# ­Getting Started

## Crafting Your Idea

If you’re new to the video production business, or just need a refresher, there are several standard questions you should ask yourself when developing the right focus and look for your video. Some of these questions might include:

* **Who is the audience for your video?** Think of the primary viewer you’re trying to reach. Are they current or prospective students? Are they teachers or administrators? Are they parents or alumni? Try to be as specific as possible. There may be multiple audiences for your video, but try to narrow down the primary one.
* **What is the purpose of the video?** Are you trying to motivate your audience to action, educate or inform them, or are you trying to train them? What would you like them to do once they’ve seen the video?
* **What is the main topic of the video?** A video can focus on more than one topic, but the fewer the better.
* **How will the video be seen?** Will it be presented live in front of an audience, on the web, shared one-on-one, or distributed via DVD?
* **Is there a deadline for the video’s completion?**

## Determining The Look

There are dozens of ways to make a video, but a tailored look and feel is key to connecting with your audience. Is it fun and upbeat, soft and frilly, or direct and to the point? Again, think of your audience and what would appeal to them the most. Here are a few questions to guide you in deciding:

1. **What style, genre, or approach would you like to take?** Would your vision best be served by setting up dramatizations with actors pretending to play certain roles? Or maybe documentary style with voice-over, interviews, and supporting footage to help tell the story? What about a “newscast” setup where one person introduces the segments/topics that are “reported on” by others? Or maybe a combination of these or other approaches! Also, don’t shy away from searching for videos on YouTube or television for inspiration. In doing so, you might find a style or approach that will work perfectly for your own video! Plus, sharing the videos that inspire you with your video producer will help you both get on the same page.
2. **How would you like to structure the video?** Is the focus narrow or broad? Will it cover a lot of history, or will it get straight to the point? Your video should also have a consistent look. So, if you have a logo, slogan, or specific colors that represent your intent, those would be helpful to include.
3. **How long do you think the video should be?** Should it be just one video, and if so, how long? Or should it be broken up into short videos, and if so, how many?

You don’t have to have all of the answers right away, but thinking through these questions might help you hone your current idea or formulate a new one. By catering to your specific audience and concentrating primarily on what you want them to do or to learn when they watch your video, you will ensure that your project stays focused and on track every step of the way.