How to Generate Great Footage Every Time

Before you press record, you must set up the lighting, set, and camera. But in what order?

FOLLOW THIS ACRONYM:
The "**F.A.B.**" Foreground (as in Fabulous Foreground – that's you!)

A.   F stands for **FRAME**

The first thing you do is set up the camera and frame up the action. Is there more than one camera setup? Think through each one. Is there different talent? Will there be camera movement? Lastly, what will fill the FRAME? Place all objects and set pieces with mindfulness to leave no space left ugly.

B.   A stands for **APERTURE**

Set up the iris of the camera to match your camera or talent's movement. Most of the time you will set the aperture to wide open and then add in digital ISO to brighten the image if you need more. But if you have lots of movement or you have things in the foreground and background in focus at the same time, you'll need a high number aperture resulting in a darker image. To compensate, use more light. Which takes us too….

C.   B stands for **BACKGROUND**

When lighting your scene, start with the background and work your way to the camera, i.e. foreground. Light the background to separate your talent from the background. A small light on the ground below the talent aimed at the wall behind them can do the trick most of the time.

D.   And then there is **FOREGROUND**

When lighting your talent, always shine a light at their back – from above. This is called a **Kick Light.** It's what pros do to make their talent stand out from the background. Look for the halo effect in their hair. Then bring in the **Fill Light** as close as necessary to remove any nose or eyebrow shadows caused by the light from the windows, or the Sun i.e. your **Key Light.** The Sun is the cheapest and most powerful light at your disposal. Unless you're shooting at night or in a darkened room or studio, the Sun will be your Key Light and will dictate your frame (angle of camera to talent to Key Light) once you know what good shadows look like on a person's face; minimize the shadows under the brows and nose without lowering the camera and avoid including embarrassing neck fat.