Guide to C4D Tutorial Making

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MAKING BETTER TUTORIALS

1. Watch other tutorials on a variety of subjects
2. When watching someone else's tutorial, try to identify what you really like about it, and incorporate it in your own.
3. Also When watching someone else's tutorial, try to identify what annoys you, and avoid doing that yourself.
4. Put yourself in the Viewer's position.
5. Understand your target Audience
6. Don't over or underestimate your audience
7. Use a short Title that's Descriptive and enticing - make viewers crave for what's about to come
8. Tag your video appropriately but not excessively.
9. Keep your personal introduction VERY short.
10. Make sure you show what's coming in the first 30 seconds and MAKE IT LOOK AMAZING.

WHY MAKE TUTORIALS?

1. Making tutorials is NOT ONLY about teaching others, but learning more yourselves.
   Try to leverage the "Tutorial Making" process to learn the tools better and get motivated to learn more about the industry in general.
2. It's more about the Questions you ask yourselves, rather than the Answers you already have.
   Here's a thought experiment: After you make something, ask yourself:
   a. *Why did I do it this way? How would others do it, and why?*
   b. *Was it the only way I knew, or was it the best way?*
   c. *What are the advantages and disadvantages of this particular method?*
   d. *Could I have done it differently?: Better - faster - more flexibly - cheaper or more fun*
3. The more questions you ask, the more things you'll learn in the process and the more and better tutorials you'll make as a result. Under no circumstances does this mean that your tutorial won't be good, popular, successful or anything in particular if you don't ask those questions, but I **personally** believe it's a better path to teaching and learning... It's a positive feedback loop.
4. I have NO ADVICE to give you insofar as popularity and success of your tutorial. Every day, I see tutorials with huge viewerships, in the tens or hundreds of thousands of views, that are showing the wrong way to use a tool... But regardless of that, people love them and I have no problem with that, and neither should you.

WHAT SHALL I TEACH?

1. Once you have decided you want to make a tutorial, you need to find a subject.
2. First you need to come up with a general Concept.
   Examples:
   a. *Project Breakdown - Are you showing a whole project, or a specific Scene*
   b. *Specific technique - for example: Optimal Modeling techniques for Subdivision Surface Modeling - UV Unwrapping for Humans or Dinosaurs e.t.c.*
   c. *Tool or Tool-set - for example: Polygon modeling using Bevel, Extrude or Extrude inner, or Polygon Modeling in General e.t.c.*
   d. *Specific Discipline - for example: Toon Rendering - Studio Lighting setup e.t.c.*
      A cohesive set of ideas that facilitate a specific outcome, providing you can describe that outcome.
   e. *Industry Standards - for example: Color Management - File Naming Conventions - Studio Pipeline processes e.t.c.*
   f. *Overall, anything you find interesting to watch, others may find it interesting as well.*
      For example: Think back to when you were learning Cinema 4D, and try to remember what you couldn't understand, and how you came about understanding it.
3. Overall, try to make your tutorial:
   a. *Educational*
   b. *Inspirational*
   c. *Motivational*
   d. *Interesting*
   e. *Engaging*
   f. *Entertaining*

PREPARING THE CONTENT

1. You have now decided on the general concept and style, so you need to create the flow, something that will dictate the overall length of the tutorial and roughly how many videos it will be, if it's a series.
2. Also, this is a good time to decide the overall "User Level" you're addressing. If your target group is too narrow, you will lose viewers either because more advanced users will get bored, or less experienced will be overwhelmed.
3. On the other hand, if you are addressing a strict user level, just go ahead, but always remember that even very experienced users may be missing something otherwise obvious.
4. The golden rule is to explain things enough to allow beginners to follow along, but also try to avoid swaying too much from the Target Group.
5. Start by doing a "dry run" from an empty scene, to see if everything you did, flows without problems. If **you** stumble, the viewer will stumble even more.
6. Once you succeed and feel that you have a general mental image of the Tutorial, do another dry run, and start taking notes for Milestones and talk to yourself while doing it. You could also record that session for your own reference.
   This is the stage where you define the exact length of the tutorial.
7. The optimum length of each video is 7-10 minutes, UNLESS the concept needs to be cohesive and splitting it will make it harder to follow.
   A good rule of thumb, is to imagine a viewer starting from the middle of a Series. Although they will miss a lot of information, they should be able to follow along to a certain degree and still learn something.

8. At Cineversity, we prefer more and shorter videos, rather than long form ones. The ultimate decision is yours, but don't do it out of convenience. Always prioritize your viewers.
9. With your previous notes at hand, go through every milestone, once again, and make sure you are using the tools in the simplest way. If you are not sure how something works, find out. This is your chance to learn.
   If a technique is based on the "abuse" of a tool, let your viewers know and ideally if slightly relevant, show them what it's supposed to do, and compare it to how you're using it.
10. NOW you are ready to start Recording the Tutorial...

AUDIO

1. Audio quality is very important.
2. You can find low noise - ultra cardioid, USB microphones for less than $50 these days. Also, a Pop filter or screen can make a huge difference.
1. Use headphones to monitor your speech. If you haven't done it before, you'll get used to it, and you'll never look back.
2. If you can't stand hearing your voice, it will be very hard to make tutorials.
3. If you can't think while hearing your own voice, practice and try to get used to it. It will improve your delivery a lot and also help with catching audio issues early on.
4. Remove anything from your immediate environment that can knock or make noise during recording, mouse movement and keyboard usage.
5. Some Computers become louder as they get hotter. See what you can do to minimize the fan noise.
6. Be well rested and well hydrated. If your mouth is dry, try something like a slice of lemon. The internet is full of advice...
7. Do some Audio recordings to test the above.
8. Don't play music during recording. If you want to promote your music, give your viewers a link to it, and they can listen while watching.

VIDEO & INTERFACE

1. Use 1920x1080 to record your Screen, and adjust your recording monitor to reflect that resolution. Don't record part of the screen only, as it will lead to clipped menus and hidden managers.
2. For Mac, use the "QuickRes" Utility. It allows any resolution on any monitor. Using 4K Screens without Scaling, makes the icons, menus, managers and text very small when watched on HD screens.
3. Use a Screen recording software of choice. I use Camtasia as it offers me everything I need.
4. Make the Application Full Screen Mac or Maximize Window on ... Windows.
5. Don't have the application window misaligned.
6. On Mac OS, Turn OFF Show Mac Menu Bar to make the UI identical to PC
7. Hide Taskbar - Dock.
8. Use Standard Layout, and if you're using another one, switch to it and say what you're doing.
9. If you're using your own layout, tell your viewers, and quickly show how to add icons to toolbars (if you have any), and quickly show how to dock a window in the UI, or any other relevant UI information but don't spend too much time on it, unless your tutorial is about Creating Layouts.
10. Keep Object Manager Organized. Fold everything and unfold as you go.
11. DON'T start with a pre-made scene UNLESS you're showing what you're about to make, and then make it from scratch in an empty project.

12. Don’t create and teach things inside an already populated scene unless it was the result of a previous video, or you’re offering the scene for download.
13. Use empty scenes to isolate objects and techniques, by copying and pasting relevant objects.
14. In the Attribute Manager, make sure ONLY the necessary tab is selected.
15. Don’t customize colors and interface elements - Unless it’s fundamental to the process - or at least show your viewers how to do it.
16. Make sure your Default Attribute values are NOT changed. If this is the case, say it, and show people how to “Set as Default”
17. Turn OFF “New Feature Highlights” (Yellow menus)
18. Turn off Redundant Viewport elements if they are not helpful - Show them how you did it (e.g. Safe Frames, Grid, Horizon e.t.c.)
19. Work in the latest C4D version if possible, but remember that Subscriber Versions maybe different from perpetual ones.
20. Turn OFF notifications and any background software. If you do get a popup or notification, please re-record that segment and cut it out.
21. Turn OFF phones, social media and let people know you’re recording.
22. Make sure there will be no distractions
23. Record and Encode @ 25 or 30FPS
24. Record 20 seconds Screen and Audio to make sure your video is working and audio is good.
25. Start recording.

HOW TO RECORD

1. Take your time and think before doing anything - Cut gaps out in Edit
2. When a mistake happens, pause for 2 seconds, Undo back to the moment before, including the Viewport and repeat what you said.
   The Audio Waveform Gap will be your visual aid for removing mistakes.
3. Don’t assume the user knows what you’re talking about. If there’s a lingering thought in your mind that tells you to do something, say it out aloud.
4. Talk about the “why’s” as well as the “how’s”
5. Offer alternatives when you think they are useful
6. Use simple examples to show fundamental concepts and then apply to the complex setup.
7. Talk about slightly tangential things if you think it adds to the specific teachable element
8. Explain things that are not obvious
9. Explain **what** you’re planning to do, and **then** do it. Create positive anticipation NOT temporary confusion. Information retention is much easier when viewers expect something to happen.
10. Place objects in Viewport in a way that minimizes zooms and panning.
11. Make sure they can see clearly what effect a specific change has. It helps for better retention.
12. Explain WHY certain things are happening... most users don’t know. That’s why they are watching the tutorial in the first place.
13. Know which menu you are clicking. Scrambling around menus doesn’t look good. Fix it in post if needed.
14. Provide resource information when using 3rd party assets. Make sure you tell your viewers if they are free or not.
15. Use the “Magic of editing” to make things look smooth and uneventful
16. Try not to have things moving or animations playing when you’re talking. It makes it easier to cut out mistakes seamlessly

17. Always align Visual and Audio. Don't create cognitive dissonance. In other words, DON'T say one thing while showing another
18. **Don't fast forward anything you do**. If there's a labor intensive or repetitive process you need to perform, complete at least all the necessary steps, and then say "just repeat the same for all other objects, and I'll cut to the final".
19. Audibly and Visually Call out anything that needs the Viewer's focus
20. When you want to guide the viewer's attention to another part of the screen, do that by annotating and Audibly calling it out ("Let's go to the Object Manager...). Arrows, Boxes, Zooms. Don't only rely on the mouse movement. Do it slightly beforehand, as our brains always lag our eyes.
21. Audible Shortcut call-outs - "Command Z on Mac or Control Z on PC"
22. Avoid Using Shortcuts the first couple of times you need to do something, UNLESS it's a common one (Copy - Paste - Undo). If you're planning to use shortcuts, First show it in the menu, and the next time Say the shortcut and add a call out on screen.
23. Don't use the Commander, unless you tell them about it, and it's necessary for the flow. Don't do it for your own convenience or out of habit.
24. Don't move managers and Dialogs around if it's not necessary. For example, open the material manager, zoom in (post) change whatever you want to change, zoom out (post) close manager.
25. Take a few minutes mental break every time you reach a milestone.
That's a good time to stop the recording and SAVE.
Just make sure you don't touch C4D's interface. Also, SAVE the C4D project at that point incrementally.
26. When you're about to say something for a few seconds that doesn't require you showing anything in particular, DON'T TOUCH YOUR MOUSE, DON'T MOVE STUFF, DON'T Deselect things, DON'T adjust windows... just talk.
27. Record a few seconds of background noise Audio to use in post if you're planning to use Noise Reduction software or Plugin. You can also use it to fill in gaps where you're showing an image or other video. Total silence is very obvious. There's always a bit of noise in the background.
28. Be pleasant - Show excitement

THINGS TO AVOID

1. Avoid or remove "Umms" , "Ahhs", and repeating filler words.
2. Don't show your confusion, unless it's part of the teachable content.
3. Don't fidget - Don't move the mouse, Don't Navigate without a reason.
4. Instead of using the Mouse Pointer to drive the user's focus, better use zooms and annotations.
5. Don't talk too much about things that don't matter. If something works in a particular way, and the reason is not important, just mention it and move on.
6. Don't call behavior "buggy". You want users to watch with enthusiasm. Anything negative you say about the software may cause a negative reaction to your tutorial. When you have to show problematic behavior, do it by providing a solution and curbing expectations.
7. Avoid showing things that are broken, unless that's the teachable subject. If necessary, show it to the extent that it works, and caution people that it could get a bit tricky if they try to do something differently.
If something needs a certain switch to function properly, tell the users CLEARLY, and tell them NOT to do the wrong thing.
8. Don't trash-talk competition

POST PRODUCTION

1. After Recording, don't change your Audio recording configuration (Audio Mixer, Microphone position e.t.c.) As you may need to re-record something, and it may sound differently.
2. Do a first pass using the Audio Waveform as a visual guide to cut out the mistakes and breaks .
3. Remove "Umms" and "Ahhs", or any filler words odd Sounds and Noises.
4. Start watching your tutorial while adding Zooms, Annotations, Graphics e.t.c.
5. Add Title Screens (templates available for Cineversity)
6. Use Call-outs for Shortcuts (templates available for Cineversity)
7. Use Annotations.
    a. *When terminology is important, add the text on screen. "Buckminsterfullerene" is a hard word to say. Write it on screen.*
    b. *Use Arrows to show where some things are. Don't overuse*
    c. *Use Boxes, Lines and Circles to show important things*
    d. *Add any graphics, animations, images that help make the tutorial easier to understand.*
8. Zoom strongly and fast. Many viewers watch the tutorials on smartphones and tablets
9. If you hear any Audible mistake, Record the new Audio immediately and replace. Re-listen from earlier to make sure it has continuity
10. SAVE and SAVE AS (to be on the safe side)... and then save again.
11. Don't skim. Watch and listen to everything.
12. Try to avoid software noise reduction, unless it's a high quality one. "Underwater" audio never sounds good. If necessary, use Audio processing software. Equalizers and Noise Gates can help improve your audio.
13. Use background noise to fill in if necessary. Don't have complete silent parts.
14. After you are done, Export - Encode to the required format, making sure your export settings are correct.
15. After Uploading, sit back and watch it again as a Viewer. If you can't watch your own tutorial 4-5 times without being annoyed, nobody else should!

16. Make Sure you have license to show content and Play Audio