

## **The Extended Interview**

**Record a 20 minute interview and cut down to 2.5 - 3 minutes.**

Suggestion:

1. Interview someone about their work - a book, art work, their profession, etc. Try to focus on one aspect of it, one angle - something you are curious about. This also allows you to get more images and related footage later.

2. A story of some kind. Ask someone about something that happened to them in the past. Go deep and find out the backstory. Make sure you can locate other visual elements to use for breaking up the interview when editing. Watching someone talking for even 20 seconds can get tiring visually no matter how compelling the story is.

Try to find a person and topic that you are genuinely interested in knowing more about, and follow your curiosity.

### 1. Setting

lighting - the person should pop (be brighter than) from the background if possible  
light should come from behind you, and daylight from a window if possible

background - avoid distractions. Have some distance between the subject and background.

### 2. Camera Settings

If handheld (shorter or walking segments) :

- set exposure manually based on the face. zoom to where the face is taking up 2/3 of screen and set exposure
- set white balance manually (if the camera has it)

In addition to the above, If on a tripod (if they will be sitting for more than a couple of minutes or so:

- turn off motion stabilization
- turn off auto focus. If you leave it on it will "hunt" Zoom in on eye, focus manually, zoom back out
- Set exposure manually based on the face. Zoom to where the face is taking up 2/3 of screen and set exposure

### 3. Sound

- use the lav mic
- as a rule, any conversation longer than 2 min should use a lav where possible, or if it is noisy.
- double check the settings BEFORE the interview. I usually check all settings the night before, then 30 min before interview.
- test the mic on yourself or someone who is helping you to test levels.
- levels should be strong but loudest sounds should not top out the meters.
- lav mics are susceptible to interference. Listen carefully for noise and popping sounds and adjust the frequency on both receiver & transmitter if needed. Use fresh batteries.

4. Interviewing technique - see the extensive friendfeed entry

### 5. Length

- A good interview is usually about 20 minutes, 30 at the outside. Use your intuition - you'll know when the subject is tired. Usually there's a moment in the middle when people are comfortable and there's some flow.