How to act when the camera’s on you:

1. Relax. If you feel uptight, you’re going to look and sound uptight! If you can, try to discuss questions and possible answers before the crew starts shooting. This will help you feel better prepared and more comfortable. Remember, the interviewer wants to know about you and what you do, and you’re the best expert on these subjects!

2. Talk Slowly. It’s normal to feel nervous, especially if you don’t do TV interviews every day. Your adrenaline is flowing, your heart is beating a little faster, and you start talking much faster than you normally do. If you think you’re talking too fast, you probably are. If you think you’re talking slowly enough, you probably aren’t.

3. Avoid Uncontrolled Hand Gestures and Other Body Motions. A few slow and deliberate hand gestures are OK…but avoid quick, broad and sweeping hand gestures. The camera is probably on a close-up shot and the camera operator can’t “keep up” with quick motions. Remember good posture! Your voice can be saying one thing, and your body language can be saying something quite different. If you’re asked to hold an object to show, raise it slowly and tilt it slightly toward the camera to avoid glare from studio lights. You may wish to practice before the interview.

4. Give Yourself Adequate “Think” Time. Don’t feel compelled to “blurt out” an answer before you really know what you want to say. Give yourself a couple of seconds to respond to a tough question.

5. Be Confident. Even if you’re a little nervous or unsure about how you’ll perform in front of the camera, act confident – it helps your presentation.

6. Speak Up! Don’t be afraid of the microphones, the lights, or the cameras. These are just the interviewer’s tools. You don’t have to yell, just speak clearly and confidently.

7. Avoid Bad Grammar, Slang and Swear Words. They distract from the interview and can lessen your credibility with the viewing audience. After all, the information you’re sharing is important.

8. Be Conversational and Be Yourself! Put a little variety in your voice. It might help to think about how you talk to another person on the telephone. Show interest in what the interviewer is asking. Talk as though you’re speaking with a business colleague or friend.

9. Be Brief. Television is a time-oriented medium. The amount of time devoted to sound bites and story length is very short. Concise responses are best.
10. Be Prepared. Make sure you’re familiar with the facts and that you have a thorough understanding of the topic. If you’re not sure, defer the response to someone who can answer more appropriately. Anticipate tough questions. It’s OK to rehearse before your scheduled interview appointment.

11. Use Simple Language. If possible, avoid complicated technical terms and acronyms that need explaining. Avoid words, terms and phrases that lay audiences might not use in everyday dialogue.