



## **SA FILM ACADEMY FILM INDUSTRY CAREER PATHS**

### **A VITAL BRIDGE BETWEEN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT**

The SA FILM ACADEMY provides a vital bridge between education and employment for South African citizens aged between 18 and 35, focusing primarily on emerging black Heads of Departments and independent film-makers.

FILM's primary focus is to promote transformation, skills & entrepreneurial development, employment & career channelling via mentored, hands-on experiential '*Learning by Doing*' on local and international productions and emerging black producers to help create diverse, representative, sustainable, internationally competitive, South African crews & heads of departments and emerging black media entrepreneurs.

FILM invites PRODUCTION COMPANIES to partner with the SA FILM ACADEMY which provides accelerated career path, employment and management opportunities to trainees, interns and emerging black filmmakers, through work-based '*Learning-by-Doing*' ON LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL PRODUCTIONS and in PRODUCTION COMPANIES in the following primary fields, amongst others:

Assistant Directing; Director of Photography; Line Production; Production Coordination; Assistant Production Coordination; Production Management; Continuity/ Script Supervision; Art Department; Hair and Make-up; Wardrobe; Location Management; Film Production Accounting, Unit/ Transport Management and related film industry technical skills such as Camera Department, Lighting Department; Grips Department; Video Take-off (VT); Digital Imaging Technician (DIT)

Here follows an outline of some of the career paths and the diverse occupational, life and entrepreneurial skills they demand.

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## LINE PRODUCER

*The Line Producer is the person who takes responsibility for the way the budget gets spent during pre-production, production and post-production periods of the film.*

*'Line Producers' derive their title because they cannot start work until they know what the 'line' is between the 'above-the-line' costs, which relate to writers, producers, directors and cast, and the 'below-the-line' costs which include everything else, e.g., crew salaries, equipment rentals, development costs, locations, set design and construction, insurance, etc.*

- Line producers are generally employed just before pre-production and complete their work at the answer print stage.
- The Line Producer is the producer who is in charge of the physical logistics (film stock, lab, camera, crew, etc) during the shoot.
- The Line Producer is one of the first people to be employed on a film's production by the Producer and Executive Producers.
- Line Producers are rarely involved in the development of the project, but often play a crucial role in costing the production in order to provide investors with the confidence to invest in the project.
- As soon as the finance has been raised, the Line Producer supervises the preparation of the film's budget, and the day-to-day planning and running of the production.
- Line Producers are usually employed on a freelance basis. They must expect to work long hours, though the role can be very rewarding creatively & financially.
- Career advancement is based on experience and reputation.
- Where a Line Producer has creative input to the production, he or she is often credited as a Co-producer.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Line Producer is in charge of all the business aspects of the physical production of films.
- They are called Line Producers because they cannot start work until they know what the 'line' is between the 'above-the-line' costs, which relate to writers, producers, directors and cast, and the 'below-the-line' costs which include everything else, e.g., crew salaries, equipment rentals, development costs, locations, set design and construction, insurance, etc.
- Line Producers are usually recruited onto the production team during the later stages of development.
- They are given the script and asked to assess the likely 'below the line' cost of the production which involves breaking down the screenplay into a schedule - a timetable for the film shoot that shows how long it will take to shoot each scene.
- From this schedule the Line Producer can accurately estimate the cost of each day's shooting, and produce a provisional budget estimating the total amount of funding required. Once the Producer and Executive Producers have raised and confirmed the required finance, the film can go into pre-production.

### PRE-PRODUCTION

- During pre-production, Line Producers work closely with the Director, Production Manager, First Assistant Director, Art Director and other Heads of Department to prepare the production schedule and budget, and to set the shoot date.

- Line Producers oversee all other pre-production activities, including hiring the production team, setting up the production office, location scouting, ensuring compliance with regulations and codes of practice, sourcing equipment and suppliers, selecting crew, engaging supporting artistes and contributors, and monitoring the progress of the art department and other production departments

## **PRODUCTION**

- During production, Line Producers hand over control of the final budget to the Production Accountant, and delegate the day-to-day operation of the production office to the Production Manager and Production Co-ordinator.
- Line Producers are ultimately responsible for overseeing all activities, and for ensuring that the production is completed on time and within budget.
- This requires setting up and implementing financial monitoring systems, controlling production expenditure, controlling production materials, and monitoring and controlling the progress of productions.
- Line Producers usually allow a 10% contingency in the budget to cater for unforeseen circumstances, and spend much of their time juggling figures and resources.
- Line Producers are responsible for certain Health and Safety procedures, legal agreements and for sorting out any insurance claims. At the end of the shoot, the Line Producer oversees the 'wrap', or winding down, of the production.

## **SKILLS**

Line Producers require:

- An in-depth knowledge of scheduling and budgeting, and of all the physical and technical processes of filmmaking including the post-production process.
- Excellent industry contacts
- That they command the respect of the production crew.
- Exceptional communication skills, as well as the diplomacy to balance the creative expectations of the director, artists and creative personnel with the financial resources available.
- To plan for the worst, whilst simultaneously being able to inspire others to excel in their work.

Unlike Producers, Line Producers are not responsible under Health & Safety legislation for setting up health and safety procedures; however, they are required to carry out risk assessments according to regulatory requirements. They must therefore know how to identify the hazards in the production environment, to assess the level of risk, to recommend action, and to carry out a review of their assessment.

## **QUALIFICATIONS/ EXPERIENCE**

No qualifications without extensive industry experience, can prepare anyone completely for this hugely demanding role. But:

- Line Producers must have considerable industry experience, which can only be acquired by working for a number of years in film, television and/or commercial production.
- Individuals usually progress to the role of Line Producer by working their way through a variety of roles in Assistant Direction, Location Management and/or the Production Office.
- Many start their careers as Runners or Production Assistants.
- Line Producers must also attend the required Health & Safety courses.



You could apply to be a LINE PRODUCER trainee through the SA FILM ACADEMY, which gives you hands-on experience in the industry and helps you build those all-important contacts that are essential when competing for a job. This particular skillset is usually the culmination of many, many years of hands-on experience in a range of disciplines and departments, progressively working your way up the line function to this executive position.

After working for an appropriate period on a number of productions as a F.I.L.M trainee or intern, you could start out as a Runner, Assistant Production Co-ordinator or as a Production Assistant in television - this would give you essential additional on-set work experience on very long road to a vital strategic and operational position.

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## PRODUCTION MANAGER

### PRIMARY ROLES

- Managing the production budget
- Making sure the production runs smoothly for the Producer and Line Producer
- Scheduling shoots and negotiating hire of crews and equipment

### REQUIREMENTS

To perform this role, you will need to:

- Have good experience of film production
- Have excellent knowledge of the film business
- Have a thorough understanding of production processes
- Be dynamic and highly self-motivated
- Be prepared to work long hours
- Be able to react calmly under intense pressure.
- Have good planning and admin skills
- Be highly organised
- Have good communication skills
- Be a good negotiator
- Understand relevant software packages
- Be experienced at creating and managing budgets
- Have good contacts with suppliers
- Know where to recruit reliable production personnel
- Understand insurance issues
- Understand the relevant health and safety laws and procedures

### WHAT DOES A PRODUCTION MANAGER DO?

Production Managers are in charge of the '**below-the-line**' budget. This covers costs relating to the crew and the practicalities of running a production.

In pre-production, Production Managers work with the Producer, Line Producer and First Assistant Director to prepare a provisional schedule. Production Managers then consult with the various Heads of Department. They estimate the materials needed and prepare draft budgets.

Once the overall budget has been agreed, Production Managers help Producers to recruit crew and suppliers. They negotiate rates of pay, and conditions of employment. They arrange the rental and purchase of all production materials and supplies.

Production Managers oversee the search for locations, sign location releases. They also liaise with local authorities and the Police regarding permits. On smaller productions they may also negotiate contracts with casting agencies.

During production, Production Managers ensure that all bills are paid and that the team is working well. Their responsibilities include setting up controlling the spending, paperwork and liaising with the First Assistant Director to make sure the production schedule and departmental budgets are on target.

Production Managers sign and authorise all purchase orders, and help the Production Accountant to prepare weekly cost reports. They make changes to the schedule and to the budget as needed.

Production Managers deal with any personnel problems or issues that may arise, and ensure that everyone complies with Health and Safety regulations.

At the end of the shoot, the Production Manager 'wraps' the production. This involves ensuring that all final invoices are dealt with, locations signed off, rental agreements terminated and equipment returned. On larger productions involving more than one Production Unit, Assistant Production Managers may be given these jobs. The role of Production Manager is challenging but well paid, usually on a freelance basis.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED – IF ANY**

You don't need a qualification in film or media studies but a degree is an advantage. It is also useful if you have been on industry courses covering health and safety, budgeting and scheduling, IT and first aid. You will need a full clean, driving licence.

#### **WHAT'S THE BEST ROUTE IN?**

You can become a Production Manager after working as an Assistant Director or by working in different positions in a production office. You can also move into film from production management roles in TV, advertising or drama.

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## **PRODUCTION COORDINATOR**

***Production Coordinators are directly responsible to the Line Producer and Production Manager for scheduling and coordinating the communications***

***and the day-to-day workings of the whole production team.***

- They co-ordinate the crew, maintain the purchase order log, make sure paperwork is completed and filed, answer the telephone, and ensure that nothing is overlooked.
- Production Coordinators also produce new versions of the script as changes are made.
- Production Coordinators are most responsible for the day-to-day workings of the production office
- Production Coordinators must work very long hours, particularly in the final week before the start of principal photography.
- Employment is usually on a freelance basis.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Production Coordinators run the production office from the office, according to the guidelines set out by the Production Manager.
- Production Coordinators manage the production office and are left in charge of it whenever the Production Manager is on set.
- Production Coordinators typically perform the following duties during the different phases of production.

### **PRE PRODUCTION**

- Production Coordinators are responsible for setting up the Production Office and for ordering equipment and supplies
- They co-ordinate travel, accommodation, work permits, and visas for cast and crew; and they prepare and distribute shooting schedules, crew and cast lists, scripts and script revisions.
- They assist with ordering and collecting equipment, and booking personnel, once the Production Manager has negotiated acceptable terms.
- Production Coordinators organize and process the paperwork related to insurance cover for action vehicles, rental cars, office equipment, etc.

### **PRODUCTION**

- A Production Coordinator is responsible for preparing, updating and distributing crew lists, daily progress reports, script changes, call sheets and movement orders.
- He or she must ensure that transportation needs are communicated to the transport captain, or to unit drivers.
- They organize the use of courier and shipping companies, co-ordinate the shipment of film and tape to and from various laboratories, and make arrangements for the movement of props and costumes, and other equipment.
- As the shoot draws to an end, Production Coordinators assist the Production Manager to "wrap" the production by closing accounts with suppliers, returning surplus stock, tying up all loose ends, and ensuring that office files are stored safely, and in a suitable format, so that information can be easily accessed by other personnel when required.
- Depending on the size of the production, Production Coordinators may delegate tasks to one or more Assistant Production Coordinators, and to a number of Production Runners.



## **ASSISTANT PRODUCTION COORDINATOR**

*The Assistant Production Coordinator acts as a general assistant to the Production Coordinator, performing duties relating to the preparation, distribution and filing of paperwork, both within the production office and on set.*

Assistant Production Coordinators are almost always self-employed, and must be prepared to work long hours, particularly during the final week of pre-production. Most, larger long-form films employ one Assistant Production Coordinator; however, even larger productions may employ two or more.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Assistant Production Coordinators work under the direct supervision of a Production Coordinator. Their duties vary according to the production phase, and the daily requirements of the production office.

Responsibilities may include:

- Setting up, maintaining and closing down the Production Office, for example, ordering furniture, equipment and supplies.
- Travel & Accommodation - helping to co-ordinate travel, accommodation, work permits, visas, medical examinations and any immunizations for principal crew and cast to conform with insurance and foreign travel requirements.
- General production duties - including typing, filing, answering the telephone, and other related office duties.
- Transportation - helping to organize the pick-up and delivery of equipment and personnel by the Unit Drivers.
- Production paperwork - assisting the Production Coordinator to prepare and distribute shooting schedules, crew and cast lists, call sheets, production reports, movement orders, scripts and script revisions.

### **SKILLS**

- Assistant Production Coordinators must have strong multi-tasking abilities, be enthusiastic team players, and be able to work calmly under pressure.
- They need to be hardworking, efficient, and to have strong organizational and communication skills.
- They should have an understanding of the film-making process, and of the different phases of production.
- They must be highly computer literate, with excellent secretarial, typing, word processing and e-mail skills.
- They should also be aware of health and safety issues, and ensure that their actions do not constitute a risk to themselves or to others.
- Assistant Production Coordinators must also know how to manage and market themselves as freelancers.

### **QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE**

There are currently no specific degree courses in Production Coordination; however, significant industry experience is usually required. Assistant Production Co-ordinators on film productions usually progress to this role from working as Production Runners. Equivalent experience in TV, advertising or general office management may also be sufficient. Valuable work experience can also be gained by working on short film productions. A full clean driver's license is usually required for this role.



You could apply to be a CONTINUITY trainee through the SA FILM ACADEMY, which gives you hands-on experience in the industry and helps you build those all-important contacts that are essential when competing for a job.

After working for an appropriate period on a number of productions as a F.I.L.M trainee or intern, you could start out as an Assistant Production Co-ordinator or as a Production Assistant - this would give you essential additional on-set work experience.

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## **FIRST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (1<sup>ST</sup> AD OR FIRST)**

*The 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant or 1<sup>st</sup> AD is the person who organizes the crew*

*To the best advantage for filming.*

They say things like “quiet please” and “turn over”. The 1<sup>st</sup> AD usually designs and controls the shooting schedule and generally liaises between the production office and the set.

The First is responsible to the Director for the efficient execution of the schedule on set and assists the director, when required, in the direction of extras, crowd scenes and special effects.

The AD is also responsible for production paperwork, including overtime authorization.

The First Assistant Director, (referred to as First or First AD) is the Director's right hand person, taking responsibility for a number of important practicalities so that the Director is free to concentrate on the creative process.

The First Assistant Director, (referred to as First or First AD) is the Director's right hand person, taking responsibility for a number of important practicalities so that the Director is free to concentrate on the creative process.

### **PRE-PRODUCTION**

During pre-production:

- First ADs break down the script into a shot-by-shot storyboard.
- Work with the Director to determine the shoot order, and how long each scene will take to film.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> AD then draws up the overall shooting schedule (a timetable for the filming period). Once the film is in production, The First is in charge of making sure that every aspect of the shoot keeps to this schedule.
- Before the shoot, the Firsts' main task is to create the filming schedule, working in careful consultation with the Director in order to fulfil his or her creative ambitions.
- When drawing up the shooting schedule, First ADs must also be aware of budgetary constraints, cast availability and script coverage. Preparing the storyboard, overseeing the hiring of locations, props and equipment, and checking weather reports, are all key pre-production duties for Firsts.

### **PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY**

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

First ADs' main duties are:

- Assisting the Director
- Coordinating all production activity
- Supervising the cast and crew.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> AD is also in charge of a department of other Assistant Directors and Runners.
- Overall, they provide the key link between the Director, the cast and the crew, whilst also liaising with the production office, and providing regular progress reports about the shoot.
- During production, the First AD must ensure that everyone is on standby and ready for the Director's cue for action.

- First ADs' core responsibility is to keep filming on schedule by driving it forward, so they frequently make announcements and give directions to co-ordinate the cast and crew.
- They also control discipline on the set and supervise the other Assistant Directors.
- The First AD oversees the preparation of the daily 'call sheet' (a document detailing daily shooting logistics, which is distributed to all cast and crew).
- Firsts are also responsible for health and safety on set or location, and must take action to eliminate or minimize hazards at all times.

## SKILLS

- ***First ADs must be authoritative team-leaders and motivators, whilst also being approachable team players.***
- They need exceptional organizational and time-management skills.
- The ability to plan ahead, trouble-shoot and pay close attention to detail is vital in this role.
- Being an excellent communicator, with tact and diplomacy skills, is also essential as they must routinely deal with problem or even crisis situations.
- They are also constantly required to prioritize tasks, and as they may be frequently interrupted, the ability to multi-task is crucial.
- Firsts work long and often unsocial hours on a freelance basis, so a strong commitment to the job is essential.
- They also usually work under highly pressurized and stressful conditions, so a flexible, upbeat and positive approach is highly valued.

## QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

No formal qualifications are required to become a First Assistant Director.

- Extensive industry experience gained through working on set or on location is the key route to develop the necessary skills.
- Most First ADs start as Runners, before progressing through the other Assistant Director roles (Third Assistant Director and Second Assistant Director).
- ***Please note that this route may take a number of years.***
- Firsts need specific experience in planning and budgeting (and how this affects scheduling), as well as in-depth knowledge of, and qualifications in, current Health and Safety legislation and procedures.
- Regular Health and Safety training courses should be undertaken, in order to keep this knowledge up to date.
- A full driving licence is generally deemed necessary.
- You could apply to be an AD trainee through the SA FILM ACADEMY, which gives you hands-on experience in the industry and helps you build those all-important contacts that are essential when competing for a job.

After working for an appropriate period on a number of productions as F.I.L.M trainee or intern, you could start out as a 3<sup>rd</sup> AD which would give you essential additional on-set work experience.

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## 2<sup>ND</sup> ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

***The Second Assistant Director (Second AD or Second) is the First Assistant Director's right hand person.***

***The Second AD's main function is to ensure that all the First AD's orders and directions are carried out.***

Under the supervision of the 1<sup>st</sup> AD, the 2<sup>nd</sup> looks after the cast. From time-to-time and where required, they also take charge of the set and organize the next day's call sheet. 2<sup>nd</sup> ADs tend also to be a liaison between the set and production office.

**Seconds have two main responsibilities during production:**

- ***They prepare and draw up the 'call sheet'*** (a document detailing daily filming logistics, which is distributed to cast and crew), under the supervision of the First
- ***They oversee all the movements of the cast***, ensuring that the principal actors are in make-up, in wardrobe, or standing by on the set at the correct times.

On smaller productions, where there is no Third Assistant Director, Seconds may also be responsible for finding and looking after background artistes (extras). Most Seconds also assist the First in liaising between the set or location and the production office, updating key personnel on the timings and progress of the shoot.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

On each day of a shoot:

- Seconds must prepare and draw up the next day's call sheet, (which involves confirming the details of who needs to be on set and at what time, the transport arrangements, extras required etc.).
- These details must be approved by the production office before the Seconds can distribute the call sheet to the cast and crew.
- Ensuring that everyone knows their 'call time' (the precise time they will be required on set) is a key responsibility - any delay to filming due to bad time-keeping negatively affects the day's schedule and budget, and is considered unprofessional, extremely inefficient and most important, very costly.
- Once the day's filming has begun, Seconds must ensure that all actors are ready for filming when they are required, which entails coordinating any transport requirements, as well as make-up and wardrobe timetables.
- In some cases, Seconds may also be in charge of finding extras, sometimes in large numbers at short notice, and coordinating their transport to, and activities on, the set or location.

### **SKILLS**

- Seconds must have excellent organizational and time-management skills to co-ordinate arrangements and to make efficient plans.
- First-class communication and interpersonal skills are also essential, as Seconds must deal with a large number of people, convey messages and give instructions clearly, concisely and confidently.
- Cast members may be under pressure to learn script lines, or to hone their performance, and need to be dealt with tactfully and diplomatically at all times.
- Paying close attention to detail and always attaining very high standards of efficiency are vital skills for successful Seconds.

- To win and maintain the confidence of First ADs, Seconds must consistently offer capable support and assistance. As the work is on a freelance basis, and involves long and unsocial hours, Seconds must be extremely motivated and always flexible.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS/ EXPERIENCE**

- No formal qualifications are required to become a Second Assistant Director.
- Industry experience is key, and the best way to gain this is via the conventional entry level position as a Runner or Production Assistant, eventually acquiring enough on-the-job experience to progress to the role of Third Assistant Director, and then on to becoming a Second.
- A full driving license is generally required for this role.
- Regular Health and Safety training courses should be undertaken, in order to keep this knowledge up to date.

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## THIRD ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

The main function of the Third Assistant Director (3<sup>RD</sup> AD OR Third AD or Third) is to support and assist the First and Second ADs in whatever ways are necessary on the set or location.

This can involve a wide variety of tasks, but ***the key duties of most Thirds revolve around the movement and activities of background artistes (extras).***

Thirds may be required to direct the action of extras, or of vehicles appearing in the background of the shot, especially in large crowd scenes.

Thirds also act as messengers on the set or location, and are often required to convey messages and relay information to cast or crew members, usually by radio link.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

- Thirds are responsible for coordinating the extras to arrive at the right time and place for filming.
- Once the extras are on set or location, Thirds are in charge of preparing and cueing them, and sometimes also directing them, in any required background action.
- They must also supervise and look after the extras - they may be on standby on the set or location all day, despite only being needed for a short period.
- Thirds may have to keep members of the public out of shot, and off the set or location, so that they don't interrupt filming, cast or crew.
- Thirds may also liaise with the Location Manager, and may be given responsibilities with regard to the security and locking up of studios or locations after filming has taken place.
- Firsts or Seconds may also provide Thirds with specific information to add to the daily progress reports, before they are sent to the production office.

### SKILLS

- Thirds must have excellent organizational and time-management skills, as well as a good stock of common sense.
- The ability to take instructions and carry them out with enthusiasm and efficiency is vital.
- Communication and interpersonal skills are also essential, as Thirds spend most of their working days interacting with a large number and variety of people.
- Diplomacy and patience are required when coordinating and directing large groups of extras.
- As the work is freelance and involves long and unsocial hours, Thirds must be highly motivated and always flexible.

### QUALIFICATIONS/ EXPERIENCE

No formal qualifications are required to become a Third Assistant Director. Industry experience is the key, and the best place to start is via the conventional entry-level position as a Runner or Production Assistant.

With sufficient on-the-job experience, individuals may then progress, usually relatively quickly, to becoming a Third Assistant Director. Regular Health and Safety training courses should be undertaken, in order to keep this knowledge up to date.

A full driving license is generally required.



You could apply to be a trainee through the SA FILM ACADEMY, which gives you hands-on experience in the industry and helps you build those all-important contacts that are essential when competing for a job.

After working for an appropriate period on a number of productions as F.I.L.M trainee or intern, you could start out as Set PA, trainee 3<sup>rd</sup> AD, 3<sup>rd</sup> AD; Trainee 2<sup>nd</sup> AD, 2<sup>nd</sup> AD and this would give you essential additional on-set work experience.

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## CONTINUITY/ SCRIPT SUPERVISOR

Ensures that film, TV dramas & series, most often shot out of script sequence, end up making continuous verbal and visual sense in terms of continuity

### **WHAT DO YOU NEED TO ASSUME THIS ROLE?**

You will need to:

- have exceptional skills of observation
- have a meticulous and methodical attention to detail
- have stamina to remain alert and focused during long filming days
- be able to take precise and detailed notes quickly and efficiently
- possess a good sense of visual composition, perspective and movement
- have excellent organisational skills and a practical approach to work
- be able to think on your feet and respond quickly to changing circumstances
- have good communication skills and show diplomacy and sensitivity when working with artists and crew
- be able to remain friendly and calm in challenging situations
- understand the requirements of the relevant health and safety legislation and procedures
- be able to collaborate and work as part of a team
- have a full, clean driving licence, ideally

### **WHAT DOES A SCRIPT SUPERVISOR DO?**

It is the Script Supervisor's role to monitor whether it is possible for each filmed scene to be edited into a verbally and visually coherent sequence. **Film** and **TV** dramas - and most especially series - are invariably shot entirely out of script sequence. The Script Supervisor ensures that the finished product makes continuous verbal and visual sense from a continuity perspective within the narrative sequence. They work as part of the camera department.

During pre-production they check the script for any errors and/or inconsistencies and prepare estimated running times. They develop story synopses and character breakdowns. They check the shooting schedule to ensure that the required scenes will be shot and covered from all required angles, distances, etc. They attend reces and pre-production meetings to feed back any identified issues. During rehearsals they record detailed timings which inform the shooting schedule.

During the shoot, they work closely with the Director to anticipate and solve any potential problems. This entails keeping detailed written and photographic records of dialogue, action, costumes, props and set design, all camera and lens details, all slate and scene number information, so that when different takes are edited together, the fictional world of the film is not disrupted by continuity errors. These records provide an invaluable resource for Directors and Editors enabling them to assess the coverage, including how many shot options there are for each scene and how each shot was filmed.

On each day of principal photography, Script Supervisors file their record of the previous day's shoot and prepare all paperwork for post-production. During filming they closely monitor the script to check that no dialogue is overlooked, and cue actors where necessary.

They liaise closely about continuity with other departments including sound, costume, make-up and hair, props and lighting. Where pick-up shots are required, they provide actors with dialogue start points and exact continuity details. They re-type scripts to reflect any major dialogue changes, and mark up scripts with slate numbers, cut points, and other relevant details for post-production.

They prepare detailed Daily Continuity Reports, Editors' Daily Log Sheets and Daily Production Reports. They provide production with records of the requirements for any outstanding shots or inserts.

### **DO I NEED A QUALIFICATION?**

You don't need a formal qualification to become a Script Supervisor. However, some film schools and training courses offer a good basic grounding in the skills and knowledge you'll need.

You will need good knowledge of the theory and grammar of filmmaking and, in particular, of editing. This is essential in order that you can understand the craft of constructing scenes out of individual shots.

If you are considering taking a TV or film production course in higher education, the following courses have been rigorously assessed by the film and TV industries and awarded the Creative Skillset Tick for the high standard of education they provide and the degree to which they prepare you for a film or TV career.

### **WHAT'S THE BEST ROUTE IN?**

You could apply to be a CONTINUITY trainee through the SA FILM ACADEMY, which gives you hands-on experience in the industry and helps you build those all-important contacts that are essential when competing for a job.

After working for an appropriate period on a number of productions as a F.I.L.M trainee or intern, you could start out as an Assistant Production Co-ordinator or as a Production Assistant in television - this would give you essential additional on-set work experience.

You would need to assist an experienced Script Supervisor for a minimum of 30 weeks before you could progress to script supervision on 2nd camera shoots, and 2nd unit work, progressing finally to become a Script Supervisor.

### **WHERE COULD THE ROLE TAKE ME?**

From being a Script Supervisor, you could move into other areas of production, including producing, writing, directing, editing and script editing.

Or you could become the most kick-ass Script Supervisor in the entire industry!

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## **DIGITAL IMAGING TECHNICIAN (DIT)**

### **WHAT DO YOU NEED TO ASSUME THE ROLE?**

- Ensuring a digital camera is being used to produce high quality images
- Making sure all footage is secured and backed up, and creating dailies for the director and Director of Photography to view
- Applying LUTs to raw footage to give an impression of what the footage will look like after the post production phase

### **WHAT DO YOU NEED?**

For this role, you will need to:

- Know the ins-and-outs of digital cinematography
- Have in-depth knowledge of all the major cameras used in digital film
- Have a good eye for colour
- Be aware of file formats, storage media and computer hardware, in order to cater your personal DIT rig to the shoot you're working on
- Make sure you're always equipped with a large supply of cables and chargers
- Provide support for the cinematographer in delivering the best images possible

### **WHAT DOES A DIT DO?**

A DIT, or Digital Imaging Technician, is a role that's evolved alongside digital cinematography. The DIT is responsible for the digital handling of footage. They would help the cinematographer and camera department when setting up the camera for a shoot, making sure that the settings are correct and they're getting the most out of the camera.

Once footage has been captured, the DIT will be in charge of backing up the footage across multiple storage drives. Then, because digital footage on most professional shoots will be shot "raw" or "flat" (without the final colour baked in) they will quickly apply a LUT (Look-Up Table) to give it an impression of what the footage would look like when coloured. This allows the Director and Cinematographer to quickly check the rushes and decide whether the shot was satisfactory.

### **DO I NEED A QUALIFICATION?**

You don't need a specific qualification. However, if you are considering taking a film production course in higher education, they provide a degree and the degree to which they prepare you for a CAREER IN FILM.

### **WHAT'S THE BEST ROUTE?**

A DIT, despite what a lot of people think, is a very specialised skill that requires someone to be knowledgeable of data and computers, as well as know the specifics of the individual cameras on set. Like many on-set positions, becoming a runner is always a good first step, and from there you can become a Data Wrangler, the main assistant to the DIT. From there it's a matter of picking up experience, making sure to showcase your knowledge of the job role.

You could apply to be a DIT trainee through the SA FILM ACADEMY, which gives you hands-on experience in the industry and helps you build those all-important contacts that are essential when competing for a job.

## VIDEO TAPE (VT) OPERATORS

### WHAT DO I NEED FOR THIS ROLE?

- Operating and managing equipment
- Fixing equipment
- Making digital copies and labelling them

### WHAT DO I REQUIRE FOR THIS ROLE?

To do this role, you will need to:

- Have knowledge of post-production equipment
- Know how to digitise media and make copies
- Understand industry practices and standards
- Understand media formats
- Be familiar with editing systems and graphics
- Be able to solve technical problems
- Have excellent communication skills
- Be very well organised
- Have good attention to detail
- Be able to work on your own initiative
- Have good problem solving skills
- Have advanced IT skills
- Have advanced analytical skills
- Be a good teamworker
- Be diplomatic and sensitive when working with clients
- Understand the relevant health and safety laws and procedures

### WHAT DOES A VT OPERATOR DO?

VT Operators are sometimes called CAR Operators, Technical Runners or Tape Operators. They work in and manage the machine room and operate tape recording equipment. They make sure that the contents of tapes meet the correct technical specifications. They prepare VT machines for use by clients and Editors. They may also have to set up Avid and other editing equipment.

They make tape copies in different formats, labelling them label tapes accurately. Every frame of each project has to be labelled, using roll numbers and time-codes according to industry practice.

VT operators move media and machines around the building. They auto conform media, and may digitise media for use on Avid and other equipment. They are responsible for quality control of output media, and for quality assessment reports. They deal with conversions, digitisation, transfers, and duplication of video and audio materials. They operate, *patch* and un-patch equipment. They manage equipment and identify faults.

Larger facilities of 50 or more staff employ a number of VT Operators, with varying degrees of experience. In smaller companies, the VT department also manages the Library system and database. In some cases Edit Assistants' and VT Operators' roles may be combined.

### WILL I NEED A QUALIFICATION?

You don't need specific training or qualifications. But you will find an Engineering or IT degree is useful.



## **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY (DoP)**

The Director of Photography, Cinematographer, DoP or DP, is responsible for the cinematic look of the film – the lighting, the type of film/lenses used, etc, and also for getting the image on film. This vital role is often abbreviated to DP (in the USA) or DOP (in UK/Australia/South Africa).

The Director of Photography (DoP) is a key Head of Department on film productions, fulfilling one of the major creative roles.

Requested by the Director, she or he must be approved by the financiers, studio and/or completion bond company.

***DoPs work closely with the Director and Production Designer to give a film its visual signature.***

Lighting is one of the fundamental elements in filmmaking; the way in which light falls on an actor's face, reveals an interior space, or illuminates a landscape, can create mood, drama and excitement for the audience.

Framing a shot, camera angles and movements play a significant role in the look and feel of a film and providing an emotional space the viewer feels compelled or wants to inhabit.

The ability of cinema to entertain and emotionally move an audience emotionally is the result of a highly collaborative process which encompasses camera-work, performance, editing and music.

The role of the Director of Photography or Cinematographer is to provide a film with its unique visual identity, character or look often referred to as their signature. Most DoPs work on commercials and promos as well as on feature films.

Although the hours are long, and some foreign travel may be required, involving long periods spent away from base, the work is highly creative and very rewarding.

### **WHAT DOES THE JOB INVOLVE?**

DoPs must discover the photographic heart and soul of a screenplay, using a variety of source material, including stills photography, painting, other films, etc. They realize the desired look using lighting, framing, camera movement, etc. DoPs collaborate closely with the camera crew (Camera Operator, 1st and 2nd Assistant Camera, Camera Trainee and Grips). During filming, DoPs also work closely with the Gaffer (whose lighting team is key to helping create the required look of the film), the Production Designer, Costume Designer, and the Hair and Make Up Department.

### **PRE PRODUCTION**

- After reading the screenplay, DoPs meet with the Director to discuss the visual style of the film.
- They conduct research and preparation including carrying out technical recce of locations.
- They prepare a list of all required camera equipment, including lights, film stock, camera, cranes and all accessories etc., for requisition by the production office.
- During preparation DoPs also test special lenses, filters or film stocks, checking that the results are in keeping with the Director's vision for the film.

### **PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY**

On each day of principal photography:

- The DoP and camera crew/s arrive early on set to prepare the equipment for the day's work.

- During rehearsals, the Director and DoP block (decide the exact movements of both actors and camera) the shots as the actors walk through their actions, discussing any special camera moves or lighting requirements with the Camera Operator, Gaffer and Grip.
- Each shot is marked up for focus and framing by the 1st AC, and, while the actors finish make-up and costume, **the DoP oversees the lighting of the set for the first take.**
- On smaller films, DoPs often also operate the camera during the shoot.
- At the end of each shooting day, DoPs prepare for the following day's work, and check that all special requirements (cranes, Steadicams, remote heads, long or wide lenses, etc.) have been ordered.
- They also usually view the rushes with the Director.
- During post production, DoPs are required to attend the digital grading of the film, which may involve up to three weeks of intensive work.

### **MORE TYPICAL CAREER PATHS**

The majority of DoPs study film and/or photography to degree level or higher, subsequently working in a junior capacity, e.g., as 2nd Assistant Camera on short films or promos, and progressing through the camera roles. Camera Operators often progress to becoming DoPs by carrying out second unit work, although there is no set route.

Less frequently they may progress from the Lighting Department.

Becoming a DoP can be a long and arduous process, but the eventual rewards are great. Although experience of working on short or student films can provide a good introduction to feature film production, the on-set hierarchy and traditions of working as part of a camera crew can only be learned by experience.

### **ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

The basic requirements for a DoP are:

- A good technical knowledge of photo-chemical and digital processes and camera equipment.
- In-depth knowledge of lighting techniques, and how to achieve them, is essential.
- A combination of practical, technical and creative expertise is required, as well as considerable industry experience, in order to achieve the best results while also saving time and money.
- They must be flexible in order to adapt ideas instantly, and to be able to take decisions quickly.
- Knowledge of photography, painting and, particularly of the moving image, is essential.
- Some knowledge of film history may be useful, as it enables DoPs to be inventive, and to have a working knowledge of how technologies evolve.

### **KEY SKILLS INCLUDE:**

- Artistic vision
- Creativity and precise attention to detail
- Good color vision
- Ability to give and to accept direction
- Excellent communication skills
- Diplomacy and tact when working with director, cast and crew
- Knowledge of the requirements of the relevant Health and Safety legislation and procedures.

### **TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS**

- Stills photography provides a good all round understanding of composition and light.
- Tertiary courses in Cinematography provide the opportunity to specialize, and are often taught by practicing DoPs.

- Mentorship programs such SA FILM ACADEMY are invaluable in terms of gaining hands-on experience and learning from the real gurus and masters.
- Although DoPs do not need to have electrical qualifications, they do need to understand the functions of a variety of lighting equipment, and to have thorough knowledge of cameras, lenses and film stocks.
- They may have previously studied Drama, Stills Photography, or Art, or taken a Film/Media Studies degree, where useful research skills are also developed.
- Good eyesight definitely counts in a good DoP's favor.
- You could apply to be a CAMERA trainee through the SA FILM ACADEMY, which gives you hands-on experience in the industry and helps you build those all-important contacts that are essential when competing for a job.

**APPLICATIONS TO JOIN THE SA FILM ACADEMY:** [admissions@safilmacademy.co.za](mailto:admissions@safilmacademy.co.za)

## **THE CAMERA OPERATOR**

***Camera Operators perform a vital role within the camera department on feature films. They support the Director of Photography (DoP or DP), and the Director, by accurately carrying out their instructions regarding shot composition and development***

The seamless ease with which the camera moves is key to the narrative flow of feature films, and is the Camera Operators' responsibility. They are usually the first people to use the camera's eye piece to assess how all the elements of performance, art direction, lighting, composition and camera movement come together to create the cinematic experience.

The DoP or Director often requests a specific Camera Operator, who in turn makes recommendations about the rest of the Camera and Grip Departments. The work is physically demanding, and requires high levels of strength and stamina. Hours are long (12–14 hours a day), and some foreign travel may be required, involving long periods spent away from base.

### **WHAT DOES THE POSITION REQUIRE?**

Camera Operators usually begin work at the end of pre–production and, if the budget allows, attend the technical recesses with other Heads of Department. They work closely with the Director of Photography (DoP), Director and Grip, and are responsible for the 1st Assistant Camera (AC), 2nd Assistant Camera (AC) and the Camera Trainee.

After the Director and DoP have rehearsed and blocked the shots, the Camera Operator and DoP decide where to position the camera, and what lenses and supporting equipment to use. Camera Operators liaise with the Grip and other Heads of Department, and keep them informed about how the position and movement of the camera might impact on their work load. They oversee the preparation and checking of camera equipment. During shooting, Operators are responsible for all aspects of camera operation, enabling the DoP to concentrate intensively on lighting and overall visual style.

Camera Operators ensure that the camera and associated equipment are prepared for the required set–ups, always keeping alert for any last–minute changes. They must be able to multi–task, and to watch, listen and think on their feet while carrying out complex technical tasks.

They liaise closely with the Director, fine–tuning the exact details of each shot, which often involves suggesting creative improvements or alternatives. They supervise the logistics of moving the camera, and oversee the Camera maintenance work carried out by the Focus Puller and the 2nd AC.

Camera Operators work closely with performers, guiding them on what can and cannot be seen by the camera. As it is now common for DoPs to also operate the camera on smaller films, many Camera Operators specialize in the operation of other precision equipment, such as Remote Heads or Steadicam, and most also work on commercials, promos and television drama.

On bigger budget films, the role of the Camera Operator remains a crucial link between the creative ambitions of the Director, the DoP, and other major departments, including Art, Hair and Make–Up and Costume.

## **TYPICAL CAREER ROUTES**

Most Camera Operators begin their careers as Camera Trainees or Runners, progressing to 2nd AC and, as they gain more experience, to 1st AC. Throughout this progression, they must build upon their experience, and achieve a high level of competence when operating a variety of cameras. Once this level of expertise and experience has been achieved, they may become a DoP or a Camera Operator.

## **ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS REQUIRED**

Camera Operators need advanced technical abilities, combined with creative skills, and must know how to operate the camera to achieve the desired result. They need a good working knowledge of all camera systems, lenses and camera support equipment; of available accessories such as remote focus systems, video senders and receivers, and of any other regularly used equipment. Creative input and artistic ability are vital. As the decision-making process may take some time, patience is also essential.

## **KEY SKILLS INCLUDE:**

- A good sense of visual composition, perspective and movement;
- Physical co-ordination and strength;
- Ability to combine creativity with technical skills;
- Precise attention to detail;
- Effective communication skills;
- Ability to collaborate, and to work as part of a team;
- Diplomacy and sensitivity when working with directors, DoPs, artists and crew;
- Knowledge of the requirements of the relevant Health and Safety legislation and procedures.

No specific qualifications are required to work in this role, although film schools and training courses offer a good basic grounding in the skills and knowledge required. Camera Operators usually learn most of their practical skills through hands-on experience on the job. However, continual professional development is vital, especially as technology is changing rapidly.

New shooting techniques, lighting set-ups and other practices are learnt by testing out new equipment, studying trade journals, attending exhibitions and joining industry forums. Basic stills photography, which develops visual and composition skills, provides a useful starting point in training for this role.

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## **FIRST ASSISTANT CAMERA (FOCUS-PULLER)**

***The role of the 1<sup>st</sup> AC, AC, First Assistant Camera or Focus-Puller as he or she is variously referred to, plays a critical role in the filming process.*** When characters in films run out of a burning building or simply walk across a room to open the door, they are usually moving closer or further away from the camera. This means that the focal length - the distance of the camera lens from the subject and the depth of focus - or the critical band in which the subject remains in focus - is constantly changing.

***Adapting or "pulling" focus to accommodate these changes is the main responsibility of the 1st Assistant Camera (AC).*** 1st ACs are usually requested by the Director of Photography or the Camera Operator and work on a freelance basis. Hours are long and the work can be physically demanding.

### **THE KEY ROLE OF THE 1<sup>st</sup> AC?**

***The role of the 1st AC (also known as Focus Puller) is one of the most skilled jobs on a film crew.***

1st ACs are responsible for focusing and refocusing the camera lens as actors move within the frame of each shot, but they do not look through the lens to do this; they pull focus according to a set of complex marks (which are placed on the set, on the floor, on props, etc., during the Director's on-set rehearsal time with the cast), and by using their instincts and experience of judging focal lengths. As it is impossible to see whether the focus is sharp until the rushes are screened, 1st ACs rely on experience and instinct for each focal adjustment. Because re-shooting scenes is expensive, and actors may be unable to re-create their best take, 1st ACs must be extremely reliable and good at their work, and should be able to cope effectively in stressful situations.

1st ACs are also responsible for camera equipment such as lenses, filters and matt boxes, and for assembling the camera and its accessories for different shots. 1st ACs arrive on set or in the studio before the Director, Director of Photography and Camera Operator, and ensure that the camera and all required lenses are prepared for the day's shoot. If the Director or DoP wants to try out a specific lens, the 1st AC assembles the camera so that she or he can look through the eyepiece to assess the shot. At the end of each shooting day, 1st AC cleans the equipment and packs it up in preparation for the next day. If there is a problem with the rushes (such as a scratch on the film), the Focus Puller liaises with the Film Lab to rectify any faults with the camera or stock.

### **TYPICAL CAREER PATHS**

Since the essence of the job is learning how to gauge focal length to such a degree that it becomes second nature, being around working cameras and learning how to use them is a crucial part of any apprenticeship or mentorship.

Since being a 1st AC is about acquiring hands-on experience, a mentorship program is often very effective in doing so with industry gurus. It is essential to serve an apprenticeship, starting out as a Camera Trainee and progressing to become a 2nd then 1st AC. Some 1st ACs may start out by working at a junior level in a film lab or camera equipment facilities house. However, since the essence of the job is learning how to gauge focal length to such a degree that it becomes second nature, being around working cameras and learning how to use them is a crucial part of any apprenticeship. Some of the best 1st ACs see this role as an end in itself and make a good living; others go on to become Directors of Photography.

### **ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

1st ACs must develop their ability to pull focus to such a degree that it becomes instinctive. This requires excellent knowledge of cameras, lenses and all related equipment. They must also keep up to date with new techniques and equipment. They need expert knowledge of photo-chemical and Digital film processing.

#### **KEY SKILLS INCLUDE:**

- Good eyesight and the ability to accurately judge distances;
- Agility and speed;
- Precise attention to detail;
- Ability to collaborate and to work as part of a team;
- Diplomacy and sensitivity when working with DoPs, directors, artists and crew;
- Physical stamina and strength and knowledge of the requirements of the relevant Health and Safety legislation and procedures.

#### **TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS**

- Although hands-on experience apprenticeship and mentorship provide the most important training for 1st ACs, there are numerous short courses available providing the basic skills for 16mm and 35mm Camera Assistants. Training in stills photography provides a good all round understanding of composition and light.

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## **SECOND AC OR CLAPPER LOADER**

2nd Assistant Cameras (ACs) are key members of the camera crew, and are responsible for the smooth running of the entire camera department. Audiences watching a finished film are not conscious of the camera - a complex piece of machinery, powered by batteries which must be charged and reloaded. Nor are they thinking of the difficult job of anticipating when a magazine (the sealed container that feeds the unexposed film into the camera) is about to run out, and what a pressurized job it is to reload quickly so that the flow of filming is not disrupted. These are some of the responsibilities of the 2nd Assistant Camera (also known as the Clapper Loader). Most 2nd AC's are requested by a Camera Operator or 1st AC, and work on a freelance basis. They often work on a combination of commercials, promos and features.

### **WHAT DOES THE JOB INVOLVE?**

2nd ACs assist the Camera Operator in positioning and moving the camera, and are responsible for loading and unloading film magazines, changing and charging camera batteries, changing lenses, operating the clapper board, filling out and filing all camera sheets, liaising with film labs, and ordering the correct amount and type of film stock. 2nd ACs work closely with 1st ACs (Focus Pullers), and supervise any Camera Trainees.

Depending on the size of the feature film, 2nd ACs start work two or three weeks before the first day of principal photography, assisting the Director of Photography (DoP) and Camera Operator with any tests required on film stock or/and with artists. During the shoot, 2nd ACs begin work early in the mornings, unloading, organizing and preparing all the camera equipment for each day's work. During rehearsals, they mark-up the actors' positions, enabling the 1st AC to calculate any changes in focus. When the camera starts to roll, 2nd ACs mark each take with a clapperboard (which identifies the take and enables the Assistant Editor to synchronize the sound and picture in preparation for editing). 2nd ACs position themselves next to the camera, where they can anticipate all camera movements, and monitor how much film stock is being used. They must know when a new film magazine should be prepared. At the end of each shooting day, 2nd ACs pack away all the equipment, label up film cans, and dispatch them to the labs with detailed camera sheets.

### **TYPICAL CAREER PATHS**

The majority of 2nd AC's serve an apprenticeship as a Camera Trainee before progressing through the ranks of the camera department. Because the job involves an in-depth knowledge of, and feel for the camera, actual experience of handling camera equipment and stock is vital. Working in a camera rental facilities house such as ARRI or Panavision can also provide a good route to an apprenticeship.

### **ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

2nd ACs must have an exhaustive knowledge of all camera equipment, film stocks and processing techniques. They also need a thorough understanding of how to manage and maintain all camera department paperwork and administration.

### **KEY SKILLS INCLUDE:**

- excellent organizational skills;
- agility and speed;
- effective communication skills;
- precise attention to detail;
- ability to collaborate and to work as part of a team;
- diplomacy and sensitivity when working with director, DoP, artists and crew;
- physical stamina and strength;

- timing and a natural, musical ear for the `clap`.
- knowledge of the requirements of the relevant Health and safety legislation and procedures;

### **TRAINING & QUALIFICATIONS**

Although the most important training for 2nd ACs is hands-on experience, there are numerous short courses available in the UK providing the basic skills for 16mm and 35mm Camera Assistants. Training in stills photography provides a good all round understanding of composition and light.

We are working on establishing an Occupational Centre of Excellence providing industry recognized training for all job roles, including Camera, involving mentored, apprentice-style attachments to professional crews, combined with short course training opportunities.

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## GRIP

*The responsibility of the Grip is to build and maintain all the equipment that supports cameras.*

- Equipment supporting the cameras, which includes tripods, dollies, tracks, jibs, cranes, and static rigs, is constructed of delicate yet heavy duty parts requiring a high level of experience to operate and move.
- Every scene in a feature film is shot using one or more cameras, each mounted on highly complex, extremely expensive, heavy-duty equipment.
- Grips assemble this equipment according to meticulous specifications and push, pull, mount or hang it from a variety of settings.
- The equipment can be as basic as a tripod standing on a studio floor, to hazardous operations such as mounting a camera on a 100 ft crane, or hanging it from a helicopter swooping above a mountain range.
- Good Grips perform a crucial role ensuring that the artifice of film is maintained, and that camera moves are as seamless as possible.
- Grips are usually requested by the DoP or the Camera Operator.
- Although the work is physically demanding and the hours are long, the work can be very rewarding.
- Many Grips work on both commercials and features.

### **WHAT DOES THE JOB ENTAIL?**

- Grips work closely with the Director, Director of Photography (DoP) and the Camera Operator to ensure that all positioning or movement of cameras is achievable.
- Grips are usually responsible for pushing the Dolly (the wheeled platform which carries the camera and the Camera Operator) and must create smooth movements that do not distract from the onscreen action.
- On large projects with multiple cameras, the Key Grip is responsible for the main camera (camera A), with other Grips providing additional camera support.
- Grips begin work in the later stages of pre-production, when they join all other Heads of Department to carry out a technical recce.
- If particular challenges are identified, Grips work with specialist companies to devise tailor-made pieces of equipment to facilitate difficult camera manoeuvres which are sometimes performed on location in extreme terrain and/or severe weather.
- During shooting days, Grips and their team (which may include other Grips, a Remote Head technician, a Crane Operator, tracking car drivers, and all construction standbys) arrive on set early, unload all the equipment, and ensure that everything is prepared for the day's filming.
- After the Director has rehearsed the actors, all the shots are choreographed, using stand-ins (the line-up), and Grips subsequently set-up any required equipment.
- Whenever a crane is used, a minimum of two Grips are always employed, collaborating closely with the Crane Operator about mounting and moving the camera.
- Grips should be ready as soon as the camera starts to roll, and they must anticipate all the camera moves, whilst also keeping in mind the preparations required for the next camera set-up.
- At the end of each day's shooting, Grips oversee the packing up of all camera-support equipment.



## **THE GAFFER, CHIEF ELECTRICIAN OR SUPERVISING OR CHIEF LIGHTING TECHNICIAN**

*The Gaffer is the head or chief electrician, supervised by the Director of Photography. He will arrange the lighting and electrical requirements on set as needed and supervise the other electricians.*

- The Gaffer is in charge of all the electrical work on a production, leading the team of technicians who install the lighting equipment and arrange the power supply in order to create the desired, designed lighting effects.
- The Gaffer works closely with the Director of Photography to visualize in a practical way the 'look' he or she is trying to achieve.
- Several years' experience may be required in order to qualify for the role of Gaffer. They may work on location, or on a film studio set. On larger productions there may be more than one Gaffer, e.g., there may be a separate Rigging Gaffer who is solely in charge of the rigging team, in which case there will also be an overall Supervising or Chief Electrician.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- One of the Gaffers' key responsibilities is Health and Safety.
- The Gaffer conducts risk assessments and certifies the electrical safety of the production.
- The Gaffer must keep control of the lighting budget, and oversee the work.
- The Gaffer helps in the selection of the best lights and equipment for the production, ensuring that they are within budget.
- The Gaffer is in charge of the technical work of carrying out recces, and planning and preparing the lighting installations and equipment.
- Gaffers check the list of lighting with the Best Boy to ensure that the correct equipment is ordered, and mediate between the lighting crew and the DoP.
- They must be able to suggest and interpret ideas, and have a thorough knowledge of a wide range of equipment, and of its operation.
- They position the equipment, and operate the lights during filming.
- Gaffers need to be committed to completing the job, often in difficult circumstances.
- They choose the lighting team, and must be aware of the legal regulations relating to working with electricity, driving, and employment. Gaffers act as the spokesperson for the lighting crew.
- There may be a considerable amount of travel involved in this role, and irregular, unpredictable working hours.

### **SKILLS**

- Gaffers must to be imaginative, and need high-level technical skills proven over several years of work.
- They must have strong problem solving skills.
- Excellent communication and team leadership abilities are required, plus the ability to gain the respect of their crew in often tense and very difficult situations.
- The ability to work under extreme pressure in often very difficult and uncomfortable circumstances, is also vital.
- The role requires self-confidence and assertiveness, as they may have to walk onto a set of 100 people and direct others in their team.
- Fast decision-making is essential, as well as the ability to justify their decisions.

- The role also requires patience and tact, plus the ability to compromise, and to balance differing opinions.

## **QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

- Gaffers are fully qualified electricians, and usually rise through the ranks of the Lighting Department, although some may have a degree in Electrical Engineering.
- They may have gained additional qualifications during their career.
- They work for several years in various lighting roles before becoming a Gaffer.
- They need to attend trade shows to keep up to date with their knowledge of the available equipment.
- Many Gaffers work freelance and are self-employed, although in practice they often work repeatedly, from production to production, with the same DoPs.

## **BEST BOY OR ASSISTANT CHIEF LIGHTING TECHNICIAN, ASSISTANT CHIEF LIGHTING OPERATOR OR ASSISTANT CHIEF LIGHTING ELECTRICIAN**

*The term 'Best Boy' comes from "The Gaffer's Handbook", an American publication, and refers to the best electrician in the team led by the Gaffer (Chief Lighting Technician).*

- Best Boys co-ordinate the team of Lighting Technicians, and deal with all the logistics and paperwork relating to the role.
- They liaise between the production office and the lighting company, and relay information for the Gaffer.
- Best Boys ensure that equipment is ordered, arrange its delivery, and ensure that it arrives in the right place at the right time.
- They are also in charge of dealing with any damaged or malfunctioning equipment.
- This is a senior lighting role, and varies according to the size of the production.
- The Best Boy is the Gaffer's right hand person.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Best Boys have specific responsibility for liaising with other members of the production team, e.g., the First Assistant Director, the Special Effects Director or the Art Director.
- On location they may liaise with the building maintenance team, or with the electrician in a particular building.
- It is the Best Boys' responsibility to check the lighting team members' time sheets in order to verify the hours they have worked.
- Best Boys issue written orders, and assist the Gaffer in co-coordinating the other lighting technicians in the team.
- The work is demanding, and the hours long and unpredictable.
- Best Boys may work a six-day week, and up to 12 or 13 hours per day.

## SKILLS

- Lighting Technicians need several years working experience before becoming Best Boys.
- They must be organized, able to motivate other team members and to communicate effectively with other production departments, as well as acting as the liaison with the lighting company.
- Best Boys must be aware of Health and Safety legislation and procedures.

## QUALIFICATIONS AND/ OR EXPERIENCE

- Best Boys are fully qualified and experienced electricians, with the relevant qualifications in Electro-technical Technology in the Requirements for Electrical Installation.
- They may have gained experience in television or theatre, following their initial training, before working on films or commercials. Many Best Boys work as freelancers and are self-employed, although in practice they often work repeatedly on request, with the same Gaffers.
- SA FILM ACADEMY places trainees on 1-month 'Flash Internships' with Panalux and in due course, Media Film Service.

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## LIGHTING OPERATOR, TECHNICIAN OR ELECTRICIAN OR 'SPARK'

- Lighting Technicians help to provide the relevant lighting and power supply for a film, either on a studio set, or on location.
- Once they are fully qualified (having served as an apprentice or trainee for three years) they start to work "on the road" as part of the lighting team.
- They usually require up to two years' working experience before they start to work as bona fide crew on feature films or commercials.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

- Lighting Technicians' responsibilities vary according to the size of the production, and the number of lighting technicians in the team.
- Lighting Technicians represent the company who employs them, although many also work freelance once they have established a reputation.
- They are required to keep the equipment clean, and maintained in good working order.
- Some Lighting Technicians are engaged in setting up the lighting equipment before a shoot starts (referred to as **Rigging Electricians**) and carrying out lighting tests. Others (referred to as **Lighting Storemen**) work in the Lighting Store, which may be a temporary store set up in a corner of a studio. They are in charge of all the light bulbs and other consumable items, such as the traces and filters that are fitted over lights to create particular effects.
- Others are responsible for positioning lights during the shoot or recording.
- The responsibilities differ from production to production, and Lighting Technicians must be able to adapt to whatever role is required of them.
- They must report anything that goes wrong to the Best Boy, and be very aware of Health and Safety legislation and procedures.



## SOUND RECORDING ON SET

Recording all sound in studio, on set or on location is the work of the Production Sound Crew which includes:

- Production Sound Mixers
- Boom Operators
- Sound Assistants
- On bigger films, Sound Trainees or Mentees working under Production Sound Mixer Heads Of Department Mentors

Although film is considered a primarily visual medium, much of the storytelling and emotional resonance of a script is conveyed through dialogue, sound effects and music powerfully amplifying visuals.

Ensuring that the dialogue recorded during film shoots is suitably clear is a complex job; most film sets are challenging for the Sound Department as there are often unwanted noises to deal with, or the desired camera shots hamper the placing of microphones.

Although it is sometimes easier to re-record dialogue after the shoot (post-syncing), most actors and Directors prefer to use the sound captured on set or location.

Production Sound Crews also record atmosphere (without dialogue) or "wild" tracks on set or on location to assist the Post Production Sound department to create uniform 'sound beds', bridges and continuity during the editing process.

## PRODUCTION SOUND MIXER OR LOCATION SOUND RECORDIST

### *The production Sound Mixer or Location Sound Recordist*

***Selects and operates all sound equipment in studio, on set or on locations on productions.***

- He or she is responsible for monitoring the recording levels of each take and when more than one microphone is used, to mix and balance the levels during a take.
- He or she is also responsible to keep accurate records and sound reports for use during post-production.
- The Production Sound Mixer is responsible for the difficult job of ensuring that dialogue recorded during filming is suitably clear.
- Although much of the storytelling and the emotional impact of a script are conveyed through dialogue, most film sets are challenging environments for Mixers because there are often unwanted noises to deal with, or the required camera shots hamper the placing of microphones.
- It is sometimes easier to re-record actors' dialogues after shooting (post-syncing), but the majority of Directors prefer to use the actual lines of dialogue recorded during filming by Production Sound Mixers, Boom Operators and Sound Assistants using multiple microphones and DAT (Digital Audio Tape) or hard disk recorders.

- Production Sound Mixers work on a freelance basis on features and drama productions.
- The hours are long and the work often involves long periods working away from home.

## **WHAT DOES THE JOB REQUIRE?**

### **DURING PRE-PRODUCTION**

- Approximately two weeks before the first day of principal photography, Production Sound Mixers meet with the Producer and Director to discuss their creative intentions, (is the sound naturalistic or stylized? etc.), technical requirements and budgetary issues.
- They also meet with the Costume Department and Visual Effects Supervisors to discuss the placement of microphones on or around the actors, and visit all locations to check for potential sound problems.

### **DURING PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY**

- When filming begins, Sound Crews arrive on set half-an-hour before call time to prepare their equipment.
- During rehearsals, when the Director, Director of Photography and actors run through all camera moves and lighting, the Production Sound Mixer and Boom Operator plan where they should place microphones to obtain the best possible sound quality while at the same time framing the shot to avoid seeing the boom in frame.
- After each take, Production Sound Mixers (who are situated off set, but close by), check the quality of sound recording and, if necessary, ask for another take.
- In the same way as Directors endeavor to ensure that they have adequate overall coverage of each scene, Production Sound Mixers work with the Boom Operator to select suitable types of microphone (e.g. close-ups or extreme angled shots may require clip microphones that do not appear in frame), and carefully reposition these microphones for each set-up, to ensure adequate sound coverage.
- If music is required in a scene, Production Sound Mixers also set up playback equipment and speakers for the actors.
- At the end of each shooting day, Production Sound Mixers may send the day's sound recording files to post production via ISDN as well as handing over the meticulously labeled originals to the Camera Assistant, who packages them up with the camera rushes.
- Production Sound Mixers finish work when the film wraps (is completed).

### **TYPICAL CAREER PATHS**

- The majority of Production Sound Mixers train in sound recording but start working in the industry at junior levels – often under mentors on productions - as Sound Trainees.
- This period of on-the-job training can last anything up to two years before Sound Trainees are ready to become Sound Assistants.
- Working with equipment manufacturers or hire companies can also provide the opportunity to learn about sound equipment and to make useful industry contacts.
- Experience may also be gained by working on commercials, short films and television productions.
- Once individuals progress to becoming Boom Operators, they usually work with the same Production Sound Mixers over a number of years, gaining extensive experience, before they in turn are offered the opportunity to head up the Sound department as Production Sound Mixers.

## ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

- Production Sound Mixers must have a good understanding of electronics and an expert knowledge of acoustics and all sound recording, playback and editing equipment (analogue and digital).
- They must understand the requirements of the other departments on feature films, including: Camera, Rigging, Art Department, Wardrobe, Hair and Make-Up.
- They should also be aware of, and comply with, on set protocols. Production Sound Mixers must be computer literate.

## KEY SKILLS INCLUDE:

- Excellent aural skills
- Good communication skills
- Diplomacy and tact
- Ability to give and to accept direction
- Precise attention to detail
- Ability to make decisions under pressure
- Knowledge of the requirements of the relevant Health and Safety legislation and procedures

## TRAINING & QUALIFICATIONS

- As the head of the production sound department, Production Sound Mixers must undertake specialist training in sound recording before starting out at junior levels within the sound department and progressing through the sound roles.
- Sound is one of the best served areas for film and television training with provision ranging from specialized short courses, to tertiary qualifications at BA and post graduate levels.
- Training for Sound Assistants involves mentorship or apprentice-style attachments to professional crews, combined with short course training opportunities provided by industry recognized training providers.
- A Diploma in Sound Recording for Film and Television may be obtained, covering the practical skills required, including location sound recording for single film or video camera techniques, sound for multi-camera television production, and music recording in studios and on location. Tertiary institutions such as the Peninsula Technikon and AFDA also offer Sound recording courses.

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## **BOOM OPERATOR**

***The boom Operator reports to the Sound Mixer and is responsible for positioning the microphone during takes to achieve optimum sound while not interfering with: lighting, camera or actors.***

***He or she is also responsible for wild sound takes.***

- Boom Operators are responsible for placing the microphone in the best position, without impeding camera operation, director's shot-framing or hampering actors' freedom to perform.
- Clear dialogue is expected by cinema audiences, and this is usually achieved by placing microphones suitably close to the actors saying their lines.
- This is part of the Boom Operators' art and responsibility, and is a physically difficult enterprise, requiring a great deal of skill, ingenuity and experience.
- Boom Operators work on a freelance basis, and report directly to Production Sound Mixers in Production Sound Departments. They usually specialize in either film or television, but may also work on commercials.
- The hours are long and the work often involves long periods working away from home.

### **WHAT DOES THE JOB INVOLVE?**

- Boom Operators assist the Production Sound Mixer and operate the boom microphone, which is either hand-held on a long arm or dolly mounted (on a moving platform).
- If radio or clip microphones are required, Boom Operators position them correctly around the set or location, or on actors' clothing.
- Boom Operators are responsible for positioning microphones so that Sound Mixers can capture the best quality dialogue and sound effects.
- If this is done well, a great deal of money can be saved by not having to re-record (post-sync) the dialogue at a later stage.
- Boom Operators are also responsible for all the sound equipment, ensuring that it is in good working order, and carrying out minor repairs where necessary.
- Boom Operators begin work on the first day of principal photography, after reading the script several times, and familiarizing themselves with the characters and their lines of dialogue.
- Members of the Sound Department arrive half-an-hour before call time, in order to unload and set up all the sound equipment.
- Boom Operators are given "sides" (small booklets of pages from the script that are to be shot each day), so that they can memorize all lines of dialogue and anticipate when to move the boom during filming.
- During the morning rehearsal with the Director, Director of Photography and the actors, Boom Operators carefully note all planned camera movements and lighting requirements, so that they can ensure that the microphone does not accidentally fall into the shot or frame or cast shadows.
- Boom Operators are on set virtually all day, positioned with the Camera Crew, with whom they must develop good working relationships, as they are often asked to move slightly because of lights or camera angles;
- Boom Operators may also make similar reciprocal requests.
- They finish work when the film wraps (is completed).



## **SOUND ASSISTANT**

Sound Assistants are the third members of the Production Sound Crew and provide general back up and support to the Production Sound Mixer and the Boom Operator. They are responsible for checking all stock, microphones and batteries and making sure that the sound department runs as smoothly as possible.

On large scale productions, Sound Assistants may be called upon to operate the second boom, recording all off-camera lines of dialogue, i.e., lines spoken by characters who do not appear on screen. Sound Assistants usually work on a freelance basis with the same Production Sound Mixer and Boom Operator. Most Sound Assistants work on both film and television productions, unless they work with a Production Sound Mixer who works exclusively on feature films. The hours are long and the work often involves long periods working away from home.

### **WHAT IS THE JOB?**

Sound Assistants usually begin work on the first day of shooting, arriving on set half an hour before call time, with the rest of the Sound Crew. They help to unload the sound van, and working with the Boom Operator, check that all equipment is prepared and fully operational. During the Director's rehearsals with the Director of Photography and actors, Sound Assistants must pay close attention in case they are required to move positional microphones, or assist the Boom Operator to plan for difficult shots.

Sound Assistants also help to lay carpet if required to stop any unwanted noise being picked up from the studio or location floor. When other members of the crew or guests visiting the set use headphones with audio receivers to check for dialogue continuity, it is the Sound Assistant's responsibility to ensure that they are in good working order, and that their batteries are fully charged. If there is unwanted noise during recording (talking, coughing, traffic, etc.), Sound Assistants are required to find the source of the problem and deal with it as quickly and tactfully as possible so that the shooting schedule is not disrupted.

Sound Assistants help the Production Sound Mixer to attach clip microphones to actors' clothing. They also help the Boom Operator to negotiate cables on the studio floor during recording, and at the end of each shooting day, to ensure that all the sound discs containing the sound rushes are correctly packaged and labeled. They are employed until the end of the shoot, when they make sure that all equipment is carefully packed away and that any remaining sound paperwork is handed over to the production office.

On large scale productions where Sound Assistants are required to swing a second boom, Sound Trainees are usually employed to perform general running duties (making tea and coffee for the Sound Crew, helping with unpacking, cleaning and setting up all sound equipment, etc.). They also shadow the Production Sound Mixer and Boom Operator, learning while gaining invaluable on-the-job experience.

### **TYPICAL CAREER ROUTES**

Most Sound Assistants gain a foothold into the industry by finding a Production Sound Mixer who is willing to offer them a junior position on their sound crew as a Sound Trainee. This period of on-the-job training usually lasts approximately two years before Sound Trainees are ready to become Sound Assistants. Working with equipment manufacturers or hire companies can also provide the opportunity to learn about sound equipment and to make useful industry contacts. Most Sound Assistants aspire to progress to be Boom Operators and/or Production Sound Mixers.

## **ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

Sound Assistants must have a basic understanding of electronics and sound recording. They must have a good, reliable working knowledge of a variety of microphones and how to position them for sound.

### **KEY SKILLS INCLUDE:**

- Excellent aural skills
- Dexterity and agility
- Ability to anticipate
- Good timing
- Precise attention to detail
- Diplomacy and sensitivity on set
- Knowledge of the requirements of the relevant Health and Safety legislation and procedures

## **TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS**

Although there are no formal entry requirements for Sound Assistants, experience gained as a Sound Trainee, plus a demonstrable interest in sound is invaluable.

All the tertiary education institutions offer where you can specialize in sound

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## **CABLE MAN**

- On larger productions where there are often particularly complicated and intricate sound set-ups, the Cable man or 'Cable basher', manages, strings and connects cables related to the sound equipment

## **FOLEY ARTIST & EDITOR**

- A Foley Artist is a person who creates sound effects for the post-production of the film.
- The Foley Editor is responsible for post-synchronized sound effects on a film sound track that are added during the sound editing process,
- Aside from the essential role they play in large film productions, with the huge increase in animated features, excellent Foley Artists & Editors have become increasingly sought-after.

## **FOLEY ARTIST**

- A Foley Artist is a person who creates sound effects for the post-production of the film. They beat drums, throw themselves on the floor, walk on gravel, etc to record the right effect as required by the director and sound supervisor.

## FOLEY EDITOR

- The Foley Editor is responsible for post-synchronized sound effects on a film sound track that are added during the sound editing process, excluding any special sounds which are usually created by the Sound Effects Editor or Sound Designer.
- “Foley” is normally defined as sounds related to movements, whether pertaining to a character or an object (footsteps, fights, fist banging on a door), or to the result of an object’s movement (pouring wine, shards of glass falling from a broken window).
- Named after Jack Foley (an innovative pioneer of the art at Universal Studios), Foley is recorded in specialized sound studios working to projected pictures.
- It is a means of adding the subtle sounds that production microphones often miss, e.g., the rustling of clothing or the squeak of a saddle when a rider mounts his horse; or of enhancing explosions or crashes which give scenes the realism that other effects methods cannot provide.
- Foley Editors are either employed by Audio Post Production Houses, or work as freelancers who are employed directly by film production companies and use dry-hire rooms close to the other Sound Editors.
- They work on film and television productions, and the hours are long.

### **WHAT DOES THE JOB INVOLVE?**

- Depending on the scale of the film, Foley Editors usually start work at the end of picture editing.
- If the film includes a great deal of action, (e.g., war or horror films), they start work earlier in the process.
- The Foley Editor, the Supervising Sound Editor and usually the Director and/or the Picture Editor attend a Spotting Session - a creative meeting where the film is viewed, stopping whenever necessary to discuss what the Director wishes to achieve in different scenes (e.g., how violent a fight scene should sound).
- Every Foley effect required in the film is noted and integrated into tracks. This could amount to thousands of effects, including breaking glass, footsteps on different surfaces (e.g., carpet, gravel, grass) etc.
- When a particular specific Foley effect, e.g., the sound of a 1940s typewriter, is required, Foley Editors use their initiative to track down a real vintage typewriter.
- This preparation may take several days or weeks.
- Foley Editors make and record all these sounds in specialized sound studios.
- This process can take from 5 days to 5 weeks, depending on the budget and scale of the film.
- In the studio, the Foley Editor works closely as part of an inventive team with the Foley Artist (the person who actually creates the sounds in front of a projected picture), and the Foley Mixer who records the sound.
- Foley Artists may try several different ways to produce each single specific sound required by the Foley Editor to make the scene more believable.
- Foley Mixers record each performance and are responsible for the positioning of the microphones and the perspective of the recorded Foley.
- Foley Editors must keep track of the many thousands of Foley elements recorded, and monitor the overall feel of the combined sound as the session progresses.
- After the Studio recording, Foley Editors fit all the Foleys to the images in perfect sync, working meticulously in cutting rooms using Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs).



## **FILM PRODUCTION ACCOUNTANT**

Production Accountants are responsible for managing finances and maintaining financial records during film production. They work closely with the Producer and the production office to prepare schedules and budgets for film productions, as well as managing the day-to-day accounting office functions, and reporting the projects' financial progress against the budgets.

They are usually, but not necessarily Accountants or Bookkeepers with extensive experience in the peculiarities of film production - and in some instances, film financing - and with a thorough knowledge of VAT, personal tax, Department of Trade & Industry (DTI) Qualifying South African Production Expenditure (QSAPE) rebates and other relevant Government regulations and film industry sector dispensations. They usually work on a freelance basis, and the exact level of experience required depends on the size and scale of each specific film production. Career prospects are very good, both in the South African film industry and around the world.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Production Accountants are responsible for calculating finances, costing productions, liaising with financiers, and controlling the cash flow to ensure that payments are made on time, and in accordance with agreements and approved budgets. They must contribute to the accountability, integrity, honesty and transparency of the production, confirming that all legal requirements are met, and that the company is a legal trading entity. In pre-production, Production Accountants assist the Producers and Production Managers to prepare budgets and Estimated Final Cost Reports.

During production, they evaluate and approve all purchase requisitions and organize VAT and PAYE registration; oversee payments, manage payroll, petty cash and foreign currency and keep accurate financial records; help monitor budgets, and analyze costs and expenditure; and provide daily or weekly cost reports, as well as cost forecasts that evaluate the financial impact of any production changes.

Production Accountants are responsible for the health, safety and security of the Accountancy section, as well as being a part of the wider team that manages the delivery of film and TV projects. They must set up and maintain accounting systems, and supervise Assistant Accountants and Accounts Trainees. This involves setting work objectives, standards and outcomes, and continuously monitoring performance. Depending on how the film is financed, Production Accountants may also have to deal with bank finance and completion guarantors. They need to ensure that all the necessary paperwork is available in order to prepare accurate, timely cost reports.

Production Accountants must prepare a Statement of Account detailing all income and expenditure, for the Producer or Production Company and the financiers, and finalize all financial records relating to the production. They may also have to arrange an independent audit. On larger productions, Production Accountants may work in collaboration with Senior Accountants, known as Financial Controllers, who are often permanently employed by production companies.

When a Studio (a large film company that finances many films a year) is involved, either through a distribution deal, or by providing direct finance for the production, Production Accountants also work in collaboration with Studio Finance Executives, who set the parameters within which Production Accountants must operate. Individual studios may have their own Film Production Accountant Manual, which Production Accountants must follow.

### **SKILLS**

The individual nature of each film production requires that, in addition to meticulous bookkeeping and accountancy skills, Production Accountants must also possess a thorough working knowledge of filmmaking processes. They need strong organizational and interpersonal communication skills, and

must be able to prioritize jobs effectively within a fast-paced environment. Production Accountants are typically able to take the initiative, learn quickly, and work with discretion, in order to maintain absolute confidentiality. Skills specific to the role include:

- Expertise in Accountancy Software Packages such as Goldfinger, Vista, Axiom, Excel, Word, Power Point as well as in Movie Magic or other budgeting and scheduling software
- Data Input and Petty Cash Reconciliation of tin & floats
- Accounts Payable (AP): Data Input of Purchasing Orders (PO's); Matching PO's to Invoices; Data Input of Invoices; Statement Reconciliation; Filing
- Payroll: Extra's Payroll; Crew Payroll – Calculate Timesheets; Crew Payroll – Data Input; Cast Payroll; Group Certificates; Per Diems(how to calculate); Payment/ Reconciliation of PAYE; Fees and Salaries Clearing Reconciliation
- Other Reconciliations: Bank, BAS, Debtors, End of Year: PAYE
- Registration of Company
- VAT Registration
- Fringes Costing; Cast Costing; Insurance Claim Costing
- Ratio/ Length of Film Calculation
- QSAPE (Qualifying South African Production Expenditure) Rebate tagging
- PFTC (Provincial Financial Tender Committee) Claim
- Withholding Tax on OS(Overseas) Cast/ Crew
- Observer at Cost Report Mtgs
- Presenter at Cost report Mtgs
- Hot Costs
- Personal: Drive and Own Car; Able to Travel; Working Part-time or Full-time

#### **QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

Film Production Accountants are typically freelance Accountants with a BA or B.Com Accounting, combined with a number of years' experience in the film industry. ***The exact level of qualification and experience required depends on the size and scale of each specific production; however, Film Production Accountants usually need a proven track record, in order to secure the approval of the Financiers, Completion Guarantors and Studios involved in the Film Production.***

***Knowledge of foreign languages is also advantageous on specific productions.***

***The SA FILM ACADEMY associate organization Reel Partners specializes in this demanding discipline.***

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## THE PRODUCTION DESIGNER

- The Production Designer is a major head of department (HOD) on film crews, and is responsible for the entire Art Department.
- Production designers play a crucial role in helping Directors to achieve the film's visual requirements, and in providing Producers with carefully calculated schedules which offer viable ways of making films within agreed budgets and specified periods of time.
- Filming locations may range from a rural village to an orderly Colonial parlor, to a late-night café, to the interior of an alien space ship.
- The look of a set or location is vital in creating the emotional and physical space for the characters and the viewers to inhabit, drawing the audience into the story, and is an essential element in making a film convincing and evocative.
- A great deal of work and imagination goes into constructing an appropriate backdrop to any story, and into selecting or constructing appropriate locations and/or sets.
- Directors of Photography and Production Designers are largely responsible for informing and realizing the Director's vision.
- Production Designers begin work at the very early stages of pre-production and are specifically requested by the Director and/or Producer.
- They work on a freelance basis, and may have to prepare detailed drawings and specifications in order to pitch for work on a number of productions before they are offered work on one of them.
- Although the work can be very demanding and the hours long, this is one of the most highly skilled, creatively fulfilling roles within the film industry.

### WHAT DOES BEING A PRODUCTION DESIGNER INVOLVE?

#### PRE PRODUCTION

- Production Designers may be asked to look at scripts before a Director is approached, to provide estimates of the projected Art Department spend on films.
- When Production Designers first read a screenplay, they assess the visual qualities that will help to create atmosphere and bring the story to life.
- After preparing a careful breakdown of the script, they meet with the Director to discuss how best to shoot the film, e.g. to decide:
  - whether to use sets and /or locations
  - what should be built and what should be adapted
  - whether there is a visual theme or leitmotif that recurs throughout the film
  - whether there are certain design elements that may give an emotional or psychological depth to the film
  - whether CGI (computer generated imagery) should be used.
- Production Designers must calculate the budgets, and decide how the money and effort will be spent.
- These discussions are followed by an intense period of research during which Production Designers and their Specialist Researchers source ideas from books, photographs, paintings, the internet, etc.
- Production Designers deliver their design sketches (detailing mood, atmosphere, lighting, composition, color and texture) to Art Directors who oversee the production of technical drawings and models, which are used by the Construction Department to build the sets and to adapt locations.

- Props Buyers and Set Decorators liaise closely, sourcing props and organizing the manufacture of specialist items.
- As the start of shooting approaches, Production Designers manage a large number of individuals, prioritizing the work schedule and carefully monitoring the budget.

### **PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY**

- When shooting starts, they are usually on set early each morning to view each new set up with the Director, Director of Photography and Standby Art Director, responding to any requests or queries.
- Subsequently, in the Art Department office Production Designers check on the construction and dressing of other sets, and sign off on sets/locations for the following day's shoot. Although Production Designers usually finish work on the last day of principal photography, on larger films they may be involved for longer periods.

### **POSSIBLE CAREER ROUTES**

- As the head of the largest department on a film crew, Production Designers must have extensive experience gained over a number of years, usually by progressing through the various Art Department roles: Junior Draughtsman, Draughtsman, Assistant Art Director, Art Director.
- They may also have a background of working in theatre, where they learn the art of set design and construction as well as how to conceptualize ideas and create a sense of drama through visual spectacle.
- Graduates who have studied Film and Theatre Design may also gain experience working on short films before progressing to junior roles on feature films.

### **REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Production Designers must have expert knowledge of many art and design-related subjects including draughtsmanship, technical drawing, color theory, architecture, building and construction, history of design, interior design, cameras and lenses, lighting, etc.
- Production Designers must also have full knowledge of computer budgeting software and computer-aided design programmes (CADS).

### **KEY SKILLS REQUIRED INCLUDE:**

- Excellent management and leadership skills and excellent visual awareness and design skills
- Ability to inspire and motivate a team towards a common aesthetic goal
- Ability to prioritize and to meet deadlines and the ability to envision, budget and implement design creations efficiently and economically
- Good communication and presentation skills
- Tact and diplomacy
- Knowledge of the requirements of the relevant Health and Safety legislation and procedures.

### **TRAINING & QUALIFICATIONS**

Production Designers are usually graduates of Art, Architecture, Theatre, Interior or 3D Design courses. Subsequently they usually complete a specialist course in Film and/or Theatre Design.

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## THE ART DIRECTOR

*The Art Department looks after the `Look' of the film,*

*Including sets, costumes, make-up, props, locations, construction, etc.*

- The Art Director is second in charge of the Art Department after the Production Designer.
- The Art Department looks after the `Look' of the film, which includes sets, costumes, make-up, props, locations, construction, etc.
- The Art Director acts as Project Manager for the biggest department on any film - the Art Department.
- The Art Director facilitates the Production Designer's creative vision for all the locations and sets that eventually give the film its unique visual identity.
- The Art Director is responsible for the Art Department budget and schedule of work, and helps the Production Designer maximize the money allocated to the department.
- The Art Director is usually requested for by the Production Designer, and is responsible for the Assistant Art Director, the Draughtsman\* (as many as 20 Draughtsmen may be employed on big budget films), the Art Department Assistant(s) and all Construction personnel.
- As Art Directors must find practical solutions to creative problems while simultaneously monitoring the budget, this is highly skilled work.
- Many Art Directors work on television drama and commercials, as well as on films.
- The hours are long and the job can involve long periods working away from home.
- Art Directors work on a freelance basis.

### **WHAT DOES ART DIRECTING ACTUALLY INVOLVE?**

#### **DURING PRE-PRODUCTION**

- On big budget films, Art Directors start work up to 4 to 5 months before shooting begins (on low budget films 8 weeks may be sufficient).
- When the Final Schedule is delivered (detailing the precise order of scenes in which the film will be shot), Art Directors begin the work of overseeing the preparation of the first sets required.
- Art Directors analyze the script to identify all props or special items that may require longer lead times. Simultaneously, a team of Draughtsmen draw up numerous plans for sets and locations for use by Art Directors when working with the Construction Managers and their team. This is an extremely busy, pressured time for every member of the Art Department
- Art Directors must also control the budget tightly, (prepared and monitored on a spreadsheet).
- On big productions, weekly meetings with the Film Production Accountant are key to this process.
- A major part of Art Directors' work is troubleshooting - they must find cost-effective solutions which also provide practical answers to construction and decorating problems.
- During pre-production, they are also responsible for commissioning all Special Effects (such as explosions or car crash sequences), hiring all vehicles (from cars to horse-drawn carriages) and organizing the casting of all animals (chosen by the Director).
- Art Directors liaise closely with the Location Manager as the shooting date approaches to negotiate when locations can be prepared and dressed.

### **DURING PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY**

- During filming, Art Directors continue to oversee the construction, dressing and striking (dismantling) of the remaining sets.

### **DURING POST PRODUCTION**

- After the film wraps (shooting is completed), Art Directors must ensure that all sets are struck and locations cleared, and that all outstanding Art Department bills are paid.

### **CAREER ROUTES**

- Art Directors must learn their skills on the job, which involves starting out as an Art Department Assistant and progressing through the grades, e.g., to Junior Draughtsman, then to Draughtsman or Assistant Art Director.
- This can be a long journey over a number of years, but is a crucial process during which they acquire the knowledge and experience that enables them to become competent trouble-shooters.
- Art Directors may also have worked in theatre, where they learn the art of set design and construction as well as how to conceptualize ideas and create a sense of drama through visual spectacle.
- Students who have studied film and theatre design may also gain experience working on short films before progressing to junior roles on feature films.

### **KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS REQUIRED**

- Art Directors require a good all-round knowledge of interior design and architecture as well as a practical understanding of building and construction.
- They also need a good knowledge of computer budgeting software, e.g., Excel.
- A full, clean driving license is also vital.
- A good eye for decoration and detail
- Ability to conceptualize ideas
- Ability to think visually
- Methodical, systematic approach to work
- Ability to visualize and implement practically
- Ability to make the most of all material used – to create the most with the least - to stretch a budget without compromising the film's vision
- Ability to lead a team
- Ability to see the broader, bigger, overall picture without losing sight of the tinier details and to co-ordinate effectively
- Diplomacy and sensitivity when working with artists and crew
- Knowledge of the requirements of the relevant Health and Safety legislation and procedures.

### **TRAINING & QUALIFICATIONS**

- Art Directors are likely to be graduates of Art, Architecture, Theatre, Interior or 3D Design courses.
- Some may also undertake higher level courses in Film and/or Theatre Production Design.
- After training, it is equally important to acquire on the job experience of how Art Departments work.

## **BECOMING AN ART DEPARTMENT ASSISTANT OR TRAINEE THROUGH THE SA FILM ACADEMY**

Art Department Assistants provide support to other members of the Art Department, whilst gaining valuable initial experience from which to progress to more senior Art Department roles. Working in the Art Department of a film demands a mix of imagination, practical and technical skills, and the ability to organize and coordinate complex tasks. Most of this knowledge and experience is acquired while working in a variety of jobs within the department. The hours can be long, but good Assistants who show initiative and talent may progress relatively quickly through the ranks of the Art Department. Art Department Assistants work on a freelance basis.

### **WHAT DOES THE JOB REQUIRE?**

Art Department Assistants usually start work in the early stages of pre-production and finish approximately a week after the film has wrapped (is completed). On most films of a modest budget, they fulfil both the role of a trainee, working to improve their drawing and model making skills, and of a Runner, providing support to the Art Department. In pre-production, they spend most of their time in the drawing studio, making sure that the Draughtsmen\* have all the necessary materials, including pencils, erasers, foam-core, card, spray paint, glue, detail paper, etc. Art Department Assistants are usually responsible for ordering materials for the drawing studio, carefully monitoring supplies and usage, and constantly anticipating what might be required. Art Department Assistants also perform basic running duties (making tea or coffee, fetching lunch for Draughtsmen working at their drawing boards, etc).

Art Department Assistants work with Assistant Art Directors to record detailed measurements of locations, and on bigger films help them with the construction of scale models for less complex sets. They work closely with the Art Department Co-ordinator, providing back-up and basic running duties between the Art Department office, the Drawing and Construction studios, and the Production Office. During filming Art Department Assistants carry out vital roles, assisting the Standby Art Director and the Art Department Co-coordinator with any last minute requests or changes to the sets

### **TYPICAL CAREER ROUTES**

Working as an Art Department Assistant is considered a prerequisite for progressing through the ranks of the Art Department. The position provides the opportunity to learn on the job, practicing the drawing and model making skills that are vital for all Draughtsmen and Art Directors. Competition is stiff and it can be difficult to get a job initially, but researching forthcoming productions and contacting Art Directors may provide an opening as a Runner/Trainee or Art Department Assistant. Good Assistants often progress quickly to become Junior Draughtsmen, and continue up the ranks to Draughtsman and possibly to Art Director

### **ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

Although the role of Art Department Assistant involves a large amount of learning on the job, basic free-hand and technical drawing skills and computer skills are required. A full clean driving license is also useful.

### **KEY SKILLS INCLUDE:**

- Ability to take direction and to work as part of a team
- Good communication and people skills;
- Initiative and awareness;



## **WARDROBE SUPERVISOR (WARDROBE MASTER/ MISTRESS)**

*Supervises the operation of the wardrobe department*

*including the inventory and maintenance of wardrobe items.*

Although Wardrobe Supervisors are often referred to as Costume Supervisors, the Wardrobe Supervisors' role is actually a separately defined position.

In feature films they are normally only employed on larger-budget productions.

### **PRE-PRODUCTION**

- Wardrobe Supervisors start work on productions shortly before shoots begin.
- They are responsible to Costume Supervisors and Designers.

### **PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY**

- Wardrobe Supervisors oversee the day-to-day running and use of the wardrobe on set (the 'running wardrobe').
- They manage on-set staff, including Costume Assistants, Costume Standbys and Dailies, arrange transport, oversee continuity, and ensure that all the equipment needed for costume maintenance is functioning correctly.
- The role involves logistical planning, scheduling, management and organizational skills.
- During the shoot, Wardrobe Supervisors ensure that all clothes are labelled, and laid out for dressing according to continuity requirements
- That accurate lists are kept of costume accessories such as jewellery.
- They supervise the maintenance and cleaning of costumes during breaks, and between shooting days.
- They oversee continuity, keeping up to date with any last minute changes in schedules or scripts.
- They are responsible for wardrobe on all shooting units. In some cases, second or third units may be shooting in different countries, and Wardrobe Supervisors must ensure that the correct doubles have been dispatched, together with copies of the continuity book.

### **POST**

- After filming is completed, Wardrobe Supervisors manage the return of hired outfits, and the sale or disposal of any remaining costumes.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Wardrobe Supervisors initially discuss films with Costume Designers, Costume Design Assistants and/or Costume Supervisors.
- They refer to the continuity book for details of which costumes are needed for which scene, how many changes are required in a shooting day, and whether Costume Dailies should be hired.
- Wardrobe Supervisors may be given responsibility for managing the wardrobe budget (for the purchase of clothing rails, washing machines, etc).
- Supervisors may also be put in charge of crowd fittings.
- They organize the transport of costumes to sets or locations.

- They ensure that all items of equipment, e.g., sewing machines, steamers, irons, etc., are available and in working order, and that costumes are cleaned, ironed and ready for use.
- They may need to carry out a risk assessment of the workplace, and draw up codes of practice to minimize the possibility of injury to persons working with potentially hazardous machinery or chemicals.

## REQUIRED SKILLS

- Wardrobe Supervisors must be highly organized and efficient, with a good memory and the keen attention to detail needed to oversee continuity.
- They should be able to multi-task, and to analyze detailed information in order to prepare day-to-day schedules.
- Wardrobe Supervisors have a number of people working for them, and must therefore have excellent leadership, management and motivational skills.
- They also work closely with Actors in a physical sense, and must therefore be tactful, sensitive and able to put people at their ease.
- Wardrobe Supervisors need to be adaptable, and able to deal proactively with last minute changes.
- They must cope well with external deadlines, and be able to work on their own initiative.
- They should be able to hand sew, in order to make any emergency repairs.
- They must know how to dress Actors, and how to gauge clothing sizes at a glance.
- Good computer skills (Mac and PC) are essential. Language skills are useful for foreign shoots. They should be familiar with the requirements of all relevant Health and Safety legislation and procedures.

## QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

- The role of Wardrobe Supervisor is not an entry-level position, and practitioners have usually worked on a number of productions, in a variety of different roles in the Costume Department.
- Qualifications in related fields such as Fashion, Costume Design or Costume Interpretation are desirable, but not essential.
- Practical, hands-on experience of working in costume in theatre or television is relevant and mentorship here is extremely valuable.  
 Most Wardrobe Supervisors progress through the Costume Department working on film productions, beginning their careers as Costume Trainees or Assistants.
- Alternatively, they may have worked for a Costumier, gaining experience in costume making and establishing valuable contacts with Designers, Costume personnel and Actors. As the role involves travel, a full local and if possible, an international driving license is essential.

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## STANDBY WARDROBE OR WARDROBE ASSISTANT OR STANDBY COSTUME

*Standby Wardrobe or Wardrobe Assistant is responsible to the Wardrobe Mistress/Master. Said person must be on set during filming to supply and maintain all costume/wardrobe items on set.*

- Costume Assistants may be employed on films at any stage during pre-production.
- They are responsible for carrying out any tasks allocated to them by Costume Designers, Costume Design Assistants, Costume Supervisors and Wardrobe Supervisors.
- Their tasks may include
  - assisting with the design of, and carrying out research into costumes
  - making, ordering and adapting the costumes and accessories required for productions
  - organizing fittings, dressing performers, and overseeing continuity on sets.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

- Costume Assistants may help to break down the script into costume plots, and detail costume requirements and changes in the continuity book.
- They may also carry out research for the Costume Designer into the costume styles, designs and construction methods which are appropriate for the productions' time period, using a number of resources including libraries, museums and the Internet.
- Costume Assistants help to organize the Costume Department, ordering supplies and assisting in setting up any workrooms needed for productions.
- They take artists' measurements, and they may also assist with making costumes, including pattern cutting, ageing and distressing costumes, etc.
- They may be involved in sourcing and buying costumes and accessories, and in liaising with Costumiers about costume hire.
- They may be given specific responsibility for crowd fittings, overseen by Costume Design Assistants or Costume and Wardrobe Supervisors.
- Costume Assistants may be responsible for packing costumes for overseas shipment to other locations or units. During the shoot, they help to organize the costumes by ensuring that the appropriate outfits are correctly placed for Actors.
- They may dress Actors and explain their costumes to them, checking that the costumes match continuity requirements.
- Costume Assistants monitor the costumes for damage, carrying out any last-minute alterations and repairs, or sending garments to the workrooms for specialist treatment.
- Costume Assistants may also act as Standbys, dressing the costumes to camera by referring to a monitor, and ensuring that there are changes of clothes available in case of wet weather on locations.
- During breaks, and between shoot days, they clean and iron costumes, look after accessories such as hats and gloves, and keep a record of all jewellery used by Actors.

### SKILLS

- Costume Assistants must be highly organized and efficient, with a good memory and the keen attention to detail needed to oversee continuity.
- They should be able to respond positively to others' requests, but should also have the self-confidence to point out any continuity errors or plot mismatching.

- They need good communication and interpersonal skills, and must be able to work under pressure and as part of a team.
- They should understand research processes, and know how to source information.
- Costume Assistants must be familiar with call sheets and schedules, and aware of the correct etiquette on set.
- They work closely with Actors in a physical sense, and must therefore be tactful, sensitive and able to put people at their ease.
- They must understand how to care for and maintain costumes, and need general knowledge about the qualities of different types of fabric.
- Costume Assistants should have solid foundation skills in ironing, steaming, adapting garments, dyeing, hand and machine sewing, alterations, pattern cutting and drawing.
- General knowledge of both costume history and contemporary fashion is useful. Good IT skills (Mac and PC) are essential.

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## MAKE-UP ARTIST

*In addition to applying make-up, the Make-up Artist also organizes and supervises the operation of all personnel in the make-up department such as hairdressers etc.*

- Make-up and Hair are key elements in the overall design of films or television productions, creating a look for the characters in relation to social class, and time periods, and any other elements required to create the desired illusion.
- Make-up Artists should be experienced in using a wide variety of professional make-up products.
- They must be able to work to make-up designs to meet production requirements.
- They also work with facial hair, and may be required to affix any required small prosthetics.
- They oversee make-up continuity on their performer(s) during the shoot, and remove products as required.
- Make-up Artists are recruited onto films during pre-production and work throughout production, usually on a freelance basis.
- Make-up Artists work on feature films and on some commercials and pop promos, working to the Chief Make-up Artist. The hours are long and the job can involve long periods working away from home.

### **WHAT DOES THE JOB INVOLVE?**

- Make-up Artists are briefed by Chief Make-up Artists, who provide them with detailed notes, character and scene breakdowns, and if necessary reference pictures about the characters they must create.
- Occasionally they may only receive a rough brief, and must produce their own script breakdown, and research and create their own design notes.
- They work on Principal and Supporting Actors (those that do not have their own dedicated make-up artist). Many marquee names have their own dedicated make-up artists and hair stylists.
- Depending on the schedule, they usually look after several Actors throughout the shoot.
- They are responsible for maintaining the continuity of their Artists' "look". They must also carry out full risk assessments, and develop procedures to control risks.
- On smaller productions Make-up Artists must be able to negotiate terms with appropriate suppliers and prosthetic makers, provide them with design specifications, and ensure that they deliver to specific deadlines.
- They discuss color palettes with Production and Costume Designers.
- They make appointments for, and if necessary, go with actors to facial hair fittings, prosthetic castings, optician and dental appointments.
- They ensure actors are comfortable with their look, note any allergies or sensitivities and report them to appropriately qualified personnel.
- Personal Make-up Artists are specifically requested by some principal Actors to work exclusively on their make-up, and they have autonomy within the department.
- Although they receive a rough brief from the Make-up Designer, they prepare their own script breakdown, and research and create, and are ultimately responsible for, their own designs. However, they must work within the overall design of each production.
- Dailies work on productions on a day-to-day basis, usually on large crowd scenes.

- In all cases, Make-up Artists check whether Actors have any skin conditions in advance, and make sure that any allergies or sensitivities are taken into consideration, and report them to the relevant Head of Department.
- They apply make-up, affix prosthetics, apply products and use specialized techniques to create specific designs.
- They work with facial hair and false pieces, such as beards and moustaches.
- They may also apply special effects make-up, e.g., grazes, cuts and bruises, and bald caps.
- Make-up Artists usually accompany their performers onto set, and stand by during their scenes, touching up make-up between takes, and ensuring that continuity notes are maintained using digital or polaroid photographs.
- When the scenes have been shot, Make-up Artists remove performers' make-up. They remove facial hair and small prosthetics, ensuring that they are cleaned and prepared for further use.
- Make-up Artists may be required to assist with any subsequent publicity shots.

### **TYPICAL CAREER PATHS**

- Make-up Artists are usually experienced personnel who have worked in the film and/or television industries for a minimum of 5 years.
- They may have started their careers working as Trainees, progressing to Assistant Make-up Artists, and to Make-up Artists working on larger and more complex productions.
- They may eventually become Chief Make-up Artists.
- Progress through the department is usually based on skills and experience, which is acquired by on the job training, while assisting established Chief Make-up Artists.

### **ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS REQUIRED**

- Make-up Artists must be self-assured, without appearing over-confident.
- The ability to cope with stress, and a positive attitude are paramount, as they work long hours in pressurized, often cramped environments
- The work can be physically demanding, as it involves many hours of standing or bending over Actors. Make-up Artists work very closely with Actors in a physical sense and must therefore be tactful, sensitive, patient, and able to put people at their ease.
- Creative problem-solving and flexibility are essential, as is the keen eye for detail needed to oversee continuity.
- Make-up Artists should be able to break down scripts in terms of Make-up plots for their Artists, and need an understanding of story structure and character arcs.
- They must understand the research process, and be familiar with both period Make-up, and contemporary looks.
- They should understand the overall look of the production and be able to re-create it. They need a good eye for color, and an understanding of the anatomy of the human skull and facial muscle structure.
- They should have the artistic and technical skills, and manual dexterity, necessary for the application of make-up styles and effects.
- Language skills may be helpful for foreign shoots, where the team may include local Make-up personnel.
- All members of the Make-up Department are expected to have their own kits.

## KEY SKILLS INCLUDE:

- make-up skills include:
  - straight corrective;
  - glamour;
  - period;
  - ageing face,
  - hands and neck;
  - contouring effects;
  - some specialized techniques such as making and applying bald caps;
  - applying and dressing facial hair;
  - creating special effects such as skin diseases, cuts, burns, scars;
  - tattoos and body-painting;
- effective communication and diplomacy skills;
- excellent organizational skills;
- good presentation skills;
- ability to work effectively as part of a team;
- ability to work under pressure to external and departmental deadlines;
- good IT skills;
- knowledge of the requirements of the relevant Health and Safety legislation and procedures.

## TRAINING & QUALIFICATIONS

- All Make-up Artists should have achieved at least a vocational qualification or equivalent in Media Make-up, and should have the equivalent of four years professional experience.
- As it is essential that all Make-up Artists keep up to date with new methods and materials further qualifications and additional skills may be acquired by attending specialist, industry approved short courses.
- Experience of working in theatre or with prosthetics makers is also advantageous.
- At all levels, personality and the right attitude are extremely important.
- A full driving license is useful.

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## CHIEF HAIRDRESSER

***Chief Hairdressers are responsible for the overall design and execution of hair styling on feature films***

- Chief hairdressers are in charge of the Hairdressing Department.
- As well as styling and dressing performers' natural hair, they also design, make, style, dress and apply all wigs, and hairpieces.
- Chief Hairdressers work closely with Costume Designers and Chief Make-up Artists to ensure that each artist's overall "look" complements every aspect of the script.
- Chief Hairdressers research and create the hair design, supervise its application, and oversee its continuity throughout the shoot.
- Chief hairdressers set up the department: drawing up the budget and schedule, hiring staff, and organizing facilities.
- On larger productions, when a Make-up/ Hair Designer is involved, the Chief Hairdresser is the senior member of the Hairdressing Department.
- In all cases, Chiefs are recruited during pre-production, and liaise with all staff in the Make-up and Hair Departments, with the Costume Designer, Director of Photography, Production Designer, Director, Actors and extras.
- Chief Hairdressers usually work on a freelance basis. The hours are long and the job can involve long periods working away from home.

### **WHAT DOES THE JOB INVOLVE?**

- Chief Hairdressers acting as Heads of Department break down the script: working out hair styles for each character, assessing whether wigs need to be made or hired, and carrying out research into the production's time period.
- They present their initial ideas to the Director, Chief Make-up Artist, Production and Costume Designers.
- Having created individual designs, they make sure that Actors are comfortable with their look, note any allergies or sensitivities and report them to appropriately qualified personnel.
- Chief Hairdressers work with the Camera and Make-up departments on test shots to assess how hairstyles look on camera.
- They are allocated their budget, and may negotiate for increased funds.
- They assess the creative and technical requirements of the work, carry out a full risk assessment, and oversee the preparation of the departmental budget breakdown.
- Chiefs staff the department, and explain the design brief to their team to ensure that the look is consistent.
- They prepare an overall departmental production schedule, as well as overseeing the day-to-day breakdown of responsibilities.
- They negotiate terms with, and hire, the appropriate suppliers and/or wigmakers, communicate design requirements to them, and ensure that they deliver to specified deadlines.
- They ensure that wig fittings or salon appointments for Actors are arranged.
- Prior to each shoot, Chief Hairdressers prepare accurate call times for performers, and draw up and distribute continuity notes for principal and supporting Actors.
- They supervise the hair process throughout the shoot, possibly working as Personal Hairdresser for one or more of the principal Actors.
- They ensure that continuity is maintained, and that wigs are cleaned and prepared for further use.

- Chiefs working with a Designer to oversee additional units undertake duties similar to those listed above, with the following exceptions:
  - They are not expected to take part in the actual design process, although they may have input into it;
  - They are not given responsibility for drawing up the overall departmental budget, but receive a portion of that budget and break it down for their particular unit.

### **TYPICAL CAREER PATHS**

- Chief Hairdressers are usually experienced personnel who have worked in the film and/or television industries for a minimum of 10 years.
- They may work in feature films, commercials, fashion and/or television, or they may specialize in one of these areas.
- Chief Hairdressers should be experienced in designing, making and dressing wigs.
- They may have entered the department as Trainees, progressing to become Assistant Hairdressers, and eventually Hairdressers working on larger and more complex productions.
- After several years in this role, they may become Chief Hairdressers.
- Progress through the department is usually based on skills and experience, which is acquired by on the job training, while assisting established Hairdressers.
- Chief Hairdresser is not an entry-level position, and considerable knowledge and experience is required, combined with a wide network of contacts with product and wig suppliers and manufacturers.

### **ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Overseeing an entire department or a separate production unit requires excellent leadership skills and a great deal of self-assurance.
- Chief Hairdressers should be effective team-builders and managers, able to motivate and organize the right mix of personalities and skills.
- They should be able to listen to the ideas and concerns of others, whilst at the same time trusting their own opinions and instincts.
- Chief Hairdressers work closely with Actors in a physical sense, and must therefore be tactful, sensitive, patient, and able to put people at their ease.
- The work can be physically demanding, as it involves many hours of standing or bending over Actors.
- Creative problem-solving skills, and flexibility are essential, as is the keen eye for detail needed to oversee continuity.
- They should be able break down scripts in terms of hair plots, and must understand the research process.

### **ACTING AS HEADS OF DEPARTMENT:**

- Chief Hairdressers need a large cultural knowledge base, not only in terms of period hair and contemporary styles, but also in make-up, costume, art, literature, film, etc.
- They must have creative flair, a strong sense of color and design, and drawing abilities.
- They need the artistic and technical skills, and manual dexterity, necessary for the application of hair products, styles and effects.
- They may also be expected to have some make-up skills.
- Chiefs need to translate abstract ideas into practical applications, quickly and efficiently.

- They must have excellent strategic planning, scheduling and budget control skills.
- Language skills are helpful for foreign shoots, where the team may include local Hairdressers.
- All members of the Hairdressing Department are expected to have their own kits.

#### **KEY SKILLS INCLUDE:**

- hairdressing skills such as: cutting, waving, straightening, coloring, perming, setting, applying extensions, braiding, shaving;
- altering, setting, dressing, and applying wigs and hairpieces;
- effective communication and diplomacy skills;
- excellent organizational skills;
- good presentation skills;
- ability to work effectively as part of a team;
- ability to work under pressure to external and departmental deadlines;
- good IT skills;
- knowledge of the requirements of the relevant Health and Safety legislation and procedures.

#### **TRAINING & QUALIFICATIONS**

All Hairdressers entering the film and television industries preferably require vocational qualifications. They may have achieved these qualifications through experience; by attending a full or part-time course; or by applying to a salon as a Trainee and attending college on day release. Short course vocational qualifications are also available. Hairdressers may work towards vocational qualification in Hairdressing Management, which is useful (although not essential) for working as a Chief Hairdresser. As it is essential that all Hairdressing personnel keep up to date with new methods and materials, further qualifications may be acquired by attending specialist, industry approved short courses. Experience of working in theatre or with wig makers is extremely useful. At all levels, personality and the right attitude are extremely important. Good computer skills (Mac and PC), and a full, clean driving license are advantageous.

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### **BECOMING A MAKE-UP AND HAIR TRAINEE – JOIN THE SA FILM ACADEMY**

Make-up and Hair Trainees are recruited onto productions at the Designer's discretion, usually near the beginning of principal photography. They may be employed on feature films and in television on commercials, pop promos, corporate productions, light entertainment programs, documentary dramas, etc. They must be competent in basic make-up and hair techniques. Make-up and Hair are key elements in the overall design of films or television productions, creating a look for the characters in relation to social class, and time periods, and any other elements required to create the desired illusion.

Responsibilities vary depending on the amount of work involved in each production. On some productions Trainees carry out basic tasks, such as setting up workstations and observing more experienced staff. On others, Trainees may take care of basic make-up and hair for crowd scenes, and may be given responsibility for some minor characters. Trainees must be confident in their make-up application and hairdressing skills, and should be prepared to work quickly and efficiently under

pressure. An understanding of script, schedule, continuity, and set etiquette is useful, and they must be able to work tactfully and diplomatically with performers.

Trainee positions enable individuals to familiarize themselves with how Make-up and Hair departments work, the different chains of responsibility, and how to work as part of the team. These positions also provide opportunities to work with different Designers and Make-up and Hair Artists, and to build a network of useful contacts, which may help them to get work in the future. Make-up and Hair Trainees may be employed throughout pre-production and production, and usually work on a freelance basis. The hours are long and the job can involve long periods working away from home.

### **WHAT DOES THE JOB INVOLVE?**

Increased multi-skilling in the film and television industries has meant that personnel are required to be proficient in both make-up and hair, and the departments are often merged. Make-up and Hair Trainees are usually involved in the basic set up and maintenance of make-up and hair workstations, including: keeping the workstations clean and tidy, cleaning and laying out brushes and products for the day ahead, making sure product levels are maintained, assisting with the purchase of supplies, and moving make-up and hair kit between buses or locations.

Trainees also assist Make-up and Hair Artists in their work, handing them brushes or products, helping to affix prosthetics, running errands, and making sure that performers are well looked after, and provided with cups of tea and refreshments. Trainees may be involved in setting up for crowd days, when large numbers of extras must be dressed and made up. They help to prepare facilities, check with the Make-up and Hair Artist in charge that all make-up and hair products, including wigs, hair pieces, facial hair, etc., are properly set out, and that all reference materials, notes, etc. are available for Dailies who are booked on a daily basis to look after supporting artists or crowds.

During crowd days Trainees may help to style the crowd, making them look dirty, or bloody and battle-weary, making basic scars and wounds, helping to fit wigs, applying make-up and powder, and putting on facial hair. After the scene is shot, Trainees stand by on set to maintain the crowd's appearance between takes.

Working under supervision they may also be asked to look after stunt doubles, or even minor characters. Working from continuity notes, and overseen by senior staff, they apply make-up and cut or style hair. They are responsible for the continuity of their characters during production, and must ensure that notes are updated using either digital or Polaroid photographs for visual references.

### **TYPICAL CAREER PATHS**

Make-up and Hair Trainee is an entry level position into the Film and Television industries. Having achieved college qualifications Make-up and Hair Trainees may acquire their first jobs by various routes, e.g., working in theatre, or opera houses; working for one of the wig and facial hair companies; low budget productions; assisting on Student films (often unpaid). Highly competitive opportunities for work experience on TV or Film Productions provide useful contacts and may lead to employment as a Trainee in the Make-up and Hair Department. Make-up and Hair Trainees should maintain a portfolio of their work, and keep all letters and witness testimonies as evidence of their work and experience. They may progress to become Make-up and Hair Assistants. After several years in this role, they may become Make-up and Hair Artists working on larger and more complex productions. Progress through the department is usually based on skills and experience, which is acquired by on the job training, while assisting established Make-up and Hair Artists.

## **ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

Make-up and Hair Trainees must be self-assured without appearing over-confident – this is their opportunity to be noticed by senior personnel and rehired on another production, and the right attitude is the key to making a good impression. As Trainees must learn on the job, whilst at the same time blending in with the smooth running of the production, they must be sensitive to each situation, and evaluate when to ask questions and when to stay quiet.

They should be enthusiastic and willing to contribute to the smooth running of the department, and to carry out basic tasks. The ability to cope with stress, and a positive attitude are paramount, as they work long hours in pressurized, often cramped environments. The work can be physically demanding, as it involves many hours of standing or bending over Actors. Trainees work very closely with Actors in a physical sense and must therefore be tactful, sensitive, patient, and able to put people at their ease. Creative problem solving skills, and flexibility are essential, as is the keen eye for detail needed to oversee continuity.

They need manual dexterity, and must be proficient in hair cutting and styling, and applying false hair. Language skills may be helpful for foreign shoots, where the team may include local Make-up and Hairdressing personnel. All members of the Make-up and Hair Department are expected to have their own basic kits. Consumables, including wigs, facial hair, etc., are supplied by production companies.

### **KEY SKILLS INCLUDE:**

- Effective communication and diplomacy skills;
- Excellent organizational skills;
- Good presentation skills;
- Ability to work effectively as part of a team;
- Ability to work under pressure to external and departmental deadlines;
- Good IT skills;
- Knowledge of the requirements of the relevant Health and Safety legislation and procedures.

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## **SET CONSTRUCTION IN THE FILM INDUSTRY**

Construction Department workers play a vital role in determining the look of films: they are responsible for building, painting and plastering all the sets required for productions. They work closely with the Art and Design Department to ensure that the Director's and the Production Designer's ideas are visually realized on sets.

The Construction Department is overseen by the Construction Manager, who is responsible for ensuring that all the required work is completed to deadline, within budget, and to the specifications set by the Production Designer. Once appointed, Construction Managers are responsible for hiring in the required number of Carpenters, Painters, Riggers and Plasterers, as well as for coordinating the purchase of all the necessary materials and tools.

### **CONSTRUCTION MANAGER**

*Construction Managers supervise the construction of sets and stages for film productions*

- The Construction Manager co-ordinates the entire process of set building, from initial planning through to the final coat of paint on the finished sets.
- Reporting to, and hired by, the Production Designer, the Construction Manager leads a team of craftsmen, including Carpenters, Painters, Riggers and Plasterers, and ensures that all sets are completed to deadline and within budget, and that they meet production requirements.
- Construction Managers need excellent organizational and management skills, close attention to detail, an ability to see the "bigger picture" and to work under pressure, as well as an understanding of all facets of the construction process, usually acquired during many years' experience of working in the film industry.

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- The Construction Manager is responsible for interpreting and realizing the Production Designer's plans. He or she consults with the Production Designer in order to establish the film's construction requirements. Working from the Production Designer's plans, he or she establishes the number of sets required, and their size, design, color and texture.
- Staying within relevant budgets, the Construction Manager hires in the Carpenters, Painters, Riggers and Plasterers required to complete the work, and negotiates their wages. The Construction Manager briefs the Heads of the Carpentry, Painting, Rigging and Plastering departments, passing on the relevant drawings and plans, and agreeing on construction methods, procedures and deadlines.
- Construction Managers are responsible for supervising all aspects of construction work, ensuring that it proceeds smoothly, and to strict timetables.
- Construction Managers order in, and negotiate the best prices for, the materials and tools required for set builds. They are also responsible for arranging the transport of materials and tools to the correct location, at the right time.
- A key responsibility for Construction Managers is to ensure that strict Health and Safety guidelines are met and enforced, in particular those that ensure the safety of crew working at heights, and with machinery; and those that dictate the requirements for the safety and stability of all the sets constructed.

- In addition to overseeing the construction of sets, Construction Managers co-ordinate the 'strike' (the dismantling of sets), and ensure that all materials are disposed of, or stored, safely and appropriately.

## **SKILLS**

- Construction Managers must have project management experience, and excellent leadership skills.
- The work is challenging and often hugely complex, and involves coordinating large numbers of staff and materials.
- Construction Managers should be able to motivate their staff, and inspire good work. They must also be aware of individual workers' particular craft skills and strengths.
- As much of the work involves contributing to planning meetings, which may involve senior crew members, such as Production Designers, or Directors, they need good verbal and written communication skills.
- Excellent numerical skills, and the ability to work within budgets are also vital.
- Construction Managers must also be creative and resourceful, as they often need to find solutions to construction problems while working under great pressure.

## **EXPERIENCE & QUALIFICATIONS**

- The range of responsibilities faced by Construction Managers requires that they have a wide variety of industry skills and knowledge, e.g., in carpentry or rigging.
- In the film industry, many Construction Managers progress through the Carpentry department. Most Construction Managers have accredited qualifications in Carpentry and Joinery.
- Detailed knowledge of the requirements of the relevant Health and Safety legislation and procedures is essential.
- As the role involves travel, a full, preferably though not necessarily, heavy-duty driving license is essential.

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## **LOCATION MANAGER**

***The primary role of the Location Manager is to identify and find ideal locations for a film shoot, reporting to the Producer, Director and Production Designer***

- The Location Managers' primary role is to identify and find ideal locations for a film shoot, reporting to the Producer, Director and Production Designer.
- The role also involves negotiating with each location's owners about a number of issues, such as the cost and terms of the hire, crew and vehicle access, parking, noise reduction, and what official permissions may be required.
- Once filming has begun, Location Managers are in charge of managing all aspects of shooting in each location, and also ensuring that every location is handed back to its owners in a satisfactory condition after the shoot.
- On larger productions, Location Managers may supervise Assistant Location Managers and/or Location Scouts, each of whom support and assist the Location Manager in finding the ideal location, and in all matters relating to its use for filming.

### **WHAT DOES THE JOB INVOLVE?**

#### **DURING PRE-PRODUCTION**

- In pre-production, Location Managers must work closely with the Director to understand his or her creative vision for the film.
- This informs Location Managers' decisions when identifying and visiting potential locations, together with issues such as accessibility, and the flexibility of the schedule and budget.
- They usually compile a photographic storyboard in the production office in order to report back on their findings.
- Location Managers' primary role is to identify and find ideal locations for a film shoot, reporting to the Producer, Director and Production Designer.
- The role also involves negotiating with each location's owners about a number of issues, such as the cost and terms of the hire, crew and vehicle access, parking, noise reduction, and what official permissions may be required.
- In pre-production, Location Managers must work closely with the Director to understand his or her creative vision for the film.
- This informs Location Managers' decisions when identifying and visiting potential locations, together with issues such as accessibility, and the flexibility of the schedule and budget.
- As mentioned, they usually compile a photographic storyboard in the production office in order to report back on their findings.
- Once the ideal location is agreed, Location Managers begin negotiations over contracts and fees for the location, and make all the necessary arrangements for filming to take place, including co-ordinating parking facilities, available power sources, catering requirements, and permissions from the relevant authorities.

#### **DURING PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY**

- Once filming has begun, Location Managers are in charge of managing all aspects of shooting in each location, and also ensuring that every location is handed back to its owners in a satisfactory condition after the shoot.

- On larger productions, Location Managers may supervise Assistant Location Managers and/or Location Scouts, each of whom support and assist the Location Manager in finding the ideal location, and in all matters relating to its use for filming.
- Location Managers are also responsible for ensuring that everyone in the cast and crew knows how to get to the filming location, and they must display clear 'location' or 'unit' signs along main routes.
- During filming, Location Managers oversee the health and safety of everyone using the location.

### **DURING POST PRODUCTION**

- After the shoot, they must ensure that the location is securely locked, and adequately cleaned, before returning it to its owners.
- Any damage must be reported to the production office and, if necessary, insurance proceedings instigated.

### **SKILLS**

- Location Managers need initiative and a strong imagination in order to visualize and find potential locations that will satisfy the Director's requirements.
- Excellent organizational skills and the ability to negotiate are essential in order to gain permissions successfully to film in the ideal locations, as well as to keep location fees on budget.
- Administrative skills may be required when drawing up contracts and negotiating permissions with local authorities.
- Trouble-shooting and communication skills are useful during filming, when Location Managers may need to resolve any unforeseen problems involving the location.
- They must also be extremely reliable and flexible - Location Managers are usually the first to arrive on location and the last to leave, so the hours can be long and unsocial.
- A high degree of motivation and enthusiasm are required.

### **QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE**

- No formal qualifications are required to become a Location Manager.
- Industry experience is key, and the best place to start is in the conventional entry-level role of Runner.
- Ideally, on-the-job training may then be acquired by progressing to the role of Location Scout, or Assistant to an established Location Manager.
- A full driving license is essential for this role, as is a good working knowledge of health and safety requirements.
- The successful completion of any Health and Safety training courses is extremely useful.

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## UNIT &/ OR TRANSPORT MANAGER

In many feature film productions in South Africa & around the world, the unit & transport departments are seen to overlap and go hand-in-hand and are thus combined. These two departments do however also involve distinct and different responsibilities.

We outline the respective responsibilities below, bearing in mind that a head of department may also be appointed as combined unit/ transport manager.

### TRANSPORT MANAGER

*The Transport Manager is in charge of managing all the large vehicles on a film production.*

- The Transport Manager is in charge of managing all the large vehicles on a film production.
- These include mobile make-up and costume units, artist caravans, mobile production offices, and mobile toilet units (known as honey-wagons), as well as HGV lorries and vans for moving props, sets and equipment.
- Reporting to the Transport Co-coordinator on bigger budget films, they work closely with other crew members, such as the Location Manager, Line Producer, or Second Assistant Director, to ensure that the right number of vehicles arrive, on time, and at the correct locations.
- This role requires good transport and film industry experience, as well as excellent planning and management skills.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Transport Manager is responsible for directly managing the transport of the equipment required by a film production, such as costumes, camera equipment or workshop materials, to the site of the shoot.
- Transport may be by mini-bus, HGV lorry, ship or air.
- Transport Managers are also responsible for managing the vehicles, such as the artists' caravans and mobile production offices, and the Drivers, hired from a facilities company.
- Transport Managers are responsible for implementing the transport schedule for a production, to ensure that the required vehicles arrive at the right place, at the correct time.
- In the case of international shoots, this involves managing the transport of vehicles and equipment to very remote locations, and requires considerable planning.
- On location, Transport Managers liaise with the Location Manager to establish the best places to park the vehicles.
- They are also responsible for ensuring that the Drivers of facilities vehicles meet the requirements of the cast and crew.
- In the case of international shipments, Transport Managers work with the Transport Co-coordinator to ensure that vehicles and their contents have the appropriate permits to travel across international borders.

#### SKILLS REQUIRED

- Transport Managers on major film productions need excellent planning and managerial skills to implement what can be very elaborate transportation schedules.
- They must be very familiar with the geography of the area in which the shoot takes place, or be able to acquire a very quick understanding of it.
- They need to understand the requirements of key cast and crew members.



## UNIT MANAGER

- The Unit Manager (UM) works in the Location Department and supports the Location Manager and the Assistant Location Manager.
- The UM liaises between the film crew and the location, making sure that the property's residents or landlords are kept informed and happy so that filming can progress quickly.
- If an angry resident complains because of a noisy generator, the UM must placate them, and try to resolve the problem without impacting on the shooting schedule.
- The UM is responsible for parking and positioning most of the location's vehicles, ranging from crew cars to Facilities trucks.
- The UM is also responsible for organizing the collection and disposal of waste materials, e.g., water and/or rubbish from the location.
- They are responsible for the smooth running of the Unit Base including the Facilities trucks, vehicles for Hair, Makeup and Wardrobe, as well as the toilets – known in the industry as Honey Wagons.
- UMs work on a freelance basis.
- The hours are extremely long and the work can be physically demanding.

### **WHAT DOES THE JOB ENTAIL?**

#### **DURING PRE PRODUCTION**

- UMs usually start work approximately 4 weeks before filming begins, joining all Heads of Departments for several days of technical recces, when locations are visited and checked against each department's needs.
- During recces, UMs try to establish good working relationships with the locations' owners/landlords, and note any specific technical requirements, e.g. changing fixtures and fittings, attaching lights or rigs to the property.
- During pre-production, UMs help with Movement Orders (directions to locations which are distributed daily to crew members with call sheets), and check the dimensions of trailers and trucks to ensure that on the first day of shooting, all vehicles fit into their allocated parking spaces.

#### **PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY**

- UMs arrive at the unit base before the rest of the crew on the first day of filming, to liaise with security staff (who may have been guarding the vehicles throughout the night) and to organize the marking out of parking areas using traffic cones.
- They pick up their radio-microphones from the production office trailer and go to the location where they make sure that everything is ready for the get-in, including checking that all parking areas are clear and ready for use by the crew.
- When the crew arrives, the UM must be available to deal with all eventualities. Working closely with the 1st Assistant Director, the UM may be required to de-ice a driveway or, if there is a lighting problem, to help the Electricians carefully prepare the location for rigging.
- UMs must be on stand-by permanently throughout each shooting day, ready to respond to any situation.
- They are also responsible for ensuring that the location owners and local residents are not overly inconvenienced by the film shoot.
- At the end of each day's filming, the UM clears away all rubbish and ensures that locations are left in good order.

## **POST PRODUCTION**

- Where required, UMs may be kept on for several days after films have wrapped (shooting is completed) to ensure that all locations are cleaned and restored to their original condition, and that letters of thanks are sent.

## **TYPICAL CAREER PATHS**

- Since the ability to drive and handle vehicles is key to being a UM, some have previously worked as drivers of Facilities vehicles.
- Others are experienced, hard working Floor Runners who are spotted by a Location Manager and offered the opportunity to become Unit Managers.
- Big budget films that use locations where the public have to be asked to co-operate often use freelance Marshals, and this work provides useful experience of working with the public during film shoots, and may enable them to make industry contacts.

## **ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS REQUIRED**

- UMs must be experienced and confident drivers, and should also be computer literate. Practical knowledge of how film crews work on location, and of on-set protocol, is also required.

## **KEY SKILLS INCLUDE:**

- excellent knowledge of the requirements of the relevant Health and Safety legislation and procedures;
- ability to trouble shoot and to respond quickly in any circumstances;
- excellent communication skills;
- ability to be amiable and calm in difficult situations;
- tact and diplomacy; excellent organizational skills;
- a practical approach to work.

## **TRAINING & QUALIFICATIONS**

- Because of the practical nature of the work, no formal training is required for this role.
- All UMs must be able to drive and have excellent knowledge of, and some qualification in, Health and Safety procedures.
- A Heavy-duty license is preferable

## **POST PRODUCTION**

***Post Production is the term for the final stage in film making in which the raw material (shot by the Camera crew and recorded by the Production Sound crew) is edited to form the completed film.***

The processes involved in Post Production include: picture editing, sound editing, composing and recording the score, music editing, adding visual special effects, adding audio sound effects such as Automated Dialogue Replacement (ADR), Foley (Post-synchronized sound effects), sound design, sound mixing, color grading, titles design, and negative cutting.

### **PICTURE EDITING**

***The vital role of the Picture Editor is to ensure that the story flows effortlessly from beginning to end, each shot is carefully chosen and edited into a series of scenes, which are in turn assembled to create the finished film.***

- Editors are one of the key Heads of Department on feature films, responsible for First Assistant Editors, and on bigger productions, Second Assistants and Trainees.
- The way a story unfolds and grabs the attention of the audience is one of the most important elements in filmmaking.
- To ensure that the story flows effortlessly from beginning to end, each shot is carefully chosen and edited into a series of scenes, which are in turn assembled to create the finished film.
- This highly creative, challenging and rewarding job is the work of the Editor, who works closely with the Director, crafting the daily rushes into a coherent whole.
- Editors work long, unsociable hours, often under pressure, in an edit suite or cutting room. They are employed on a freelance basis by the Producer (sometimes with the approval of the film's financiers), based on their reputation and experience.
- Editors often work on television dramas, as well as on feature films.

### **WHAT DOES THE JOB INVOLVE?**

#### **DURING PRE PRODUCTION**

- In the case of major productions, Editors often work closely with the Director before shooting begins, deciding how to maximize the potential of the screenplay.

#### **DURING PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY**

- After the first day of principal photography, Editors begin work in the cutting room (sometimes on location), looking at the previous day's rushes which are developed overnight at the Film Lab and synced-up (synchronized, the alignment of sound and image) by the Assistant Editor.
- Editors check the technical standards, as well as the emerging sense of story, and the actors' performances.
- Because scenes are shot and edited out of sequence, Editors may work on scenes from the end of the film before those at the beginning, and must therefore be able to maintain a good sense of how the story is unfolding.
- Editors select the best takes and edit them together to create scenes. In some cases, an improvised line or an actor's interpretation of their role may create some on-screen magic that can be developed into a new and exciting scene. By the time the film wraps (shooting is completed) Editors have spent hours reworking scenes and cutting them together to create a Rough Assembly.

## **DURING POST PRODUCTION**

- During the post production period, the Editor and the Director work closely together, refining the assembly edit into the Director's Cut, which must be approved by the Producers, until they achieve picture lock or Fine Cut (when the Director and/or Executive Producer give final approval of the picture edit).
- Editors usually work in a supervisory role during the subsequent music and track laying, and sound mix.

## **POSSIBLE CAREER PATHS**

- Traditionally, Editors progress from being Runners to Trainees, Second Assistants, First Assistants and eventually to become Editors.
- Because of the rapid changes in the film industry caused by the increasing use of digital editing techniques, this clearly delineated career progression is less easy to follow.
- Whilst it is still possible to work as a Trainee, 2nd Assistants are now only employed on very big budget films.
- Trainees with up to two years experience are likely to progress by working as Assistants in television or on low budget films for a considerable period of time before becoming First Assistants on feature films.
- Some big budget productions take on Trainees and Second Assistants, and it is important to keep up to date with films in preproduction by reading the Trade Press.
- Because feature film production involves large amounts of money, and as the majority of producers prefer to trust their film's editing to experienced hands, the progression to becoming an Editor can be difficult.
- However, if Editors trust their Assistants, they may allow them to learn and to demonstrate their talents by carrying out the assembly edit of some sections of the film.
- Experienced Assistants may also work as Editors on short films, which enable them to showcase their talents.

## **ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Editors must have a degree of technical aptitude and wide experience of the post production process.
- Since most films are now edited on computers, they must also be able to use a variety of computer editing equipment and be proficient with cutting edge software.
- They should understand dramatic storytelling and be able to create rhythm, pace and tension.

## **KEY SKILLS INCLUDE:**

- ability to be creative under pressure
- imagination and an understanding of narrative
- excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- developed sense of rhythm and timing in story telling
- highly developed aesthetic visual awareness
- ability to lead a team
- patience, attention to detail and good organizational skills
- extensive knowledge and proficiency with analog editing equipment and digital hard and software
- knowledge of the requirements of the relevant Health and Safety legislation and procedures.

## TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS

- Although no specific qualifications are required for Editors, industry-recognized training for all job roles, including Editing, is available, involving FILM mentorship and apprentice-style attachments to professional crews, combined with short course training opportunities.

Alternatively, short courses specializing in Assistant Editing for digital (non linear) cutting rooms provide a useful starting point. Tertiary Film and Television Media Schools offer industry-recognized short and longer courses for all grades. Post graduate courses are also available.

## SUPERVISING SOUND EDITOR

***Supervising Sound Editors are Heads of Department, responsible for all sound post production.***

- They are the Director's main point of contact for everything concerning film soundtracks.
- They must have a good grounding in dialogue recording, ADR (Automated Dialogue Replacement), Foley (post-synchronized sound effects), and sound effects or music editing.
- They should be able to make accurate informed notes and comments based on films' creative sound requirements while always keeping the Director's vision in mind. This is both a managerial and a hands-on job.
- The majority of Supervising Sound Editors also work as Sound Designers on the same film.
- They can be employed by Audio Post Production Facilities Houses, or work on a freelance basis and dry-hire a room close to the picture Editor(s), providing their own Digital Audio Workstations.
- Supervising Sound Editors work long hours under considerable pressure.

## WHAT DOES THE JOB INVOLVE?

- The Supervising Sound Editor's role varies according to the budget and scale of each film.
- On low to medium-budget films they begin work when the picture Editor has achieved picture lock (the Director and/or Executive Producer have given final approval of the picture edit) and take a more hands-on role often cutting dialogue, ADR, Foleys and special effects
- On big budget films, they usually start work before shooting begins and appoint specialist Sound Editors to supervise separate teams for each area of work.
- They are responsible for the sound budget, organizing the work flow according to the Delivery Schedule and making plans for any special circumstances or requirements, e.g., amount of CGI (Computer Generated Images), different recording formats, additional recording/gathering, mixed frame rates, etc.
- After picture lock, Supervising Sound Editors attend a "Spotting Session" with the Director and other Sound Editors during which they discuss any concepts for the overall feel of the sound (naturalistic or stylized), and check every sound effect and line of dialogue to see what ADR or Foleys may be needed.
- There follows a concentrated period of work during which Supervising Sound Editors oversee the recording of fresh dialogue by the actors, Foleys by Foley Artists, sound effects (which they may create in their capacity as Sound Designers) and sometimes the music, all of which are track-laid (the ordering and placement of different audio tracks) and assembled for subsequent temporary mixes for preview screenings.
- After audience previews, the Producer(s) and financiers usually require films to be re-cut and further mixes to be undertaken many times before the Pre-Mix of the film, where all sound inconsistencies are smoothed out (cross faded). Subsequently, Supervising Sound Editors also ensure that the Final Mix runs smoothly, working closely with the Re-Recording Mixer.

- This process can take between 2 and 12 weeks depending on the scale of the film. After the Final Mix, the Supervising Sound Editor usually oversees the "deliverables" - including the Music and Effects version of the film which allows the dialogue track to be replaced with different language versions.

### **POSSIBLE CAREER PATHS**

- Supervising Sound Editors must have gained extensive experience by working in Sound Post Production over a number of years.
- They usually work their way up from being Runners in Audio Post Production Facilities Houses or Mixing Studios, progressing to assisting in picture or sound cutting rooms where they are often required to work on Dialogue, Special Effects, and Foley.
- Some Supervising Sound Editors may progress from television or music studios. They must be able to handle heavy workloads and work to tight deadlines.

### **ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Supervising Sound Editors must have an excellent working understanding of acoustics, sound recording processes and electronics, and an expert knowledge of all post-production sound equipment, processes and procedures, both analogue and digital.
- They must also be able to use computer budgeting software.

### **KEY SKILLS INCLUDE:**

- Ability to manage and motivate a team
- Excellent communication skills
- Excellent aural skills
- A methodical, organized approach to work
- Ability to work under pressure to tight, changing deadlines
- Precise attention to detail whilst also seeing the broader picture
- Organizational and financial skills
- Knowledge of the requirements of the relevant Health and Safety legislation and procedures

### **TRAINING & QUALIFICATIONS**

- Supervising Sound Editors are usually graduates of Arts, Music, Electronics, Maths, or Sound Technology courses, who have also specialized in Sound at post-graduate level. Sound is one of the best served areas for film and television training with provision ranging from specialized short courses, to qualifications at diploma, BA and post graduate levels.

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