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 **RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**

The responsibilities of an Assistant Director are numerous to say the least. An Assistant Director’s role is vital to a film production. Although Directors are the creative force in a film’s production defining the style and structure of the film, the Assistant Director is the Director’s “right hand.” Being the First Assistant Director on a film set is to be the “eyes and ears” of a number of important operational tasks on the set, so that the Director is free to focus on the creative process of the film.

On a daily basis the Assistant Director can be found working with the Director to determine the shoot order of the script by breaking down the script into a shot by shot storyboard, and calculating how long each scene will take to capture. Firsts AD’s are also responsible for scheduling the shoot, scouting out locations, giving instructions on set to guarantee that everyone is on standby and ready for the Director's cue for action, in addition to providing for health and safety on set or location, to help eliminate or minimize hazards.

It is imperative that an Assistant Director be a confident team-leader and motivator with exceptional organizational and time-management skills. They must be able to plan ahead and trouble-shoot as well as pay close attention to detail. In addition to being an excellent communicator, an Assistant Director must also be able to routinely deal with problem or even crisis situations and work long hours.

Overall, the AD is the link between the Director, cast and crew and the liaison for the planning and coordination of the details throughout the entire film production. During pre-production, the AD will go through the script and make notes of all necessary things needed to shoot the scene, including props, special effects and sounds. The AD will also create call sheets and schedules that outline the order in which the shoots will take place, the timing of each shoot, any special needs for the shoot, as well as the talent needed for each scene. The detailed Breakdown sheets for all the scenes are provided to all department heads siting the notes for the script. Another document provided for the pre-production of the film is the One Liner which shows the scenes and the order in which they will be filmed that day, detailing the scene number, name and description of the shot. A list of locations and cast members and their work days are also created.

The Assistant Director is the “voice” that gets the cast and crew doing what it supposed to do. During production, the AD keeps a strict schedule and motivates everyone to stick to it. They must prepare the storyboard, oversee the locations, props and equipment, and check weather reports. Make sure that a blocking of the set is done, allow for rehearsals and give directions to cast and crew. They must ensure that everyone is on standby and ready for the director's cue for action by “calling the roll.” Calling out specific prompts like “ Final check, please” or Quiet on the set, or “Action” in order to make sure that all cast and crew on set are aware of exactly what is going on so they can execute their particular role at the appropriate time.

The role of Assistant Director is a very time consuming and stressful duty of balancing and delegating cast and crew, locations and the logistics of a film production. Success depends on learning how to juggle these challenging tasks, by being committed and learning as much as possible about the film making process in order to dramatically decrease the pressure of this very important and critical part of film production.