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HOW TO



TELEVISION HOW TO GET INTO TELEVISION

HOW TO SURVIVE AS A FREELANCER
LOUIS THEROUX'S INTERVIEW TIPS
WRITE THE NEXT LINE OF DUTY
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Television is not an industry for the faint hearted, but the results can be hugely rewarding. In this magazine you'll find tips and inspiration on how to get your foot in the door of this challenging and exhilarating business.

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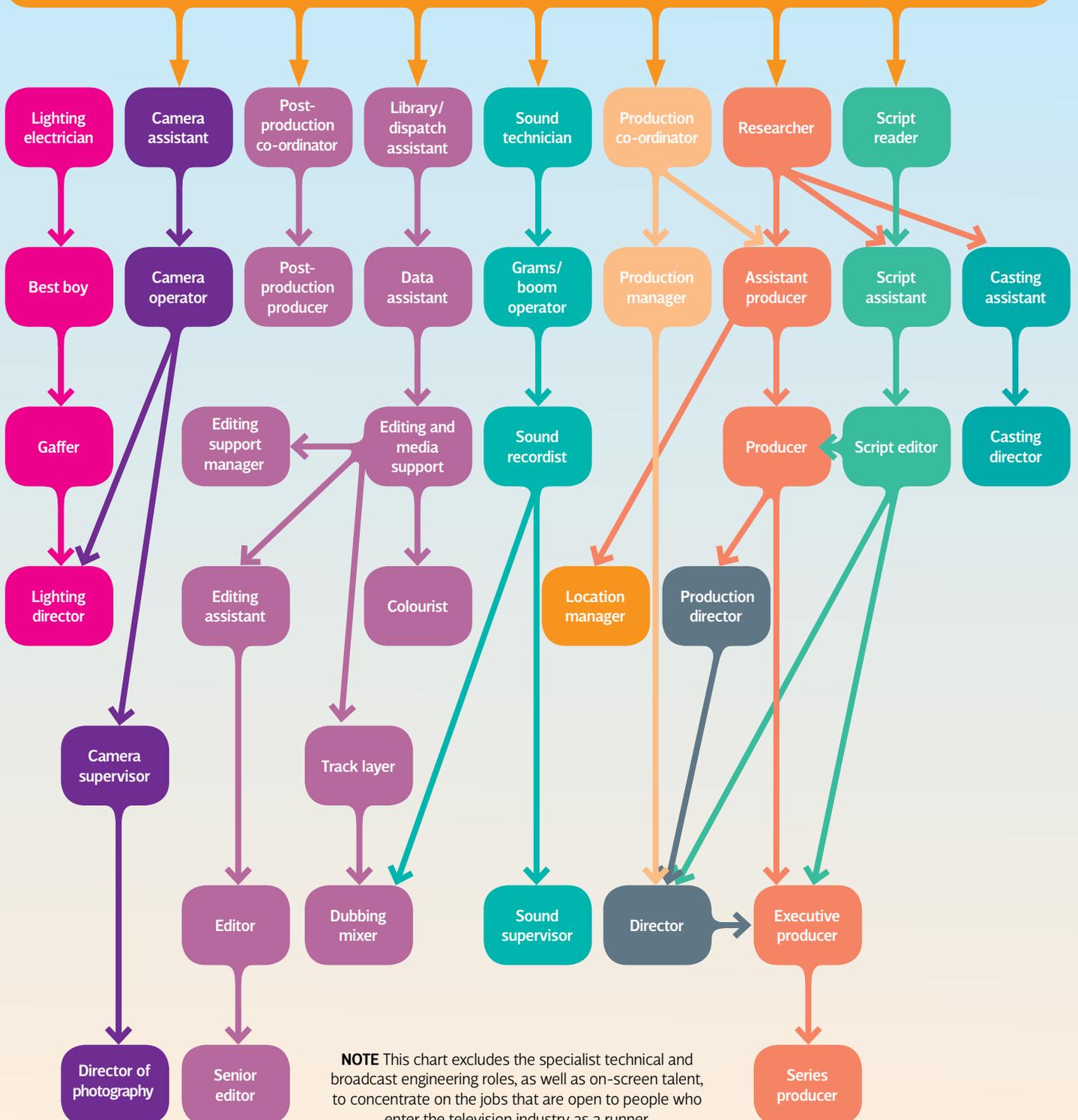
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Registered Charity 313 728

ISSN 0308-454X
Printer: FE Burman
20 Crimscott Street
London SE1 5TP
© Royal Television Society 2018

How far could you run?



Start as a runner and your ambition could take you a lot further





On location with BBC One's *Hard Sun*

Smart moves

Congratulations! You've honed your CV, done some networking and your hard work has turned into your first TV job. But now you've got your foot in the door, how do you turn it into a lifelong career?

Starting out on a week-long position here or a few days of running there can feel pretty daunting, but no matter how junior the role or short the contract, every job is a chance to build a name for yourself, not just at the company you're working for, but in the wider industry too.

People move around a lot between roles and productions, so word travels fast about dependable new talent. Stand out in one job, and you could soon be being recommended for plenty more.

For Emily Fielden, talent executive at Studio Lambert, the opportunities to impress come before you've even set foot on set: "Do your research. You're so much more charming when you're well prepared." As well as checking out the route to the studio or researching the programme you're working on, make sure you're ready for anything the day can throw at you. Having a pen ready to take notes, or a phone charger you can lend to the director can easily avert

A foot in the door is the first step, says Holly Close. Now you need to keep it there

disaster, and get you a reputation as someone to rely on in a crisis.

Small things can make a big difference on a hectic production. Whether it's staying later to help with photocopying or remembering how the crew take their coffee, being kind and using your initiative will help you make a great impression. And doing a drinks

round is more than just a way to keep the team's caffeine levels up. "Kitchens are a great place to meet people – eventually you'll be asked, 'What are you working on' – which is a perfect moment to do your spiel and say, 'Let me know if you need a hand on anything,'" says AP Simon Lee.

It's also helpful to figure out your own unique selling point, and make sure other people know about it, too. Knowledge you already have, such as speaking a second language, knowing how to drive or having a specialist academic background, can help you make the leap from runner to researcher – but be proactive about learning new skills on the job, too.

Finding a quiet moment to ask about camerawork or learn about editing demonstrates that you're keen and engaged, and can help prepare you for your next role.

And lastly, even when the job is over, keep chatting to the contacts you've made. Logger Suna Yokes says: "It helps to keep in touch with friends you make along the way and to let each other know when companies you're already in are looking for people.

"People really value recommendations from people they already know."

You never know when an old acquaintance could be your new colleague.

**EDINBURGH TALENT
INTERNATIONAL
TELEVISION SCHEMES
FESTIVAL**
brought to you by **YouTube**

Runner

A woman is standing on a yellow step ladder in a room decorated for Christmas. To her left is a large, decorated Christmas tree. To her right is a large, ornate chandelier with many lit candles. In the background, there is a framed painting of a woman. In the foreground, the backs of several people's heads are visible, suggesting they are watching the woman. The overall atmosphere is warm and festive.

A running start

It's the ultimate entry-level job and a hard graft, but it can open up all kinds of futures

A runner has one of the most varied job roles in television; one day you could in an office setting up a meeting, and the next you could be on a busy production shoot. Although you won't be able to escape making teas and coffees, the job role can differ significantly for each sector of the industry.

Office Runner

This role is the most nine-to-five job you can find in TV and is based in an office, either during pre-production or the edit of a production. Daily jobs involve transcribing footage, collecting and distributing post, topping up refreshments, tidying the office, hiring kit, answering the phone and administration. It might not be glamorous, but showing enthusiasm could land you a job on the next project.

Production Runner

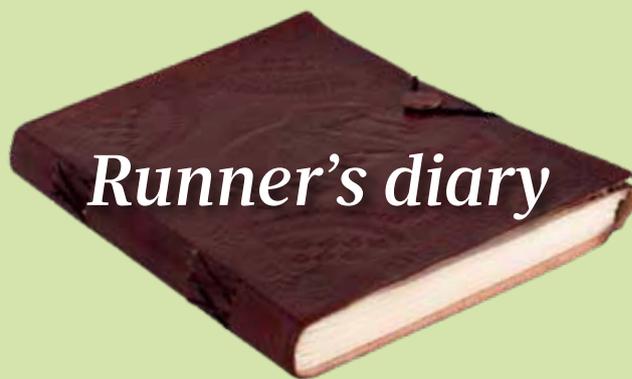
Working in production is often seen as the most exciting runner job, but the hours can be long and you will be on your feet for most of the shift – so wear comfortable shoes! Duties include looking after contributors, setting up kit, collecting lunches and buying props. It's beneficial to own a drivers licence as many jobs involve driving contributors and kit to different locations.

Post Production Runner

A runner at a post house will be on hand to keep edit suites tidy, provide food and drinks, deliver and collect rushes, set up meetings and general reception duties. If you have no experience in TV, this is a good place to get your foot in the door as employers will often look for customer service experience for the role.

Starting at the bottom is always going to require hard work, but it will pay off when you have a breadth of experience, great references and a list of contacts to make the next step in your TV career.

Kate Holman



Ellie Robins, junior researcher

I already had several runner credits before starting on Comic Relief, so I knew the importance of adaptability and a calm head when new challenges arise. Good communication was particularly important;

remembering to update the other runners, giving tips for working with high-profile contributors. That meant that I could pre-empt problems before they arose, or make a coffee before it was asked for, which can make you a favourite on the spot!

Top tips



It's an incredibly demanding industry and [not for] anyone who wants to clock off at six.... Being a grafter, making cups of tea, carrying people's kit and learning the job as you go

Nicola Brown, producer/director, *The Secret Life of Four Year Olds* and *Educating Cardiff*



The people who stick around are fun, hard-working, resourceful and innovative.... Being rude is the worst thing you can do in telly

Mike Matthews, director, *Jamie's 15-Minute Meals*



A degree is not essential... as long as they show initiative, have intelligence and are quick learners.... These are the attributes we're looking for, regardless of qualifications.... Be a great team player and don't get above yourself

Claire Walls, series producer, *The Apprentice*



People want to help people who want to learn. There's no such thing as a stupid question.... If you have the energy, passion, enthusiasm, and the bravery to be creative, that's what's going to make you stand out

Gemma Nightingale, series producer, *Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway*

Pictures: ITV/iStockPhoto.com/Shutterstock

Researcher



First Dates

Channel 4

Cast your net

Researchers are everywhere in television. While the name seems self-explanatory, additional descriptive words, such as “shooting” or “casting”, can render the job title confusing and mysterious to outsiders.

Specialist researchers are easier to set apart. They include archive researchers or people who have degrees in subjects, such as science or history, relevant to the show.

Alex Cowan has worked as a freelance archive researcher for more than 20 years. His role requires a technical but broad skill-set. Being responsible for finding archive footage to convey a particular mood or event means that “you’re lucky enough to be much closer to the creative coalface,” he says.

Even if a candidate for a researcher post isn’t a specialist, producers tend to favour

Without you, the show would have no exclusives, no guests and no archive footage

candidates with any kind of knowledge that might benefit the production.

Helen Thompson, a talent manager at BBC Northern Ireland, explains: “Productions are on a short time frame. They will prefer

someone who can hit the ground running, because they already have useful contacts and understanding.”

Craig Langran started out as a junior researcher before becoming a development and then a casting researcher, so is well placed to outline the distinctions between the terms.

“A development researcher will be writing up whole treatments and [junior researchers] might support them [with back-up] research,” he says.

The ability to use a camera is very valuable for budding casting researchers who occasionally have to shoot and cut casting tapes for producers.

Langran says that there are no set criteria for becoming a “self-shooting” researcher. New researchers shouldn’t be afraid to try and learn new skills on the job, however be

Top tips

Get off the internet and on to the phone – or, even better, get out of the office

Emma Loach, executive producer

Get to know as many of the producers and executive producers as you can

Annie Conlon, senior producer/director

Use multiple official and verifiable sources. Commercial resources may be sponsored and have an agenda

Carrie Britton, executive producer

Ask what you can do. Don't wait to be told. Be proactive and productive

Amy Jenkins, producer

Get over the very British concern of feeling as if you are bothering someone. That's part and parcel of our profession

Nicky Huggett, head of development, Popkorn TV

Never take information straight from Wikipedia – always check the sources

Selina Tso, researcher

wide

careful not to promise things you cannot deliver. There's a fine line to walk here between pushing yourself to learn new skills as you work and misleading the producer into counting on you delivering something that you can't.

"If you don't know something, don't try to blag it," advises Emily Hudson, casting executive at Studio Lambert. "Be honest if you make a mistake."

Whatever kind of researcher you become, there is a core skillset to all roles. According to Ophelia Byrne, a producer at BBC Northern Ireland, decent researchers are "determined, curious – and ready to go the extra mile".

Whether you stick to one path or do a bit of everything, strengthening your core skills and being prepared to go beyond your basic duties should help you land the researcher role that you really want.

Holly Barrett

MY BIG BREAK



Justine Allan (above, on location for Discovery's *Dogs: The Untold Story*) and her own film (right) *Creatures of the Compost*

Justine Allan's career has soared since she won an RTS Student Television Award in 2010 for *Creatures of the Compost* in the Postgraduate Entertainment category – only 10 months after first picking up a camera.

Winning the RTS award "opened doors" for her, she says, and gave her "a confidence boost to say: 'You can do this'".

After receiving her MA in wildlife documentary production, Allan quit her sales job and moved to the home of nature programming in the UK, Bristol. "I knew I had to strike while the iron was hot and get moving," she recalls.

She credits a meeting with Charlotte Crosse, at the time a

series producer for a CBBC wildlife show, as her a big break. She joined the BBC as a junior researcher, where the experience of creating her award-winning children's nature short was directly

helpful with the tasks she was given. The post eventually led to a job as researcher for Mike Gunton, the creative head of the Natural History Unit.

After working on several projects for the BBC, she fulfilled every wildlife programmer's dream of working with Sir David Attenborough. The experience was "simply amazing", she says. "That voice just holds your attention."

Since then, she has criss-crossed the globe, from Alaska to Botswana, as an assistant producer on a six-part series for Discovery. She has now landed her first assistant director role for a feature-length documentary that will take her to Canada and Cambodia.

Her "wild dream" – making an award-winning feature-length nature documentary – is getting closer by the day.

ONLINE LINKS

How To Be the Best Researcher handbook
rts.org.uk/researcher-handbook

Researcher tips video playlist
rts.org.uk/researcher-explained



Pictures: Justine Allen/Discovery

Kate Holman

Be determined,
curious – and
ready to go the
extra mile

Story first

Planet Earth II

Like most editors, Matt Meech started out as a runner, working at a post-production house in Soho where he spent his spare time learning how to use editing software Avid.

Matt put together a showreel which impressed his bosses enough for them to give him a job as an assistant editor.

Since then, he's moved to Bristol, first working on a feature film for Wallace & Gromit creator Aardman Animations, then going into natural history programmes. He started on *The Really Wild Show*, working up to landmark series such as *Planet Earth II*.

"Natural history films are the most challenging and entertaining programmes to work on," explains Matt. "They have to have as much drama as *Game of Thrones*, be both concise and scientifically true, and be so beautiful that you can't switch over the channel." It doesn't help that animals don't tend to follow a script.

The camera teams spend months amassing footage for a series such as *Planet Earth II*, and Matt feels a great responsibility for making sure that the end product is as good

Good storytelling is central to editing – and editing is central to all TV shows



Matt Meech

as it can possibly be. While it helps to be a perfectionist, having a short-term memory can also come in handy, says Matt. "It really helps to be able to look at a sequence you're working on like it's the first time you've seen it. The longer you're working on it, the harder it is to do."

On projects of the scale of *Blue Planet II*, editors spend hours going through rushes, selecting shots and working out how to tell the story that the director wants to tell. Rather than trying to plan a programme, Matt and his colleagues are tasked with creating six-minute sequences, and these are eventually woven together to form a film.

After days spent agonising over sequences, Matt likes to go back to his original cut to see if there is anything that has become dulled during the re-edit. "You can go into a spiral of picture changes and commentary changes that creates a really flat sequence."

As a professional perfectionist, you need to know when to stop, says Matt. "I will often get 10 hours of material for a six-minute sequence, so there is an infinite number of ways to craft a story."

Top tips

Pictures: BBC

● Never cut the beginning first – you don't know what exactly the film is [yet]

Bonnie Rae Brickman, film and TV editor

● How to establish a location, how to cut a scene, how to compress time – those are skills you need to master

Bonnie Rae Brickman,
film and TV editor

● Take a film that you love and cut a trailer for it. Turn a horror film into a romance. This is what one does in the cutting room!

Ben Stark, documentary editor



Planet Earth II

● Editing's about pace, and how you pace yourself as much as pacing the film

Rupert Houseman,
documentary editor

● Pick up your smartphone, film some videos, edit them, stick them on YouTube

Josh Douglas, assistant editor at Barcroft Media



Planet Earth II

CUTTING TO THE CHASE

Deconstruction of a classic sequence

Youtuber Charlie Kilman, of *Our Changing Climate*, analyses the famous Racer Snakes vs Iguana sequence from *Planet Earth II* in a video which, Matt Meech says, captures his process.

With 28 shots over 2 minutes 4 seconds, Matt echoes the narrative of a Hollywood film – which, he says, allows him a 'subliminal way to ease people into a new story.' Charlie divides the sequence into six parts:

Exposition: Using a shot/counter shot technique, Matt establishes the location of the snakes (frame left) and the lizard (frame right).

Tension: A series of shots show the snakes now moving right to left – as if creeping up behind the lizard.

Conflict: The chase begins! Three wide shots bombard viewers with informa-

tion as snakes pour from the rocks.

Twist: The iguana gets caught by the snakes, abruptly stopping his escape. So sudden is it, your eye wants to keep tracking across the screen.

Falling action: A rapid series of shots allows Matt to manipulate the timeline and gradually release tension as the snakes fall behind.

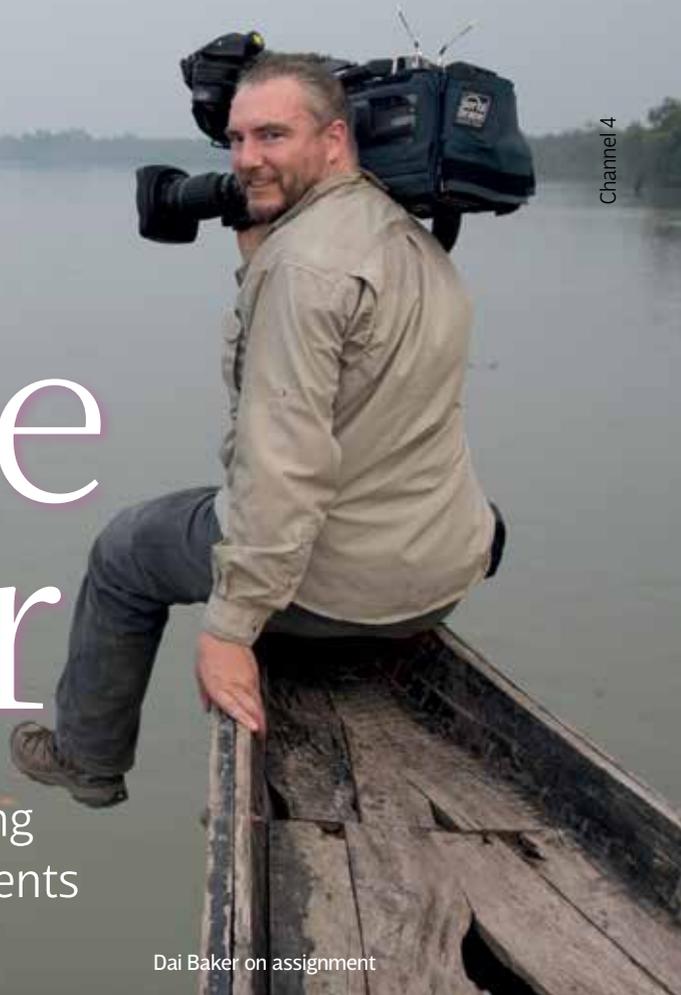
Resolution: The iguana escapes.

Charlie explains that Matt's editing brings out a simple narrative in order to 'maximise sympathy, imply opposition and build suspense', 'transforming an animal that may fail to engage an audience in real life, into an emotional and educational hero.' For a fuller understanding of the editing of this scene, watch Charlie's video at bit.ly/Editing-Animals and check out his channel.

Planet Earth II

Headline snapper

Covering the news is all about hitting deadlines in the face of unforeseen events



Dai Baker on assignment

Channel 4 News cameraman Dai Baker has travelled around the world, including a 10-year stint at the broadcaster's Washington bureau.

He's now based in Wales where, alongside a reporter and producer, he films and edits news packages from

Wales and the West Country. He's also on standby to go further afield, having covered the inauguration of Donald Trump in the US and the independence protests in Barcelona.

The unpredictable nature of the job is both the best and worst thing about it. With tight deadlines, it's vital to stay calm under pressure.

After Dai's had a call about a story, he drives off in his van to film and then edit the package. On the scene, he takes a moment to plan what he needs to capture.

Knowing what you want for a sequence can also help you plan what you're going to shoot. This means getting a variety of wide and close-up shots that can be pieced together to tell a story. Editing his own work has been invaluable in helping him know what to film – "It makes you think, 'what idiot shot this? Oh, it was me.'"

Teamwork is another crucial aspect of the job. Dai's relationship with his reporters means he can almost hear script lines forming in his head as he shoots, something that helps him plan what to film. "I'm not a journalist, I can't write, but you... get an idea of what they're looking for," he explains.

Since joining ITN as a trainee in 1994, Dai has learned a lot, often through the mistakes he's made. From putting the wrong lens on a camera to forgetting a spare battery and driving off with equipment on the top of the car, he's tried not to repeat his errors.

The RTS award-winner's top tip is not to worry about getting the best footage, just to make sure you've got the pictures.

Get to the right place at the right time, he says. "It's no good being the best camera-person in the world if you're stuck behind everyone else because you didn't get there until 9:00pm," Dai warns.



I find windows and doorways very useful (framing) devices

Bafta-winning documentary cameraman Steve Robinson

When lighting, don't just think about windows. Remember skylights, passing cars, ambient city lights

Cinematographer Tim Palmer

Learning to light properly is probably more important than the camera stuff

Drama Director of Photography Ed Moore

Keep the camera on a shot until there is a good place to cut

Series Producer Kristin Hadland

It's all in the light



BBC Two's *Peaky Blinders*

The pros shed light on shooting big-budget dramas

Lighting is key to camera-work, says cinematographer Laurie Rose. It's essential to establishing a look or mood for a scene, he explains: "The important thing is to tell a story and create mood using light."

Between them, Laurie and cinematographer Matt Gray have credits on shows as varied as *Peaky Blinders*, *Broadchurch* and *Riviera*.

"More light sources... can slow you down" warns Matt. "Having fewer light sources for a scene means that you can move quicker."

For Laurie, the three-point lighting framework – which places one light source behind the subject as well as key and fill lights at 45° to their right and left

– is vital for cinematographers. Everything you need to learn can be found in classic films, Laurie suggests.

But despite the creativity of the role, being organised and knowing your equipment are critical. "You've got to find the right tools for the job," advises Laurie.

Matt agrees that it is very easy to get left behind. "Things come at you that you just can't anticipate," he warns, listing bad weather and broken cameras as just two threats to a cinematographer. "You have to be able to react accordingly."

"You're always working with the other departments throughout," explains Laurie. "It's that collaboration really, there's something magical about it."



Laurie Rose

Ashley Whitt

Sound



Hear this!

Sound is not understood by very many people; warns sound supervisor Tony Revell, whose credits include *Strictly*, the NTAs and Baftas. “Producers, directors or anyone on the visual side of television really don’t know what sound involves or how it is created.”

Building a career in sound, Tony believes, is the same as it was when he began over 40 years ago. “[You] need to do the work at the coal face,” he says, and work your way up from sound assistant to sound supervisor. A degree isn’t always necessary, either. Due to how specialised TV sound is, there aren’t many specific courses. “I don’t think I know who has done a degree,” he says. “It’s never come up.”

The role of a sound supervisor is quite simple, says Tony: “You have to interpret the production’s requests in a way that is feasible to achieve”, by knowing what is or is not



Tony Revell

It’s all about knowing what’s possible, says *Strictly*’s Tony Revell

possible, and being able to explain that to the rest of the production.

“You have to develop cunning ways of getting what you need without directors shouting at you because... the microphone is in the way.” Sound, he adds, is as much about cutting out what you don’t need as it is capturing what you do: “It conveys the majority of the programme... [so] if something goes wrong then people start shouting.”

As such, planning for when things go wrong is essential – “If you can actually hear something is wrong and go about fixing it, you are 90% of the way there.”

However, getting into the industry isn’t easy. “Look at credits at the end of programmes,” suggests Tony. “Do the research. Get in touch. Most people have got websites. Talk to them and take it from there.

“Sit in with people and get to know [them]. It’s amazing what you pick up from watching someone else do the same job!”



BBC One's Strictly Come Dancing

SOUND ADVICE

Aspiring composers need to find talented collaborators, says Sarah Liversedge

Television is a crowded industry. For every Hans Zimmer, David Arnold or Danny Elfman, there are dozens of aspiring composers eager for the opportunity to make their mark in TV and film.

It's not a completely closed shop however, says Sarah Liversedge, Managing Director of independent music publisher BDI. 'There are many different [ways in which] someone can approach somebody such as me.'

'If I think that, if somebody is talented and they've sent me a link of their SoundCloud... I will remember it. I would normally say [to] keep in touch,' she says. However, there is a fine line between being eager and being relentless: 'Being bombarded isn't necessarily the right approach.'

New composers emerge in different ways. Sarah suggests that it is through networking that someone can make an impact.

'Make sure you work with people who you think are really talented and are at a similar

level to you [so] that you can hopefully go on a journey with them.'

Aspiring composers should also look at organisations such as Basca – the British Academy of Songwriters, Composers and

Authors – which represent individuals coming up through the system.

'They want to meet young up-and-coming composers, and they want to help and support them,' Sarah says.

'If you meet a composer who is experienced... then offer to help them. Ask them if they need an assistant!,' she adds. 'It's all about aligning yourself with the right people.'

While it might seem an impregnable industry, there are opportunities for young composers.

'With music publishers like me, send me a link!' she insists. 'On our websites we always have demo submission... There are so many production companies out there – drop them a line, ask if you can come in for a cup of coffee. Show interest in their programming'

'It's all those little things that count and gradually piece together if you have the talent.'



Sarah Liversedge

Ed Gove

A ONE-MINUTE MASTERCLASS

With sound recordist Simon Clark



If you want to break into sound, the best thing you can possibly do is network, network, network, and speak to us! Find out who we are. We're all available on websites like the IPS – Institute for Professional Sound – and AMPS – the Association for Motion Picture Sound. Get in touch and tell us about yourself. Tell us how passionate you are about what you want to do.



Don't get hung up on the technology. Doing our job on location with actors and directors and all the rest of the crew – it's not actually a completely techy job. It's all about who you get on with and how you get on with people.



Write. When you watch the TV or you're watching a film, write down the credit of the person who recorded the sound and find out about them. When you get in contact with them, you can say, 'Dear Simon, I liked your work on...' and, because we're all kind of egotistical, we'll read it and think you're absolutely wonderful.



Don't expect it to be glamorous. A lot of people think, 'Great, I'll be in the studio recording my favourite band.' I spend most of my time standing in rain storms desperately waiting for the actor to remember their lines.

PEOPLE YOU SHOULD GET TO KNOW

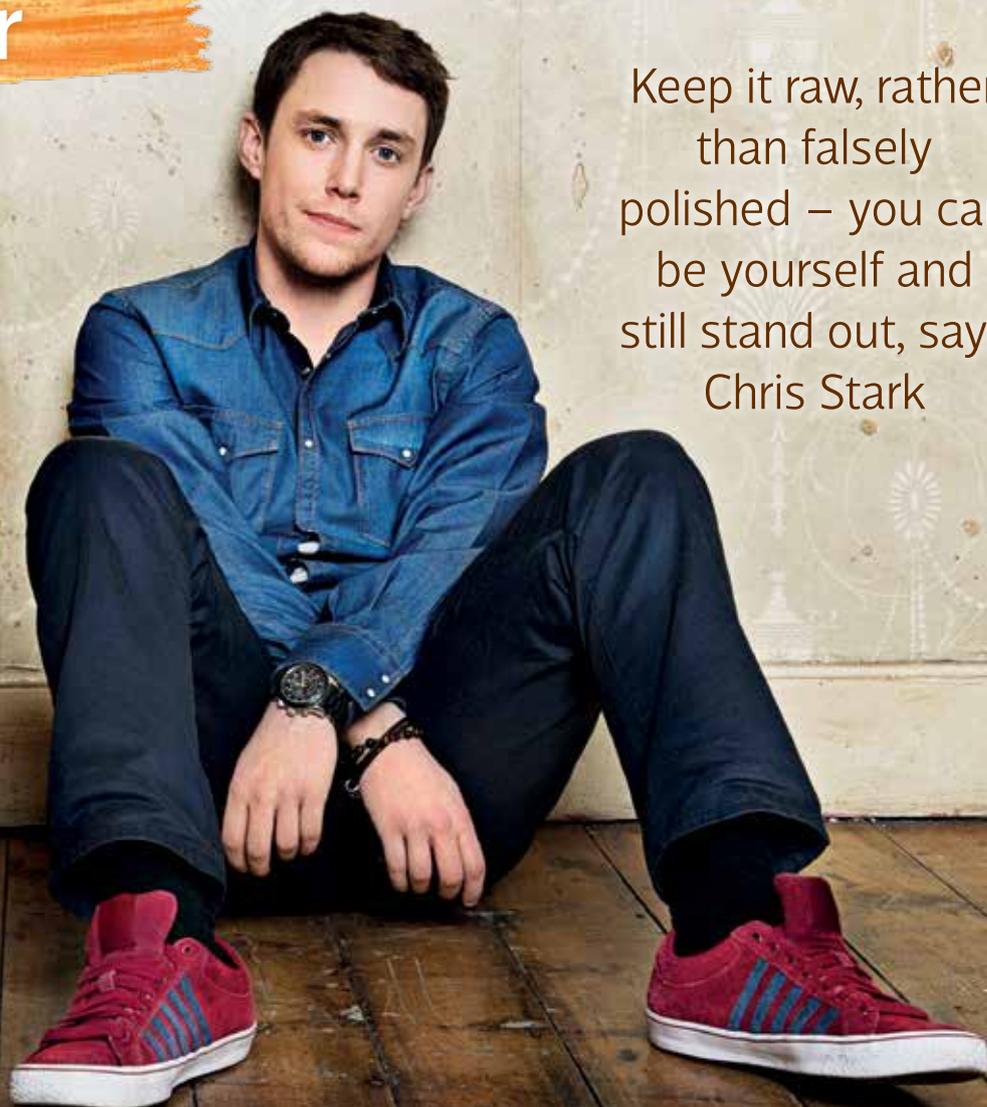
IPS – Institute of Professional Sound – ips.org.uk

Amps – Association of Motion Picture Sound – amps.net

Basca – British Academy of Songwriters, Composers and Authors – basca.org.uk

Presenter

Centre



Keep it raw, rather than falsely polished – you can be yourself and still stand out, says Chris Stark

of attention

Chris Stark is a strong believer in making your own luck. When he was offered two days a week on *The Scott Mills Show* in 2012, he did everything in his power to get noticed. He recalls: “I would turn up at 8:30am and stay all day and help wherever I could – no one asked me to leave!”

He has since gone on to become a household name on Radio 1 and has carved out an exciting career, making fresh and interesting content for the station.

“Try and find a way of being yourself which inherently will make you different,” he suggests. “I like to find the kind of bridge between these megastars and what we do on a weekly basis, like going to the pub. You can be yourself and be different, you don’t

need to be a shiny presenter to stand out.” It is this approach that has enabled him to branch off and explore other projects.

Alongside his career in radio, he has gone on to front his own celebrity interview series for Channel 4 and a number of short documentary series for BBC iPlayer, as well as DJing at venues around the country.

“I use all these other platforms to make [my brand] bigger,” he explains. “If you have one central source of content that you’re producing, whether that’s putting stuff on YouTube, or a podcast that you’re doing once a week, use that as your focus and use other things as assets for it. “Having that core, that one thing you’re doing regularly, allows all the branches that come off it, [and] little opportunities arise from those branches.”

You don’t need expensive equipment to be creative and stand out from the crowd, says Chris. “You get more of a groundswell behind you if you keep things raw rather than falsely polishing something that doesn’t need to be.”

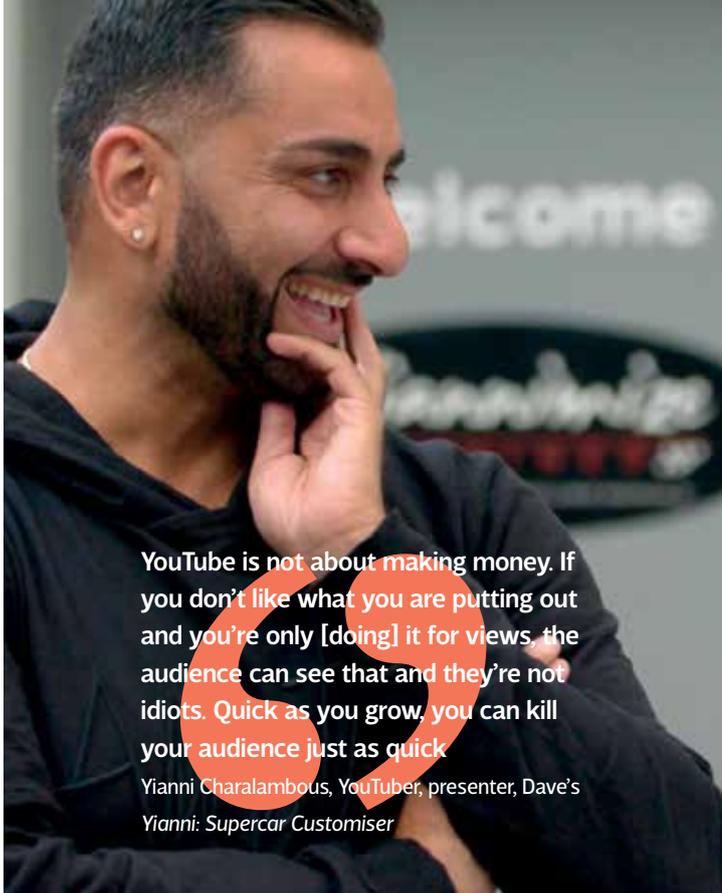
The industry is hard to crack, but you should never give up, he insists: “There’s always a point at which you think you need to give up on the idea of working in this kind of job, [when you’ve] been knocking on every door and no one’s been listening.

“It will be during work experience that you’ll meet someone who will try and help you. It’s those unexpected opportunities that make all the difference between people who succeed and those who perhaps give up.

“You’ve just got to make sure you’re trying every possible door.”

BBC

Kate Holman



YouTube is not about making money. If you don't like what you are putting out and you're only [doing] it for views, the audience can see that and they're not idiots. Quick as you grow, you can kill your audience just as quick

Yianni Charalambous, YouTuber, presenter, Dave's Yianni: Supercar Customiser

UKTV



Smile a lot. Try and do work experience everywhere. Be a runner. Be an excellent runner. Have something else to do if doesn't work out. Try and work for your local radio station. Write for your local newspaper. Use a vast amount of eyeliner and good luck

Claudia Winkleman

Pictures: BBC/Richard Kendal/Bryan Adams

Top tips

Decide what your USP is, what makes you different from anyone else. If you're a vlogger, get as much experience as you can being on screen

Anna Richardson, presenter, producer and journalist

Understand what you want, what you're going for, understand the business and be passionate. If you don't like what you're doing, it comes over

Holly Pye, director and agent

What I learned coming off *Bake Off* was that... I didn't have to have a mask on all the time. I can just be myself.

Nadiya Hussain, *Bake Off* winner



Alex Brooker

The ability not to panic under pressure helps – especially when you're hearing all manner of stuff in your ear doing live TV

Alex Brooker, co-host of Channel 4's *The Last Leg*



The Ganges with Sue Perkins

Wanting to be famous and recognised and rich isn't going to work. Start from 'I love people, I'm interested in stories' and you stand a really good chance

Sue Perkins, comedian and broadcaster

It really helps for you to know where the camera is at all times. Move so that you're not blocking it!

Simon Reeve, travel documentary maker

Follow your curiosity,
says Louis Theroux
– but don't forget
your audience

You don't need to be a 'traditional' TV star to make a career in television. Look at Louis Theroux.

'I was not a conventional presence,' says the documentary maker, who is now entering his

24th year in television, with over 50 films under his belt.

His opportunity came in 1994, when he joined Michael Moore's series *TV Nation*. 'I went into the interview with Michael, saying "I'll do anything" and I genuinely meant it: writing researching or doing anything.'

That is his first tip for tomorrow's Theroux: focus on making good TV.

'Let's say that you want to be a documentary presenter – you don't go in saying, "I really want to be on TV". It comes across as a little bit over-weening. Actually, what you want to do is make great TV shows.'

BBC

Making headlines

Louis' opportunity came when he was sent to meet apocalyptic cults to get a date for the end of the world.

Despite his inexperience and nerves, he believes it was his curiosity that made the interviews work. 'I thought, maybe if I'm curious and I just want to meet these people and... talk to them, maybe that will carry me through this.'

That curiosity is the backbone of his

documentaries – however, he is quick to add, you must not forget about the audience.

'I am curious about the world, but I am also not out there just to scratch my own itch of curiosity. These things need to work in concert: the needs of the subject, my own curiosity, and the sense of getting a story that we can tell in an engaging way onscreen.'

Most important, he says, is building a

relationship with your interviewee. 'It's not just getting your questions answered,' he insists. The interviewer needs to create a subtext of goodwill and trust, and offer the subjects a sense that they are being listened to.

'You can make these things sound really complicated but, in the end, it is just a case of trying to be a relatively nice guy while getting the questions answered.'

Ed Gove



Pictures: BBC/Paul Hampartsoumian

you are willing to sit in your underpants on a Saturday alone, editing a video week after week, I feel like, no matter what you want to do, you will do it.”

Just dream big

“If you get upset [that] someone went to a good school, then use that as inspiration to fight against it. I remember feeling really bad, but then I was like, ‘You know what? Fuck it! I’m going to be the first person from Bowring Comprehensive School to be editor of something!’”

I did a lot of work experience

“When I was at university... I worked at the Discovery channel, *The Scotsman*, *The Edinburgh Evening News*, I worked at the BBC. I realised that I did not want to be an individual part of a documentary because, on that, I was junior researcher or runner or something.”

PUSH ON UP

Ben Zand won the Young Talent of the Year Award at the RTS Television Journalism Awards 2016. His career began while still at university, when he launched a travel website, *Informed Explorer*, and began producing video content.

As editor of BBC Pop Up, he travelled the world making current-affairs documentaries. His most recent series, *Ben Zand: Cults, Gangs and Gods*, launched on BBC iPlayer in early 2018.

Born in Liverpool and without any connections in journalism or the BBC, Ben has forced his way up through hard work and talent, and along the way he has picked up a lot of handy advice.

Ed Gove

There’s no excuse to have a boring video

“Don’t give people the opportunity to switch off. You have to get straight into the action! More actuality! Make sure you have things going on around you. Don’t interview somebody sitting in a chair. Interview someone going into a war!”



Benjamin Zand

Discontent pushes you to go on

The inability to find happiness in what you achieve leads to success and probably depression. You literally obviously can do it. Why can you not? What is it about me that is different? Nothing.

Just realise that you are adequate, you have the right to ask that question.

There is nothing about you as an individual that means that you don’t. If you place confidence in hard work, you can be confident no matter what.

I am a guy who is just obsessed with success

“Very early on, I identified where I wanted to get to. Because I identified that, when I came to the BBC I was very quickly like: ‘Who does that?’ ‘What departments do that?’, ‘How can I speak to those people?’ If

Nobody is going to offer you a job the first time they see you

At networking events, don’t try and get a job, try and make friends.

That way, when the opportunity arises, you are in the position that could potentially get you a job.

ASK LISTEN ASK AGAIN

Have an objective. Get some training. If you’re interested in a region, whether it be the Middle East or North America or Europe, read a lot. That’s how you get an edge to understand what’s happening

Jeremy Bowen, BBC Middle East editor

We’ve got to be really clear about our facts, and it probably means that we’re going to have lots of really boring journalism, because ultimately it is just the facts that matter

Matt Frei, Channel 4 News

Think about the most engaging way to tell a story, what will make a viewer turn up the volume. Start your piece with this to catch the consumer from the outset

Esme Wren, head of business, politics and specialist journalism, Sky News

[Work] out your own style. What is it? Is it quizzical? Is it forensic? Is it: ‘Sorry, I missed that, could you say that again?’

Emily Maitlis, Newsnight, BBC



Emily Maitlis

There are two things. Do your reading. Really do your work. Don’t busk stuff. And listen carefully when you are talking to someone

Victoria Derbyshire, *The Victoria Derbyshire Programme*, BBC

The audience want... someone who is always going to be asking questions. Whatever [their private] views are... is going to be secondary to making sure that they get to the questions and hold power to account

Tom Bradby, *ITV News at Ten*

Screenwriter

Line of Duty creator Jed Mercurio took time out of filming series 5 to share his advice for writers who want to see their work on screen

Now is a great time to get into writing for TV. There have never been more opportunities for scripted programming. To stand out from the crowd, an idea should seem original and distinctive.

While the breadth of programming has increased, the traditional formats have remained dominant. Your writing should fit the standard models for a mini-series, a serial or an episodic series: 30 minutes for comedy, 60 minutes for drama.

Write a pilot episode that showcases your idea plus a few pages describing how the series will develop and what format it will follow – either a continuing story (serial) or stories of the week (episodic), and whether the story will conclude at the end (mini-series) or set up further instalments (returning series).

Only send your script to a producer/commissioner who might respond to your writing. The simplest method is to target people who've recently produced or commissioned programmes that resemble yours in style or tone.

Even if your idea doesn't make it, you'll have a script to serve as a calling card for your writing.

Once you've written one script, write another. And another. Professional TV writers have lots of ideas in development because you never know which one's going to catch someone's eye – and because it can take months or more for producers and commissioners to make up their minds.

Jed Mercurio

Target people who've recently produced or commissioned programmes that resemble yours in style or tone

Write now

COMPETE TO WIN

Don't be afraid of a little competition, says Bafta New Writer 2016 winner, Ryan Brown.

Historically, it's been possible to get your break with a killer script and the right opportunity, now young writers need an 'in'. Competitions, says Ryan, are key: 'I don't see how you would do it without them. Maybe that's just my experience, but I cannot see how an unrepresented screenwriter could [break in].'

But don't get stung by the entry fee. Many competitions – including Bafta's – do charge for submissions to cover costs. Some are less legitimate and can charge as much as £600 an entry. Be smart.

Now, with a writing credit for BBC comedy *Coconut* recently added to his CV, Brown is



Ryan Brown

looking for the next challenge, however he is running up against a common problem for young screenwriters: an overcrowded industry.

'I find in the UK that it is very much the same [names],' he says. 'I am, literally, having meetings where people are saying, this is fantastic but, with you being a new writer, I think you need maybe a few more credits for someone to take a chance on you.'

On top of his writing, Ryan is still holding down another job to make ends meet. 'I don't know how many writers survive,' he marvels. 'You make a little bit of money and you try and make that last as long as possible.'

'I can't wait for the day where I can just take six months to write!'

Ed Gove

Top tips

I start the writing process by having all these funny stories. I put them all on post-its and put them on a wall and [mix] them around until I [feel] a story and a character come out

Phoebe Waller-Bridge, *Fleabag*

If you just construct goodies and baddies, it's very two-dimensional. If you're going to make your hero... truly heroic, the person they deal with has to be as complex as they are

Sally Wainwright, *Happy Valley*

There is no secret ingredient. It is just: make sure you've done enough research to do this properly

Jack Thorne, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, *National Treasure*

You can do all the planning and outlines, but you just need to sit down, write and let it go

Daisy Goodwin, *Victoria*

I have this exhaustive process of doing character breakdowns of every single person – at times, you go 'gosh, I can't choose a [character's] favourite colour again!'

Marnie Dickens, *Thirteen*



Phoebe Waller-Bridge



Marnie Dickens

MANAGE YOUR BRAND

- Think about what you put online.
- Would you want an employer to see this?
- Do not show up late or cancel at the last minute – it's a tough reputation to lose
- Set up your phone voicemail so that people know they have reached you
- Do the job you've been hired to do before you offer to help with something else!

Survival guide

How to make a success of self-employment – and who to turn to for advice and support

Whether you land your first job with one of our broadcasters or with an independent company, remember that television production should reward not just those who own the assets but every single person who contributes to the production, from the runner upwards.

And there's the rub. Despite the profitability of the sector, and recognition that the UK is a world leader in the field, massive interest in working in TV means that it can be hard to get started and get paid for the work you do. Building a sustainable career is the ultimate challenge for the new entrant.

The best advice to new entrants coming into this dynamic area is to be your own critical best friend:

- Value your skills and your commitment and others will, too;
- Don't work for nothing (all this does is encourage exploitative employers) – the law states that workers should be paid at least the national minimum/living wage;
- Put a time limit on any project that isn't helping you to make the progress you want;
- Get it in writing! If you're an employee you should receive a contract within eight weeks. If you're freelance and don't receive

a written contract, set out your own understanding of the terms and send this to the employer – this will help to clear up any misunderstandings later;

- Keep a record of all the work you do (and tax and NI paid, or unpaid). This is vital

if you're completing your own tax return;

- If you need to chase a bad debt, act quickly and professionally – Bectu supports members with monies-owed cases;
- Get connected by taking part in events and trade shows and exploring sources of help. There's lots of useful advice and training to take advantage of (some free or subsidised) and great contacts to be made, including online;
- If your role requires insurance make sure you're covered and, if you have kit, be sure to cover this, too;
- Develop a professional persona. You don't need to sacrifice your personality to be business-like but remember a good reputation among colleagues – being a good time-keeper, delivering what you promise and considering others – will help you succeed;
- Be mindful of your online reputation, too. Don't say anything in that space that you wouldn't want an employer to see.

We in Bectu, the industry trade union, love television and have the highest regard for the people who make it. We also know the level of commitment required to get established, and the personal sacrifices needed to get ahead. Long hours and lack of personal time are familiar concerns. Low pay, or no pay, is another key challenge for the new starter. But Bectu exists to help.

Whether it's the long-standing legal right to paid holidays or the conclusion of an important new agreement covering TV drama (from 1 December 2017), Bectu continues to press the case for a better, fairer workplace for both staff and freelancers.

To find out more about the benefits of Bectu membership visit www.bectu.org.uk/ welcome. Take a look at the free advice in our *Freelance Survival Guide*: www.bectu.org.uk/fsg
Sharon Elliott, Bectu



WORK-LIFE BALANCE IN 3 STEPS

- Don't work unpaid. Volunteering can only be legal with registered charities. Students may be unpaid only if it is part of their course
- Freelancing is tough. Budget for working nine months out of 12
- You are entitled to 5.6 weeks paid holiday a year (this includes bank holidays). If untaken holidays remain at the end of your contract, you should receive a lump sum. Do not view this as additional pay, though. Take holiday within your contract where possible

INVEST IN YOUR OWN TRAINING - BUT DO YOUR RESEARCH

- FREE Carbon Literacy Training - wearealbert.org
- Production Safety Passport - bit.ly/HiiveSafety
- Remember that training courses do not guarantee you a job - but they are useful

YOUR FINANCES IN 5 STEPS

- Track your salary and invoices in a spreadsheet, and open a separate bank account just for income - make sure you're aware of what the National Minimum Wage is
- Set aside 25% of your income for tax and National Insurance (NI) - unless your company deducts tax and NI at source
- Keep your receipts. Many of your expenses are tax deductible when it comes to doing your tax return
- Make sure you're paid appropriately. Some people will offer you a lump sum. Are you being paid for the hours you're working?
- For advice on tax issues relating to TV, email a.filmproductionunitmailbox@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk

FILE THIS

- File anything from HMRC that comes in a brown envelope
- Keep every callsheet contact or unit list
- Keep a list of jobs you have applied to

PEOPLE TO KNOW

- Bectu - the industry trade union - www.bectu.org.uk
- Hiive - Professional Network for the creative industries. www.hive.co.uk
- People looking for TV work: Runners Facebook Group. bit.ly/tvrunnersFB

Job hunting

1

Writing a CV

Your CV is your life on paper. Try and make it look good

Format it properly. If it's difficult to read, it won't be read

Make sure your **contact information** is correct and accurate. Phone number and email are essential

You don't have to write a personal statement. But if you do, make it **punchy and interesting.** Don't be trite

Be careful of **adjectives.** 'Hard-working', 'enthusiastic' and 'passionate' don't mean anything

Include your **key skills and assets:** awards, qualifications, languages, visas, editing systems, whatever.

Keep it **factual, recent and relevant**

Keep it **short** – one page ideally, two pages maximum

Don't lie. Liars are easy to spot and TV is too small a world for a big mistake like that

Also, **don't exaggerate.** Everyone bigs up their experience, but if you were only there for a week, don't say you were there for months

Make sure your **references** know who you are. And that they don't think you're rubbish.

Pay **attention to detail.** A spelling mistake or bad grammar could put you out of the running

Put your **name** in the document title so that it's easy to find

Remember, hiring managers receive loads of CVs. They're looking for a reason to stop reading yours. Don't give them one.

Export it to PDF. It'll stop it looking weird due to reformatting



BBC One's *Hard Sun*

2

Your cover letter

There are no fixed rules for writing a cover letter. Everyone who reads it will be looking for slightly different things, but there are some clear dos and don'ts

DO think about what you are after

What are your best points? What impression are you trying to give? Why are you doing this?

DO meet the job description

If you can't do the job, don't apply for it. If you can, then prove it

DO find out who you are talking to

If you were told who to address your application to, brilliant! If not, do your research. Pick up the phone if you have to. As a last resort, using 'Dear [Production Company].'

DO mention your availability

If they want someone who can start on Monday, say you're available on Monday. If you're not available, don't apply. Simple

DO write from scratch!

Write a new cover letter every time. Copied and pasted templates don't do the job

DO come across as human

Some places prefer formal cover letters, some don't. If you aren't sure, keep it formal, but don't sound like a robot. You're 'excited' to apply, you are not 'most keen to express an interest'. It's wordy, boring and will make people tune out

DON'T waffle on

Cover letters should be brief. No more than one side of A4. Employers want to get a feel for what you are like, they don't want your life story. They'll call if they have questions. Also, put it in your email. Not as an attachment.

DON'T crack jokes

Everyone loves a funny co-worker, but a jokey cover letter is a fast track to the No pile. People in the media are busy. They don't have time to care about your bad jokes, and, even if they do, no one has ever hired a runner on the basis of a good one-liner. The same goes for emoticons, gimmicks, origami cover letters, kissograms, whatever. Don't risk it

If you've made videos, put them online and send links

DON'T be generic

Do you love TV? Are you passionate? A team player? Willing to work long hours? Excellent. Because that's what's expected. If you're not, you're in the wrong industry

DON'T repeat your CV

This is your chance to explain why you'd be perfect for this job. Don't waste it on reiterating what your CV already says.

DON'T use a stupid email address

It doesn't matter if katylovestoparty123@myemail.com. katy.green@myemail.com should be the one sending this email.

3

So you've got an interview

Dress to impress-ish. First impressions matter, so no torn jeans or tracksuits. But don't overdo it, it's TV, not banking. Think back to your work experience and dress slightly smarter than the people you met in the production office

Beware the 'quick chat'. A 'quick chat' is an interview. Don't be fooled. It might be in a coffee shop. Your interviewer might be cool and young and friendly, but they are not your friend. Remember that

Come prepared. Bring a copy of your CV in case they don't have one to hand, and anything else they have asked for. Write down your availability just in case, and have your contact details or business card, if you have one, to hand

Know your stuff. What has the company been working on? Did you like it? Don't be afraid to say no, but be prepared to explain why. Know what you wrote in your CV and cover letter and be able to expand upon it

Excited? Tell them about it. If you don't seem keen then you won't get the job. You can be sure of that. Don't bring me down.

Don't 'we' everywhere. By all means, tell yourself that you already have the job, if that helps your confidence. But don't start telling your interviewer what 'we' will do. It's annoying

Be clean. Don't stink. How does that still need saying?

Do you have anything you'd like to ask us? This is just as much a part of the interview as anything. Have some questions prepared that show you have read the job description, researched the company and could imagine yourself working for it. It is also your chance to show your interviewer what sort of things concern you and that you could envisage yourself doing this job

Where have you been? Don't turn up late. If you're running late, call and give warning. These things happen. It's not the end of the world, but don't just leave someone hanging

Mind your vibes. Being interviewed is a test to see if they want you – so don't be creepy or odd. Even a whiff of snobbery will have you out of the running. Being nice to everyone is vital, including receptionists, PAs, cleaners and security.

Get in training

Take your pick

BBC Production Trainee Scheme

The BBC Production Trainee Scheme offers an 11-month contract to young people interested in TV and radio. Trainees are mentored by senior BBC staff and will be given three different work placements over the year. Past trainees have worked on shows including *EastEnders*, *Doctor Who* CBBC and *The One Show*.
bit.ly/BBCPTS

Channel 4 Nations and Regions Apprentice

Based in Glasgow and open to anyone aged 18+, this role throws apprentices into the deep end to work with the Nations and Regions coordinator organising events and working with production companies outside of London on behalf of Channel 4. This paid opportunity lasts for 12 months.
bit.ly/C4nations

The Edinburgh International Television Festival – The Network

The Network is a free intensive introduction to working in the TV industry. Each of the 50 Networkers will spend four days at the Edinburgh International Television Festival, learning practical TV making skills, will receive an industry mentor and get access to exclusive alumni events and job placements.
bit.ly/EITFnetwork

UKTV Apprenticeships Scheme

Offering an alternative to university, the UKTV scheme places its apprentices in departments across the company including creative, communications, social media and even PA to the CEO! Apprentices leave the 18-month scheme with a tailored diploma qualification and a host of industry experience.
<https://whitehat.org.uk/apprentices>

Shine Four Weeks

This four-week scheme is open to anyone over 21 who is interested in a career in TV. Trainees spend one week among Shine's office runners, then the rest of the time will be spent working on a production. And there may be a job at the end of it for the best candidates!
shine.tv/jobs

Channel 4 Production Trainee Scheme

Aimed particularly at groups underrepresented in the television industry, this 12-month contract places trainees at one of C4's production companies around the country. By the end, trainees will have the skills and connections to forge a career in the industry.
bit.ly/C4prodtrainee

IMG Advantage scheme

This 12-month scheme places individuals across the technical, editorial and management divisions of sports production company IMG. It is open to those with a degree qualification or relevant work experience.
<http://www.advantagetraineescheme.com/>

Sky Sports News Apprenticeship

This two-year course offers school leavers the chance to work in the hub of Sky Sports News. As well as working on the planning, graphics, production and digital content of the programme, apprentices will have the opportunity to shadow reporters and work on location.
bit.ly/Skyschemes

Broadcasters, producers
and professional
organisations run a
wide variety of training
schemes. Here's a
selection



Find even more training schemes online

Bafta Scholarships

bit.ly/BAFTAscholarships

BBC Extend Hub

bit.ly/ExtendBBC

BBC Three Talent Pool

BBC Writers Room

bbc.co.uk/writersroom

Channel 4 Apprenticeship Programme

4talent.channel4.com

Channel 4 Industry Talent Schemes (Writing)

bit.ly/C4Writing

Channel 4 Training Schemes

bit.ly/C4schemes

Creative Access

www.creativeaccess.org.uk

Creative Skillset Production Coordinator Programme

<http://creativeskillset.org/pctp>

Creative Skillset Trainee Finder

www.creativeskillset.org

David C Spencer, The Media Mentor

twitter.com/themediamentor

Diva Apprenticeships

divaapprenticeships.com

Endemo!Shine UK Brightbulb

endemo!shineuk.com/brightbulb

Edinburgh Festival Ones To Watch

bit.ly/EITFtoWatch

Indie Training Fund

indietrainingfund.com

InterMedia, LGBT Media Network

intermediauk.org

Journo Resources

journoresources.org.uk

Mama Youth Project

mamayouthproject.org.uk

Media Parents

mediaparents.co.uk

Media Trust

JasmineD@mediatrust.org

Mediargh Jobsite

mediargh.com

MonologueSlam

monologueslamuk.com

My First Job in TV

twitter.com/myfirstjobintv

Pact indie Diversity Training Scheme

bit.ly/Pactscheme

Project Noir

twitter.com/projectnoirhub

Royal Television Society

Bursaries (see pages 28-29)

rts.org.uk/bursaries

RTS Futures

rtsfutures.org.uk

Scene TV

scenetv.co.uk

Sky Academy

skyacademy.com/get-involved/

Think Bigger Training Opportunitites

thinkbigger.uk.com

TriForce Creative Network

tcn.com

TV Watercooler Jobs Site Database

twatercooler.org



Pictures: Michael Kurtz/Getty Images/CSU

About us

Love TV? So do we

The Royal Television Society is committed to helping young people make their way in television



RTS Bursaries

RTS bursaries offer financial support to those from a low-income background to study a television-related university course.

Recipients are awarded grants of £1,000 per year of their course, as well as being paired with an industry mentor.

The scheme is open to students who wish to study undergraduate degrees in television production or broadcast journalism at Creative Skillset-accredited universities.

There are also a number of grants open to those studying computing or engineering – highly sought after skills in this industry.

For more information, email bursaries@rts.org.uk



RTS Undergraduate Bursary recipients

RTS Futures

RTS Futures is the strand of the RTS dedicated to helping young adults get into the broadcast industry.

We offer events and masterclasses with accomplished industry professionals. Recent events have included a self-shooting masterclass hosted by TV survivalist Ed Stafford, a behind-the-scenes look at how *First Dates* is made and a session on TV comedy delivered by the makers of *Mrs Brown's Boys* and *8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown*.

We also run a range of practical workshops, covering everything from interview technique to basic camera skills, as well as our annual Christmas Quiz and Summer Party.

Visit www.rtsfutures.org.uk to keep in the loop.



Sam Clarke

Sam Clarke – An RTS success story

Sam Clarke's working day is anything but ordinary.

From cycling across Vietnam and Cambodia to film for Challenge Cancer, to trekking in Iceland with the CoppaFeel! charity, Sam's role as production executive at film production agency GoFilm has taken him all around the world.

"I've worked on quite a few exciting projects since winning the award," says the 2015 Undergraduate Factual student award winner.

He cites a challenging project with an intense filming schedule in India for the British Asian Trust as one of his most memorable experiences on the job – "I feel very privileged to have been part of the experience."

After graduating with a first-class degree in TV and film production, he built up an impressive portfolio working as a freelance cameraman at equestrian and cycling events around the UK. When Sam heard about an opening for an "adventure cameraman" at GoFilm, he got in contact and landed the role of production executive – and the rest is history: "A very busy, hectic and fun history."

His diverse role combines producing, filming and editing, both in the office and out on an adventure – "One day I'll be directing interviews, the next week I'll be making things look pretty behind the camera."

His RTS award-winning documentary *Birdman* played a huge part in impressing the team in his interview at GoFilm, he reveals. Sam adds: "[It] gave me the confidence in my ability to produce work that I could be proud of. As long as I can produce work that I'm proud of, then I'll continue to do so for as long as I can."

Kate Holman

Join the RTS

To access all of the Royal Television Society's events free of charge, sign up as full RTS member for £65 per year by direct debit (or £82 per year by cheque or credit/debit card).

Full members enjoy a range of benefits that include: affiliate membership to The Hospital Club, a private members club and bar for people in the creative industries; membership of On The 7th members club in MediaCity UK; plus discounts at restaurants, stores and attractions across the UK.

Visit: www.rts.org.uk.

RTS event 'Humans... Anatomy of a Hit!' Pictures: Paul Hampartsoumian

RTS Student Television Awards

The awards recognise the best television created by students across the UK and the Republic of Ireland. Anyone at college or university who can pick up a camera is invited to submit their work. Submissions are accepted from both individuals and groups.

Students can enter their work into six categories: Animation, Comedy and Entertainment, Drama, Factual, News or Short Feature.

All pieces entered are also eligible for Craft Skills Awards, which recognise the best editing,

camerawork and sound across all genres.

RTS Student Television Awards success stories include the 2016 Editing Craft Skills winner Philip Wood. His documentary *Chasing Dad* was picked up by BBC Three, and he was later nominated for Best Newcomer at the 'Oscars of Documentary', the Grierson Trust Awards.

The 2012 Animation category winner, Ainslie Henderson, went on to win a Bafta just a year after collecting his RTS award.

Visit rts.org.uk/studentawards2018

Adrian Lester has built a career acting in theatre, film and TV. He starred in BBC One drama *Hustle* for eight years, going on to direct an episode in 2012. More recently, he played Robert Carver in *Riviera* on Sky Atlantic, where he also directed two episodes, and he starred alongside John Simm in ITV thriller *Trauma*.

I've always loved acting, I just caught the bug. It's become an old saying now, but if you can make a living doing what you love, then you'll never have to work a day in your life. That has certainly been what it's felt like for me.

The hardest thing to deal with is what happens when you're not able to work, and you either have to take another job or just be frustrated and wait. There's all sorts of disappointments waiting for you, and I think the measure of professionalism in our career is how you handle disappointments, not how you handle success.

Actors have to seal themselves in a little bubble, so that they can live in a world of imagination. They draw on emotions and ignore the cables, the lights, the cameras, the runners and so on. The director has to do almost the complete opposite. While shooting a script out of sequence, they need to have a clear vision of what element of the story's being told at which time, and how we need to tell it.

I've always been a bit of a director, I just didn't know it. By the time I'd been working on *Hustle* for five or six years, the technicalities were in my bones, I knew the language of the show, and I really wanted to have a crack at directing. It took me a while to convince myself that I should push for it, and then, in the pushing, it took me a while to convince the producer that I was working with that I was serious, and that I wasn't just going to muck it up. I won't ever forget the trust the team placed in me.

Switching between acting and directing in the same production is a very complicated dance.

You're switching on and off, in terms of your bubble as an actor, and your awareness as a director. For me, it's like playing a large role on stage, because you are constantly in and out of that awareness of being in the bubble and yet being onstage in front of an audience, repeating what direction you've been given, what positions you have to hit, but, at the same time, disappearing inside your own emotional thought process.

There are just two things that will help you on set, whatever job you're doing: One, be good at what you do. Two, be there for the people that work with you. If you can be counted on and you can do your task well, then you should have no problem.

Code of conduct

Don't just be good at your job – be good to your colleagues, says Adrian Lester

Sky

Adrian Lester in *Riviera*



From left to right, starting with top row: Ant and Dec at the RTS Programme Awards | Adam Bolton | @ed.gov | @paulhiphop | @samanthgill | @royaltelevision | @kirtb | @neilfair | @paulhiphop | Julie Walters receives Lifetime Achievement Award | @Alan_Measles | Tom Braddy at the RTS Television Journalism Awards | @ed.gov | Taskmaster table at the RTS Programme Awards & Grayson Perry at the RTS Programme Awards | @justinebower | Sue Perkins at the RTS Futures Christmas quiz | @paulhiphop | Television magazine | @royaltelevision | Peter Morgan | @royaltelevision | @royaltelevision

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