
How to Read a Script Naturally Using a TelePrompter

Tip Sheet

Ten Tips to Help Your Use a TelePrompter Like a Pro

1. Write your script for the spoken word
2. Familiarize yourself with the script and mark it
3. Adjust the text formatting on the teleprompter
4. Try to relax and be comfortable
5. Understand and own the script
6. Practice aloud until you sound perfect
7. Be a little larger than life
8. Accept that you don't have to be perfect
9. Smile when appropriate
10. Use the teleprompter's technology to be more natural



Tip #1 - Write your script for the spoken word

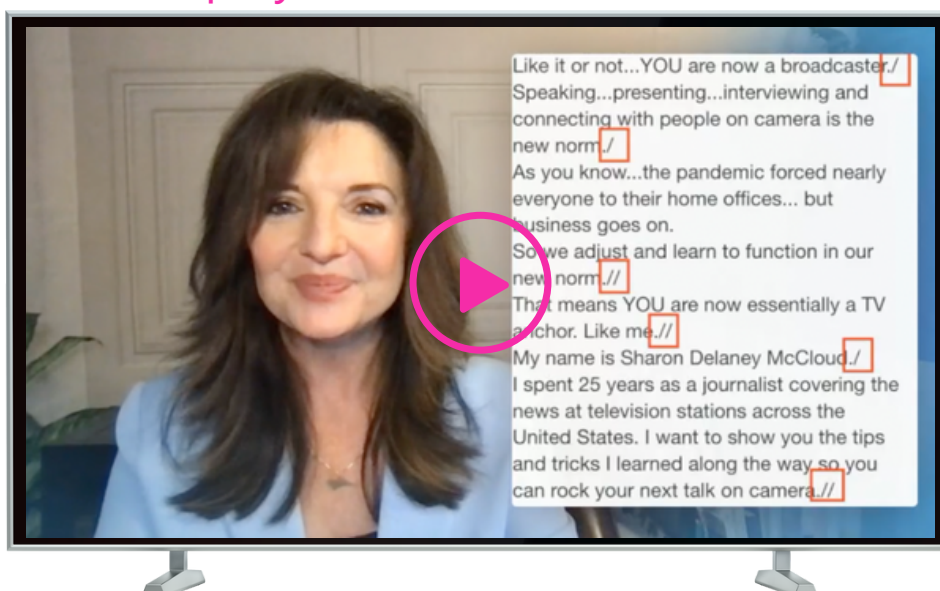
When you're writing copy for a video script make sure you write in a style that matches the way you speak. When it comes to recording your video, you'll find it much easier to read copy that has been written to be spoken aloud than something that sounds like a formal essay.

Use the kind of language and phrasing you would use in your normal daily speech. Even if your video is targeting people in your own industry, if possible, avoid industry buzz words and specialist language. Try keeping things simple so they're easy to understand. You'll be a more effective communicator if you do so.

Tip #2 - Familiarize yourself with the script & mark it

Before you get anywhere near the camera, make sure you've read through the script multiple times so you know exactly what to expect. This is especially important if someone else wrote the script for you. If you're reading someone else's script, you'll find it easier to read if you can make minor changes to the wording or phrasing so it sounds more like the way you speak. It's recommended that you also mark your script by adding visual cues to help you deliver it more naturally. The video below explains how to mark your script and why it's critically important.

Click the play button below to view video



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Tip #3 - Adjust the text formatting on the TelePrompter

Most teleprompter apps allow you to change the way the text is displayed, and that can help you see the script more clearly. When it's easy to read your lines, you can relax and make the script sound more natural.

Often you can change the text and background colors, the font, and font size. Your choice can make a big difference to the ease of reading.

Tip #4 - Try to relax and be comfortable

Standing for your on-camera piece often times improves your delivery. By standing, your breathing will be less constricted and you'll find it easier to say your lines. It also helps you look energized and engaged. However, be sure to avoid rocking back and forth. Use your hands for natural gesturing but keep them in the "safe zone". Essentially, your hand movements should be contained between your shoulders and hips, not above or below.

Watch what you wear. Avoid clothing that makes you feel uncomfortable since you'll unconsciously communicate that feeling to your audience. It's recommended you wear solid-colored, jewel tones for your shirt or blouse. Even if you wear a physician's lab coat over it, the pop of color looks good on camera.

Before you start, take a few deep breaths helps you relax. Breathe in through your nose and blow slowly out through your mouth. Try and avoid any distractions. If there's something that's just in your line-of-sight that's putting you off, see about removing it.

Tip #5 - Understand and own the script

Don't just read the words, own them. Make sure it sounds like you're speaking and not just reading the lines. As explained above, make changes to the script so it sounds like the way you speak. Add markings so you know where to pause and add emphasis.

To make your read sound more natural, you should also change your pace so it reflects the tone of the content. In a conversation, you might pick up the pace if excited about what you're talking about. Do the same when reading your script. Of course, you shouldn't read the entire script at a high-octane pace. It's the variation you include in your presentation that helps to add interest for the listener and makes you an engaging speaker.

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Tip #6 - Practice aloud until you sound natural

You've heard the adage that practice makes perfect. It's also true when performing in front of a camera. Practice not only makes you familiar with your lines, but you'll also understand exactly how best to phrase each line. You might even bring your natural creativity to bare and add one or two small embellishments to your performance.

Practicing, or rehearsing, will give you the confidence to step in front of the camera and record a natural performance. If possible, practice using a TelePrompter app so you get used to how the words move on the screen. There are numerous apps available for smart phones and tablets including [this app from BigVU](#) which has a free option.



Tip #7 - Be a little larger than life

Reading from a TelePrompter can feel very unnatural so it takes extra effort to look and feel like yourself on camera. Try to imagine a specific person on the other end of the technology that you're talking to.

Also, to engage your viewers, slightly exaggerate your natural way of speaking and your body language. Be just a little bit over the top in your presentation. When you watch the recording, you'll frequently notice what you thought was too big a performance was just right. If you get it wrong, you can always do a retake and pull back those exaggerated tendencies.

Tip #8 - Accept that you don't have to be perfect

When you're starting out you don't have to be perfect on camera. Most professional presenters take time to form their polished onscreen personas. So, don't worry that you can't nail every tiny detail in your video. You really don't have to be word perfect; no one is expecting that except maybe you.

Once you accept that you don't have to be perfect you can relax and enjoy the video production process. Now here's the interesting thing, when you accept that you don't have to be perfect you'll take away the pressure you previously put on yourself. Without that self-imposed pressure, you'll find it easier to read your script more naturally. Now, just keep going. With each new video, you'll get better as you become more comfortable and learn how to communicate with your viewers.

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Tip #9 - Smile when appropriate

If you feel stressed, you'll find it difficult to read your script and make it sound natural. In addition to proper breathing technique, one way you can reduce anxiety is by smiling. Research shows that smiling causes the release of those feel-good chemicals in your brain. The natural high helps raise your mood and relaxes you. According to Dr. Sivan Finkel, from The Dental Parlour, "Even forcing a fake smile can legitimately reduce stress and lower your heart rate."

So, the message is clear. Smile to de-stress - that can help you sound more natural when reading from a teleprompter.

Tip #10 - Use the TelePrompter's technology

In a professional video studio, the TelePrompter is frequently controlled by a teleprompter operator. Their job is to make sure the text on the screen matches your pace of delivery. This might mean they slow down the scroll speed at some points but speed up at others. However, when you're working with a TelePrompter app on a tablet or smart phone, you won't have the luxury of a teleprompter operator. But don't worry, you can still include a natural variability in your pace without losing your place in the script.

One simple strategy is to adjust the scroll speed slightly to match your fastest pace and then add line spaces where you will slow down your presentation. This is a trial-and-error method that will take up a bit of time so make sure you plan your schedule with enough rehearsal time to adjust the speed of the TelePrompter to sound as natural as possible.

Conclusion

In summary, if you want to read a script naturally from a TelePrompter, make sure your script has been written in an informal way that matches the way you speak in conversation. Do your best to be comfortable and confident in front of the camera. And use the technology to help you achieve your goal.

Above all, remember that no one is ever perfect the first few times they read from a TelePrompter. It takes practice, so give yourself a break and just let yourself improve over time.

If you have any questions or would like further support, please reach out to me directly.

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