



OUTLINE FOR A 7-MINUTE SHORT DOCUMENTARY

ACT 1: THE INTRODUCTION (approx. 30 to 90 seconds)

“The Hook” – think Cinematic Style and Texture!

- This is your film’s beginning; the “Tell ‘em what you’re gonna tell ‘em” segment.
 - Usually starts with your company’s logo
 - Followed a series of intriguing, stylized shots, not necessarily connected with each other, music energy building, provocative sound bytes, etc.
 - Followed by your film’s OPENING TITLE sequence.
- Your introduction can set up the overall aesthetic design for your film; the visual/sound/mood/vibe/mojo of your doc.

By the end of your introduction, your audience should basically understand what your film is about.

Ideas: cool shots / sounds / music / voices

ACT 2: THE BODY (approx. 5 to 6 minutes)

The “GUTS” of your documentary

- The body is the main stuff; the “tell ‘em” section.
- Approx. 3 to 6 SEGMENTS – the main interviews / events / sections of your film.
- Each segment can be made out of:
 - A-Roll Interviews (your main interview subjects)
 - B-Roll Footage (all your cool supporting footage)
 - Still Images (get some! or create them from footage)
 - Infographics or Text (required)
 - Voiceover or Interview Narration
 - Music / Sound Design
 - Montages (to help with your films pacing)
 - Soundscape, Sound Collage
 - Musical Interludes
 - Transitional Elements (“Interstitials”)
- Each Segment can / should contain a **variety** of COOL CINEMATIC STUFF:
 - Nicely composed shots
 - Close Ups, Medium shots
 - Wide shots and **extreme close ups**
 - Pacing, sound and music should be considered
 - Cool transitional ideas that take us from one Segment to the next
 - All these and more add texture and depth to your film

ACT 3: THE CONCLUSION (approx. 30 to 90 seconds)

Your film’s **ENDING**; the “Tell ‘em what you told ‘em” section.

- Here you build a solid sense of “summary” to your film.
- Does your doc have a sense of resolution?
- Does your doc have a solid opinion? Deliver and/or re-emphasize it here.
- Does your doc have a sense of the filmmaker’s “takeaway”? Meaning, what do you want your viewers to leave with or feel?
- Did your film maintain its visual/sound “mojo” throughout?
- End with END TITLE SEQUENCE, Ex’pression logo & copyright tag.