

Chapter 2 – Scripting

Why is it important to have a script before you shoot?

WAVE is a mentorship program, so it is important to share your vision with us in a script format so that we can provide feedback. Secondly, we can also provide additional tips and resources that will help you during the production of the video.

Other than these reasons, it is very important to have a vision of the video you want to create, before you go about creating it. Since videos are the juxtaposition of visuals with audio, this is usually communicated through a two column script format with video on the right and audio on the left of the page.

It is also helpful to include a column for the approximate duration of each section of your video as this will help you determine the pace and the total length of your video, and will help you determine the right amount of shots you need in order to tell your story.

Here is an example from our very own WAVE participant from Kerala, Chinju Prakash. This is the script of her profile video, which you can see on the WAVE site:

Clip No	Shot Duration	Video	Audio
1	OSS (over-the-shoulder angle) 3sec	Fade in Lady (me) working with a computer	Silence
2	16sec	Computer screen letters being typed “Name: Chinjuprakash Place: Keralam” Fade out	Sound of key board
3	Long 4sec	Fade in Fishermen Fade out	Music
4	Long 8sec	Fade in Lady walking Fade out	Music
5	Long 6sec	Fade in 2 boats Fade out	Music
6	Long 4sec	Fade in	Music

		Elephant Fade out	
7	Long 6sec	Fade in Fishermen working (side angle) Fade out	Music
8	Medium 3sec	Fade in Sun and coconut plant leaf Fade out	Music
9	Long 20 sec	Fade in A man on a bicycle	This is my village. A village where revolution is deep rooted in its soil. A village that retains its beauty and charm even in the face of development.
10	5 sec	Image of a house in black and white (if possible animate the image: zoom out)	I lived here as a child, with my friends and our little games.
11	Long 5sec	Group of children	It was a life rich with memories, as it is for any village girl.
12	5.5 sec	Photo – father, mother and me	When I began to read the Malayalam alphabet, my parents gave me my first book and pen.
13	Panning 11sec	Books on a shelf	Books taught me that there is more to life than what the eye can see.
14	Long 5.5sec	Sculpture	I entered college with new ideas and a spirit of freedom fired by my reading.
15a	9 sec	Photo – Maharaja’s College (add dissolve between photos)	Maharaja’s College brought me closer to the world of letters.
15b		Photo - Maharaja's College	I took my degree in Malayalam Literature from here.
16	Close up 12sec	A hand writing on a book with pen	The college is close to my heart for it nurtured my creativity like never before.
17a	8 sec	Photo - Department of journalism Building (add dissolve between photos)	Thiruvananthapuram, where I did my post graduate study in Journalism further broadened my thinking
17b		Photo campus	
18	4 sec	Lady (me) and man (Suresh)	I also found my partner for life here.

19a		Lady working with a tripod. (use sepia tone)	It was around this time that I became familiar with photography, videography and editing.
19b	2 mid shots total 8 sec	Lady working with a video camera and tripod. Trying to fix the camera on a tripod (use sepia tone)	
20	Close 8sec	Lady with camera and talking on a mobile phone (use sepia tone)	I resolved then that I would use them in addition to my pen to communicate with the world.
21	Close up 8sec	Space's office and name board	In 2008, I joined the Society for Promotion of Alternative Computing and Employment, or SPACE.
22	Long shot 12 sec	In an office room 2 people are working on computers	To become an advocate of Internet, which my village, like many other villages hold to be a threat to society.
23a	8 to 9 sec	Mobile phone with devil horns (this image will pop up from the left side of a blank black screen)	Reports of misuse of mobile phones and Internet have made villagers wary of these new information technologies.
23b		Computer with devil horns (After the first one the second one will pop up from the right side of the same screen)	
24a	10 to 11 sec	Screen shot of reports on the issue (no transitions)	The most recent being the suicide by three school girls in Alappuzha district who had been filmed in a compromising position by their boyfriends using mobile cameras.
24b		Screen shot of reports on the issue	
25	Medium 8sec (make it in slow motion increase the length)	Computer and lady in darkness	People tend to think that Internet is about pornography and other shady dealings like morphing images or faking identities.
26 a 26 b 26 c	9 sec	3 photos- Lady (giving lectures and training - dissolve)	I started my career by showing people through games and activities how the Internet can be used safely and fruitfully.
27 a 27 b 27 c	9sec	3 photos of people with different abilities (Dissolve)	It is joyous indeed, to be able to contribute to efforts, to bring the fruits of ICT to people with different abilities.
28	Close up 3sec	Wave logo	WAVE has given me a chance...

29	Medium 4 to 5 sec	Lady sitting in front of the computer, removing headphones (from: 02 to :09)	To make myself open to change and to tell the world about it.
30	Close 4 to 5 sec	Leaving headphones on table (1.03 to5.5)	Even I have so much say.... Fade out

How do you visualize before you shoot?

Many WAVE participants have told us that it is hard to write a script because it is hard to visualize before one shoots. This may be because the important step of preliminary research is being skipped. However, as mentioned in the last chapter, if you want to make a good video, research is crucial, and this will help you visualize your story, before you spend the time to go out and shoot it. It will also help you to think visually, like a filmmaker should.

If you look at Chinju's script example above, you can see that she decided to start her video by establishing the subject of the video in the beginning ie. herself in an appropriate way (since she works in the field of ICT or Information and Communication Technologies) by sitting at a computer and typing her name on the screen.

Her next section is a montage of visuals that exhibit Kerala, her home state. After this, she begins to narrate her story in a brief but sensitive manner, as if she were speaking to a new friend. She moves chronologically from her parents and village where she grew up, to college, her life partner, and finally to her work. Here, she describes some of the challenges she faces in her work in terms of perceptions of the internet and the job satisfaction she gets from helping differently-abled people access ICT tools. In the end, she brings the video to the present moment, where she expresses what her participation in the WAVE project means to her.

So, you can see that it's a good idea to think about the beginning, middle and end of your video. This is not too difficult once you decide the main message you are trying to bring across to your viewers.

Here is an example of a news format script from our very own WAVE producer, Moushumi Basu. This was a fascinating story about a small village in Jharkhand, that condemned a family to death, presuming them to be involved in witchcraft:

Description of shots	Audio Script	Duration
Opening with track shots of the road leading to the village.		2-3 secs
Wide shots of the village With certain reference points such as school, temple, etc.	This dusty kachcha road leads to the remote village of Saudag, under Tupudana Police Station, in the Ranchi district of Jharkhand.	2-3 secs
Shots of the police station (PS) name, and name of district & state.		2-3 secs
Shots of tighter frames of the village with people. Different shots of the three deceased, whose bodies are in the Police Station.	The village recently bore witness to the killing of three persons, on charges of practicing black magic and witchcraft.	3-4 secs
		4-5 secs
Shots of District Superintendent of Police (DSP) of the area	He describes the incident	
Shots of the village, the place of occurrence, slippers, hair fallen, etc.	VO of DSP continues	
Shots of the daughter of the deceased Pinky	She narrates how the incident occurred	
Shots of local villagers	They claim to have no knowledge of the incident	
Shots of the officer-in-charge (OC) of the PS	He speaks of the connivance of the villagers/ social sanction, etc.	
Shots of the OC in the village/	The arrested people deny having any knowledge	

arrested villagers		
Shots of villagers gheraoing the PS Shots of police force	They demand release of the villagers	
Shots of the thana OC	He is making the villagers understand that they should respect the law and it's process	
Concluding shots	The OC suggesting possible solutions to the problem... that there should be health centres, schools, roads, and more development.	

What is the difference between pre-shoot and post-shoot script (also known as a paper-edit)?

Oftentimes, after you shoot and log your footage, you will realize that the reality of shooting was different from how you visualized it, so certain things need to change in your script. In this case, you would make the changes in the visuals, narration, or sound bytes, based on what you actually recorded, and send us the edited script. You should also add a fourth column with the clip names so it becomes easy for the editor to identify which clips you are referring to in your script.

What's helpful for WAVE editors?

- Naming files (including video clips, still pictures, voice over narration, music, etc.) with your name, key word describing each clip and serial number of clip.
- Referring to clip number in script.
- Deciding tone/pace of video and selecting music accordingly. Tips – Try not to use more than one music track, or if you do, then the styles should be similar, otherwise it will be distracting for the viewer. Also, use copyright free music because sites like YouTube mute the audio of any videos uploaded that use copyrighted music. The better option is to record folk music in your areas, sing a song yourself, or get a local band to lend you their music to use. Include where to put music in script.
- Include where to put text, titles, credits, subtitles (English for Hindi videos, or Hindi for English videos) in the script.