Producing Digital Audio

Basic Concepts

ExplorNet CareerTech
from *The Centers for Quality Teaching and Learning*

❖Top 8 Tips for Better Audio Recording:

- Use a quality microphone

- Monitor the sound

- Limit background noises

- Maintain a consistent environment

- Turn off the music

- Record background sound

- Watch out for wind

- Add it later

❖Top Tip #1 – Use a Quality Microphone:

- Microphones that are built into camcorders are generally low quality – no matter how expensive the camcorder

- Whenever possible, use external microphones away from the camera in order to optimize sound and record less noise coming from the camera

❖ Top Tip #2 – Monitor the Sound:

- Look on your camera and check for an audio jack
- If there is an audio jack, plug in a pair of headphones and use them while you are recording
- If you do this, you will hear the sound that the camera records exactly how it records so that you know whether or not you need to find a way to improve the technology that you are using to record your audio

❖Top Tip #3 – Limit Background Noises:

- ○ You want to limit the amount of background noises that you pick up on the recorder for two reasons – it can make for difficult editing later and it can be too much of a distraction during the recording

- ○ Turn off fans, loud technology, radios, televisions, close windows, and go to a place that is not crowded with other people to get good quality recordings

❖ Top Tip #4 – Maintain a Consistent Environment:

- The more you control the recording environment, the better quality audio you can record

- When you maintain a consistent environment and procedures, you're better able to match the audio quality in all of your recordings

- Consistency is quality

❖ Top Tip #5 – Turn Off the Music:

- If there is music playing in the background, turn it off in order to avoid background noises so your audio will have better quality

- Leaving it on will make it difficult to edit later and will make it difficult to hear what you are actually recording

- If you want music in with your audio, you can always add the music in later after you record your intended audio

❖ Top Tip #6 – Record Background Sound:

- Think about the environment that you are recording your audio

- If you are intending to record your audio, for example, in a city setting, record the audio separate from the background city noise so you can control how loud the city noises are in the background of your audio

- Just make sure that the background noise matches the other audio in your recording

❖Top Tip #7 – Watch Out for Wind:

- Recording in an outdoor setting creates all sorts of different challenges, one of them being the natural noises of the outdoors

- Wind can be a large noise disturbance while you are recording. It will completely muffle out all audio because it will go right into the microphone

- You can buy a wind protector or just a sock!

❖Top Tip #8 – Add it Later:

- Remember: you can always add sound later to your initial recording, whether that be environmental noises, sound effects, or music

- If you choose to record narration, wait until you are in a much quieter space