

Brenden Pursell

9 May 2017

The Responsibilities Of An Assistant Director

Throughout the entire process of making a film, there are numerous responsibilities imposed upon an assistant director. During pre-production, an assistant director is in charge of making a schedule that a film shoot is to go by. During production, he or she is in charge of keeping to the schedule that he or she has previously made, work changes into the schedule that are likely to occur throughout production, and make sure that everyone on set is both healthy and safe. From pre-production to post-production, an assistant director is, obviously, the director's assistant. A main assistant director is most commonly referred to as a "First Assistant Director." If there are any more assistant directors working on the same film, though, they are referred to as a "Second Assistant Director," "Third Assistant Director," "Fourth Assistant Director", and so on. A first assistant director is also in charge of all other, if any, assistant directors working on a film. If there is just one assistant director, though, he or she is responsible for the tasks that would otherwise be given to other assistant directors working on a film.

Before an assistant director is able to create a schedule for a film shoot, he or she must break the script down and make notes of what will need to be done to make each and every scene come to life. Each page of the script should be about eight inches vertically and should convert to roughly one minute of screen time. It is imperative to break each page into eights to effectively break down a script. In doing this, an assistant director will be able to see how many eights of a page each scene takes up and will, therefore, know just about how long each scene should eventually end up being in a completed version of the film.

Once an assistant director has completed said tasks, he or she is able to create a shooting schedule. This schedule should include a list of every scene of a film written in the order in which they will be filmed, a breakdown sheet for each and every scene that describes both who and what will need

to be on set to be able to film each scene, a list of which days each cast member will need to be on set (to show how many days each will need to be paid for), and the location of where each scene needs to be shot. After the schedule is made, an assistant director will have his or her second assistant director make a call sheet. This is a document that lays out a filming schedule in a much more specific manner for each day of production. Once said tasks are finished, the first assistant director is ready for the production of the film.

Throughout the production of a film, an assistant director is the main man or woman who is in charge of making sure that the entire cast and crew are on the same page. Even if an assistant director has prepared for production as much as he or she possibly could, life always tends to get in the way and make its own plan for what's to happen during production. Assistant directors have to know how to quickly adapt and change film schedules when this occurs, without getting caught up in the change and not knowing what to do. As well as being able to adapt well to change, assistant directors are in charge of making sure that everyone on set is healthy and that the set is a safe environment for people to work. Basic knowledge of health and safety, specifically knowing CPR, is an important trait to have as an assistant director. People who choose to work in this position don't need to be trained in any more than the basics of health and safety, though need to know what to do in emergency situations while staying both calm and collected.

Assistant directors are an essential part to the filmmaking process. There are so many different departments that come together to make a film that it would be quite difficult to focus on work if each department were responsible for communicating with every other department, themselves. Someone has to be the glue that holds each part of the filmmaking puzzle together and make sure that everyone is on board with one another. An assistant director is that glue.