

## Picture Tips

Taking quality photographs is a key part of a PR program. Whether you are looking for a picture to use in a newspaper ad, slide show, or philanthropy poster, you will want that picture to represent Sigma Kappa well. Certainly, you don't want to use a blurry picture or one where someone has their eyes closed. But, beyond the obvious, what really goes into taking a great picture for PR purposes?

### **Practice and Have a Plan**

Use a camera that you are familiar with that allows you to easily zoom in and out and adjust the flash. Prior to the event you are going to photograph, do some practice shots so you can see which angles and lighting work best. Try to take these practice shots at about the same time of the day that you plan to shoot so the lighting is similar. Decide when and where the pictures will be taken and who will be in them. Once you are at the event be sure to look for unique photo opportunities in addition to your planned shots. In other words, keep your camera handy and be ready to snap a picture at any time.

### **Take Multiple Pictures**

Use different angles, distances, and lighting techniques to be sure you get a good shot. It might take a dozen tries or more to get that perfect picture. Note that taking multiple pictures does not mean taking the same shot with four people holding four different cameras. Make sure your subject(s) know you are taking the shot so they are looking their best, even if they aren't looking directly at the camera. Take a look at what you have after each shot. You may realize that the lighting is horrible or the photo needs to be taken from a different angle.

### **Be Creative**

Put some thought into your photos. Go beyond that typical shot with a few women lined up hunched over with their arms around each other. Instead, have them at different elevations, back to back, or even pull in some props that represent the event. Find a backdrop that does not distract from the picture or one that adds to it. Get the pile of mail or dirty laundry out of the background! Head out on campus and get in front of a recognizable landmark or find a unique spot in your chapter house. For inspiration, look around online for creative shots and ideas.

## **Use Good Composition**

What does this mean? Well, if you have ever looked at a picture and thought that something just doesn't look right but there isn't anything obviously wrong with it, it probably has poor composition. It is good to understand basic concepts of composition such as the rule of thirds; the concept that the human eye finds images more pleasing if the subject is off-center.

For more information on the rule of thirds and other composition concepts go to:

[http://www.colorpilot.com/comp\\_rules.html](http://www.colorpilot.com/comp_rules.html)

Photography Composition - Your Photo as a Story by Two Pilots

## **Use Light to your Advantage**

Proper lighting can make or break pictures. Indoors, be careful not to put your subjects with their backs to a window. The light will cause people to become silhouetted and you will lose the detail in their faces. Outdoors, avoid taking the shot with people squinting in the bright sun. Mornings, evenings, and cloudy days are best for good outdoor shots. If you can't control the weather or the time of your photo shoot, look for a location with some shade that will diffuse the light a little so your subjects look their best.

## **Other Resources**

<http://www.kodak.com/global/en/corp/top10tips/index.jhtml>

Kodak Top 10 Tips for Great Pictures

[http://www.ehow.com/how\\_2165390\\_take-group-photos.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_2165390_take-group-photos.html)

How to Take Group Photos by Carla Lucas on eHow