

## PRE-PRODUCTION TIPS

### Team Work

- Presume positive intentions
- Pause before speaking
- Paraphrase what the last person said before giving your own ideas
- Be patient
- Be proactive
- Treat each other with kindness
- Allow the director to lead
- The director should listen and take advice from the team

### 64 Hour Sample Schedule

#### Friday:

30 – 45 minutes:	Team brainstorming
15 – 30 minutes:	Pitch to the writer
3 hours:	Writing
15 minutes:	Cast read-thru
15 minutes:	Notes with director and writer only
30 minutes:	Rewrite
2 hours:	Script breakdown
	Shot list
	Storyboarding
	Casting
	Location scouting
	Production planning

Saturday:

Shoot all day

Prepare to wrap shooting no later than 7:00 pm

Being logging and importing footage at 7:00 pm

Sunday:

Edit all day

### Screenwriting

- Use [www.celtx.com](http://www.celtx.com)
- Have a beginning, middle and an end! Have a clear and simple story!
- Introduce characters early and clearly. Be creative with how you do it!
- Don't overwrite.
- Describe action visually – describe what's happening on the screen.
- Keep it simple!
- What resources do you have before you start writing?
- Consider 1 master location.
- Consider telling the story in 1 or 2 scenes.

### Handouts

- Use the provided handouts:
  - Script breakdown – use 1 handout per page
  - Shot list – fill out once the script is completed (you can also “bracket” your script)
  - Continuity log – assign a script supervisor to make sure you that you've shot the entire script and logged all the shots

## PRODUCTION TIPS

### Directing

- Scene Breakdown – conduct a scene breakdown as soon as you have a completed script using the worksheet in your binder.
  - Every time there's a change in location AND/OR time, that's a new scene.
  - "Title" the scene so everyone knows what the main point of the scene is.
  - For example, "The Lie" or "The Confrontation" or "The Confession"
- Blocking
  - Keep the blocking simple
  - "Walk and Talk" – having characters walk and talk is great for this medium
  - "Drive and Talk" – same as "Walk and Talk"
  - Simple changes in position – move from one location in a room to another
  - Think about logical, natural movement. What would naturally happen in the scene?
  - Activities – what are the characters doing in the scene? It doesn't have to be connected to what they're saying. Playing chess, washing dishes, etc.

### Acting

- Keep your pacing up.
- Think about your objectives in the scene and go for it!
- Keep high stakes in the scenes!
- What are your relationships with the other characters?
- Bring your acting down to the size of the screen – this is not the stage!

- Focus on what's happening inside and go after your objective!
- Give it a beat after the director says "Action" before you start acting.
- Keep acting no matter what until you hear the actor call "Cut"
- Don't break the 4<sup>th</sup> wall and look at the camera.

### Sound

- Your audio is the most important technical thing for you to consider to make your film look and sound professional!!
- Listen to your space!!!
- Don't record in a space that has too much white noise or background noise. Listen for electronic hums, the sound of the freeway, neon lighting, airplanes, etc.
- Unplug as many electronic devices as you can.
- Record 30 seconds of "room tone" where no one speaks or moves. It's a neutral "background" noise which you can loop under your scene to provide auditory continuity.
- Add in sound effects (like a radio or people talking in a café) during the editing process. When you're directing, it should only be the actors speaking. Everyone else is miming talking.

### Lighting

- Use natural lighting whenever possible.
- Be careful about direct sunlight. Consider shooting at dawn or dusk
- Avoid shots in ½ shade, ½ sunlight
- Beware backlight from windows when indoors
- Avoid continuous shots in which the camera moves from the outside to the inside

- Key light – primary light source
- Fill light – light from the opposite side, much more subtle, fills in subject
- Highlight – light from behind and overhead to highlight the subject

### Camera

- Hold your camera steady!!!!!!
- Don't shake the camera before or after the scene! Hold it as steady as possible.
- Practice your camera movements (pans, tilts, tracking ...)
- Camera settings:
  - 24 FPS IPB (Slow motion should be 60 FPS)
  - Shutter 50 (Slow motion should set the shutter at 120)
  - ISO Outdoor shot – 100
  - ISO Indoor shot – 160
  - Adjust your F-Stop accordingly
  - Auto white balance

### Coverage

- Every scene must have a master shot of the entire scene!!!
- Additional shots which you should get:
  - Over the shoulder of each subject
  - Close up of each subject
  - Extreme close up of each subject
  - Establishing shot (usually external shot of the location)
  - Insert shots (close up shots of activities or important business)
- Choose interesting camera angles

- Shots from slightly overhead can make a subject seem weaker
- Shots from slightly below can make a subject seem more powerful
- Consider a second master shot with an interesting angle (extreme overhead or extreme below)
- Don't violate the 180 degree rule

### Producing

- Locations
- Costumes
- Props
- Production Design (dressing the set)
- Food
- Transportation
- Communication
- Script Supervision

### Shooting Protocol

1. "Quiet on set!"
2. "Rolling"
3. "Sound speeding"
4. "Slate"
  - a. Read the slate (scene and take), then clap it shut
5. "Set"
6. "Action"
7. "Cut"

## POST-PRODUCTION TIPS

### Importing

You will each be given an external hard drive formatted for a Mac. The drive has the following folders:

- Footage
  - Save all of your raw footage from the camera in this folder
- Audio
  - Save all of your external audio files (from a Zoom recorder) in this folder
- Project Files
  - Save your Adobe Premiere project file in this folder
- Exports
  - Save your exports in this folder

### Editing

- Editing is the “3<sup>rd</sup> Rewrite”. The director needs to let the editor cut the story together. This is the third time the script is written. Don’t be afraid to trim the story, make it tighter and stronger.
- “Cut In” – Move closer in as the scene progresses
- A traditional edit of a scene follows this progression:
  - Establishing shot
  - Master shot
  - Over the shoulder shot
  - Close up shot
  - Extreme close up
- Use the best audio for as much of the shot as possible.

- Transitions
- “J Cut” – Use audio to cut from scene to scene.
  - Start the audio first from the next scene before you visually cut to that scene. You can also do this in a blackout – begin the audio first and then fade up or cut in to the visual.
- “Match Cut” – Visually match shots (cut from a donut to the moon)
- Parallel Editing – cut back and forth between two stories or events simultaneously
- Montage over music can also help tell a story
- Cut in late, cut out early – what do you need to tell the story

### Saving

- Save early and often
  - Hit “Cmd S” after every edit
- Save multiple versions
  - You can create a rough edit of a scene, name the sequence, duplicate the sequence and then refine your edit with the new sequence without losing the rough edit.

### Exporting

- Export your film using the drop down menus in the Export dialogue box as follows:
- Format:           H.264
- Preset:           HD 1080p 23.976
- Output name:   Name your film (“My Film”)
  - After naming the film, click “Browse”
  - Find and open the external hard drive on the far left in the pop up window
- Within the external hard drive, navigate to the folder labeled “Exports” and export your film there.



Important Notes

- WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO EDIT YOUR FILM HOWEVER WE SEE FIT. We may edit your film for any reason including but not limited to offensive content, confusing sequences, poor audio leveling, pacing issues, violating the 180 rule, over or under exposure of shots and lack of effective transitions between shots. We're not trying to override your creative vision – we are only concerned with making the films presentable.
- Do not include a blooper reel with your film – it will be cut.
- Include credits and thank your parents, crew, cast and staff

AND REMEMBER ...

Listen to each other

Collaborate

Presume positive intentions

Be patient

Compromise

Have fun!!