



Helpful tips for making a great video (with multiple stakeholders)

This set of tips is a work in progress. Let me know via the contact page if it is helpful or not and any suggestions for what to add.

This set of instructions assumes you are trying to make a video within an institution with involvement from patients / public / distant senior managers who need to green-light stuff / ethics committees and more. i.e., lots of stakeholders! You probably won't need all of it but it's here if you do.

If you are the sole person responsible, please do not get the wrong idea. I can make a video for you with no hassle in a week or so. I can make one for myself in a day. Go to the simple FAQs to for an easy overview of the process. The information on this page is only for people working in a multi stakeholder environment.

This detailed guide includes lots of sample text for emails and a set of sample documents that you can edit to your needs.

The process for all videos is the same:

1. Briefing (discussing and agreeing on needs and timeline, normally via video or conference call)
2. Considering Ethics
3. Script writing (agreeing on script for storyboard)
4. Storyboarding (Implementing set of still images that visualize the animation - opportunity for major substantive changes up to this point)
5. First Video Draft (Rough animated version of storyboard - may deviate a little from original storyboard in creative process - some substantive change possible at this point)
6. Final Video Delivery (Check for minor errors and sign of as complete)

Associated Files with this Handbook.

Can be downloaded from: <https://www.sciencesplained.com/ppi-resources>

Sample video associated with this handbook can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/uNLus-Cw5vM>

- 1.ResearcherMultistakeholderEnvironmentHandbook2019.pdf (this file)
- 2.ScienceSplainedScriptSample.pdf
- 3.ScienceSplainedStoryBoardSample.pdf
- 4.ScienceSplainedStoryBoardFeedbackFormTemplate.doc
- 5.ScienceSplainedVideoFeedbackForm.Template.doc



1. Preparing to brief your animator

There are five things you need to think about and prepare

1. The **main aim** of your video in a single sentence.
2. Your **main target** audience of the video.
3. Identifying the **stakeholders** in the project and their roles.
4. Your **target channels** for video dissemination.
5. Collating **background material** you already have.

AIMS

A big watch out is to trying to do too much with a single short video. If it is a tweet, video duration will be less than two minutes, twenty seconds long. It is fine to have secondary aims and secondary audiences and to discuss them but good videos are focused. Good example aims are: 'drive potential participants to our study website', 'Raise awareness about our findings and recommendations amongst mental health care workers', 'Increase public's belief in value of research into X."

TARGET AUDIENCE

Be specific and targeted. Age, gender, social class, potential target for recruitment or family/carers of targets for recruitment, people working in specific fields. Again it is really useful to have parameters that qualify how specific we need to be as a secondary piece of information.

STAKEHOLDERS:

The biggest cause of delay and problems in making/distributing videos is, by a large margin, due to stakeholders. Stakeholders can be patient groups, institutions associated with the research, ethics committees, charities you hope will promote your final video etcetera. The reasons stakeholders cause delay fall into two categories, '*scheduling*' and '*content*'.

Scheduling

Stakeholders can often take long periods of time to review drafts of a video if they are not given advance notice of the requirement and guidance on how to review. To mitigate this I provide a clear schedule well in advance and a template for feedback for storyboards and first draft video, each requires a reviewer about 30 minutes to complete for 2-3min video. This allows you to let your stakeholders know when they will need to help and how long it will take them.

Content

If video content or the messaging within that video doesn't suit your stakeholder and at the end of the process they do not want to support the video you have a video you cannot share. The easy way to prevent this is to get agreement from the key person in that institution that gives the final 'green-light' to your video. Ideally that person also needs to agree to look at draft plans or nominate someone else to do so on their behalf. If you follow the scheduling advice in the bullet point above getting agreement for this is normally easy.

Example email snippet to stake holder who is important, but too busy to spend much time on it:

DEAR VERY BUSY IMPORTANT STAKEHOLDER,

We are really excited to develop this video to [ADD AIM]. Obviously making sure you are OK with the video at each stage is really important so we want to give you an opportunity to comment at the two key decision making points, the 'storyboard' (delivery date: 01/01/2020) and the first draft of video (delivery date: 15/01/2020) so the project can move forwards. At minimum we would need you to check that there is no major problem with the material (5-10 minute review). A full review, which we would appreciate but is not essential takes approximately 20-30 minutes. We need to get all reviews back within a week. Could you do that for us or nominate someone who could on your behalf?

YOURS

HOPEFUL KEEPING IT ON TRACKER

Example email snippet to stake holder who is important and has more time to spend on review:

DEAR ESTEEMED AND VALUABLE STAKEHOLDER

We are really excited to develop this video to [ADD AIM]. Obviously getting feedback from you during video development is really important to the success of this project. We would like to ask you to give feedback at three development points, 'the script' (delivery date: 17/12/2019), the 'storyboard' (delivery date: 01/01/2020) and the first draft of video (delivery date: 15/01/2020) so the project can move forwards. It will take approximately 20-30 minutes to review the material at each step and we would like to get all reviews back within a week. Would you be available at those times to give feedback?

YOURS

HOPEFUL KEEPING IT ON TRACKER

TARGET CHANNELS

You need to know where this video will be viewed primarily, Twitter, YouTube, on screens in waiting rooms, on your website. Who owns the channel you plan to use and do they need to be consulted about the content? If so they probably need to be considered a stakeholder if they are not already considered as such. If you are in any doubt about this speak to your media / communications contact.

BACKGROUND MATERIAL

I'm an ex-scientist and I will devour your material, I love learning new stuff. My main selling point is that I understand what I am communicating. Everything I receive is treated as confidential. Good stuff to include:

- The recent paper or unpublished manuscript.
- The main summary of the grant .
- Any layperson summaries you already have.
- Current logos, (inc. web links to specification about logos from your institution & access to video logos if they exist)
- Videos you have seen and liked elsewhere
- Interesting or odd facts related to the topic



2. DEALING WITH ETHICS

Ethics committees vary greatly in their requirement to be involved in developing animated video. Ethics committees cannot vet every tweet that comes from a study Twitter feed and so there appears to have been a loosening of restrictions in regard to section A28 of the IRAS form (other forms also) regarding 'publicity'. Most videos are clearly unlikely to cause any issues i.e., those promoting actual findings of a study. However others do, for example if a researcher were recruiting for particular racial groups to optimize drug selection based on genotype. That researcher would really want the cushion of ethical approval on any publicity they created.

As an ex-researcher and academic involved in many ethics applications I am always mindful of these questions. Often ethics is not an issue at all but when it is; I suggest the following.

Engage as early as possible with your ethics committee and try to get them to agree to a two step process. Step one is to provide the storyboard and script to the entire board. For step two, you ask the board to nominate a single member that is required to check that the animated video takes into account the committee's comments and does not fundamentally differ otherwise from the first proposal.

Below are some sample bits of text to pop into your emails if need be.

DEAR ETHICS COMMITTEE

As part of our study we plan to have an animated video developed to [ADD AIM]. The linear processes of video creation are:

- a) Script writing*
- b) Storyboard development*
- c) First rough draft of animated video*
- d) Final animated video production.*

Seeking ethical approval at the last stage is inappropriate as we would not be able to make changes to the video at that point. Multiple, long duration, stops, starts and requested minor rewrites during the creative process would increase cost substantially. There are two points where our animator says substantive changes can be made:

- 1. After the script and storyboard are finalized*
- 2. After the first draft of the video is created.*

We would like to have your thoughts on how best to proceed. Our suggestion would be to submit the 'script and storyboard' for a full panel scrutiny but to ask the panel to nominate a member that could check that subsequent versions implement the changes suggested and do not otherwise deviate from what was presented. Would something like that be possible? What would you propose?

*YOURS
EVERSO HOPEFUL RESEARCHER*



3. Script writing, voice overs and music.

Script Writing

If you ask us to write your script we will do so taking into account all information provided. Writing scripts is a skill, some of our clients are great at it, others are not. However the script comes together...

- We produce a script that also gives a idea of what will happen on screen. As an example, here is the original script for the video below
- We agree characteristics of the voice over (gender, age, class, attitude etcetera).
- The script is assessed by any stakeholders you have planned to include.
- Once approved the storyboard is produced

If you are writing your own script here are some tips:

- Cut all jargon. I personally only use explanations that my Mum can follow. My Mum is smart but if I say anything 'medical' her brain just shuts down. Think of someone like that and then write for them.
- For a tweetable video (2 minutes and 20 seconds) do not go over 300 words, (approx. 125 words per minute).
- If a video is over 4 minutes long, it is probably too long.
- Write with the main aim & main audience forefront in your mind.
- As you write, highlight keywords, do not use multiple synonyms of same thing, i.e., don't say 'study' in one sentence then 'trial' later. As you rewrite and cut down word count, think about how to keep the keywords.
- Only try and explain one concept in one video (a law made to be broken I admit, but it never goes well when I do).
- Narrative structures are always good if you can work one in, however that is the animators job as much as the script writers job.

Example scripts can be downloaded from the website.

Voice Overs

Voice over actors are sub-contracted by sciencesplained based on the needs of the video. Copyright for international commercial use is typically purchased to cover all your potential uses of the video. Voice overs are recorded as soon as the storyboard and script have been agreed as final. Normally a choice is not given as the market is very changeable for which actor is available to provide a 'voice over' at any given time. However, if you request 'options' I will provide them. This can delay production outside of the times given in the production schedule. If a change is made to the voice-over script after this point a fee will be incurred for re-recording and editing. It is not possible to guaranteed the same voice over actor is available after their initial contract.

Music

Sciencesplained only uses music and images that it has the rights to sell and use. It has a library of music which it can select from. You may or may not be provided with a set of potential music pieces to accompany a video. If you don't like the music ask for other options!



4. How to get good feedback on a storyboard.

You can download a sample story board to the sample video on the website. Also I provide a template word document for guidance on feedback. To be honest reviewers find reviewing the storyboard effectively much easier than reviewing the videos.

With multiple feedback it comes down to you to decide which feedback I should take into account and which feedback to put on the back burner. Many of your stake holders may have contradictory views. I need one summary feedback file from you that gives me direction to move on.

Key stake holders who you need to green-light your eventual video but are too busy to give feedback should OK the storyboard before moving forward. Sample text for emailing such stake holders is given below

Dear PROF IMPORTANT

*Please find the storyboard for the animated video we are creating to **ADD AIM HERE** attached. We are asking a number of people to give detailed feedback on the storyboard. I understand you may have limited time and not have time for detailed feedback. However I do need you to just take five minutes to read through and make sure there is nothing major that you think should be changed as major changes are not possible.*

HUMBLE UNDERLING

ATTACH YOUR STORYBOARD



5. How to get good feedback on a first draft video.

I use the following instructions when seeking feedback on a first-draft-video from engaged stakeholders. You can download a template word document on the website.

I would be grateful for your feedback on the video at this time point. Please note it is not anticipated that the first draft video is without errors, glitches or timing issues. We are not looking for a detailed list of timing issues or flickers where they should not be, these get ironed out at the end.

Feedback at this point should answer questions such as:

*Will the video be effective in its aims? Why / why not?
Do you ever become confused by the video? If so where and how?
Is the video suitable/unsuitable for the target audience? How?*

To review a first draft video most people find the following instructions to be the most time efficient method.

- 1) Remind yourself of the main aim of the video, who will be viewing this video, why and how.*
- 2) Watch the video with the sound on start to finish, without stopping or taking notes.*
- 3) Watch & listen to the video with a finger on the pause button and ready to take notes, whenever you see/hear something that you do not like, pause, record the time and a couple of words to remind you of the issue. Do not write lots, just scoot through getting all the points.*
- 5) Look at the points and categorize/reorder them if they fall into categories. If they cannot be categorized, that is fine, they are categories of one.*
- 6) Remind yourself of the questions above, then write about each category of comment as a whole. Please reference the times at which relevant events occurred.*

Feel free to add further comments then send back to whoever asked you to look at the video



6. Proofing and Delivery.

This is super simple.

- You list any minor changes that have somehow gotten missed and I change them.
- I export your video in the mp4 format, at the correct resolutions required by the channels you are using.
- I will create text files of the script for subtitles.
- Any additional artwork, the subtitle.txt and videos will be shared with you via dropbox.