

Quick Tips for Shooting Quality Firehouse Videos with Your Cell Phone

Videos are a great way to get the attention of the public and share important information from your fire department, whether it is relating to health and safety, recruitment and retention, fire prevention, or something else. Cell phones are an easy and free way to capture these videos, but how do you ensure you are getting a quality product? Follow these tips to create cell phone videos that are up to your department's standards.

Hold the camera horizontally, not vertically.

Instead of taking a selfie video, ask a friend to help by holding the phone. That way you can get a better angle and distance for the video, and talking to a person is much easier than talking to a camera.

Avoid too much light in the background or facing the speaker. It can cause an uneven appearance and the camera may struggle to focus.

Avoid noisy, busy, or crowded environments. It can make it hard for the camera to pick up the speaker's voice, and you have little control over what's happening in the background.

Keep your camera at eye level. If the camera is too low, it will seem that the person is looking down on you. If the camera is too high, it will appear that the person is being looked down upon.

The picture tells a story. Ask yourself: What is in the background? Does it fit with my message? What do any visible signs say?

How close you are to the subject matters. If the camera is too far away, the person will appear very small. If the camera is too close, it can cause an unflattering angle. Try to stick with chest level and above.

Body posture matters. Crossed arms signal to the viewer that the person is hiding something. Keep arms uncrossed and use open body language.

Hold your camera steady. Constantly moving the camera can make the video feel disorienting and chaotic.

Make sure your subject is in the center of the frame. The viewer should be focused on the person speaking, not the wall behind them.