

PRODUCTION VALUES

Below are some of the elements that can ensure your story looks and sounds good.

SEQUENCES – You should aim to shoot several sequences in a three minute package. You should film your subject from various angles so that the editor has a variety of shots. For example a wide shot, mid shot, close up. Ensure that you record the complete action e.g. someone on the phone puts the receiver down and the hand goes out of shot.

RECONSTRUCTIONS – The reconstruction or re-staging of events in factual programmes can be a great help in explaining an issue. Reconstructions should be identified clearly so that no-one is misled. News programmes should not normally stage reconstructions of events as the risk of confusion is too high.

USE OF GRAPHICS – Graphics can be used to illustrate statistics, trends and chronological events. Interviewees who refuse to give on-screen comments can give statements that can be turned into graphics. Using an image that has been shot during filming can make a powerful backdrop for graphics.

USE OF COMPUTER GRAPHICS - Computerised graphics give programmes great scope for the creation of arresting and informative images to aid story-telling but there are ethical dangers. Viewers must not be misled into believing that they are seeing something which is a “real” document, event or subject when in fact it is a creation of a graphic artist.

PIECES TO CAMERA – These give the story credibility by placing the reporter at the scene. They can be used as bridges to give information that cannot be filmed or to illustrate what is happening at a location e.g. during a strike. They can also be used as an ending to summarise the main points of a story. They can be shot statically or as a pan from a key landmark to the reporter. Other techniques include filming a reporter walking into shot and pointing to where the action is taking place or walking in a busy street talking for example about people’s reactions to a story.

ANONYMITY – Don’t agree to hide an interviewee’s identity unless there are good reasons for example being identified would jeopardise their personal safety. However, shooting an interviewee in silhouette can add drama to a story, particularly if that person is a victim.

LOCATION – Try and film interviewees on location. Shoot a number of set-up shots, walking, reading, making a cup of tea, talking to the reporter, whatever is natural.

PANORAMIC SHOTS – Try and get as high as possible to get panoramic shots of a town, valley etc. Even better are aerial shots to give a sense of distance, geography and location.