

# NAPFA ADVISOR

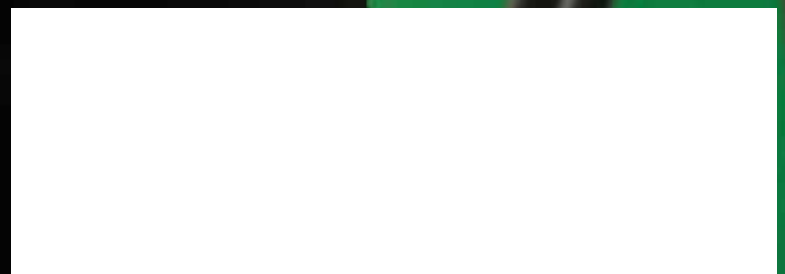
THE ART AND SCIENCE OF THE FEE-ONLY PRACTICE

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## How to be “on” when the camera is on

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## MARKETING

BY MARIE SWIFT

# How to be “on” when the camera is on

**V**ideo skills are no longer a “nice to have.” Every NAPFA affiliated advisor should be prepared to speak on camera or web video. It’s not just about you; it’s for the greater good.

Imagine you are at a NAPFA conference or another industry event. An editor from an industry trade publication is there with a videographer to interview a handful of CFP® professionals. He invites you to answer a few questions about something you know fairly well—on camera (gulp). He gives you the option of coming back to a pre-set place for the video interview in a couple hours. He tells you the topic and the questions.

Would you say yes? I hope so. First of all, it’s great practice for you, and it is important to take every credible opportunity you get. One day you may have a broadcast television opportunity. Every camera experience you’ve had in the past will help you overcome the inevitable jitters. Second, speaking on camera, whether it’s a simple iPhone video or in one of the network studios, could be seen as your fiduciary duty. If you don’t go on the record and clearly state

your views, someone who is less ethical or competent could take your place.

### Who me? (Yes, you.)

The truth is that few of us really like the way we look in videos and photos or sound in audio recordings, but we must get over our self-centered fears and hypercritical self-assessments if we are to serve the greater good. Over the years, I’ve been asked to shoot various types of videos; each and every time I have this little devil voice that hops up on my shoulder and whispers something like: “Really? You are not dressed right today. You didn’t get enough sleep. You don’t know what to say.” My more confident angel voice jumps right in with something like: “Hey now, get a grip. You know this stuff, flat. Go walk around the block, think about the questions, put on some lipstick, and stop thinking only of yourself.”

Trust me, it gets easier the more you do it—and do it you must. Today’s digital world demands that we all embrace new forms of digital media. Studies show that video is shared 12 times more often on social media than simple text and links alone. Social media and the ability for everyday people to shoot low-cost videos have changed the playing field. Journalists and professional organizations are asking advisors to do webcam video interviews more and more. Bottom line: you need to master some basic camera skills and be ready to say yes when you face your next opportunity.

### Camera Skills 101

Whenever a video camera is turned on, people tend to do one of two things: they light up, or they clam up. There are some simple things you can do to ensure a more comfortable experience.

#### Relax

Take a deep breath. Remember that the interviewer is on your side and wants to assist you in getting your message out to the target audience.

#### Smile

Nonverbal cues assist a viewer in determining how they feel about what you are saying. A natural smile will add a positive impression to your message.

#### Be natural

Don’t let a piece of equipment change your personality or how you act on a day-to-day basis. If you act natural, your message will be more readily absorbed.

#### Have a chat

The interviewer is merely asking you questions to assist you in communicating your message. So, think of it as having a casual chat rather than a serious interview. You will loosen up and be more conversational.

#### Think of the camera as just one person

Interviewees often pressure themselves by imagining that a huge audience is listening to them. But, the camera is



NAPFA member Gordon Bernhardt (above) and his RIA team pay a professional video team to storyboard and produce a four-minute video about the firm’s mission and people.

To watch: <https://vimeo.com/194389291>

merely one person with whom you are having an intimate conversation.

### **Make eye contact**

Now that you realize that the camera is only one person, make eye contact with the interviewer and the camera as you would naturally do while chatting with two people. Don't speak only to the camera if there is a live person on camera with you. It's extremely bad manners—you wouldn't exclude someone sitting next to you in an unrecorded conversation, so don't do that on camera, either.

### **Prepare key points**

Think about what you want to say before you say it, and repeat key phrases during the interview for consistency. Show up with a focused mind and be present in the moment—you'll know what to say. If you don't want to answer a question, don't be weird and say "no comment" or be dodgy. You can gracefully decline by saying something like, "I'm sorry, I can't speak to that today, but what I can say is ..."

### **Be short, sweet, and to the point**

Remember that most of an interview ends up on the cutting room floor due to time considerations. So, the quicker you make your points, the more of them will be included in the final result.

### **Check your body language**


As the video begins, ramp up just a little bit and go into passion mode. You'll like the way you come off if you show a little energy. Sit up straight in your chair. Don't cross your legs (keep your feet flat on the floor). If wearing a jacket, tug at the back hem and sit on it. If standing, don't sway from side to side. Use your hands to make points and stay animated.

### **Kill the jargon**

One of the easiest ways to be short, sweet, and to the point is to speak in words that people use in everyday conversation. Using big marketing words or industry jargon will backfire if your audience doesn't understand what you are saying.

It can actually give a negative impression. Could your mother repeat most of what you said? If not, simplify and try harder to really connect with the end viewer.

The more comfortable you are with the camera during an interview, the more responsive the viewing audience will be to your messages. Don't be shy. Really! Wade on in—the water's just fine.

For ideas on how to produce your own videos (including additional camera skills suggestions), visit [www.AndyCanHelp.com](http://www.AndyCanHelp.com). Andy Millard, CFP, has a great website with many really good examples of advisors who have nailed it when it comes to camera skills. 

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