Working as an anchor or presenter in a live news environment

can be demanding and challenging,

with breaking news stories happening at any moment.

So, having a solid journalistic background

and a good knowledge of current affairs

is essential.

But what makes a good news presenter?

And what are the skills that you need?

Here we can take a look at some of the key elements

that will help you to look confident in front of the camera,

with presenter coach Gwenan Edwards.

Preparation is crucial to looking professional

and relaxed in front of the camera.

Before going on air,

read through your program scripts thoroughly,

and make sure you read them out loud.

It's important to do this,

because this is when you find out

if any of the sentences are too long.

It also gives you a chance to think about any unusual names,

or unexpected pronunciation.

If you find some of the sentences difficult

then take the time to rewrite the script,

and break it down into shorter sentences -

but make sure the meaning hasn't changed!

This will help make your delivery more natural when you're on air

and make it look as though you're telling a story

rather than reading it from a script.

If you're working on a news programme in a studio,

it's likely that you'll be working with a prompter.

If you're operating it yourself,

try and rehearse some links so that you're comfortable with the pace.

Do make sure that you can read the prompter.

The camera shouldn't be too close or too far away,

and the text should be big enough for you to read comfortably.

Prompters can be operated by hand on the desk,

or by pressing a foot pedal.

Do make sure that you understand how it works

and how to operate it both forwards and backwards

in case you need to reset it.

In a live broadcast, anything can happen!

If something unscheduled occurs, stay calm.

If it's a technical problem, apologise

and wait for guidance from the control room.

At this point, having paper scripts

or referring to news updates on a laptop or phone

is always useful for filling any extra time.

If presenting live on location,

use bullet points to help learn your lines

rather than learning the script by heart.

Elements of the story could change when you go on air,

and if you have clear points you want to get across,

this technique gives you the flexibility to update

and refer to any new events that are happening around you.

Also, make sure that your earpiece fits comfortably

and the volume is loud enough

so that you can clearly hear the studio presenter when they talk to you

as well as the producer in the control room.

Do be aware of body language.

Whether you're standing or sitting, think about your posture.

If sitting at a desk,

holding a pen can help stop you fidgeting with your hands.

If standing, try to use your hands as naturally as possible.

Do be careful, though, not to overuse them.

You want them to enhance and emphasize what you're saying,

not be a distraction.

Think about dress code.

You want to look professional when presenting the news.

Think about what's appropriate and what works on air.

Be careful about colors, for instance - if you're working with a green screen.

Thin stripes can also strobe and glare on camera.

If in doubt, ask a camera operator, or someone in the control room

to check if it's OK.

And finally, be yourself.

Viewers are very good at knowing when someone's being insincere,

so don't try to be something you're not.

Also, do have the confidence to show some of your personality,

particularly at the beginning and the end of a broadcast.

We hope you found these tips helpful

and that you feel more confident the next time you step in front of the camera.

You can find more videos like this one at RFE/RL Academy.