

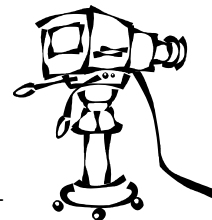


Bronx Community College Career Development Office

CAREER EXPLORATIONS NEWSLETTER

A Focus on Careers in Media and Communication

Television, Video, and Motion Picture Camera Operators and Editors



People employed as *television, video, and motion picture camera operators* "produce images that tell a story, inform or entertain an audience, or record an event." *Film and video editors* "edit soundtracks, film, and video for motion picture, cable, and broadcast television industries." To produce many informative and quality movies and commercials requires people to have technical expertise and creativity. Choosing the right equipment and having a good "eye" in presenting material that is interesting and will capture an audience are essential skills needed as well as having a steady hand to maneuver equipment around. People who record images on videotape are called *videographers* and are employed by independent television stations, large cable and television networks, or smaller, independent production companies for example. *Studio camera operators* usually work in a broadcast studio and usually videotape their subjects from a steady angle and *news camera operators* usually work as part of a reporting team. These are the people that many times capture the news images as they happen and they must be able to anticipate the action and act quickly. People that film movies are called *cinematographers*. *Steadicam operators* usually mount a harness and carry the camera on their shoulders to be able to have a steady picture while they move around capturing the events that happen.

The working environment of people employed in this field varies. People employed in the government, television, and cable networks usually work five days, forty hours per week. News camera operators usually work very long hours that vary and can be called in to work on a short notice. If news camera operators are covering a major event such as a presidential campaign or the Olympics, they must travel, stay at a hotel, and cover the event for a long period of time. Camera operators filming television events may need to travel to film where the event is being held.

Job opportunities and salaries in this field also varies. For instance, television, video, and motion picture camera operators held about 27,000 jobs in the year 2000 and film and video editors held about 16,000. One-fourth of camera operators were self-employed at that time. Median annual earnings for television, video, and motion picture camera operators were \$27,870 in the year 2000. The middle fifty percent earned between \$19,230 and \$44,150. The lowest ten percent earned less than \$14,130 and the highest ten percent earned more than \$63,690. Median annual earnings were \$31,560 in the motion production and services industry and \$23,470 in the radio and television broadcasting field. Median annual earnings for film and video editors were \$34,160 in 2000. The middle fifty percent earned between \$24,800 and \$52,000. The lowest ten percent earned less than \$18,970, and the highest ten percent earned more than \$71,280. Median annual earnings were \$36,770 in the motion production and services, which happens to also be the largest industry employing film and video editors.

The training and qualifications needed for this field are usually a good "eye," imagination, and creativity as well as a good technical understanding of camera operation. Also, relevant training must be completed through on the job training or college to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge needed for various positions. Importantly, people should subscribe to newsletters and magazines, join clubs and professional organizations where people can grow professionally and network with people in these industries (*see back page for a list of professional organizations and other key information*)

The competition for jobs in these professions will be fierce since the work is attractive to people. People interested in work-

Special points of interest:

- * The Career Resource Library has a collection of new audio and visual tapes, including "Getting The Job You Want" series where students have an opportunity to view a series of DVD's designed to help them get the job they want!
- * Students are able to use a variety of career assessments such as the *Self-Directed Search with Career Zone* to assess their interests, skills, and/or abilities in relation to career choice
- * An *On-Campus Recruitment Program* is available for students to speak to employers about career opportunities, and gain industry information
- * The Cooperative Work Experience Program allows students to gain invaluable experience, in a field of study, prior to graduation
- * Referrals are available for employment positions and so much more!
- * For more information, please come to the Career Development Office, in Laew Hall room 328 today!



Congratulations to **BCC student Marie Kouamenan** for receiving the Outstanding Customer Service commendation from the CUNY 3-1-1 Project! *Congrats Marie on Job Well Done!*

ing in these areas usually are very creative, highly motivated, able to adapt rapidly to changing technologies, and knowledgeable at operating a business. Having related work experience or training is also a plus for people who want to become camera operators. Job openings as camera operators and editors is expected to grow faster than the average for all occupations through the year 2010. The movie industry, especially the motion picture production and distribution is expected to grow rapidly and therefore, also the number of jobs as camera operators. Since the computer and the Internet provide additional sources to enhance movie production, camera operators will be needed to work for instance, with digital movies and the images which can be delivered into compact discs or over the Internet.

Keep in mind, many camera operators who work in film or video perform freelance work and for many of them who purchase their own equipment, they usually have a high expense to acquire and maintain it as well as the accessories.



Where can I begin to get a job in this field?

A good starting point is to network with as many employers as you feel can help you get started. Networking is "the process of deliberately establishing relationships to get career-related information or to alert potential employers that you are available for work." Networking will help you get the information you need and help you find out about jobs or internships that are available. Please remember that the process of networking begins with *you!* Nothing can happen if you do not initiate the first contact with an employer. In preparing for it, there are a couple of things that you should consider:

review your self-assessment, research on job sites and organizations, decide who it is you want to talk to, keep track of your efforts and create your self-promotion tools.

- ◆ In making a critical self-assessment (aside from taking a formal assessment through the Career Development Office), it is important that you are aware of your personal traits, personal values, economic needs, longer-term goals, skill base, preferred skills, and underdeveloped skills. When you are networking, you will need to honestly express some or all of these areas in relation to the job you are seeking.
- ◆ Research the jobs or organizations that you are interested in pursuing. Employers assisting you will expect that you have knowledge of the profession or industry you are looking to get into, including the working conditions, responsibilities, and other areas highlighted in this newsletter. *You can obtain additional information using the Career Resource Library in the Career Development Office.*
- ◆ Narrow down who you want to talk to in general. Please note, it is impossible to talk to every employer in the field! Decide who are the most important people that you hope to gain the most information. From there, develop a manageable list of contacts that you would like to network. Contacts can include past alumni, present and former supervisors, employers in your area or in other geographic areas, and professional associations and organizations.
- ◆ Try to develop a record-keeping system that will help you remember each and every person you meet. A good idea is to create a list on the computer with the person's name, address, telephone number, and purpose/information you gained.
- ◆ In creating tools to self-promote yourself to employers, you should consider the following two tools: your resume and cover letter and secondly, developing an "infomercial" assessing and conveying your abilities, interests and skills to employers. This can be said over the telephone or in-person. The "infomercial" usually is one-minute long and you should think about the goal you would like to accomplish and be able to express yourself clearly and in a convincing way. In getting started, you may want to write it out, practice it as if you were going to say it in a presentation, rewrite it, and practice it again so that you will feel comfortable expressing yourself freely and easily. Other tools you can use to self-promote yourself include portfolios, especially for people looking to go into the arts, writing professions, and teaching is very helpful. Portfolios can show examples of work, such as "photographs of projects or classroom activities, or certificates and credentials that are job related." Overall, be sure to be positive, have a professional demeanor and appearance, and make every opportunity count!

Professional Associations Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (also the Foundation for Independent Video and Film), 304 Hudson Street, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10013, Web site : www.aivf.org/index_basic.html, Services: training seminars, journals, resources guides, work referrals

American Society of Media Photographers, 150 N. Second Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106, Web site: www.asmp.org, Services: educational programs and seminars, publications

Radio and Television News Directors Foundation, 1000 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036, Web site: www.rtndf.org, Services: publications, career information, job placement, scholarships, internships

National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians Communications Workers of America (NABET/CWA), International, 501 Third Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001, Web site: <http://union.nabetcwa.org/nabet>, Services: publications, career information

Information for this newsletter was taken from "Great Jobs for Communication Majors," Blythe Camenson (2002) and the Enhanced Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2003 Edition