

#### 4.9 HAND-DRAWN STORYBOARD

The hand-drawn storyboard shows the major visualization points and sometimes lists the key audio sections or the shot sequence. The tilted rectangle in shot 334 indicates a canted (sideways tilted) camera.

#### Careful Roadways PSA



#### 4.10 COMPUTER-GENERATED STORYBOARD

The computer-generated storyboard has 3D graphics that can be used to create a variety of exterior and interior environments in which images of people can be placed.



people who make decisions about the commercial see the individual shots and their intended sequence.

Storyboards are also used for other types of single-camera productions that contain a great number of especially complicated discontinuous shots or shot sequences. A good storyboard offers immediate clues to certain production requirements, such as general location, camera position, approximate focal length of the lens, method of audio pickup, cutaways, amount and type of postproduction, talent actions, set design, and hand props.

### Marking the Script

Proper marking of a script will aid you greatly in multi-camera directing from the control room or on-location. In control room directing, you need to coordinate many people and machines within a continuous time frame. The marked script becomes a road map that guides you through the intricacies of a production. Although there is no single correct way to mark a script, certain conventions and standards have been established. Obviously, a fully scripted show requires more precise cueing than does an interview that is directed from a simple show format.

Live productions or uninterrupted recordings of live productions directed from the control room in a continuous time frame need a more carefully marked script than do shows that are recorded for postproduction editing. But even in discontinuous single-camera productions, a well-marked script will help you remember camera and talent positions and make your directing more exacting. It also helps in finding the right clips in postproduction.

### Script marking for instantaneous editing (switching)

Whatever system of script marking you choose or develop, it must be clear, readable, and above all consistent. Once you arrive at a working system, stick with it. As in musical notation, where you can perceive whole passages without reading each individual note, the script-marking system enables you to interpret and react to the written cues without having to consciously read each one. The three figures on pages 71 to 73 provide examples of script marking. **SEE 4.11-4.13**

Take a look at the markings in figure 4.11 again and compare them with those in figures 4.12 and 4.13. Which script seems cleaner and more readable to you?

The script in figure 4.11 shows information that is more confusing than helpful. By the time you have read all the cue instructions, you will certainly have missed part of or all the action and perhaps even half of the talent's lines. You do not have to mark all stand-by cues or any other obvious cues that are already implied. For example, "ready"

cues are always given before a cue, so they need not be part of your script markings.

In contrast, the markings in figures 4.12 and 4.13 are clean and simple. They are kept to a minimum, and there is little writing. You are able to grasp all the cues quickly without actually reading each word. As you can see, the cues in figure 4.12 provide the same information as those in figure 4.11, but they allow you to keep track of the narration, look ahead at upcoming cues, and especially watch the action on the preview monitors. Let us now highlight some of the qualities of a well-marked script from a director's point of view (refer to figure 4.12).

■ All action cues are placed before the desired action.

■ If the shots or camera actions are clearly described in the video column (page-left) or the audio cues in the audio column (page-right), simply underline or circle the printed instructions. This keeps the script clean and uncluttered. If the printed instructions are hard to read, do not hesitate to repeat them with your own symbols.

■ If the script does not indicate a particular transition from one video source to another, it is always a cut. A large handwritten 2 next to a cue line means that the upcoming transition is a cut to camera 2. It also implies a "ready 2" before the "take 2" call.

■ If the show requires rehearsals, do preliminary script marking in pencil so that you can make quick changes without creating a messy or illegible script. Once you are ready for the dress rehearsal, however, you should have marked the script in bold letters. For complex productions, have the associate director and the floor manager copy your markings onto their own scripts.

■ Mark the cameras by circled numbers all in one row. This allows you to see quickly which camera needs to be readied for the next shot.

■ In addition to the camera notation, number the shots in consecutive order, starting with 1, regardless of the camera you use for the shot. These numbers will not only help you ready the various shots for each camera but also make it easy to create a shot sheet for each camera. **SEE 4.14** You can now easily delete or add shots for the cameras. All you need to do is say, "delete shot 89," and camera 2 will delete the shot with Yolanda pacing back and forth.

■ You may want to devise a symbol that signifies action, such as someone coming through the door, walking over to the map, sitting down, or getting up. In figure 4.13 this cue is a handwritten arrow (➔)

| VIDEO  | AUDIO   |
|--|---|
| Effects  |   |
| Wipe to: SERV 03, CLIP 5 SOS (showing a series of paintings from realism to expressionism) | AUDIO IN-CUE: "ALL THE PAINTINGS WERE DONE BY ONE ARTIST... PICASSO"  |
| MS Barbara by the easel  | OUT-CUE: "...PHENOMENAL CREATIVE FORCE"   |
| CU of painting   | But even Picasso must have had some bad days and painted some bad pictures. Take a look. The woman's hands are obviously not right. Did Picasso deliberately distort the hands to make a point? I don't think so. |
| Key effects  |   |
| SERV 03, CLIP 9 SOS  | IN-CUE: "DISTORTION MEANS POWER. THIS COULD HAVE BEEN PICASSO'S FORMULA..."   |
| CU Barbara   | OUT-CUE: "...EXPRESSIVE POWER THROUGH DISTORTION IN HIS LATER PAINTINGS."   |
|  | But the formula "distortion means power" does not always apply. Here again it seems to weaken the event. Take a look at...  |

*Handwritten notes in red:*

- Ready on effects
- Take effects
- Ready to wipe to Server 3, clip 5
- Take Server 3, clip 5
- Track up on clip 5
- Ready camera 2
- Cue Barbara and take camera 2
- Ready camera 3 on the easel - closeup
- Take camera 3
- Ready to take Server 3, clip 9 SOS
- Take Server 3, clip 9 and sound on source up
- Ready camera 2
- Cue Barbara and take camera 2

*Handwritten notes in black:*

- Insert time
- 4:27 min

### 4.11 BAD SCRIPT MARKING

This script is marked with too much unnecessary information that makes it hard to read.



VIDEO

Effects

Wipe to: SERV 03,  
CLIP 5 SOS  
(showing a series  
of paintings from  
realism to  
expressionism)

MS Barbara by  
the easel

CU of  
painting

Key effects

SERV 03, CLIP 9 SOS  
4:27

CU Barbara

AUDIO

AUDIO IN-CUE: "ALL THE PAINTINGS  
WERE DONE BY ONE ARTIST...  
PICASSO"

OUT-CUE: "...PHENOMENAL  
CREATIVE FORCE"

But even Picasso must have had some  
bad days and painted some bad pictures.  
Take a look. The woman's hands are  
obviously not right. Did Picasso  
deliberately distort the hands to make  
a point? I don't think so.

Look at the outline. He obviously  
struggled. The line is unsure, and  
he painted this section over at least  
three times. Because the rest of the  
painting is so realistically done, the  
distorted hands seem out of place.  
This is quite different from his later  
period, when he distorted images to  
intensify the event.

IN-CUE: "DISTORTION MEANS POWER.  
THIS COULD HAVE BEEN PICASSO'S  
FORMULA..."

OUT-CUE: "...EXPRESSIVE POWER  
THROUGH DISTORTION IN HIS LATER  
PAINTINGS."

But the formula "distortion means  
power" does not always apply. Here  
again it seems to weaken the event.  
Take a look at...

#### 4.12 GOOD SCRIPT MARKING OF A/V FORMAT

This script is clearly marked and can be easily read by the director.

SCENE 6

A FEW DAYS LATER. INTERIOR. CITY HOSPITAL  
EMERGENCY WAITING ROOM. LATE EVENING.

YOLANDA is anxiously PACING back and forth in the  
hospital hallway in front of the emergency room. She has  
come straight from her job to the hospital. We see the  
typical hospital traffic in an emergency room. A DOCTOR  
(friend of CHUCK'S) PUSHES CARRIE in a wheelchair down  
the hall toward YOLANDA.

CARRIE

(in wheelchair, but rather cheerful)

Hi, Mom!

YOLANDA

(anxious and worried)

Carrie--are you all right? What happened?

CARRIE

I'm OK. I just slipped.

DOCTOR (simultaneously)

She has a sprained right wrist. Nothing serious...

CARRIE

Why is everybody making such a big deal out of it?

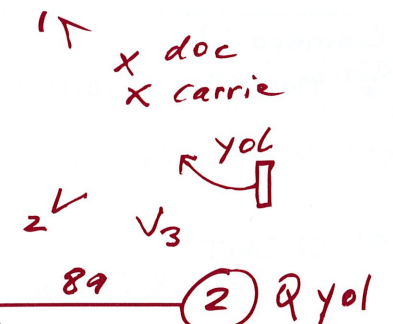
YOLANDA

(cutting into both CARRIE'S and DOCTOR'S lines)

Does it hurt? Did you break your arm?

#### 4.13 GOOD SCRIPT MARKING OF SINGLE-COLUMN FORMAT

The marking on this multicamera single-column drama script shows the cameras used, the shot number, the type of shot, and the major actions. Note the blocking sketch at the beginning of this scene.





| Camera 2 |                           |
|----------|---------------------------|
| Shot #   | Hospital scene 6          |
| 89       | MS Yolanda Follow         |
| 91       | 2-Shot<br>Carrie & Doctor |
| 94       | O/S Yolanda               |

#### 4.14 SHOT SHEET FOR CAMERA 2

■ If there are several moves by the talent, draw little maps (see figure 4.13). Such blocking sketches are usually more helpful for recalling talent moves, camera positions, and traffic than are storyboard sketches of shot compositions.

**Script marking for postproduction editing** The marking of the script for discontinuous takes consists of a careful breakdown and indication of the various scenes, their locations (hospital, front entrance), and principal visualizations (camera point of view, field of view). You then number the scenes in the proposed production sequence, ending up with a list of scenes that refers to the original script by page number. Here is an example:

| LOCATION                | SCENE | SCRIPT PAGES |
|-------------------------|-------|--------------|
| Hospital corridor       | 6     | 41–47        |
|                         | 7     | 48–55        |
| Emergency room entrance | 3     | 5–7          |
|                         | 14    | 102–10       |
| Yolanda's kitchen       | 14    | 2–4          |

In the script itself, you are free to use whatever markings you prefer. When video-recording discontinuous takes for postproduction, you obviously have more time

to consult the script than during a live or live-recorded production. For discontinuous video-recording, it may help to mark the talent blocking on the script as well as draw next to the dialogue small storyboard sketches that show unusual shot framings. Such sketches assist in recalling what you had in mind when preparing the script. Some film directors, such as Steven Spielberg, storyboard almost every shot of the entire movie before shooting a single frame. Cinema directors often use a special and more detailed shot and scene breakdown, called mark-ups, which they can use for the actual production and especially for postproduction editing.<sup>3</sup>

As you can see, the more time and effort you devote to such preproduction details, the less time and effort you will have to expend during the actual video-recording sessions. Production efficiency does not mean to hurry through a production regardless of quality; it means extensive preparation.

3. You can find such mark-ups in film production books. For example, see Michael Rabiger and Mick Hurbis-Cherrier, *Directing: Film Techniques and Aesthetics*, 5th ed. (Burlington, MA: Focal Press, 2013).

#### MAIN POINTS

- ▶ A clear understanding of the defined process message (desired effect) will help you decide on the most appropriate type of production (single-camera or multicamera, studio or field, recorded or live, continuous or discontinuous takes for post-production) and the medium requirements.
- ▶ A careful script analysis should lead to a locking-in point—an especially vivid visual or aural image—that determines the subsequent visualizations and sequencing.
- ▶ Visualization—mentally seeing and hearing key images—is crucial for the successful translation of script to screen event.
- ▶ The floor plan or location sketch enables the director to plan camera and talent positions and traffic.
- ▶ The storyboard shows drawings or computer-generated images of key visualization points of an event with accompanying audio information as well as the proper sequencing of shots.
- ▶ When preparing the show for the actual production day, you must interpret the floor plan or location sketch and mark the script.
- ▶ The important aspects of good script marking are readability and consistency.
- ▶ Precise and easy-to-read script markings help you and other production personnel anticipate and execute a great variety of cues.

## SECTION

# 4.2

## Communication and Scheduling

This section deals with the functions of the director's support staff and the necessity of working with the producer on facilities requests, managing schedules, and communicating with talent and production personnel. **ZVL3** PROCESS → People → nontechnical | technical

### ▶ SUPPORT STAFF

Floor manager, production assistant, and associate director

### ▶ FACILITIES REQUESTS, SCHEDULES, AND COMMUNICATION

Facilities request, production schedule, time line, and the director's communication

### SUPPORT STAFF

The director's support staff depends on the size of the production company. Some documentaries are done by a three-person team: the producer/director; the **DP** (director of photography), who runs the camera and does the lighting; and the audio person. Many field productions are accomplished with only a two-person team—the videographer and the talent—whereby either one or both act as director. In a television station or a larger independent production company, a director will have the support of at least two or three people: the floor manager, the production assistant, and, in larger productions, an associate or assistant director.

#### Floor Manager

The floor manager is also called TV floor manager, floor director, stage manager, or unit manager, even though the unit manager functions more like a production manager or line producer who takes care of the daily production and budgetary details. The floor manager's primary functions are to coordinate all activities on the "floor" (studio

or on-location site) and relay the cues from the director to the talent.

Before the production the floor manager needs to oversee and help the floor crew set up scenery, place set and hand props, dress the set, and put up displays. During rehearsals and the production, the floor manager must coordinate the floor crew and the talent and relay the director's talent cues. After the production he or she is responsible for striking the set and the props or restoring the remote production site to its original condition. Note that in large motion picture production, most of the floor manager's duties listed here are assigned to specific production people who are experts in a particular field, such as property master or set decorator.

The following are some points to keep in mind when "managing the floor."

■ Unless you are doing a routine show that is produced on a permanent set (one that is not struck after each show), as floor manager you need to obtain a detailed floor plan and prop list. Check with the art director and the director about any specific features or changes. Get a marked script from the director so that you can anticipate talent and camera traffic. Have the director look at the set before fine-tuning the lighting. Once the lighting is complete, even minor set changes can require major lighting adjustments. When the set is put up and dressed, take a still shot of it. Such a record is much more readily accessible than a video recording.

■ You are responsible for having all hand props on the set and in operating condition. For example, if the show involves a studio demonstration of a new laptop computer, run the specific series of computer programs a few times to see how it works. Hard-to-open jars or bottles are a constant challenge to the performer. Twist the lid of a jar slightly or loosen the bottle cap so that the talent can remove it without struggling. This small courtesy can prevent retakes and frayed nerves and is usually a quick way of establishing trust between you and the talent.

■ Check that the teleprompter works and that the correct copy is displayed.

■ If you use an on-camera slate or clapboard in the field, have it ready and filled out with the essential information. Have several pens available as well as a rag to erase the writing.

■ For complex productions study the marked script before the rehearsal and add your own cues, such as talent



entrances and exits and prop, costume, or set changes. In case of doubt, ask the director for clarification.

■ Introduce yourself to the talent and the guests and have a designated place for them to sit while waiting in the studio. Because most production people are quite busy (including the director and the producer), you are the one who must establish and maintain rapport with the talent and the guests throughout the production. Verify that they have signed the proper release forms and other necessary papers. Ask them periodically if they would like some water or coffee, whether they are comfortable, and if you can be of assistance. When working with outside talent, review your major cues with them (see chapter 15).

■ When using a teleprompter, ask the guest performers whether the font size is big enough and if its distance from the camera is tolerable.

■ During the rehearsal of a fully scripted show, follow the script as much as possible and anticipate the director's cues. Keep notes on especially difficult camera movements and talent actions. If the production is shot in segments for postproduction editing, pay particular attention to continuity of the talent's appearance, positions, and major moves.

■ Always carry a pen or pencil, a broad marking pen, rolls of masking and gaffer's tape, and a piece of chalk (for taping down props and equipment and for spiking—marking—talent and camera positions). Also have a large pad ready so that you can write out messages for the talent in case the interruptible foldback (IFB) system breaks down or is not used.

■ During camera rehearsal deliver all cues as though you were on the air, even if the director stands right next to you. You do not always have to remain next to the camera when cueing. As much as possible, position yourself so that you can see the talent's eyes. This is one of the reasons why you should not be tied to a studio camera's intercom outlet.

■ During the show do not cue on your own, even if you think the director has missed a cue. Rather, ask the director on the intercom whether you should give the cue as marked and rehearsed. If there are interruptions in the video-recording because some technical problems are being discussed in the control room, inform the talent about what is going on. Tell them they did a good job but that the director has to work out some technical details. If there are extended problem-solving interruptions, invite the talent to get out from under the lights and relax in the

break area you have set up for them in the studio—but don't let them wander off.

■ After the show thank the talent or guests and show them out of the studio. You then need to supervise the strike of the set in the studio or of the items set up on-location. Be careful not to drag scenery or prop carts across cables that might still be on the studio floor. Locate objects that were brought in by a guest and see to it that they are returned. If you shot indoors on-location, put things back as you found them. A small location sketch or photo will be of great help when trying to return things to the way they were. When shooting on-location do not forget that you are a guest operating in someone else's space.

Production Assistant

As a production assistant (PA), you must be prepared to do a variety of jobs—from duplicating and distributing the script, looking for a specific prop, and welcoming the talent to getting coffee, calling a cab, and taking notes for the producer and the director (unless the AD is taking notes). Usually, note taking is the PA's most important assignment. You simply follow the producer and/or director with a pad and pen and record everything they mumble to themselves or tell you to write down. During the "notes" breaks, you read back your notes item by item. When in the field, you may also have to keep a field log of all the production takes, which helps the postproduction editor locate shots on the recording media. **ZVL4** EDITING → Production guidelines → field log

Associate, or Assistant, Director

As an AD (associate, or assistant, director), you mainly assist the director in the production phase—the rehearsals and the on-the-air performance or recording sessions. In complex studio shows, a director may have you give most of the standby cues (for example: "Ready to cue Mary, ready 2 CU of John") and preset the cameras by telling the camera operators on the intercom the upcoming shots or camera moves. This frees up the director somewhat to concentrate more on the preview monitors and the talent's performance. Once the action is preset by you, the director then initiates it with the various action cues: "Ready 2, take 2," or, in fast dialogue, simply by snapping fingers for cutting from one camera to the other.

In elaborate EFPs or complicated studio productions, you may have to direct the run-throughs (rehearsals) for each take, which enables the director to stand back and observe the action on the field or line monitor.

The AD in digital cinema productions may also function as a facilitator of the production flow and occasionally as a second-unit director. The second unit consists of a smaller crew whose job it is to capture various inserts, such as establishing shots, certain close-ups, special-effect sequences, or other small scenes that do not involve major dialogue.

As an AD you are also responsible for the timing of the show segments and the overall show during rehearsals as well as during the actual production.

FACILITIES REQUESTS, SCHEDULES, AND COMMUNICATION

Now is the time for you, as the director, to double-check with the producer about various important tasks that should have been done in the preproduction phase, such as requesting the necessary facilities and scheduling.

Facilities Request

Even if in your operation it is the producer or engineering supervisor who requests and schedules the equipment and the facilities, you still need to verify with him or her that the facilities request actually includes all the equipment and technical facilities you may have added during your production preparations. Ask the technical director (TD) whether the final facilities request is meeting all the show's technical demands.

Production Schedule

Unless you are directing a routine show, such as the morning news, check with the producer about the production schedule—the calendar that shows the preproduction, production, and postproduction dates and who is doing what when and where. Most likely, the producer will have taken care of the production schedule, but you as the director will have to prepare the time line.

Time Line

In larger operations the daily time line is worked out by the production manager or line producer. In smaller production companies, the director or AD establishes the time line for a specific production day. Assuming that you as the director are responsible for the time line, verify with the producer whether the production schedule was actually delivered to the talent and all members of the production team. A simple telephone call by the PA will confirm this distribution and help you sleep better. **ZVL5** PROCESS → Phases → preproduction | production

As with every other aspect of television production, each production day is governed by strict time limits. Time lines differ considerably, depending on the complexity of the studio show or remote telecast. On a difficult remote, such as a parade through a narrow downtown street, you may need a whole day for the setup. The following examples are typical time lines for an interview and a one-hour soap opera segment.

**Time line: interview** This time line is prepared for a half-hour interview (actual length: 23 minutes), featuring two folk singers who have gained world fame because of their socially conscious songs. The singers, who accompany themselves on acoustic guitars, are scheduled to give a concert the following day on the university commons. Their contract does not allow the presence of television cameras during the actual concert, but they, their manager, and SAG-AFTRA (the talent union) agreed that the singers could come to the studio for a brief interview and play a few short selections.

The defined process message is relatively simple: to give viewers an opportunity to meet the two singers, learn more about them as artists and concerned human beings, and watch them perform.

To save time and money, the show is scheduled for a live-recording session. This means that the director will direct the show as though it were going on the air live, or at least with as few stop-downs (interruptions whereby the video recorder is stopped) as possible.

TIME LINE: INTERVIEW (JULY 15)

|                      |                                      |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 11:00 a.m.           | Crew call                            |
| 11:10–11:30 a.m.     | Tech meeting                         |
| 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. | Setup and lighting                   |
| 1:00–1:30 p.m.       | Lunch                                |
| 1:30–1:45 p.m.       | Production meeting: host and singers |
| 1:45–2:15 p.m.       | Run-through and camera rehearsal     |
| 2:15–2:25 p.m.       | Notes and reset                      |
| 2:25–2:30 p.m.       | Break                                |
| 2:30–3:15 p.m.       | Recording                            |
| 3:15–3:30 p.m.       | Spill                                |
| 3:30–3:45 p.m.       | Strike                               |

As you can see from this time line, a production day is divided into blocks of time during which certain activities take place.



**11:00 a.m. Crew call** This is the time the crew must arrive at the studio.

**11:10–11:30 a.m. Tech meeting** You start the day with a technical meeting during which you discuss with the crew the defined process message and the major technical requirements. One of these requirements is the audio setup because the singers are obviously interested in good stereo sound. You need different mics for the interview and for the performance area. You should also explain what camera shots you want. The sincerity of the artists and their guitar-playing skills are best conveyed by CUs and ECUs (extreme close-ups), and you may want to shift the attention from one singer to the other through a rack focus effect. The audio technician may want to discuss the specific mic setup with you, such as stand mics for the performance and wireless lavaliers for the singers' crossover. The TD (acting as studio crew chief) may ask about the desired lighting and the simultaneous recording of the show on DVD. If all goes well, you can hand the guests the DVDs right after the taping as a small thank-you gesture.

**11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. Setup and lighting** This should be sufficient time to set up the standard interview set, place the mics, and light the interview and performance areas. Although as director you are not immediately involved in this production phase, you might want to keep an eye on the setup so that you can make minor changes before the lighting is done.

**1:00–1:30 p.m. Lunch** Tell everyone to be back by 1:30 sharp—not 1:32 or 1:35—which means that everyone has to be able to leave the studio at exactly 1:00, even if there are still some technical details left undone. Minor technical problems can be solved during the production meeting with the host and the singers.

**1:30–1:45 p.m. Production meeting: host and singers** When the singers and their manager arrive at this meeting, they have already been introduced to the host by the producer or PA. Nevertheless, check that they have signed all the necessary papers. In this meeting confirm their musical selections and the running time for each. Discuss the opening, the closing, and the crossover to the performance area. Tell them some of your visualization ideas, such as shooting very tightly during especially intense moments in their songs and for intricate guitar sections.

**1:45–2:15 p.m. Run-through and camera rehearsal** Although the setup is relatively simple and there will be little camera movement during the songs, you need to

rehearse the crossovers from the interview set to the performance area and back. You may also want to rehearse some of the ECUs or the rack focus shots from one singer to the other. Then go through the opening and the closing with all facilities (theme music, credits, and name keys). Dictate to the PA any production problems you may discover during this rehearsal for the notes segment. This rehearsal is especially important for the audio engineer, who is trying to achieve an optimal sound pickup. Do not get upset when the audio technician repositions mics during the camera rehearsal. If all goes well, you may be done before 2:15 p.m.

**2:15–2:25 p.m. Notes and reset** You now gather the key production people—producer, AD, TD, audio technician, lighting director (LD), floor manager, and host—to discuss any production problems that may have surfaced during the camera rehearsal. Ask the PA to read the notes in the order written down. Direct the production team to take care of the various problems. At the same time, the rest of the crew should get the cameras into the opening positions, reset the pages of the CG, ready the video recorder and the DVD burner, and make minor lighting adjustments.

**2:25–2:30 p.m. Break** This short break will give everyone a chance to get ready for the recording. Don't tell the crew to "take five" but rather when to be back in the studio (at exactly 2:30).

**2:30–3:15 p.m. Recording** You should be in the control room and start both recorders no later than 2:35 p.m.—not 2:40 or 2:45. If all goes well, the half-hour show should be "in the can," or finished, by 3:15, including the stop-down time for the first crossover.

**3:15–3:30 p.m. Spill** This is a grace period because we all know that television is a complex, temperamental machine that involves many people. For example, you may have to redo the opening or the closing because the CG did not deliver the correct page for the opening credits or because the host gave the wrong time for the upcoming concert.

**3:30–3:45 p.m. Strike** During the strike time, you can thank the singers and their manager, the host, and the crew. Arrange for a playback in case they want to see and especially listen to the video recording right away. Play back the audio track through the best speaker system you have. All the while keep at least one eye on the strike, but do not interfere with it. Trust the floor manager and the crew to take down the set and clean the studio for the next production in the remaining 15 minutes.

One of the most important aspects of a time line is sticking to the time allotted for each segment. You must learn to get things done within the scheduled time block and, more importantly, to jump to the next activity at the precise time shown on the schedule regardless of whether you have finished your previous chores. Do not use up the time of a scheduled segment with the preceding activity. A good director terminates an especially difficult blocking rehearsal at midpoint to meet the scheduled notes and reset period. Inexperienced directors often spend a great amount of time on the first part of the show or on a relatively minor detail, then go on the air without having rehearsed the rest of the show. The time line is designed to prevent such misuse of valuable production time.

**Time line: soap opera** Here is an example of a time line for a more complicated one-hour soap opera or multi-camera situation comedy. Assume that the setup and the lighting were accomplished the night before (from 3:00 to 6:00 a.m.) and that some set changes will happen after 6:00 p.m. for the following day.

| AS THE SUN RISES SEGMENT 987 |                        |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| 6:00–8:00 a.m.               | Dry run—rehearsal hall |
| 7:30 a.m.                    | Crew call              |
| 8:00–8:30 a.m.               | Tech meeting           |
| 8:30–11:00 a.m.              | Camera blocking        |
| 11:00–11:30 a.m.             | Notes and reset        |
| 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.        | Lunch                  |
| 12:30–2:30 p.m.              | Dress rehearsal        |
| 2:30–3:00 p.m.               | Notes and reset        |
| 3:00–5:30 p.m.               | Recording              |
| 5:30–6:00 p.m.               | Spill                  |

As you can see, this time line leaves no time for you to think about what to do next. You need to be thoroughly prepared to coordinate the equipment, technical people, and talent within the tightly prescribed time frame. There is no time allotted for striking the set because the set stays up for the next day's production.

Director's Communication

Although the producer is responsible for maintaining the contact information of the talent and the technical and nontechnical production personnel, you as the director are responsible for getting the show done on time. You should therefore establish a routine procedure for communicating efficiently with all personnel involved in a day's production.

Note that such a double-check is necessary only when you work on onetime studio and field productions. If you do a routine show, you need to trust the producer or production manager to handle crew changes or substitutions for talent. Still you should have ready access to the same personnel information so that the PA can verify last-minute crew and talent substitutions. If you use e-mail for communication, request an immediate response from the recipient and always copy the producer.

Such communication verification is especially important if you are to direct a field production that needs access to restricted areas, such as a sports stadium. **ZVL6** PROCESS→ People→ nontechnical

MAIN POINTS

- ▶ The director's immediate support staff normally comprises a floor manager, a PA (production assistant), and, in larger productions, an AD (associate or assistant director).
- ▶ The facilities request is an essential communication device for procuring the necessary production facilities and equipment.
- ▶ The production schedule shows the preproduction, production, and postproduction dates and who is doing what when and where.
- ▶ The time line shows a breakdown of time blocks for various activities on the actual production day.
- ▶ To facilitate communication between the director and the technical and nontechnical personnel, the director must establish a specific routine and stick to it. E-mail messages must be immediately acknowledged by the recipient.

ZETTL'S VIDEO LAB



For your reference or to track your work, the Zettl's VideoLab program cues in this chapter are listed here with their corresponding page numbers.

- ZVL1** PROCESS→ Process introduction 56
- ZVL2** PROCESS→ Effect-to-cause→ basic idea | desired effect | cause 60
- ZVL3** PROCESS→ People→ nontechnical | technical 75
- ZVL4** EDITING→ Production guidelines→ field log 76
- ZVL5** PROCESS→ Phases→ preproduction | production 77
- ZVL6** PROCESS→ People→ nontechnical 79