

Video Learning Principles

Make Your Videos Shine!

To produce a video with maximum engagement and learning:

1. Be relevant

Relevancy beats everything. If your video is relevant to the viewer, all other video learning principles will matter much, much less.

2. Make it personal

A video is a one-to-one medium. Speak like the person is sitting next to you, do not use 'textbook language.'

Use conversational language and use the word 'YOU' often.

Script text for voice-overs only, not for SME's.

3. Make eye contact with the viewer; give visual clues to the learner

Look at the camera, not a few inches above, aside or below; your eyes are part of the communication process too. Exception: don't look directly into the camera if you're recording an interview.

In general: don't shoot unless you can see the white of your subject's eyes (from the book 'How to shoot video that doesn't suck' by Steve Stockman).

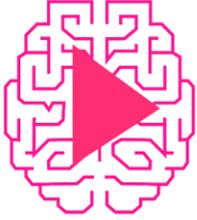
Tip: put your notes just below the camera AND position your camera far away from the subject AND zoom in.

4. 1 Topic = 1 Video

Keep your videos as short as possible. Connect several short videos to into series (in your Learning Management System and/or using interactive links to other videos).

5. Put the 'What's in it for me?' direct at the beginning

Your learners will determine in the first few seconds if your video is going to bring value to them. Avoid long intros!



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6. Use storytelling techniques

Human brains are wired for stories because they add emotion. Emotion is good for remembering and learning.

When you have several short videos: use an ongoing unified theme/story.

7. Audio determines at least 50% of the quality of your video

Always use a good microphone, don't rely on built-in microphones.

8. Make your video visual attractive, add variety

Switch camera position, add B-roll material, or stock images/video or show slides full screen.

9. Amplify your 'signal,' but cut the 'noise.'

Be 100% clear about your message. Be aware of possible cognitive information overload. Make sure that your background does not distract the learner.

10. Manage the cognitive load

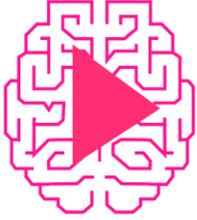
Use pauses to give the viewer time to digest the information.

11. Add interactivity

Put the brain of your learner to work by adding questions (with feedback), hotspots, etc. An open source tool: H5P (h5p.org), a professional tool: HiHaHo Video Enrichment (hihaho.com).

12. Make use of the power of 'video language.'

Use the 'rule of thirds,' pick the right shots (for example a close up for emotion), think about the 'point of view' of the camera and use in editing only cuts, dissolves and dips to black.



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13. Shoot for the small screen of mobile devices

Make sure that details are still visible when your video is watched on a tablet or cell phone.

14. Ask (reflective) questions

A human brain can't help it: if a question is asked it automatically starts thinking for an answer. Use this principle to reinforce learning and for maximum engagement.

15. Show good behavior/procedures

If you show the wrong behavior to, it can be misunderstood and mistakenly be encoded and retrieved as the right response.

16. Keep your scenarios simple (in interactive videos)

Simple plots are straightforward and do not have branches to proceed in the wrong direction.

Use feedback screens to compliment and reinforcement when the right choice is made. When a nonoptimal decision is made: tell why this option/behavior in such a way that the viewer can go on with the case. Do not let viewers continue on the wrong path!

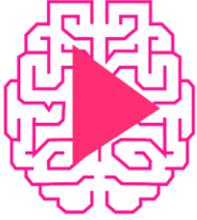
17. Use SCORM or xAPI for tracking viewing behaviors and results

What parts of your video are viewed several times, how long is the average viewing time. In short: handle your learning video as any other (part of) a learning module.

18. Think about clothing

A camera is not an eye! Don't wear clothes with a big contrast to your background. Example: don't wear a white shirt or dress when using a white background.

If you are an expert then ... look like an expert! Pick your clothing accordingly.



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19. Reinforce learning

Repeat essential content in your video ('In short ...', 'Let me rephrase ...', 'What you have to remember is this ...', 'To summarize: ...' etc.). Or use questions about the content and then give the answer in the video.

Or use (part of the) video to send short reinforcements, for example by email. See for example 12l.innk/2.

20. Shoot like a professional

Use these tweaks for best results:

- a. Shoot one extra 'over the top' recording (most of the time this is the best recording because it has extra energy)*
- b. Record continuously*
- c. Make your SME feel comfortable, relaxed ("Just rehearsing, relax")*
- d. Record short takes*
- e. If you use a script, then record each line in a different shot*

21. Re-use your learning videos

When you make short videos, many topics will also be usable in performance support and/or customer support.

22. Record in the highest possible quality

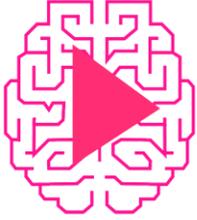
720p is minimum, 1080p is better. If possible, use 4K so you can zoom in without loss of quality (when producing a 1080 full HD video).

23. Prepare!

Don't make up your content/story when it's time to record. Make use of a storyboards, scripts and shot lists.

24. Use music to add emotion

But be aware, music can also increase the cognitive load when used with no apparent purpose.



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25. Always record horizontally (when using a mobile phone or tablet for recording)

Human eyes are positioned next to each other and not above each other. Vertically recorded videos will be smaller in a landscape video (and will have 2 black bars on the sides).

26. Make "3D video."

Don't stand absolute still. By moving your body forward and backward your video will become more 'alive.'

27. Make conscious use of lateral movement

People moving from left to right in the video will be more natural and trustworthy. Add subtitles to accommodate viewer that watch without audio.

28. Add subtitles

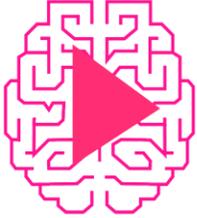
Subtitles accommodate viewers that (have to) watch without audio (because of the environment they where they view your video).

29. Make use of the emotional power of colors

Color can change the mood of a video. Use it deliberately to add emotion. Emotion is excellent for learning!

30. Make use of the signaling power of colors

Color does not add much for understanding. Use colors to highlight important content in your video.



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31. Your own principle (please share it with the world by sending your principle to hans@hansdegraaf.info)



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Vrijdag 19 mei 2017 | 13:00 – 18:00 | De Nieuwe Kolk, Assen

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