Say Cheese! *Top 10 Photo Tips*

The Marketing and Communications office loves to share the Ivy Tech Community College–Northeast story. And we couldn’t do it without you. However, there are times when we need your assistance beyond participation in an interview. We need you to help us be the eyes and ears to your personal story—quite literally. We may need you to take pictures at your newsworthy event.

For that reason, we would like to provide the following photo composition guidelines and best practices to enhance the scene.

1. **Approach with eyes wide open.** Be clear on your photography goal. Capture your subject interacting in a way that supports the theme of the story. Put some thought into it. What kind of story are you trying to tell with the photo?
2. **Consider the possibilities.** Draw attention to your subject. Be creative. Consider using selective focus, experimenting with lighting, or framing the subject by the surrounding environment. The options are limitless.
3. **Get up close and personal.** Fill the frame with your subject. Avoid the trend so common in family photo albums: standing 50 feet away from the action.
4. **Simplify the scene.** Remove extraneous visuals that don’t help you tell your story. When in doubt, leave it out.
5. **Put the pieces together.** Use the rule of thirds as you compose your shots. In other words, imagine a tic-tac-toe board over your field of view. Position your subject at one of the four intersecting corners of the grid. Interesting photos are less likely to have the subject centered.
6. **Don’t become Dr. Frankenstein.** Avoid cutting off the hands, feet, or other body parts of your subjects. Check the edges of the frames before you click to eliminate this likelihood when possible.
7. **Check for intruders.** Is someone making offensive hand gestures in the background? Does it appear that a tree is sprouting from behind your subject’s head? Re-compose your shots to remove such distractions.
8. **Snap like a turtle.** The excuse of snapping fewer pictures given the cost of film is no longer valid with today’s digital cameras. Take as many pictures from as many angles as possible (i.e., high, low, horizontal, vertical). This is particularly important in low-light or fast-action situations.
9. **Don’t get compressed.** When downloading and saving photos, keep the photos at their original size. We like large photos, because you never know when a photo might be needed for a cover story, advertisement, or a billboard!
10. **Channel your inner Clark Kent.** When you submit your photos to the Marketing and Communications office, be prepared to report the 5 Ws and the H with each image (Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?).

**Need some visual samples?**