***10 Tips for Taking Pictures That Tell Your Organization’s Story***

**1. Set your digital camera to take the highest resolution photos that it can.** This will use a little more memory but it will allow you to have crisp images in print applications as well as in your digital materials. You can downsize high resolution images later, but if you start with a low resolution image that’s what you’re stuck with and it could look grainy in print.

**2. Pay careful attention to the light.** To avoid shadows and dark spots, don’t arrange the subject of your photo with the main lighting source behind them. Instead try to have light shining directly onto and illuminating your subject. Try to arrange adequate lighting for your photo so you can avoid using a flash indoors. Using a flash inside may make your photo look unnatural. If you must use the flash, be aware that with most point-and-shoot cameras, the flash has an effective range of about 8 feet.

**3. People are drawn to people**. Even if you are photographing a new building or piece of equipment or other object, **try to include people in your photograph** because it will be more eye-catching.

**4. When photographing people, close-up photos of their faces often create more visual interest** and a greater sense of personal connection. **Show the facial expressions and emotion of the people** you are photographing to help create the overall tone and emotion for your communications piece.

**5. When photographing people, be sure to get written permission -- beforehand, if possible.** Use your organization’s own photo release form or the attached photo release form. When photographing minors, be sure to get written permission from their parents or guardians.

**6. When photographing objects, consider taking the photograph from an unusual angle** to emphasize a particular aspect of the object and to create greater visual interest.

**7.** Close-up shots are often best when photographing individual objects. However people tend to like symmetry and repetition. **Try placing several of the same or similar objects in a grouping, then focus your photo on the grouping of objects.** For example at an information table, try fanning out multiple copies of the same publication on the table and taking a photo. You might want to try several rows with a different publication in each row.  Or, at a candlelight vigil, a whole row of votive candles might capture more interest than a close-up of a single candle. **Of course, if you can include a person with the objects your photograph will have even more appeal.**

**8. Try not to put the subject of your photograph in the exact center of the shot.** To add visual interest, have your subject (whether it’s a person or an object) a little to the left or right of the center point. And put the subject either in the foreground or background.

**9.** Shaky hands make blurry pictures. **Stabilize your camera while you are taking photos, especially indoors, to get clear pictures.** Balance the camera on a ledge, chair or other available furniture.

**10. Show what you do!** Action shots are particularly compelling – especially when they tell a story about your organization’s work. Whenever you have a work party, a rally, a celebration, or a ceremony, don’t forget to take pictures.

*Adapted from “*[*Picture Perfect Communications: 10 Tips for NPO Staff & Volunteers Who Want to Take Great Photos*](http://luttrellcommunications.com/pr-for-npos/2011/3/21/picture-perfect-communications-10-tips-for-npo-staff-volunte.html)***”*** *– Karen Lutrell Communications,* [*http://luttrellcommunications.com/pr-for-npos/2011/3/21/picture-perfect-communications-10-tips-for-npo-staff-volunte.html*](http://luttrellcommunications.com/pr-for-npos/2011/3/21/picture-perfect-communications-10-tips-for-npo-staff-volunte.html)