

be your best on camera by Traci Brown: Use your camera correctly to BE AWESOME

Body Language Traci Brown shares a [Two minute video](#) - be your best on camera

Some people have a great screen presence; others just don't get it, says body language expert [Traci Brown](#). "You need to understand basic cinematography," she says. Here's how to be the star of your own mini-movie on every video call.

- 1. Prop up your computer.** The camera should be positioned an inch or so above your head. Too often, people are working on laptops and looking down on the camera. Note: The view into your nostrils is not flattering. Use a laptop stand, a few books or a sturdy box to raise it a bit.
- 2. Position your face in the screen.** Think like you're shooting a movie. Your face should command the space, with the top of your head brushing the top of the screen — or just slightly cut off. It makes a huge difference.
- 3. Look at the camera.** It's hard not to look at yourself, but it's the camera you should be talking to. Don't just stare right though it — it's natural to look away at times — but remember that's your focal point.
- 4. Don't slouch.** Sit up straight (or stand if your workstation is set up for that). This gives you a more commanding presence.
- 5. Wear a little makeup (guys too).** Pretend you're a TV anchor. We all look more washed out on screen, so a bit of color is helpful, especially for those with fair complexions.
- 6. Dress OKish.** Strike a balance between the torn Metallica t-shirt and traditional business clothes. You want to look better than bad, but don't overdo it.
- 7. Pay attention.** Others on the call can see you glancing down at your phone or checking Facebook in another window. That reflects poorly on you. Stay engaged in the conversation; it's hard to get away with multitasking when a box is around your face.
- 8. Pump up your energy level.** Hollywood actors go for dramatic flair because it takes a lot to express yourself through the camera. Your energy needs to be bigger when you're speaking on a screen than it would be in person.
- 9. Record and review.** Study yourself by recording your video calls and playing them back. Give yourself a score on tips 1 through 8 and note where there's room for improvement.
- 10. Go off-screen.** For some calls, video really isn't necessary. It makes us feel like we're on stage and being watched, which is tiresome and stressful when overused. Don't be afraid to go dark at times and have an old-fashioned audio conversation.