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Now let's talk about everyone's favourite subject, the algorithm. Look, I can't actually tell you in a detailed manner how the algorithm actually works, but based off my experience on multiple accounts, I can give you my personal speculations on what it factors in the most.

As you know, your algorithm is incredibly tailored to you. If you have spent time on TikTok, you'll notice that over time, it gets really, really good at understanding what you like and what you don't like. Obviously, it's just going to continue to feed you what you do like.

That being said, I do think that there is some sort of engagement hierarchy. In my opinion, the most important thing when it comes to your video is average watch time. Let's say, for example, you have a 15 second video and later on you go ahead and check your analytics, and that video specifically has a high average watch time of maybe 14 to 17 seconds. If you ever have a video like that, chances are it's going to do incredibly well, but how do you actually encourage higher average watch time? Well, obviously your video has to be engaging, but on top of that, there are different techniques to be able to encourage the user to stick around towards the end of the video.

Next up you have shares. Shares are very important. Think about it this way, if you're TikTok, and you're actually putting together a plan for new user acquisition, wouldn't it be great to try and bring on more people organically onto the platform? Oftentimes when you share a video, you're most likely either texting it to someone or sending it to another platform. Obviously, if your friend wants to see what you sent them, they have to hop back on TikTok. Hypothetically, if they don't have an account, this is going to increase the likelihood of them creating an account. It's incredibly convenient for TikTok.

TikTok recently introduced a new button on its actual UI called favourite. Favourite is a little flag-like banner, where essentially, you can save that specific video into a specific section under your favourite section in your profile. Favourite has a lot more weight as opposed to a like, for example, because you're obviously telling the platform, hey, I really like this, and it's giving them a better idea of what to show you. Again, I would consider a favourite more so like a like on steroids.

Then you have comments. Comments can be super, super clutch. Going back to what I said about average watch time, think back on when you're on TikTok and you want to comment on a video. Unless you pause a video, the video actually continues to loop in the background and it contributes to the high average watch time. Being able to encourage your users to comment on your videos, or maybe even just adding a sprinkle of controversy into there to encourage them to actually comment, can be incredibly effective.

Lastly, you have likes. I don't consider likes to be the most important factor when it comes to your engagement and the overall role in your video potentially going viral. I think it's one of those nice to have things, and obviously it has some sort of weight to it, but I don't think it's the most important thing.

Again, this is just my speculation based off of my personal viral videos, as well as viral videos for clients, but once you actually understand the hierarchy that I just mapped out, you'll be able to reframe your thinking when it comes to creating videos and be able to be slightly more intentional when it comes to sequencing your TikToks.

Now that you understand the algorithm hierarchy, it's time to move on to the next section.