Primer Guide to Your Video Introduction

Video messages are a fun and interactive way to introduce yourself and your team to programme participants in other countries. Studies show that viewers retain 95% of a message when they see it in a video versus the only 10% of information retained when read onscreen.

What better way to leave an impression on your fellow Innovators than through video!

Using just your smartphone, this primer will provide you with guidance on how to create an effective and compelling team video introduction for the programme. Using this guidance, teams can create a short (1-2 minute) video presentation of themselves, showing who they are, their interests and goals for the programme. Producing the video can also serve as a great way to bond with your team.

Getting Started
Your first decision as a team will be figuring out who has the best phone for taking videos. While any modern smartphone will have a decent video camera, some are better than others. The following phones are well regarded for their video capture quality.

- Google Pixel 2, 3, 3 XL
- Honor View20
- HTC U12+
- Huawei P20 Pro, P30 Pro
- iPhone 8, Xs, Xs Max
- LG G7
- Moto G6
- OnePlus 5, 5T, 6T
- Samsung Galaxy S8, S10, S10 Plus
- Sony Xperia XZ3

Don’t worry if no one on your team has any of the above phones! Any phone that can take videos at a high definition resolution (at least 720p) will do. After all, you are just introducing yourselves to the rest of the group, not trying to make an award-winning feature film (though many have been made using camera phones).

Crafting Your Message
Once you have your equipment, you will need to work on what you will say. To make sure the videos are equally informative and engaging, it is recommended that your video covers the following:

1. Who are you and what do you do?
2. How did you get into the programme? (Did you apply? Were you nominated by a superior?)
3. What do you hope to take away from the programme?
While you do not need to write out a script, you want to make sure you are clear before recording what you will say and who will say it. This will make the process much easier and avoid you having to record multiple takes or edit a final cut.

It is important to remember that the purpose of the video is to introduce your team and not just yourself. Go back to the three questions above. When answering the questions in your head, did you start with “I” or “we”?

Now that you are in the programme, you will need to start thinking as a team. Your Innovator team is your company’s representative—the voice and face of your company throughout the programme. As such, your video should not just be a basic introduction of you as individuals but rather focus on the most important things you want someone watching the video to know about your team. You may even want to think about naming your team to create a group identity.

A Few Tips:

- **Tell a Story:** A video that just checks every box and answers every question is not going to be that interesting to watch, even if it is only 2 minutes long. Talk to the camera like you are having a conversation. Instead of saying your job title, tell people what it is that you do (e.g., I am a data systems engineer vs. I make sure things in our company are running like they’re supposed to). If looking at each other helps then go ahead and do that so long as you make occasional eye contact with the camera.
- **Keep it Short:** The length of your message is crucial to engagement. Statistically, most people stop watching online video content within the first 3 minutes and already begin losing interest around the 2-minute mark. As such, try to keep your videos to no more than 3 minutes in length and try not to spend more than a minute answering each question.
- **Keep it Simple:** It is important to remember that your video does not have to be perfect or professional quality. Don’t spend your time editing out any mistakes or adding fancy graphics or flourishes.
- **Show Your Personality:** Just because this is a professional programme, doesn’t mean you should not have some fun with it! Don’t be afraid to show off who you are, your sense of humor and your quirks.

**Preparing your Shoot**

Once you know what you’re going to say, you may want to do a quick rehearsal off-camera before recording. Especially if you have written down what you want to say, you may realize that it does not work as well when you read it aloud. A quick rehearsal is a simple way to check the tone of your message and also get comfortable with what you’re saying.

When you’re ready to record, here are a few tips to ensure a great video:

- **Find a quiet, well-lit room for recording.** If possible, book a conference space in your office during the midday when colleagues are out having lunch or at the end of the day when
people are heading home. Make sure the room has sufficient lighting. Natural light is best so find a room with a view but otherwise, any room with lights will work.

- **Get a “tripod”**. While grabbing a friend or coworker to record your video may seem like the best option, even the steadiest hand will still come off a little shaky. Find a flat surface at your eye-length (whether you will be sitting or standing) to prop up your phone so it stays perfectly still during your shoot.

- **Film horizontally/landscape**. This helps viewers get the best possible viewing experience.

- **Avoid the zoom**. Even on the best phones, the zoom will make the video look grainy and blurry. If you want to get a close up, simply move yourself closer to the camera.

- **Get a “teleprompter”**. If you prepared a script, simply prop your laptop next to the phone with the script on the screen so you’re not looking down at your script the entire time.

- **Put your phone on “Do Not Disturb” or Airplane Mode**. Avoid the constant pop up notifications from other apps on your phone which can distract from your filming.

Once you are happy with the final product, videos should then be uploaded to the SDG Innovators YouTube channel.