



# Storytellers Manual

## Being a part of Our Story

WEIU features the heritage and spirit of local communities from the perspective of the residents in the Our Story program. Grab your camera and take to the streets as you document the people, places, and happenings that make your area special. This is your opportunity to share the unique features of your town. Profiles of organizations, arts, schools, attractions, people and local folklore make great stories and give viewers a sense of your area.

*No experience is required, just enthusiasm.*

## Meet the WEIU Our Story team

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## How it works

WEIU will ask you to pick one topic for a story to be featured in the show. Events, people, places, happenings...all great stories to share! We want stories to highlight the great heart of your town. Every story needs images such as photos and/or video, newspaper articles, or memorabilia that you'll need to collect. Make sure the images correspond to everything you want to tell in your feature story. You can also use archival media if needed.

## What happens next?

Each story needs one spokesperson to appear on camera. On the production day, WEIU will collect your images/media and we'll talk to you in a casual, on-camera interview. The interview will tie the story together with the images you have provided & add your personality that makes this show special. Don't worry; we'll make you look and sound like a pro! Then we'll take your images and interview back to WEIU and edit your story together. Once we've edited your pieces, we'll invite you to an exclusive premiere screening of the show and you'll also be invited to the WEIU studios for the night of the live broadcast. You won't want to miss this! You'll see how your community responds to the show as they phone in their support for your feature.

## Want to know more?

You'll find this information such as helpful hints on creating your story, updates on the project, and contact information on our website:

<http://www.weiunet.com/ourstory>

and click on your town.

You also can call anytime or send an email to the project team. Sharing local stories is part of the spirit of public television. Through viewership support, we're able to bring you all your favorite programs that you find on WEIU. And the Our Story program truly makes WEIU your local public broadcasting station as you help create material to broadcast! Thanks for joining the team and have fun!

## Tips for Appearing On Camera

Here are a few guidelines to help you prepare for your on-camera interview. Studies show viewers judge a person within the first 30 seconds of viewing a program. Here are a few tips to help you make that impression favorable.

### **Clothing**

- Whether dealing with television or personal appearances, your outfit is NOT what you want people to remember about you.
- White shirts reflect too much light. Also consider what colors are complimentary to your coloring.
- Choose an outfit that looks good when standing and comfortable when sitting. Remember that cameras are sometimes placed at low levels. Slacks, knee length or longer skirts are recommended over short skirts.
- Refrain from wearing distracting trims like large bows or numerous ruffles. Remove pens and eyeglasses from pockets.
- Avoid clothing with large patterns or geometric shapes or logos. The audience will watch your clothes instead of you.
- Avoid small high contrast patterns or lines, like herringbone, as well as bold checks or plaids. Solid colors with a colorful scarf or tie look good.
- Avoid pure white and black clothing, as they make skin tones appear harsh.

### **Accessories**

- Choose solid colored accessories or ones with simple patterns that don't appear too busy.
- Keep jewelry simple so it does not make noise when you move your head or body.
- Avoid dangling earrings, which can distract viewers.

### **Makeup**

- For women - foundation and lipstick help to keep you from looking tired or washed out.
- Don't wear dark, heavy makeup colors; television tends to create its own

natural shadows.

- For men - shave before appearing if you have "5 o'clock shadow" or use a powder close to your skin color to lessen the appearance of your beard.
- A light powdering on balding heads can prevent shiny spots as well. WEIU has powder on hand to help prevent excess shine from lights.

### **Body Language**

- SMILE - this makes you look confident and comfortable. Avoid nervous fidgeting with pens, glasses, change, etc.
- Know your subject content, bring notes, but don't read from a script. The interviewer will ask you questions about your topic. Keep it conversational, like you're telling a friend your story.
- Be aware of your posture. Keep shoulders relaxed and both feet on the floor. Try to maintain eye contact with your interviewer.
- You won't be looking directly into the camera for the interview, so think of it like a conversation between two people.
- Be YOURSELF...and have fun!

## **Tips for Shooting Video**

It's wonderful to be part of an energetic and committed team, especially when it involves your neighbors and friends. What better way to nurture a sense of belonging and pride in your community than by telling others why it's so special. This project capitalizes on both your enthusiasm and knowledge of your story. To help you tell the story more effectively we've asked our videographers at WEIU to share some of their secrets and strategies for successful videotaping.

### ***Video Tips***

- If possible, change the aspect ratio setting on your video camera to Widescreen (16:9) instead of Full screen (4:3). Please DO NOT select "letterbox" or "pan-scan"
- Scope out a scene before starting to record it. Then develop a plan and see which vantage points provide the best views.
- All shots should be 10 seconds long or more. The more you can shoot from different angles and focal lengths such as close up, medium wide and really wide. We need at least 20 different shots of a variety of people, places, items, etc. to piece together a 2-minute video story.

- Use a tripod when possible because few people like to watch rocky, unstable images. When a tripod isn't available, use other solid objects to stabilize the shot – e.g., lean against trees, set your camera on a table top, or even sit in a chair and use the armrest to help make the video steadier.
- Resist the temptation to do a lot of “panning” and “zooming” with your camera. It's best to physically move your camera from one place to another in order get an angle that shows additional items you want to include. If action is included in your shot, let things move inside the picture instead of moving the camera or zooming. Make sure that your camera is level and the scene looks straight in the viewfinder.
- Shoot a sequence of shots rather than long shots that depend on camera movement like zooms and pans.
- To create more visual excitement for your shots, try shooting from a variety of angles or perspectives.
- When shooting inside, try to use areas that are well lit. Don't be afraid to bring additional lighting into a dark room. If it's hard to see detail in the viewfinder, extra light will help reveal it. Avoid shooting a person with bright light (such as a window) in the background. The camera will adjust for the bright light and make your subject darker. Detail shots are especially powerful when edited into a series. They provide the viewer with unique visual information and they can have high emotional impact. Don't be afraid to get close.
- Many cameras include a feature that imprints the date and time of a recording on the video. Please turn this feature off.
- If you're shooting with a DVD camera or are delivering video from a past event or program, please make sure that the DVD has been “finalized.” This allows DVD's to be played in machines other than the one it was created on. If we can't play it at WEIU, we can't use it.
- Give some thought to the significance of your topic and why you chose it. We will tape a short interview with you and ask you to provide general details about your subject. You may bring notes, but we will ask you to not read directly from them. A side table will be provided to place your notes on for reference.
- Make sure all video and/or photos are your creation. We cannot use copyrighted material without written permission from the rights holder. If needed, release forms are included in your storyteller packet.

### ***Photo / Video Log Sheets***

Important: Make sure to fill out and hand in a log sheet with your footage. Please list the sequence of shots and accurately describe any locations or persons that need to be identified. Here's a sample of the video log sheet we'll need you to complete as you gather footage for your story. The log sheet also needs to include any other media you have collected for your story. Please number and title photographs, newspaper articles and or memorabilia as well. This log sheet helps our producers know where to place the images that correspond with your story during the editing process.

## Our Story Photo / Video Log Sheet

Story Name

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Videographer

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Subject	Shot Description	Shot Length
Main Street	Wide shot looking east	:15
Main Street	Close up, Main street sign	:10
Main Street	Medium Shot, shoppers walking down street	:30
Main Street	Medium Shot, people sitting at table eating lunch	:15