

PSA Steps Resource

Getting Started

1. Choose your topic. Pick a subject that is important to you, as well as one you can visualize. Keep your focus narrow and to the point. More than one idea confuses your audience, so have one main idea per PSA.
2. Time for some research - you need to know your stuff! Try to get the most current and up to date facts on your topic. Statistics and references can add to a PSA. You want to be convincing and accurate.
3. Consider your audience. Are you targeting parents, teens, teachers, or some other social group? Consider your target audience's needs, preferences, as well as the things that might turn them off. They are the ones you want to rally to action. The action suggested by the PSA can be almost anything. It can be spelled out or implied in your PSA, just make sure that message is clear.
4. Grab your audience's attention. You might use visual effects, an emotional response, humor, or surprise to catch your target audience. Be careful, however, of using scare tactics. Attention getters are needed, but they must be carefully selected. For example, when filming a PSA about controlling anger, a glass-framed picture of a family can be shattered on camera. This was dramatic, but not melodramatic. Staging a scene between two angry people to convey the same idea is more difficult to do effectively.
5. Create a script and keep your script to a few simple statements. A 30-second PSA will typically require about 5 to 7 concise assertions. Highlight the major and minor points that you want to make. Be sure the information presented in the PSA is based on up-to-date, accurate research, findings and/or data.
6. Storyboard your script.
7. Film your footage and edit your PSA.
8. Find your audience and get their reaction. How do they respond and is it in the way you expected? Your goal is to call your audience to action. Are they inspired?