

Tips for making a great podcast

Most of the work in creating a great podcast is in the preparation. Even if you have all the best sound recording equipment in the world, your podcast will bomb if you don't have a compelling story and an engaging delivery. This requires preparation.



Preparation

Listen to other podcasts - Before beginning, it can be useful to listen to some podcasts, just to have an idea of how they work, what they sound like, what techniques are used and how the stories are told.

What is your story? - Start with your story: what are you trying to say? You don't need to tell an actual story, but what you say on your podcast need to have all the elements of a good story: an introduction where you set the scene of your podcast; a middle, where all the action takes place; and a conclusion, where the issues in your podcast are resolved.

Length - At this point you should think about how long your podcast is going to be. Your teacher may give you a time limit, or you may need to think up one yourself. We suggest between 5 and 8 minutes to start with.

Script - You should probably create a bit of script for your podcast. You don't need to write down every word, but it will help your hosts to know what to say. And if you're planning on interviewing people, think of some questions you'd like to ask. A short rule for your script to follow is:

1. Tell them what you're going to say
2. Say it
3. Tell them what you just said.

Know your audience - What you say in your podcast and how you say it will also depend upon your audience. Is your audience your class, other students and teacher or parents? How much does your audience already know about the topic? What will appeal to your audience in terms of style and delivery?

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Recording

Recording - You don't need too many fancy gizmos to record your podcast, just something that can record your voice (such as a phone or tablet). However, you do want to hear what is being said so make sure there is as little background noise as possible when recording, and that the people speaking are speaking clearly and are speaking in the direction of the microphone.



Editing

Editing - Once you have recorded your podcast it's time to edit. It can be hard, but try to edit out anything that doesn't directly support your story (that bit where someone fell over while holding the microphone might be hilarious to you but it probably doesn't have anything to do with your story).

Programs like Audacity (<http://audacityteam.org/>) or GarageBand (if you're using a Mac) can be used to edit your podcast.

Music - Add music to your podcast where you need it but remember that you will need permission from record labels or artists if you plan to publish your podcast publicly. If this is the case, you might need to record your own music!

Title and jingle - Create a title for your podcast and even consider creating a jingle. This will make your podcast more interesting to your audience, and give them an idea of what they can expect.

Feedback

No one likes criticism but most people only want to help - listen to what they say and use their suggestions to help make your podcast even more amazing!

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