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## Chapter 5: Quiz: Duties of an Assistant Director

### What are their responsibilities and why are they so vital to production?

The assistant director (1<sup>st</sup> AD) takes care of all the non-creative tasks i.e. running the set, which frees up the director to focus on the creative process of filmmaking which is why the assistant director is so vital to production.

The 1<sup>st</sup> AD works directly with the director and depending on the size and complexity of the film, the assistant director may have a team of other assistant directors and production assistants with responsibilities in different areas of production.

#### *Pre-Production*

During pre-production, the 1<sup>st</sup> AD works with their director to develop the shot list and has a keen sense of how long it will take to set up the shot and what equipment, cast, crew, props and other are required. This information, along with knowing the budget for the film, is then used to develop the film production schedule.

#### *Production*

During the production phase, the assistant director has the following responsibilities:

- Tracking the daily progress against the film production schedule.
- Arranging logistics such as craft services, transportation and where to park, where to stage equipment, makeup and wardrobe, etc.
- Preparing daily call sheets and communicating these to the relevant cast and crew.
- Managing cast and crew.
- Maintaining order on the set.
- Takes care of health and safety on the set.
- Manages a team of assistant directors and production assistants.

#### *The Team*

If the film is such that it requires a large cast and crew and/or requires shooting complex scenes, the assistant director can have a team of assistant directors working for them.

#### *2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Director Responsibilities (2AD)*

- Creates daily call sheets from the film production schedule.

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- Manages the actors i.e. makes sure they arrive on time on the set, ensures the actors are moving through makeup and wardrobe to be ready for when they are needed to shoot their scene.
  - Setting of any extras on set.
  - If there are any other assistant directors, supervises the second second assistant director, third assistant director and assistant director trainees.

#### *Second Second Assistant Director Responsibilities (22AD)*

If the film is large and complex, the 22AD may divide up tasks with the 2AD such as dividing the management of a large number of actors and/or generating the daily call sheets.

#### *3<sup>rd</sup> Assistant Director Responsibilities (3AD)*

Between the 2AD and the 3AD there may not be a clear division of responsibilities but the following are some of the responsibilities a 3AD may undertake.

- Assisting the assistant director (1<sup>st</sup> AD)
- Coordinate with the 2AD to move actors from makeup and wardrobe or their trailers to the set.
- Coordinate with the 2AD to organize crowd scenes.
- Coordinate with the 2AD to supervise one or more production assistants.