

Best Practices for Headshot Photography

Consistency and quality are the objectives for NFP employee headshot photos. NFP’s brand hinges on the quality of its professionals, and properly produced headshot photography not only represents the individual appropriately, but provides a level of consistency that bolsters the reputation of each individual and the company as a whole.

Key Guidelines:

NFP encourages the creation of an official company headshot for each employee. NFP’s Austin, Texas office has an on-site photo studio suitable for headshot portraits. However, as the growth of the company’s operations has proceeded, it is necessary to hire other photographers in other locations to follow consistent guidance in studio setup, lighting and camera equipment. It is also important for subjects to dress appropriately for their headshots.

Professional Standards

NFP encourages hiring a qualified professional photographer with access to a dedicated studio space, and the appropriate equipment. Equipment and setup best practices are on the following page.

Despite increasing sophistication, the use of smartphone cameras is discouraged, as is the use of candid portraits, selfies, or other imagery not produced within a controlled photo studio environment, including a proper studio backdrop.

NFP employees with professional-level experience, equipment and access to studio space (permanent or temporary) may be engaged to create employee headshots, provided they deliver consistent results.

Professional Wardrobe

Subjects should dress in professional attire suitable for an important meeting or sales call on a valued client. Additionally, following the below guidelines will minimize technical issues—see example photos:

- Suit/jacket colors: black, tan, navy (avoid medium grey colors)
- Ties (colorful with solid print or very small patterns)
- Button-up shirts (white/lighter colors)
- Scarves (colorful but avoid busy patterns)
- Jewelry (subtle earrings, bold necklace recommended)

Example Headshots

Keep in mind that headshots are used for a variety of purposes, including “About Us” sections on websites and multiple social media platforms. Headshot photos should comfortably crop into square or round shapes for these purposes.



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Technical/Equipment Guidelines:

Camera Body

- Mirrorless or DSLR with 16mp or greater resolution; common brands include Canon®, Nikon®, Panasonic®, and Sony®.

Camera Lenses

- Mirrorless: 42.5mm focal length
- DSLR: 85mm focal length

Studio Setup

The diagrams at left illustrate a practical setup for headshot portraits.

- Subject (X) being photographed lines up on a 45-degree angle with their head pointing towards photographer (Y)
- Step stool or ladder is recommended to get a higher angle depending on the height of the person being photographed.
- Studio setup should eliminate or minimize any ambient light in the room during the photo shoot.

Additional equipment recommended (or equivalent):

- **A** = Aputure Light Storm LS-mini20c
- **B** = Westcott® Flex Cine Daylight LED X-Bracket Kit (1 x 1')
- **C** = Westcott® X-Drop Kit 5x7'- Neutral Gray

