

New Zealand Society of Animal Production online archive

This paper is from the New Zealand Society for Animal Production online archive. NZSAP holds a regular annual conference in June or July each year for the presentation of technical and applied topics in animal production. NZSAP plays an important role as a forum fostering research in all areas of animal production including production systems, nutrition, meat science, animal welfare, wool science, animal breeding and genetics.

An invitation is extended to all those involved in the field of animal production to apply for membership of the New Zealand Society of Animal Production at our website www.nzsap.org.nz

[View All Proceedings](#)

[Next Conference](#)

[Join NZSAP](#)

The New Zealand Society of Animal Production in publishing the conference proceedings is engaged in disseminating information, not rendering professional advice or services. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of the New Zealand Society of Animal Production and the New Zealand Society of Animal Production expressly disclaims any form of liability with respect to anything done or omitted to be done in reliance upon the contents of these proceedings.

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).



You are free to:

Share— copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format

Under the following terms:

Attribution — You must give [appropriate credit](#), provide a link to the license, and [indicate if changes were made](#). You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.

NonCommercial — You may not use the material for [commercial purposes](#).

NoDerivatives — If you [remix, transform, or build upon](#) the material, you may not distribute the modified material.

<http://creativecommons.org.nz/licences/licences-explained/>

The film crew's here! Are you ready?

N.B. TOMPKINS

Gibson Group Ltd, PO Box 6185, Te Aro, Wellington, New Zealand.

The Crew

The **Reporter/Director** controls the story line and 'angle' (direction) the story will follow. They question the 'talent' (the scientist) and decide on what 'shots' (pictures) will be used to illustrate the words in consultation with director of photography.

The **Director of Photography/Camera Operator** will make sure you are in focus, set up the framing of the picture and lighting and control the picture quality.

The **Sound Operator** will capture all the sound, from interviews to lambs bleating and computers that go 'bing'. The sound operator controls sound quality - they don't like airport flight paths or lawnmowers!

These people are mostly 'freelancers'. That is, they usually don't work for the actual film/production company. The standard filming day is 10 hours plus a 45-minute lunch break. Many of them like coffee and most smoke.

So what do you want?

Unlike print or radio, the verbal story is only half the story. Television needs pictures to illustrate the words. This can be difficult, especially in the field of science where 'conceptual' ideas are often not very visual. Ask the director what sort of things they want to see, or envisage. The director is trying to tell the story with pictures and is thinking of connecting several shots into a sequence. For example: pan across a paddock; a farmer on a bike mustering; animals running through a gate into some yards; the farmer closing the gate; drafting. It takes time. This simple example would take from one to two hours to film, for about 30 to 45 seconds of finished picture sequence.

It also takes time to set up shots, even for a simple interview. So always ask the film crew how long they think it will take and make that time available. Don't organise meetings for that day or a visiting school group, a film crew will often go over time.

Prepare

You will most likely have had contact with the crew before they turn up and you will know the general direction of the story, so be ready with what you need to say and what they want to see.

Inform your colleagues that there will be a film crew around and that they may be needed. Get possible locations that the crew may want to film ready and the people to help, especially when dealing with animals. The crew doesn't have time to wait around for 45 minutes for the scientist to go and get an animal from the back paddock.

The crew needs quiet when doing interviews, and might have to turn things off, like air conditioning. Know where the switches are. The crew can't come back the next day because they missed a bit. Lose the pen out of your hand because every time you click it, the sound operator gets closer to insanity.

What am I going to say?

Keep It Simple Scientist (K.I.S.S)! The crew are not scientists and neither will most of the audience be. Use language that is appropriate to the final audience.

Don't try to explain everything in one monosyllabic sentence (the crew won't use it). Short concise, pithy sentences and don't be afraid to say, "Can I have another go at that?"

The director might also, seem to be asking the same question twice or more. This is not necessarily because they did not understand your answer, but because they are looking for a more confident or clear "take" on it.

The reporter's questions are often cut out of the story so it can be a good idea to start your answers with the question. Reporter: "What is your name?" Scientist: "My name is...."

If you have done some on-screen work before, think how it worked out and what you could have done better.

Be animated, but be sincere.

Image is everything

Be aware of how the story will look on the screen. You are trying to convey an air of professionalism. You might also be looking for funding, so make yourself presentable.

Clothing in bright-saturated colours, such as red and orange, do not look good on television, they tend to 'bleed'. Stripes or small chequered clothing make the screen 'wobble'.

Don't look at the camera, unless you are asked to.

Relax

The experience can all be a bit frightening but the more prepared you are the easier you will find it and the more you will be able to concentrate on what you need to say and do.

Have a glass of water & tissues handy. Often when you are nervous your mouth will dry out and you may sweat (especially under the hot filming lights).

Get help and advice

Many institutions have a public relations or corporate communication department. They are often the very people who got you into the situation in the first place. Ask for their help.

Listen and Suggest

The film crew have been doing this a long time, they are there to get the best possible story, they know what they are doing and they know what they want. The scientist will have knowledge of their workplace and their project.

Remember – It's not rocket science