Getting Started: Humanizing U.

Background:

A few years back Frank Campbell at the video studio in the Learning and Instructional Development Centre at Simon Fraser University, and I offered a course for teachers at Simon Fraser University called "Talking to the Camera". It was designed to familiarize teachers with the video medium as on camera talent. Although the course was popular with those who took it, on camera practice was not widely recognized as a teaching skill.

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As high band width on the internet became a household requirement, and tv on the web was close at hand, we renamed the course “Say it on the Web”. We knew that bringing the high touch (heart and soul) element to the high tech (internet) environment would be essential.

This time it took off. The teachers got very excited about creatively using the medium and became re-inspired around their own teaching.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=viEAMM28YMk&feature=channel

Enter streaming video, digi-cams, home edit systems, video phones and soft ware that produce eye popping special effects to rival the major studios.

There is now instant recognition by many people (not just teachers) that showing up on video does humanize their online presence. The pressure is on everywhere to create online courses. The danger is that much of the learning takes place through text, the person to person interchange gets lost.

Technology gives unparalleled access to the globe to each of us. However, capturing your audience/student’s attention requires a bit more information and a couple of new skills that will make the difference between being passed over or highly recommended.

If you ever saw a web cam movie image or used your web cam to chat you will have noticed some distinguishing features.
The image is hard to see (poor lighting and framing).
The clarity of sound, if any, is challenging.
The onscreen talent doesn’t live up to what you see on TV.

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Although that is part of the charm of knowing the person on screen, showing up on your web cam alone is not enough to turn strangers into engaged students.

The quality of the image can help the communication process.

You can do something about selecting that image.
This is not about changing who you are. It is adjusting the technology and bringing awareness to how you show which brings out your best.

Create a two to three minute introduction of you, what you teach and what inspired you about this seminar.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e2x5hzYM1ZY&feature=channel_page.

Post the videos here: (link)

Below is a simple way to begin to create your home broadcast studio:

Try it out:

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SAY IT ON THE WEB with LIGHTING

Lighting makes the difference between a good video clip and a bad one. You, or your subject, should be 15% brighter than the background. If the background is brighter, your face will be shadowed. The background should be evenly lit, particularly if you are using a green screen software program.

The green screen hung behind you allows you to substitutue any background you desire, whether it be a video clip, a still photo or a chart. It gives the impression that you are in the location pictured behind you. This technology is used frequently in television and film to create a wide range of special effects.

You are creating a miniature studio for your face or your subject.

Experiment with angling your lamps in various ways so your body or the chair doesn't cast shadows on the back wall.

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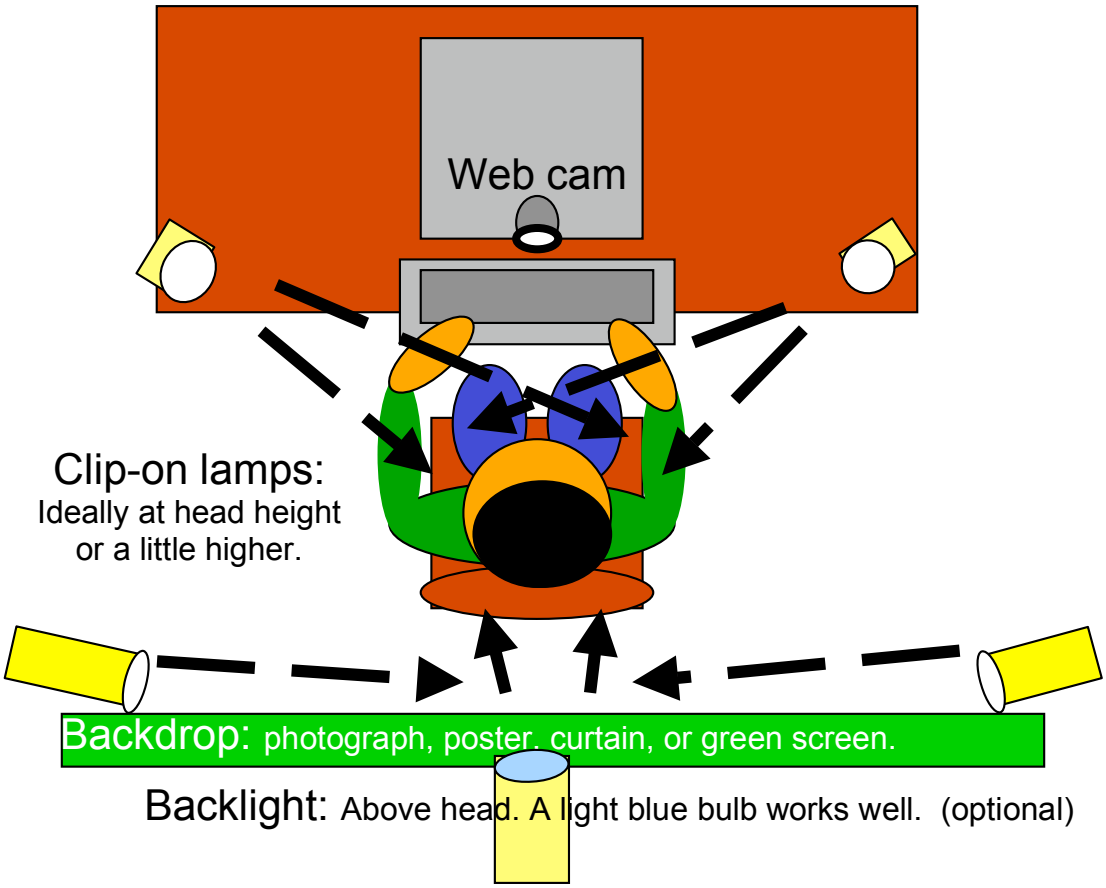
This is a model of a home studio. The green screen mentioned earlier allows you to key in any backgound you choose, whether it be video or still photographs. You can appear at the beach or in Paris with the click of a button. It requires the correct software to do it. Green screen technology is what gives you the edge of professionalism that you see in TV news broadcasts.



Two clip-on lamps crossing your face at 45 degree angles will work very nicely. If you want to raise the production values, you can backlight the top of your head in blue. 25 - 40 watt bulbs will be quite sufficient.

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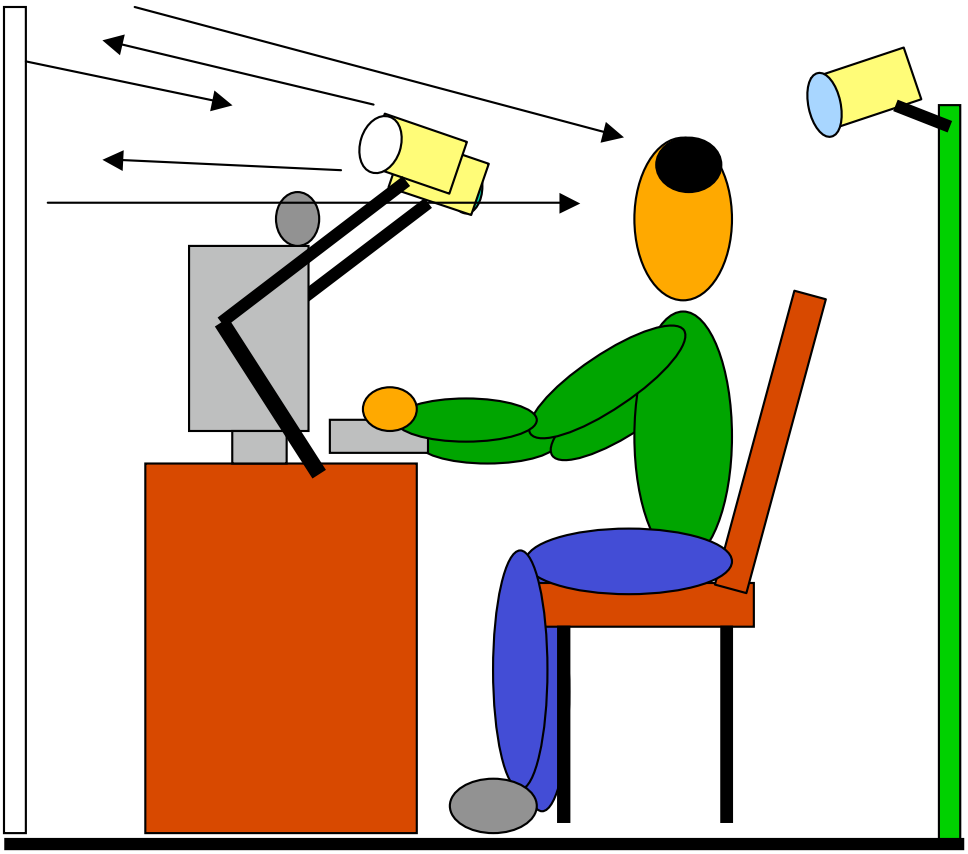

Indirect light is light that is bounced off a surface before it hits the subject. For example, pointing the light at a bright wall or ceiling creates indirect light. You can also hang a white sheet on the wall and point the lamp at it. This diffuses the light and creates an even glow, without the hot spot caused by the bulb and reflector in the lamp.

Explore the effects of lighting on your face. Here are some examples of directional lighting. Try this yourself with your own clip-on lamps. Notice how each type of lighting changes the mood.

Also use the camera settings in your web cam program to experiment with brightness, colour, and other settings.

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Directional Lighting Options

Each image demonstrates a directional lighting choice. Notice the mood created by each choice. Let the lighting aid your message, whatever it may be.

Light from the subject's right, black & white

Light from the subject's left, no back light

Light from the subject's right, with back light

Light from the subject's left, with back light

No light on the subject, with back light

Light from both sides on the subject, with back light

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Experiment with framing the picture to suit your content, style and delivery.

The computer screen reflects light. If you wear glasses, you will get a reflection. Either take off your glasses or angle the glasses to reflect down and away from the camera lens.

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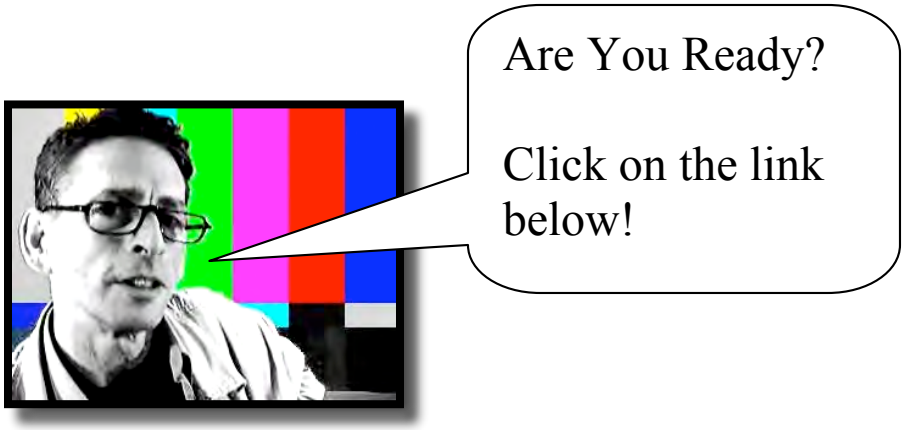
YOUR VOICE and THE MICROPHONE

Good sound quality is more important than the picture. Most computers can receive sound, but not all can receive a strong video image. Your content is delivered primarily through your voice. Here are some tips:

1. Before recording, minimize ambient sound. Turn off noisy appliances, mute your phone, and close all the windows..

2. Your microphone should be about 3 to 6 inches from your mouth. Speak over it, not into it. “P”s, “T”s and “S”s should be spoken gently to avoid popping sounds on your recording or in the other person’s ear.



http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e2x5hzYM1ZY&feature=channel_page.

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