

## **Tips for Success**

### **Creating Your Audition Video**

1. **Use a smartphone or tablet like an iPhone or iPad.** We probably all have one of these and the HD quality is better than most camcorders. Prop it up on a book or buy a cheap tripod (\$20 on Amazon) and an iPhone clip.
2. **Use a neutral backdrop.** A wall works best. Or buy an inexpensive gray or blue bed sheet and pin it on the wall. Keep it simple and clutter-free. Nobody needs to see your creepy doll collection in the background.
3. **Find a quiet room.** Turn the TV off, silence your phone and your notifications, tell your roommate to stop singing, and shut the windows. Nothing kills a self-tape more than car alarms and sirens.
4. **No shadows.** Don't use overhead lighting as it creates strong shadows under your eyes and chin. Use natural light or if your apartment/home is dark, buy a couple of cheap clip-on lights from your hardware store. Put the lights a little above eye level, on either side of the camera, and use daytime fluorescent bulbs (tungsten bulbs create a less appealing "candlelight" effect). It's all about the eyes, so make sure they are clearly lit and in focus.
5. **Shoot from the waist up.** The frame should be from the chest or waist up. Think it and feel it, and the camera will capture it. Lock the frame and keep it simple. Too much movement is distracting from the performance. The camera should be at eye level, not below, not above.
6. **Set a time limit.** Set a half-hour to an hour max of recording time and expect to get two to five takes. If you are not happy with your takes, set aside another day & time slot when you are vocally ready to record again. Pick your best session.
7. **Always watch it back before sending.** You never know if there will be a tech problem. Make sure it looks and sounds good, and is in focus. You want this to be as professional as possible.
8. **Look your best.** Treat it like a real audition because it is one. Make yourself camera-ready (hair, makeup, outfit) and make sure you are well-rested and appropriately dressed.
9. **Finally, just relax and have fun.** The great thing about self-taping is you can do it until you get it right. If you follow these steps, your talent, not your poor recording quality, will stand out.