

# Chapter 2

## Cast and Crew



# Disciplines and Techniques of Cast and Crew

- ▶ Certain techniques are needed to accomplish the tasks at hand.
- ▶ Certain disciplines are needed to make sure the finished product goes smoothly.



# Number of People Involved in a Production Can Vary

- ▶ Studio vs. field production
- ▶ Union vs. nonunion
- ▶ Degree of a facility's automation
- ▶ State of the economy



# Crew

- ▶ Producers
- ▶ Directors and associate directors
- ▶ Stage managers
- ▶ Camera operators
- ▶ Prompter operators
- ▶ Lighting directors
- ▶ Audio engineers
- ▶ Graphics operators
- ▶ Technical directors
- ▶ Recordists
- ▶ Editors



# Producers

- ▶ In charge of the *overall organization*
- ▶ Make sure all elements are in the right place at the right time
- ▶ Do the most intense work during *pre-production*
- ▶ Roles vary during production and post-production
- ▶ Oversee final editing
- ▶ Handle social and legal aftermath of the production
- ▶ Oversee distribution promotion of a program



# Directors

- ▶ Prepare script for production
- ▶ Scout location or rent studio facilities
- ▶ Oversee casting
- ▶ Pull the project together
- ▶ Meet the shooting schedule
- ▶ Oversee rehearsals and recording
- ▶ Call shots
- ▶ Oversee editing and post-production work



# Your Take

- ▶ The textbook authors compare the work of a director with that of a symphony conductor working with a number of different artists and their instruments.
- ▶ Do you think this is a fair comparison? Why or why not?



# Associate Directors (AD)

- ▶ Help the director with various tasks
- ▶ Time the production
- ▶ Arrange substitute assignments
- ▶ Note script changes and continuity problems
- ▶ Communicate with crew members and talent about production
- ▶ Prepare to take over at any point
- ▶ Set up a schedule for any editing



# Stage Managers (Floor Managers or Floor Directors)

- ▶ Act as overseer of the studio
- ▶ Relay instructions from director to talent
- ▶ Help inexperienced talent
- ▶ Work with talent on blocking
- ▶ Broadly supervise staging and light set ups
- ▶ Direct studio traffic; supervise placement of props
- ▶ Coordinate with director on positions of equipment
- ▶ Prepare studio for next production



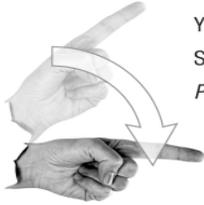
# Hand Signals Used by Stage Managers



## STAND BY

Ready to start show. Ready to record.  
Quiet on the set.

*Stage manager raises hand in the air,  
with fingers pointing upward*



## YOU'RE ON, TAKE YOUR CUE

Start talking. Talent is on the air.

*Points to performer or live camera*

## GET CLOSER TOGETHER

Talent, performers, or reporters too far  
apart. Get closer together. Get closer to  
object of interest.

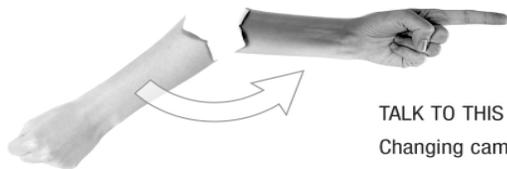
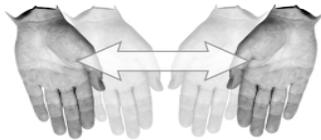
*Stage manager plays  
an invisible accordion,  
bringing the palms  
together repeatedly*



## GET FARTHER APART

Talent too close together.

*Stage manager moves  
hands together, back  
to back, then spreads  
them sharply apart*



## TALK TO THIS CAMERA

Changing cameras.

*Stage manager swings hand through a  
wide arc from camera that is on the air  
to the camera that will be on the air*

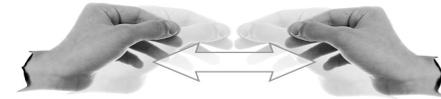
*(continued)*

# Hand Signals Used by Stage Managers, continued

**STRETCH IT OUT,  
SLOW DOWN**

Talking too fast.

*Moves hands as if pulling taffy apart  
or stretching rubber bands*



**SPEED IT UP**

Talking too slow. Running out  
of time.

*Moves forefinger in circles*



**5 MINUTES TO GO  
2 MINUTES TO GO  
1 MINUTE TO GO**

Time cues to end  
of show.

*Raises hand with corresponding  
number of fingers spread apart  
or raise flash cards*



**HALF A MINUTE TO GO**

Time to end of segment  
or end of show.

*Crosses forefingers or forearms  
at midpoint*



**WRAP IT UP**

Ten seconds left. Come to  
a conclusion.

*Rocks or shakes  
clenched fist*



**CUT, FINISH,  
OFF THE AIR**

Segment or show is over.

*Stage manager slashes own  
throat with forefinger or edge  
of hand*



# Camera Operators

- ▶ Frame and compose the shots, based on director's instructions
- ▶ Compose pictures properly; develop an aesthetic sense for what looks good
- ▶ Ready the cameras for operation and adjust cameras once lighting is set
- ▶ Understand the shots needed and think ahead to the next one



# Prompter Operators

- ▶ Control the rate of the script on the prompter
- ▶ Check the script for errors or anything confusing

In a growing number of studios, the talent have out-of-sight foot pedals and control the prompter speed themselves.



# Lighting Directors

- ▶ Check that lights and lighting instruments are properly set
- ▶ Execute any needed lighting effects

Most of a lighting director's work takes place well before the production begins.



# Audio Engineers

- ▶ Work with microphones, audio consoles, and intercom between director and crew
- ▶ Make sure sound is audible and consistent
- ▶ Test, select, and position appropriate microphones before recording
- ▶ Test and cue music, sound effects, and audio elements before recording



# Graphics Operators

- ▶ In charge of the computer system that creates or imports text, images, and various visual effects
- ▶ Make sure that the proper graphic is ready when director calls for it



# Technical Directors

- ▶ Act as the head technical person on the set
- ▶ Ensure that all equipments works
- ▶ Operate the switcher
- ▶ Oversee and assist crew members



# Recordist vs. Videotape Operator

- ▶ *Videotape operator*— former name
  - From days when a production was recorded on, and source video was played back from, videotape.
- ▶ Recordist, recording engineer, or file manager—current name
  - Industry now use primarily tapeless recording and playback to/from computer hard drives, external drives, or memory cards.



# Recordists

- ▶ Record the program
- ▶ Play back video from whatever source the facility uses
- ▶ Play back and/or record video signals
- ▶ Label and file stored recordings



# Editors

- ▶ Piece together various shots and recorded scenes
- ▶ Work with the director and/or associate director
- ▶ Most work occurs after production, when shots are placed in juxtaposition with each other
- ▶ With digital editing, editors can edit while a program is in progress



# Other Positions

- ▶ Production assistant
- ▶ Propmaster, painter, carpenter, etc.
- ▶ Makeup artist
- ▶ Costume designer
- ▶ Grip
- ▶ Gaffer and electrician
- ▶ Unit production manager
- ▶ Production designer, art director, or set director
- ▶ Composer and sound designer
- ▶ Special effects or visual effects supervisor
- ▶ Animal handler or wrangler
- ▶ Crafts services



# Your Take



- ▶ After reading about the many different positions involved behind the scenes, which ones seem the most interesting to you? Why?
- ▶ What surprised you the most? Are there any roles you had never thought about but now find intriguing?



# Cast

## ▶ Performers:

- Announcers, hosts, reporters, people on reality shows, interviewers, panel members, game show contestants, and so on
- Be aware of voice, eyes, and mannerisms

## ▶ Actors:

- Need to have precise movements and be a quick study



# Focus on Employment

- ▶ SAG–AFTRA—largest talent union
- ▶ Formed in 2012 from the merger of:
  - Screen Actors Guild (SAG), the nation’s largest labor union of actors.
  - American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA), representing journalists, broadcasters, recording artists, and other performers.

