side**
Additional means of stabilization

Be clever with clips

$12 tripod & holder
Moving and panning

In general, do not move the camera.

If you need to follow the action, move the camera very slowly – much slower than how fast you turn your own head.
Three different views:

**Far**: the whole scene

**Mid**: two people’s interaction

**Detail**: up close use of something
Lighting

Keep the brightest light in front and to the side of your subject, not behind! Watch for windows and the location of room lights.
Image focus and exposure

Tap the screen where you’d like to focus the shot. A square or circle will show up on your point of focus.

If the image is too light or dark, tapping on different parts of the screen will adjust the exposure.
Sound quality

Carpeted, quieter room

$15 plug in microphone & extension cord
**Technical**

**Tips for Taking Great Videos**

1. Hold the phone horizontally, with both hands.
2. Place elbows against your body or use a holder and tripod.
3. Choose your framing – far, mid, detail.
4. Pan slower than you would naturally turn your head.
5. Record in a quiet, carpeted area to minimize echo or use a wired lapel microphone.
6. Position participants with lighting in front or to the side of them.
7. Tap on the screen (square box or circle) to focus the lens + improve the lighting.
8. Keep your fingers away...make sure your index finger isn’t over the phone lens, mic or flash.
9. Narrate over the experience to provide context.
Resources

Tips for Recording Better Video With Your Smartphone
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3OII-sRG8d0

Smartphone Videos for Marketers and Nonprofits
https://www.udemy.com/create-smart-phone-videos-that-raise-money-make-sales/