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**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** All right. We're going to talk about hosting. I'm going to go through rules quickly, guidelines just the same as we did before. Then I'm going to read a short section of one of your scripts. You're going to critique my hosting. And then we'll do the same thing for some of you. Again, we won't do everyone.

This we covered already. Don't read it. *Tell* it. This is the Hourglass video from before. This is a subtle point. You can start off by imitating someone else's hosting style, but you'll invariably just get caught, as like that's the only thing that you can do. And since it's not your own personality, it's just sort of weird and unnatural, and doesn't work.

I did this when I was first starting out. It did not end well. These are my words of wisdom to you. And no more needs to be said about that.

This is a really hard one. So there's this device called interview something. I don't know. There's a famous director, who basically has a silver mirror that he puts in front of the camera. And there's an image below. It's like a teleprompter, except, instead of text, you see a person's face. You see the interviewer's face. So the interviewee is looking straight into the camera lens, but that person is actually seeing the face of the person who's interviewing them.

So who's seen the movie *The Fog of War*? No one else? OK. You should watch it. It's really interesting. It's a documentary. It's an interview movie.

And not Richard Nixon. The Secretary of War for the Vietnam War was McNamara. So he was interviewed on that movie using this technique. And it's a really interesting technique.

But the point is when you look into the camera-- we don't have a fancy device like that, unfortunately. But when you look into a camera, see a person's face, preferably someone that you know, whether it's like a friend, husband, wife, son, daughter, whatever it is. Pick someone, and see their face on camera. That is the quickest and easiest way to make your hosting more natural without really thinking about it.

And that's very hard to do, because you're thinking of your script. You're thinking of 18,000 other things. But that's the most important rule.

Usually, the camera tones you down. So if you are talking like you would normally talk, you will kind of seem like this on camera. It just tones you down and slows you down, and lowers your energy level, unless it's right in your face. Then it's different. But usually it's not right in your face.

So you need to compensate by-- I really hesitate to say, up your energy level, because when people say that the initial reaction is to be like, and then, you need to talk like this, because that's how-- and that just doesn't work either. So you want to be a more energetic version of your natural self. So think of if you were just really excited about something, how would you actually be? That's how you should be on camera.

**ELIZABETH** And just to have physical metrics, higher energy doesn't mean higher pitch and tone. That's  
**CHOE:** the biggest thing that happens when they say, now, with more energy. Then people talk with a higher tone, like this. And that's the last thing you want to do, generally.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** OK. So now what I'm going to do is I'm going to read this. And you all are going to critique my hosting style. And I'm going to read it as if-- I'm going to deliver it as if-- oh, wait. No, most of this is a quote. So let me do something else. I'll do this.

I'm going to deliver this as though it's not my job. OK. Ready? Here we go.

Why do some people handle cold better than others? Why is it that some are so fearful of the cold that they'd rather die than be caught outside with all the winter gear on, mask and all, while others can wear one layer for a morning jog? What makes all the difference?

OK. Critique. What was wrong with that? Yeah?

**AUDIENCE:** I felt like you could do more.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** In what way?

**AUDIENCE:** So you were restrained by the fact that you were looking at somebody else's work.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** OK. That is true. So if I was reading something that I had written myself, I'd probably do a better job. But in this case-- you will be reading your own work. So that won't be quite the same. Yeah?

**AUDIENCE:** So I think just how you read it, it seemed like you were asking a question, but there's no, oh yeah, I've never thought about it. It's like, why do some people handle cold better than others? Maybe if you changed it to like, have you ever wondered why some people-- and try to-- I don't know if it's the structure of sentence or just how you said it.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** And this is part of the exercise, as I'm reading it word for word. So let's assume that I can't change the wording. I mean, in real life, you can. But what could I do just with intonation of my voice, or what else?

**AUDIENCE:** Maybe slow down a little bit, and really hit that question hard.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** OK. You were going to-- no, you had your hand up.

**AUDIENCE:** I'm going to think a bit more.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** OK.

**AUDIENCE:** The intonation, when you ask a question, you probably want to raise it at the end. And if you were to ask a very [INAUDIBLE], because there are a couple of questions there. So I guess you can pick the one that you really want them to think and give them pause. So get them to think before you [INAUDIBLE].

**ELIZABETH  
CHOE:** That's a good point, that you can create suspension in your tone of voice. But a lot of people make the mistake of assuming that every question has to end with an uptone. Right? A powerful question can be posed with the tone ending downwards. Why do some people handle cold better than others?

That is still a strong question even though I didn't say, why do some people handle the cold better than others? That actually is--

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Well, you didn't end upward on either of those. The ending upward is like, why do some people handle cold better than others? That's the traditional way that people asks questions.

But I agree with you. The way that I read it, all the questions were flat. All had the same intonation. What I really want to do is vary. So something like, why do some people handle cold better than others? Why is it that some are so fearful of the cold that they'd rather die than be caught outside without all the winter gear, all the mask and all that stuff, where other people can just wear one layer for a morning jog? What's the difference?

So each question I asked there in a totally different way. What else?

**ELIZABETH**

**CHOE:**

So a big piece of advice that we give to students is to think about the words that you're saying, which is also the hardest thing to do when you're trying to remember everything that you're saying. You have a camera in front of you.

But that's also why we often take the script away from the students. It's easy to get caught up in, oh shoot, I have to remember all the words. And I'm very, very guilty of this as well. So I totally understand how hard it is to do.

But when you are asking the question genuinely, why do some people get cold while other people don't? The way I said that was very different than why do some people handle cold better than others? When I'm actually thinking about the words that I'm saying, which is a very obvious suggestion to make, but, again, very hard to implement yourself, the intonation and the delivery become a lot more natural and genuine. I don't know if you want to add anything to that.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Yeah, and that's another rule. Like when you look into the camera, see someone's face, that's something that you can do that doesn't-- I mean, it requires some preparation. But it doesn't require thought while you're actually doing it. So when you look in the camera, see someone's face. And actually think about the words that you're saying is helpful too.

**ELIZABETH**

**CHOE:**

You want to avoid monotony not just in the intonation. So you don't want to say, why do some people handle cold better than the others? Why is it that some are so fearful-- right, that's monotonous in tone, but it's also monotonous in rhythm.

All right. So when George said it the second time, he rushed through some of the words in the middle that were in a list, which is very natural. When we're like, this morning I have to go to work, and I have to do this, and I have to do this, and this, you rush through things that you list. Whereas, if you're just reading like you would read, you say it with the same rhythmic pacing.

You make the pauses where the punctuation is. You sound very even with the way you break up your words. And that's super unnatural. That's why it sounds robotic.

So when you mix up not only the intonation, but also the speed at which you're delivering some of the words-- I don't know. You can do it again and maybe pay attention to how he

does it. That's kind of also why it feels a lot more natural.

So I'm going to do it again, this time completely different, and get your critique as well. Why do some people handle cold better than others? Why is it that some are so fearful of the cold that they would rather die than be caught outside without all the winter gear on, mask and all, while others can wear one layer for a morning jog? What's the difference?

Was that better or worse than the first time I did it?

**AUDIENCE:** It sounds like a Ted Ed video.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** It sounds like a Ted Ed video? Oh man, then I'm not making very good Ted Ed videos.

**AUDIENCE:** Better than the first, not as good as the second.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** OK. Why? What was inauthentic about that?

**AUDIENCE:** You sounded too intentionally energized.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Yeah. So normally, when we say to someone, up your energy, or when anyone says that, that's what comes out. You get this weird, I have to really try to be excited about this, because I don't really know what I'm reading. But I'm going to just emphasize random words and say them louder. And that makes it exciting. No, it doesn't make it. And especially, if you mix that in with a bit of newscastery, then you're just dead in the water, because you end up with the most unwatchable video ever.

**ELIZABETH  
CHOE:** And you sound like you're trying to talk to a 2-year-old too. I think that's the final effect, which we want to avoid.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** OK. Now, I'm going to read it again. And this is going to be a bit more subtle. Here we go. Why do some people handle cold better than others? Why is it that some are so fearful of the cold that they'd rather die than be caught outside without all the winter gear on, mask and all, while others can wear one layer and be fine? What makes the difference?

What does that sound like to you?

**AUDIENCE:** It sounds more natural, like you're talking to someone.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** It definitely sounds more natural. Any critique of it?

**AUDIENCE:** I think it sounded a little disinterested at parts.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Uh-huh. Why?

**AUDIENCE:** It was kind of like a little bit of a mumble, like when I talk, and I'm going on like this.  
[MUMBLING]

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** It's like, yeah, [MUMBLING]. It is very natural. But there is a lack of wonder. This is a topic that I am sort of taking for granted. And I sort of expect that you'll take it for granted too, so you do take it for granted.

All right. I've sort of run out of different ways to do that. So let's have you guys try. Who did not have their script analyzed? Come on up. So take my hot seat there. And give us a read.

**AUDIENCE:** Why do some people handle the cold better than others? Why is it that some are so fearful of the cold that they'd rather die than be caught outside without all the winter gear on, mask and all, while others can wear one layer for a morning jog? What makes all the difference?

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** One more time. Differently. Do it differently.

By the way, those of you that will do production with me and Elizabeth, that is the phrase that you will hear most throughout the week is, one more time.

**AUDIENCE:** Why do some people handle the cold better than others? Why is it that some people are so fearful of the cold that they'd rather die than be caught outside without all the winter gear on, mask and all, while others can wear one layer for a morning jog? What makes all the difference?

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Do you have the first sentence memorized?

**AUDIENCE:** Yeah.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Deliver it without looking at the script.

**AUDIENCE:** Why do some people handle the cold better than others?

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Now, look at Elizabeth, and just ask that question.

**AUDIENCE:** Why do some people handle the cold better than others?

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Now, don't have the line in your head. Just ask her.

**AUDIENCE:** Why do some people handle the cold better than others?

**ELIZABETH** Now, ask me as if I were Eric Lander.

**CHOE:**

**AUDIENCE:** I've never seen him. Why do some people handle the cold better than others?

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Elizabeth, sit closer.

**ELIZABETH** OK. I'm a professor. And you're at my office hours. And I've given you the piece at question

**CHOE:** relating to hypothermia.

**AUDIENCE:** Why do some people handle the cold better than others?

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Now, ask the question in your own words. Don't use the words that are written on the script.  
Ask Elizabeth.

**AUDIENCE:** Why are some people so immune to the cold?

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** So do people see how hard this is? This is really not easy. Right? Thanks. You're good. Come on back.

All right. Who's next? Your turn. Same paragraph.

**AUDIENCE:** All right. Why do some people handle cold better than others? Why is it that some are so fearful of the cold that they'd rather die than be caught outside without all the winter gear on, mask and all, while others can wear one layer for a morning jog? What makes all the difference?

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** One more time.

**AUDIENCE:** Why do some people handle the cold better than others? Why is it that some are so fearful of the cold that they'd rather die than be caught outside without all the winter gear on, mask and all, while others can wear one layer for a morning jog? What makes all the difference?

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Now, do the first time without reading it.

**AUDIENCE:** I have a horrible memory.

**ELIZABETH** Don't worry about the words. You can say it however you want.

**CHOE:**

**AUDIENCE:** I guess, it's just--

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** What's the video about? What's the video about?

**AUDIENCE:** Dealing with the cold weather.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Say who is dealing with it.

**AUDIENCE:** OK. I have it. Why are some people better at dealing with cold than others?

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** OK. You can sit down. Anyone else want to go? Anyone else want to give it a shot? Yeah, come on up. Same paragraph.

**AUDIENCE:** Why do some people handle the cold better than others? Why is it that some people are so fearful of the cold that they'd rather die than be caught outside without all the winter gear on, mask and all, while others can wear one layer in the morning jog? What makes all the difference?

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** One more time.

**AUDIENCE:** Why do some people handle the cold better than others? Why is it that some are so fearful of the cold that they'd rather die than be caught outside without the winter gear on, mask and all, while others can wear one layer in the morning jog? What makes all the difference?

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Great, thanks. What time is it? Do we have time?

**ELIZABETH** You only have like 10 minutes.

**CHOE:**

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** OK. What did you guys notice about all of those, all three deliveries? Were they different or similar?

**AUDIENCE:** Both. Their personalities came through.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** OK. But-- it sounds like there was a but.

**AUDIENCE:** But they had a really hard time doing something different than what they did the first time.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** I don't know why this is. I don't have any cognitive theory as to why it's so hard to do

something so differently-- when you have the same words in front of you, why it's very difficult to read them in different ways. But this just happens with everyone.

And especially, if you've written the script yourself, you know the words so well, you've looked at it a million times, when it comes time to actually be on camera and perform that script and we say like, OK, well, that was great, but do it a different way. You're like, well, I wrote it this one way. Why should I do it a different way? Maybe that's what your brain is thinking. And so you just don't know how to do it a different way.

Let's try something a little weird and creative. Julia, right? Do the first line, but try and do it as different from your first reading as you possibly can. And I mean, if you want to exaggerate-- don't think of this as I'm hosting a line. Just think of it as I'm going to say these words in the most different way I can think of.

**ELIZABETH** It's OK if it doesn't make any sense.

**CHOE:**

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Yeah.

**AUDIENCE:** Like, why do something handle cold better than others?

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** So valley girl. OK, good. That was very different than your first delivery. Great. Remind me of your name again.

**AUDIENCE:** Joshua.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Joshua. Go ahead. Do the first line totally different than the way you did it, and not valley girl either.

**AUDIENCE:** Why do people some-- OK, let me try again.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Yeah, yeah.

**AUDIENCE:** Hey. Why do people sometimes handle cold better than others?

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** OK. That was an accent. So great, very different. Remind me of your name again.

**AUDIENCE:** Nathan.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Nathan, your turn.

**AUDIENCE:** Why do some people handle cold better than others?

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Julia, yell the line.

**AUDIENCE:** [YELLING] Why do some people handle cold better than others?

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** OK, now, close your eyes. And just say it. Ask the question.

**AUDIENCE:** Why do some people handle cold better than others?

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** OK, that was your best delivery. I don't know why. Sometimes getting people to step way outside their comfort zone and do a line in a totally ridiculous way that you would never actually use resets something in your mental circuitry. I have no explanation for why this works. But you get out of your normal, and then you just sort of do it the way that you would normally do it if you were talking to someone.

That's a technique that we'll also use when we're in production. We'll be like, OK-- actually, we might even say, do this line as a valley girl. Do it with an accent. Yell it out loud. Do it like a robot.

[TALKING LIKE A ROBOT] Why do some people handle cold better than others?

And then do it in your normal-- why do some people handle cold better than others? I mean, that was different than how I've done it every single time.

What other hosting tech-- I mean, this is just one of those things that practice-- you need to practice. And you should do it, like I was saying earlier, with an audio recorder. You have them doing vlogs. Right?

**ELIZABETH** Mhm.

**CHOE:**

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** It might be good to change one of those assignments into an audio vlog versus a--

**ELIZABETH** Yeah, actually, for your daily reflections-- I know Siri did a video just to make sure that you

**CHOE:** guys knew. But you don't have to do text reflections. You can do an audio recording if you want. You can do a video blog if you want. And I think that's a great opportunity to practice some of this stuff.

Your reflection last night, it was really good. It was really authentic. You weren't trying to host. But I thought you did a pretty good job on camera. And it was very different from your pitch. Right? I would suggest that you go back and watch yourself on both your pitch and on your blog last night. And you'll see a pretty surprising difference. And it happens to all of us.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** When you listen to-- that's the other part of this is that once you do your vlog, reflection, or audio vlog, or whatever, listen to it, and see what you sound like. Do one where you're just talking off the cuff. You're like, today was great. We had this guy. He was terrible. But he had some good points, whatever, whatever.

And then do one where you actually read-- you can read even this same paragraph if you want, or pick something that you've written. And listen to the difference.

I think it's only by sort of really listening to yourself that you will learn to do this. Yeah?

**AUDIENCE:** Have you ever tried to have people do practice dry-runs, and maybe tell them that it's not running--

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Yes, we do that all the time. We'll say, oh, this is a rehearsal. We're not rolling, but go ahead and deliver the line anyway. Sometimes it works. It usually doesn't, because you've still got the camera there. It's still--

**ELIZABETH**  
**CHOE:** And the other thing is even though we want you to sound as natural as possible, when it comes to the day of shooting, the more you've practiced your lines, it just takes out one more confounding variable that will stress you out during the day of shoot. The students, you can really tell if they've rehearsed their lines. Even if we end up changing a lot of the wording, they're just much more comfortable, because they're not worrying about remembering things. They actually are thinking about the words that they're saying.

For tonight's assignment, it will just be to recreate your episode pitch. I would suggest that you redraft your script. We are going to do a table read next Monday. And there's no official assignment for another draft of a script until then.

If you want feedback on any material that you write, which I would recommend, I am happy to give feedback. George--

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Yep, I'm going to write my email right now

**ELIZABETH** --is happy to give-- his email's also on the syllabus. We're all happy to give feedback. We will  
**CHOE:** have traditional office hours today, tomorrow, Friday. So there's lots of opportunity for feedback before the table read. But just so you guys know for tonight, it's just a repitching of an idea for your episode.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** That's all the material that I had. Does anyone have any questions in the two minutes remaining? And I'm going to stick around. So if you guys want to chat with me individually, that's fine too.

**AUDIENCE:** So basically, to host, just be yourself.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Yeah. To the most extent that you can, be yourself.

**ELIZABETH** And I mean there are exceptions to every single rule. I know that when I host, I'm very  
**CHOE:** different than I am in real life.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Not really.

**ELIZABETH** Really?

**CHOE:**

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** No, you're pretty similar.

**ELIZABETH** You said that my hosting persona was a lot different than you were expecting.

**CHOE:**

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** I was just messing with you.

**ELIZABETH** But for the most part, be yourself. And we mean that very literally. Right? I don't know if you  
**CHOE:** guys noticed, but that time you asked that question at the very end, it was how you would say it, and it was the best delivery. It really was.

**AUDIENCE:** So less of like a pitch to get people excited, but just kind of explain what you're doing?  
Because a pitch, just [INAUDIBLE] kind of like excited.

**ELIZABETH** Well, when you think of pitch, you think of Shark Tank. And you think of, I have 30 seconds to  
**CHOE:** buy into my idea. So I'm just going to be as loud and exaggerated as possible. So please don't mistake pitch for that. Keep it under a minute and a half.

A lot of your videos were five and a half minutes. That's longer than your entire episode is

going to be. Keep it under a minute and a half. Not just as a challenge, but that'll really help structure the way you deliver. And that should be the point of the video.

So maybe don't think about it as a pitch as it is a point, like a thesis almost.

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Think of it as explaining your video to someone else.

**AUDIENCE:** So it's not the actual stuff that you wrote?

**ELIZABETH** It's like a trailer.

**CHOE:**

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** Remember-- Paul, right? Remember when Paul was doing his shoebox thing. It's that.

**AUDIENCE:** I don't think I have a shoebox, but--

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** You can just mime one.

**ELIZABETH** We've got a budget for a cardboard box. Let me tell you.

**CHOE:**

**GEORGE ZAIDAN:** We've got about \$1.50. OK, thanks, guys.

**ELIZABETH** All right. We'll stick around for a while if you guys have questions.

**CHOE:**