

How to use the Video Production – Needs, Strategy and Objectives Worksheet

This is a guide to the use of the Needs, Strategy and Objectives worksheet, it explains each question and the purpose of writing a video project objectives statement. The Needs, Strategy and Objectives worksheet is a great tool to use for most any type of media production when you are looking to deliver a specific message to a target audience. Each video production is different not all questions may apply to your project, use this guide when working through the provided blank form with either your production group or client.

1. Who's your audience? – Identifying your audience often helps you identify the nature of your video, consider your primary “the target” audience first but also look for potential secondary audiences and more. Try to identify with your audience including what makes that audience unique. Be mindful of differing population segments including; age groups, race, culture, religions, beliefs, sexual orientation, minority and other equal opportunity interest groups.

Examples of video types/audiences

Marketing Video - Customer, Retailer, Dealers, Distributors

Corporate Video - Employees, prospective employees, managers, investors

Educational/Informational – targeted population segments such as by age, social status, minority group, geographic location and/or other identifiable population group.

Entertainment - targeted population segments (same as described above)

2. What do we want them to do? – Depending on the type of production the purpose (desired outcomes) of the video will vary. Is the video meant to sell product, influence thinking, change behavior, educate, inform, and entertain or a combination of several of these.

Examples of video types/desired outcome

Marketing Video – Customer to buy, Retailer, Dealers and Distributors to sell more do better customer service.

Corporate Video – inform/educate/change behavior of employees (prospective employees), inform investors

Educational/Informational – get the message out to targeted audience, inform educate, solicit support, change thinking behavior.

3. Why should they do it? - or “what’s in it for me” can be the question, again this depends largely on who your audience is and what you want them to do or what is at stake. For your audience look to identify motivating factors of why your audience should do what you are asking them to do through the video.

Examples of video types/motivating factors

Marketing Video – Customer – benefits (save money, better life, good for the world), Retailer, Dealers and Distributors (make more money, better life, save the world).

Corporate Video – Employees (keep their job, work more safely, get a promotion, make more money, be more loyal), investors (buy more stock, build confidence, influence thinking)

Educational/Informational – targeted audience (make/save money, save lives, make a better world, improve lives, feel good by supporting, because it is the right thing to do).

4. How do they feel about doing it? – Answering this question will help you identify if the audience receptive to the purposed message or are they resistant to the message. What is their attitude, how do they feel?

Examples of video types/audience attitude

Marketing Video – does the target audience think your product are good, fairly priced, do what you say they can, is your reputation good or bad?

Corporate Video – does the target audience trust your message, are they happy about changes or feel good about the company?

Educational/Informational – does the target audience trust your message, do they believe in what you are saying, are you the expert or authority on the subject?

5. How do we want them to feel? – So the target audience has watched the video want type of emotional response if any are you expecting from them; anger, happiness, pride, relief, confidence, loyal, threatened?

Examples of video types/audience emotion

Marketing Video – the target audience feels good about your products; company and they want to be a customer.

Corporate Video –the target audience trusts your message, they are happy or feel good about the company and what is going on.

Educational/Informational – the target audience trust your message, they believe in the cause, they view you as the expert or authority on the subject.

6. How shall we persuade them to do it? – Every audience is as different as the message you may want to convey. If you have done a good job identifying the motivating factors of your audience, look to use those motivators to persuade the audience to respond or behave the way you want them to. This is, as much about the “approach” as to how you are going to “sell” the message as it is about what will motivate your audience.

To explain “the approach” think about this as the delivery method, such as; “use of humor”, “just the facts”, “cause and effect”, “policy-policy-procedure”, “emotional appeal” or “inform/entertain”. Choose your delivery method carefully; would a humorous delivery work when informing a group of employees that the company is planning cuts? Or use of a threatening message like “you either do it this way or you will be fired” (cause and effect).

“Just the facts” and “policy-policy-procedure” are examples of delivery where very little emotion is put into the delivery, more of a “this is they way it is and needs to be”. Where as using testimonials and worst-case emotional appeals as part of the delivery can evoke a lot of emotion. Think of all the videos (TV ads mostly) you have seen where they may say, “Each day thousands of people die needlessly”.

Examples of video types/delivery (method of persuasion)

Marketing Video – humor can be used here and supportive facts work as well, you are looking to evoke excitement, confidence, loyalty, trust, and the “feel good about”, so use methods of persuasion to achieve that, testimonials can have impact if the spokesperson is credible.

Corporate Video – depending on the message topic/target audience I would caution on using humor, however some humor can be used to ease into difficult subject areas if used correctly. The safe way is to stick to the facts, supported by strong rational as to “why” this is the way it needs to be. Again testimonials by a credible spokesperson can have impact.

Educational/Informational – humor can be used here as well to ease into sensitive areas but be very careful with the use of humor, there is a higher risk of offending an unintentional audience when done wrong. Provide supportive facts from credible sources, but don’t over do it with facts and figures. The use of “it’s the right thing” or “ you will feel good about it”, methods of persuasion paired with facts and credible testimonials can have impact.

The Objectives Statement – this is the last step in the Needs, Strategy and Objectives worksheet, the task of writing a clear concise objective statement very important and the whole purpose for working through the questions above. The objectives statement serves as a guide when developing your production outline and the development of your video, so it is worth the effort to develop a good one that focuses on your audience and your needs.

You use the objectives statement as a method of filtering out ideas and concepts that would be considered as part of the video production. The result of using the objectives statement, as a guide will help streamline production and keep the project focused on your message and audience. Remember everything going into your video must meet the project objective.

Sample - OBJECTIVES Statement: (Video topic/scenario – Public Service Announcement on food safety, an informational and educational video to change behavior related to food safety and help prevent food poisoning)

Objective Statement: The purpose of this video is to... through the use of facts from the CDC related to food borne illness and deaths in the United States, raise awareness of the importance of following food safety methods when handling and preparing foods. The video will focus on the 4 handling behaviors; Separate, Clean, Cook and Chill. Demonstrating practical steps to help change behaviors related to food safety and will direct viewers to additional resources that can help them learn more and protect themselves and their families.