



Learn about the Film & Video industry, the types of positions available, and how to get the training you need to launch your career for success.



# The Ultimate Career Guide For The **Film & Video Industry**

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# So you want to join the **Film & Video Industry...**

Just what does it mean to study Film and Video Production, and what do professionals in the Film and Video Industry do?



In this fast-paced, exciting field, you'll need to bring both your artistic vision and your technical expertise to the creation of film and video content.

Film and Video Production centers around the planning, shooting, and editing of footage for film, television, commercials, and much more. The Film and Video Industry is vast and varied, employing everyone from editors to directors to location scouts – so teamwork is essential to the success of any project!

# The top 10 most common positions our graduates pursue in the **Film and Video Industry**

## 1. PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Taking a gig as a PA is a great way to gain experience with a full array of production personnel. PAs are essential to the success of a production, and that can mean anything from making sure that everyone gets lunch to tidying the set after a shoot. Whether you are assigned to the set or the office, you are the glue that holds a production together, taking on a variety of tasks each day that keep the production process running smoothly.

## 2. VIDEOGRAPHER

Videographers film and edit anything and everything: documentaries, commercials, online content, even weddings and plays. When working solo, videographers are typically responsible for all aspects of a shoot - recording, lighting and audio setups, and editing.

## 3. ASSISTANT EDITOR

Assistant editors prepare footage for the editor to work on each day, check for continuity and synchronization within the project, and maintain a balanced and structured environment in the editing room. He or she also receives and interprets communications from the crew so that the editor can focus on the job at hand, and keeps notes on all aspects of the editing process. Sometimes assistant editors are given the responsibility of making rough cuts, and even making creative decisions for the editor so that everything stays on schedule.

## 4. ASSISTANT CAMERA OPERATOR

Assistant camera operators take care of many of the practical elements involved in rendering the director's vision with technical precision. While camera operators monitor the set, lighting, rigs, and camera settings, assistants work to prepare, set up, and position the equipment itself. Camera assistants fulfill a variety of roles, but the cameras are always the most important things: cleaning, maintaining, preparing and packing equipment is almost always up to the assistant camera operator.

## 5. GRIP

Grips must provide ways of securing the cameras so that everything is safe and sturdy and the shot can be achieved smoothly and successfully. Grips analyze the needs of a project, and depending upon their findings they will hire or create the equipment necessary to complete complex shots and camera movements. There are different roles for grips: the Key Grip supervises all grip crews and equipment, the Best Boy oversees administrative duties and keeps an eye on workplace safety standards and procedures, and the Dolly Grip operates the camera dolly, physically pushing and pulling camera rigs in concert with the camera operators.

## 6. BOOM OPERATOR

Boom operators assist the production sound mixer by operating a boom microphone or placing lavalier microphones in the correct spots around the set. The best boom ops have an understanding of lighting and framing, which helps them successfully place or hold the microphone out of shot. When operating the boom mic itself, operators get the chance to look over the dialog of the scene beforehand so that they can anticipate how to move the microphone: it's a skill that takes time to develop, but is highly prized by experienced directors!

## 7. SCREENWRITER

Screenwriters map out a story, scene, or sequence before production begins. Early versions of a script will describe scenarios in detail, including physical environments and moods of characters, and final, "shooting scripts" will include lighting, camera, and shot instructions for the crew. Screenwriters are creative and dedicated, sometimes working with directors and performers to hone the images, actions, and dialog included in a script.

## 8. LOCATION SCOUT/MANAGER

Location managers search for the perfect shooting location and make the arrangements to reserve it for a shoot. They work with property managers and visit all kinds of sites according to the needs of a script. The location managers make sure that everything looks exactly right on set, and that everything can be undone to return a location to its original appearance once the shoot is finished.

## 9. VIDEO TECHNICIAN

Video technicians are crucial when looking at live production as opposed to digital filmmaking. They are on site during live entertainment or a theatre performances, maintain and operating video production equipment under the supervision of a technical director. The equipment used may include video cameras, screens, projectors, media servers, and the grip kit.

## 10. CASTING ASSISTANT

Casting is one of the most important parts of film production, and casting assistants are invaluable help to casting directors in the task of filling dozens, even hundreds of parts. Casting assistants sometimes operate the cameras for auditioners or read scripts with actors. Other times, casting assistants may keep resumes in order and/or monitor the audition process. Casting assistants often work to create short-lists of actors for the casting director's consideration in different roles.

# So you want to join the **Film & Video Industry...**

## **Starting Out**

Most people begin a career in the Film and Video Industry with a passion for movies, music videos, or television.

So you have the passion, where do you go from there?



## **Take a look at a few of the lesser-known areas you can explore with a background in Film and Video Production**

- **Lighting or set designer**
- **Colorist**
- **Educational media designer**
- **Video game designer or consultant**
- **Cinema archivist**
- **Film, television reviewer**

There are many other options for working in film and video in today's market, however, and an aspiring filmmaker does not necessarily have to rely on Hollywood to get work! Local commercials, promotional videos, event capture, and indie production are valuable options for F.I.R.S.T. Institute's Film and Video grad

## **Get the Skills**

The first step toward landing the gig of your dreams is getting a solid education from an accredited institution. With solid technical knowledge and experience under your belt, you'll be way ahead of the game when you start looking for your first position.

## **Get the Internship**

Internships are a fantastic way to get familiar with a professional environment, make contacts and network within the industry, and show yourself to your best advantage. At F.I.R.S.T. Institute, your internship is an integral part of your coursework, and sometimes students find that this internship leads directly to their first job after graduation.

## **Learn on the Job**

Taking a position as an assistant is the perfect opportunity to watch the experts in action and strengthen your skills. A good assistant is indispensable and the more you learn here, the better you'll know what to expect and how to instruct your future assistants!



## Where Do I Find the Higher Paying Jobs?

Like any job in the entertainment sector, the jobs that pay the most are in the major cities. In the largest cities, you'll find venues like:

- **TV broadcast stations**
- **Filmmaking studios/lots**
- **Production companies**
- **Convention centers**
- **Sports arenas**
- **Churches**
- **Hotels**

But that doesn't mean that you can't work closer to home! Every city in the U.S. holds opportunities in film and video production. For example, local productions and independent filmmakers must have crews, and live events and shows require video professionals: your skills are needed wherever you go!

## Career Development Tools

There are some essential tools to keep in your back pocket as you conduct your job search. Not only will these things show that you understand how to operate professionally, they will serve as calling cards for your creative abilities.



## Cover Letter and Resume

Your cover letter explains who you are and why you are great for the position you're applying for, and your resume proves it! This is where you can get your foot in the door, show your professionalism, and set yourself up for an interview.

## Business Cards

They might seem a little old-fashioned at first, but business cards are still a must-have for networking and getting your name out there. If you meet a person that is interested in your work, you want to give them a quick, clean reminder of who you are and how they can find you – you do not want to just scribble your name and number on a random piece of paper! People do business with those they believe they can rely on. Business cards show care and attention to detail, and can be personalized to reflect your professional character.

## Websites and Online Profiles

One of the best things to list on your business card is your website! All online profiles should lead back to your website, where you can showcase your best work. Having a website shows your commitment to your craft, and allows you to direct potential business so that they can see you in your best light.

## Demo Reels

Your demo reel is one of the most important career development tools you will have. More than anything else, your reel shows who you are as a person, as an artist, and as a professional. This is your personal commercial, so keep it concise and make sure that it tells a viewer exactly what you want them to know about your technique, skill, and personal flair.

## The Education you need to succeed!

Gaining your education from F.I.R.S.T. Institute will prepare you with the tools needed to successfully launch your career in the Film and Video Industry.



With such a wide field to work in and so many options to choose from, the best way to start a career in the Film and Video Industry is to get educated in the latest technologies and techniques.

The Film and Video Production Program here at F.I.R.S.T. Institute focuses on giving you the tools and personalized attention you need to succeed in this industry.

As the entertainment industry continues to expand, other industries that employ film and video professionals are always looking for new talent.

This means that your skills will be in demand, but it also means that there will be more competition in the field.

As the job market follows its projected growth in the entertainment industry, employers are looking for the most experienced and qualified candidates to work on their projects.

This is where your training and background become important. Not only will getting an education prepare you for the practical and professional challenges ahead, your confidence in articulating your skills will grow. Other professionals will speak your language. You will have a great solid understanding of your field, with the beginnings of a network already in place when you graduate.

Investing in your education is the best thing you can do to prepare for your career, learn the tricks of the trade, speak the language of engineers, get real experience, and prepare your portfolio for success. Start your new career path with F.I.R.S.T. Institute today!

Warmest Regards,  
F.I.R.S.T. Institute

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