Videography Best Practices

Lighting
- Find a source of natural light or very even artificial light. Windows work best.
- Position the subject so that they have even, soft lighting on their face. This usually works best when it’s cloudy and you can position the camera between the subject and the window, so the subject is looking toward the camera and the window
- Try to turn off any other lights that might be on; having multiple types of light can cause strange coloring in the video

Framing
- If the subject will be looking to the right of the frame when speaking to the interviewer, then they should be placed just left of the middle of the frame. If they’ll be looking to the left of the frame, then they should be placed just right of the middle of the frame.

Audio
- Find a quiet space where there’s not likely to be any interruptions
- Use an external microphone when possible (shotgun mic or lavalier mics are best)
- Make sure any mics are fully plugged in and powered mics are turned ON

Camera Settings
- If shooting in cloudy conditions with natural light, set the white balance for cloudy
- If shooting in manual mode, leave the ISO in AUTO mode so that the camera can adjust slightly if needed to maintain exposure.
- Disable servo AF if subject is not expected to move
- Make sure any powered mics are turned on and fully plugged in

Interviewing
- Start recording and ask subject to introduce themselves and say what their favorite memory from the last week was, just to help them get comfortable.
- The interviewer should refrain from speaking while the subject is speaking, even the normal “uh-huh” or “yeah” that people usually say without thinking during a conversation.
- When the subject finishes speaking, the interviewer should allow 2-3 seconds of silence before asking the next question.
- After all the questions are asked, the interviewer should ask something to the effect of: “Is there anything about this topic that I didn’t ask you about, but that you’d like to share?”
- Have interviewee sign a release and archive it.