Workforce Development Strategy v2

April 18, 2025 – Prepared by Stephen Hall based on notes from Rob Hardy

Fundamental Premise

Screen-based production is an industrial process that requires well-trained personnel to work in a variety of roles that employ creative, business and technical capabilities to create a spectrum of motion picture products.

At one end of that spectrum are experimental films, independent films, and small commercial productions with budget levels ranging from a few thousand dollars to a few hundred thousand. At the other end are multi-million dollar productions that require companies to act as general contractors to create and deliver screen-based products to studios, distributors and streamers. Those general contractors (producers) hire a range of sub-contractors (crew members and specialized suppliers) to provide the skilled labour and specialized services required to produce products (movies and TV shows) which are distributed through markets and channels around the world.

Each motion picture project on that spectrum of possibilities, requires skilled workers who operate a variety of tools and machinery, to produce a product which is (most often) delivered digitally, and distributed to screens from as small as a phone to as large as an IMAX theatre.

The tools the workers use range in complexity from the lowly apple box, a deceptively simple yet incredibly versatile tool used for everything from propping, supporting, lifting, leveling, or sitting; to the LED volume, a large high-resolution digital screen that allows for in-camera visual effects.

Most of the "tools of the trade" for screen-based production are agnostic: the same production equipment might be used to make an experimental film crewed by non-union workers for a few thousand dollars; or a hundred million dollar movie crewed by IATSE, DGC and ICG members.

Production processes are also mostly agnostic: the correct way to set up a C-stand—a common piece of grip equipment used to hold lighting modifiers (flags, silks, reflector etc.) and small lights—is exactly the same regardless of whether it was set up by a non-union grip on an unscripted documentary series, or a unionized grip on Marvel movie.

Accordingly, the core competencies associated with the development of the skills required for *any* crew position on *any* screen-based production are not dependent on the kind of production, the size of the budget, or the union affiliation of the crew member.

This fundamental premise provides the basis for the approach to ScreenSask's strategy for workforce development, the implementation of which requires the establishment of a Workforce Development Taskforce.

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A Workforce Development Taskforce

In order for Saskatchewan's screen industry to thrive, it needs to develop its workforce. The following describes a proposed strategy for workforce development that is anchored by the fundamental premise described above, and would be guided by a taskforce composed of representatives from stakeholder groups that are directly or indirectly engaged with education and training for screen-based jobs in Saskatchewan. In addition to ScreenSask they include the DGC, IATSE 295, ICG 669, Saskatchewan Polytechnic, SIIT and the University of Regina. The 7-member Workforce Development Taskforce would proactively develop plans to:

1. Document competencies, both on set and off.
2. Identify targeted competency-based training modules (typically in the form of microcredentials).
3. Identify work-experience training opportunities on planned productions.

The proposed approach to workforce development is similar to other established industries like mining and energy, and relies on a competency-based training model.

Competency-Based Training

Competency-Based Training is a structured approach to workforce development that defines and verifies the specific skills required for each role in the industry. Rooted in models used in the skilled trades, this framework breaks down job functions into clearly articulated competencies—discrete tasks or areas of knowledge that a worker must master. Each set of competencies is documented in a chart—typically no more than one or two pages long—that outlines learning objectives, performance benchmarks, and methods of evaluation.

Competency-Based Training is modular and can occur through various modes, including classroom instruction, virtual workshops, on-set experiences, and advanced workshops or masterclasses. Competency sign-off is conducted by experienced professionals, often those who helped create or endorse the standards, ensuring credibility and consistency. This model promotes transparency, accountability, and adaptability, allowing workers to progress along flexible, stackable pathways while giving producers, line producers and production managers confidence in the qualifications of crew members.

The following outlines a tactical plan for the Workforce Development Taskforce to develop a Competency-Based Training Model that is designed to increase Saskatchewan's screen-based workforce capacity for the **next 3 months, 6 months, and 1 year**, with broader consideration for Years 2 and 3. The focus is on the practical implementation of the model, collaborating closely with industry representatives on the Workforce Development Taskforce to identify pathways, standardize training expectations, and create a sustainable ecosystem for skills development across the Saskatchewan screen industry.

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Training Strategy and Model

The proposed training approach is a competency-based framework modeled after trade certification systems, such as those used by the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission (SATCC).

The SATCC is an industry-led, arms-length government organization responsible for overseeing and administering the apprenticeship and trade certification system in Saskatchewan. In a typical apprenticeship model, approximately 85% of an apprentice's training occurs on the job under the supervision of certified journeypersons. The remaining 15% consists of theoretical and technical instruction provided by institutions such as Saskatchewan Polytechnic and regional colleges. This combination ensures that apprentices gain both practical experience and foundational knowledge in their chosen trades.

The SATCC employs competency charts as essential tools to guide and assess the progression of apprentices within their respective trades. This well-established process for training workers for industry aligns well with the typical development of a screen industry worker and provides structure and clarity to its training model. The goal of the proposed screen industry training model is for each role in the industry to be accompanied by a one or two-page Competency Chart, breaking down core skills into clearly defined, measurable units. Training will include:

- Foundational courses, and microcredentials (delivered virtually or in classroom)
- On-set experiential training (mentoring on productions)
- Advanced workshops and Master Classes

Each competency will be signed off by qualified professionals, typically those involved in designing the chart or vetted by the industry association (e.g., union representatives, experienced department heads). The screen industry competency charts serve as:

- A checklist of specific learning objectives for trainers.
- A record of individual trainee progress.
- A tool to ensure consistency and clarity across institutions.

It is critical that the unions, IATSE, DGC and ICG oversee and endorse the competency charts, either by creating them or reviewing and signing off on their content.

The development of Competency Charts creates clear objectives for training. The type of training, whether delivered online, in a classroom, or through mentorship, will depend on the desired competency. As described above, most of the competencies will be developed through hands-on, mentor-guided training delivered in work-experience programs administered by ScreenSask and supported by Creative Saskatchewan.

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Timeline and Tactics

First 3 Months

- Create a seven-member Workforce Development Taskforce with representatives from ScreenSask, DGC, IATSE, ICG669, Sask Polytechnic, SIIT and University of Regina.
- Develop a fully-costed implementation plan for Workforce Training & Skills Development.
- Identify sources of revenue to finance the plan and lobby for funding.
- Create a standardized template for competency charts that can draw from existing competency documentation such as those developed by Culture Works Canada[1], as well as existing union training plans, and other sources.
- Poll producers and industry representatives to identify 10 priority roles for training and skills development.
- Work with Training Taskforce representatives to draft versions of **training pathways** and **competency charts** for the 10 priority roles.
- Formalize pre-requisite requirements for all training modules—such as Sask Poly's Set Safety and Protocol (online) and DGC's Ultimate PA workshop (in person)

First 6 Months

- Finalize and publish the first 10 competency charts.
- Create Explainer videos (for trainers and trainees) about how to use competency charts.
- Identify microcredential offerings available through DGC, IATSE, ICG, SIIT and SaskPoly.
- Identify work experience opportunities for competency development in cooperation with Creative Saskatchewan, DGC, IATSE, ICG and Saskatchewan producers.
- Develop tracking tools (printable and digital) for monitoring trainee progress.

First 12 Months

- Deliver at least 3 virtual/introductory workshops and work with 2 productions offering on-set training opportunities for any of the 10 priority roles.
- Host advanced workshops/master classes for upskilling experienced crew.
- Produce annual review of program results and incorporate feedback.
- Work with SATCC to begin the process of registering screen-based roles in their database.

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[1] Formerly Cultural Human Resources Council. For example, the Competency Chart for Directors can be found here.

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Years 2 and 3 (Broad Focus)

- Scale competency chart model to include all screen industry production roles
- Formalize ongoing partnerships with unions and post-secondary institutions.
- Expand funding and support mechanisms to support growth and development of the ScreenSask Competency-Based Training Model.
- Formalize SATCC registration process for all screen-based production roles.

Levels of Training

There are three proposed levels of training that involve different modes of learning including Off-set training, On-set training and Advanced Workshops

A. Off-Set Training: Virtual, Classroom, Intro Workshops & Microcredentials

Level A provides foundational learning prior to on-set training:

- Examples: Set Safety & Protocol, DGC's Ultimate PA Course, Department Overviews and microcredential courses such as C-stand Fundamentals (a 4-hour course).
- Delivery: Online modules, live Zoom classes, or in-person classroom sessions and workshops.

B. On-Set Training: Work Experience

Level B is based on the industrial apprentice model, and includes supervised work on active productions:

- Competency charts guide both trainee and trainer.
- Trainers sign off on competencies demonstrated.
- Training is scaffolded[2] to increase responsibility over time.

C. Advanced Workshops and Masterclasses

Level C includes role-specific and deep-dive training for intermediate or senior crew:

- Examples: Budgeting for Production Coordinators, Advanced Grip Techniques, Specialized Set Dressing.
- Often delivered in partnership with unions or senior professionals.

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[2] "Scaffolded" refers to the educational technique of providing support at the beginning of the learning process and then slowly removing that support as the learner becomes more capable.

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Sample Training Pathways

Training pathways would be developed for all screen industry positions. Below are draft versions of training pathways for three positions: Production Coordinator, Set Decorator and Grip. Pathways include a clear description of responsibilities, key competencies and training methods.

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR

Production Coordinator Responsibilities

A **Production Coordinator** plays a crucial role in ensuring the smooth operation of a production.

Key functions include:

1. **Scheduling and Coordination:**
   - Organizing and maintaining the production schedule.
   - Coordinating the timing of various departments, ensuring all timelines are met.
   - Communicating with department heads to ensure resources and personnel are where they need to be.

2. **Communication:**
   - Acting as the main point of contact between various departments and the production team.
   - Distributing information to the cast, crew, and other stakeholders.
   - Ensuring that any changes to the schedule or production requirements are communicated promptly.

3. **Logistics:**
   - Managing transportation and accommodation arrangements for cast and crew.
   - Coordinating the delivery and pick-up of equipment, materials, and supplies.
   - Overseeing the production office and making sure everything is operational.

4. **Budget and Resource Management:**
   - Assisting the production manager with tracking expenses and staying on budget.
   - Managing petty cash and other financial resources as needed for day-to-day operations.

5. Paperwork and Documentation:
- Organizing contracts, permits, releases, and other essential paperwork.
- Maintaining crew lists, call sheets, and other documents that keep the production organized.
- Ensuring compliance with union rules and regulations, where applicable.

6. Problem Solving:
- Handling any issues or emergencies that arise on set or in pre-production.
- Ensuring that the production runs smoothly by addressing logistical problems or conflicts.

7. On-Set Support:
- Assisting the Assistant Director (AD) and other key personnel on set to ensure things are running as planned.
- Helping to manage the set's daily operations and workflow.
- Managing the movement of talent and background performers.

8. Post-Production Coordination:
- Assisting in the transition from production to post-production.
- Ensuring all required footage, files, and materials are properly archived and delivered to the post-production team.

Overall, a Production Coordinator is a vital support role, ensuring that a production runs on time, within budget, and in an organized manner, while helping to facilitate communication between all parties involved.

Production Coordinator Training Pathway[3]

1. Scheduling and Coordination

<mark>Competencies</mark>

- **Time Management:** Ability to prioritize tasks and meet deadlines.
- **Scheduling Software Proficiency:** Familiarity with scheduling tools like Movie Magic, StudioBinder, or Google Calendar.
- **Workflow Optimization:** Understanding of how to structure workdays, manage shooting schedules, and adjust for delays.

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[3] Important Disclaimer: The Training Pathways presented in this report are suggestions only. They have not been vetted by industry experts or union representatives and are meant only as broad-strokes suggestions for the kind of structure and approach that is recommended.

- **Logistical Coordination:** Ability to manage various moving parts on a production timeline.

Training Methods

- Workshops on time management and tools.
- Hands-on practice with scheduling software.
- Simulation exercises for adapting schedules under pressure.

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2. Communication

Competencies

- **Interpersonal Communication:** Ability to effectively communicate with cast, crew, and departments.
- **Clear Reporting:** Proficiency in writing and delivering concise emails, memos, and reports.
- **Conflict Resolution:** Skills to manage disputes or misunderstandings efficiently.
- **Multi-Tasking Communication:** Ability to manage multiple conversations or projects simultaneously without losing focus.

Training Methods

- Role-playing exercises for managing difficult conversations.
- Training on effective email communication and reporting.
- Workshops on handling interpersonal issues on set.

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3. Logistics

Competencies:

- **Logistical Planning:** Ability to organize transportation, location scouting, and equipment.
- **Vendor and Supplier Coordination:** Working with external vendors to organize deliveries and pickups.
- **Problem-Solving:** Quick thinking and resourcefulness when dealing with transport or logistical disruptions.
- **Attention to Detail:** Ensuring all materials, props, and equipment are in the right place at the right time.

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Training Methods:

- Practical exercises in organizing transportation and logistics.
- Vendor negotiation and coordination workshops.
- Mock problem-solving scenarios to handle unforeseen logistical issues.

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4. Budget and Resource Management

Competencies:

- **Basic Accounting and Budgeting:** Knowledge of tracking expenses, receipts, and staying within budget.
- **Expense Reporting:** Familiarity with managing petty cash, preparing reports, and tracking expenditure.
- **Resource Allocation:** Understanding how to allocate resources efficiently based on needs and available budget.
- **Financial Tools:** Proficiency in using spreadsheets (e.g., Excel or Google Sheets) for tracking expenses.

Training Methods:

- Training on budget-tracking and expense-management tools.
- Simulations on managing a budget for a small production.
- Workshops on resource allocation and decision-making under budget constraints.

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5. Paperwork and Documentation

Competencies:

- **Document Management:** Ability to organize and manage contracts, releases, and other production paperwork.
- **Legal and Compliance Knowledge:** Understanding of union regulations, permits, and location releases.
- **File Organization Systems:** Familiarity with digital file management (e.g., Dropbox, Google Drive, or proprietary production management systems).
- **Attention to Detail:** Ability to catch mistakes and ensure all required documentation is collected and signed.

Training Methods:

- Legal and compliance workshops focused on production-specific contracts.

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- Hands-on training with document management systems.
- Case studies on organizing and reviewing paperwork for a real production.

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6. Problem Solving

Competencies:

- **Critical Thinking:** Ability to analyze situations and come up with practical solutions on the fly.
- **Flexibility:** Ability to adapt to changing conditions (e.g., weather, equipment failure, cast changes).
- **Stress Management:** Ability to stay calm and focused under pressure.
- **Resourcefulness:** Finding creative solutions to unexpected challenges.

Training Methods:

- Scenario-based training (e.g., weather-related delays, equipment failure).
- Stress management workshops for handling high-pressure situations.
- Team-building exercises to develop quick decision-making.

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7. On-Set Support

Competencies:

- **Set Organization:** Understanding of set operations and assisting with daily logistics.
- **Team Collaboration:** Ability to work with ADs and department heads to ensure set functions smoothly.
- **Talent and Crew Management:** Experience in managing background actors, crew, and equipment during shooting.
  Crowd Control: Managing crowds and ensuring that all actors and crew members are in place and ready when needed.

Training Methods:

- On-set shadowing with experienced production coordinators.
- Hands-on experience managing background actors or crew during mock shoots.
- Training on set safety and protocols.

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8. Post-Production Coordination

Competencies:

- **Archiving and File Management:** Ability to organize and manage footage for post-production.
- **Post-Production Software Knowledge:** Familiarity with file transfer protocols and software used for editing (e.g., Avid Media Composer, Premiere Pro).
- **Communication with Post-Production Team:** Ability to ensure smooth handoff of assets to post-production personnel.
  Deliverables Management: Tracking and managing the timely delivery of required materials.

Training Methods:

- Workshops on post-production workflow and software.
- Hands-on practice organizing and transferring files.
- Shadowing post-production coordinators to understand their needs and expectations.

Production Coordinator Training Pathway—Potential Timeline[4]

1. **Month 1-3:**
   - Introduction to production coordination and scheduling tools.
   - Basic training on communication and document management systems.
   - Learning to manage resources, vendors, and logistical coordination.

2. **Month 4-6:**
   - Hands-on experience with set logistics and on-set coordination.
   - Shadowing experienced coordinators during live productions.
   - Budgeting and expense management training.

3. **Month 7-12:**
   - Focus on problem-solving, handling on-set issues, and managing real-time changes.
   - On-the-job training for managing post-production and deliverables.
   - Final assessment through a mock production project.

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[4] The Potential Timeline for Training Pathways represents an ideal state—an active and fully operational screen industry. Timelines for Training Pathways are a function of the number of active productions in the province: they will take longer in a scenario that has less production activity.

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Evaluation of Competencies

- **Self-assessments**: Periodic self-assessments to track improvement.

- **Peer feedback**: Getting feedback from other departments (e.g., AD, producers).

- **Practical tests**: Simulating real-world production problems and measuring problem-solving skills.

- **End-of-training project**: Running a small-scale production and handling all coordinator responsibilities.

This Pathway will prepare a Production Coordinator to efficiently manage the complexities of film and television production.

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SET DECORATOR

Set Decorator Responsibilities

A Set Decorator is responsible for creating the look and atmosphere of a set by selecting and arranging props, furniture, and other elements.

Their key functions include:

1. Set Design Collaboration
- Work closely with the production designer and director to understand the visual style and tone of the project.
- Ensure the set aligns with the overall vision, including historical accuracy, thematic elements, and mood.

2. Selection of Set Dressing
- Choose, acquire, or design furniture, decor items, wall coverings, drapes, rugs, and other set dressing materials.
- Items must be appropriate for the scene, character, and setting, and enhance storytelling visually.

3. Props Coordination
- Work with the prop master to ensure that all props required for the set are available and complement the set design.
- Ensure props are in the right places and suit the characters, ensuring they add to the authenticity of the scene.

4. Set Dressing and Installation
- Oversee the physical setup and dressing of the set on location or in the studio.
- Ensure proper placement of items, considering lighting, camera angles, and scene flow. Supervise construction and modification of elements if necessary.

5. Budget and Resource Management
- Function: Manage the set decoration budget by purchasing, renting, or sourcing materials and decor elements.
- Details: Maintain cost-effective solutions while ensuring quality and consistency in the set design.

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6. Supervision of Set Dressers and Assistants
- Lead and manage the set dressing crew, including set dressers and assistants. Delegate tasks, monitor progress, and ensure proper handling of materials to create the desired set environment.

7. Maintenance of Set Elements
- Ensure that set dressing remains intact and undamaged throughout production.
- Make necessary repairs or replacements to ensure the set remains consistent during filming.

8. Problem-Solving and Adaptation
- Address issues with set elements that may not be working as planned (e.g., items that don't suit the lighting or aesthetic needs).
- Adapt to last-minute changes, such as shifting a scene or the need for new set pieces due to creative changes.

9. Finalization and Removal
- Ensure that the set is cleared and restored after filming.
- Organize the return of rented items, ensure all elements are properly stored, and manage the clean-up process.

10. Research and Sourcing
- Research the style, era, or environment that the set must reflect.
- Sourcing specific period pieces, or items relevant to the character's life or background, ensuring the set accurately portrays the required time, place, or culture.

The Set Decorator's role is highly creative, requiring a blend of artistic vision, attention to detail, organizational skill, and a deep understanding of the production's aesthetic and narrative needs.

Set Decorator Training Pathway

1. Set Design Collaboration

Competencies

- **Artistic Vision Alignment:** Ability to understand and contribute to the director's and production designer's vision.
- **Visual Storytelling:** Understanding how set design communicates aspects of the story (e.g., character development, setting).

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- **Collaboration Skills:** Effective communication with the production designer, director, and other departments to ensure consistency.

Training Methods

- Workshops on visual storytelling and thematic design.
- Shadowing experienced set decorators to observe collaboration with designers and directors.
- Group exercises for interpreting script requirements into visual elements.

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2. Selection of Set Dressing

Competencies

- Material Knowledge: Knowledge of different types of materials, furniture, decor, and finishes used in set decoration.
- Aesthetic Sensibility: Ability to match set pieces to the mood and period of the production.
- Period and Cultural Accuracy: Understanding historical, cultural, and geographical relevance for set elements.

Training Methods

- Hands-on exercises selecting materials for different periods or themes.
- Visits to prop houses, antique shops, and set-decor rental facilities.
- Lectures or tutorials on the history and styles of interior design and architecture.

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3. Props Coordination

Competencies

- Props Knowledge: Deep understanding of props and their role in storytelling.
- Integration with Set Dressing: Ability to incorporate props seamlessly into the set without overpowering it.
- Communication with Prop Master: Coordination to ensure that props are correctly placed and complement set elements.

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Training Methods

- Joint training with prop masters to understand the interaction between props and set dressing.
- Role-play exercises for coordinating props placement on set.
- Workshops on the importance of props in storytelling.

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4. Set Dressing and Installation

Competencies

- Set Dressing: Expertise in arranging set pieces to create a visually cohesive environment.
- Spatial Awareness: Understanding how the placement of furniture and decor affects the camera and lighting.
- Attention to Detail: Ensuring the set is dressed with precision to match the artistic direction.

Training Methods

- Practical exercises dressing small-scale sets, taking into account camera angles and lighting.
- On-the-job training during pre-production and set building phases.
- Mentoring from experienced set decorators for hands-on installation practices.

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5. Budget and Resource Management

Competencies

- Budgeting Skills: Ability to manage a budget for set decoration, prioritize spending, and make cost-effective decisions.
- Vendor Relations: Sourcing materials, negotiating with suppliers, and handling rental agreements.
- Resource Allocation: Ensuring that the right amount of resources are allocated for each department while staying within budget.

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- Workshops on budget management and resource allocation in production.
- Case studies on cost-effective sourcing and rental strategies.
  Shadowing experienced set decorators to learn how they manage finances and negotiate with vendors.

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6. Supervision of Set Dressers and Assistants

Competencies

- Leadership and Team Management: Leading a team of set dressers and assistants, delegating tasks effectively.
- Task Prioritization: Ability to manage multiple tasks and coordinate the efforts of the team efficiently.
- Quality Control: Ensuring that the work of set dressers is consistent with the set's vision.

Training Methods

- Leadership training courses specific to creative and technical teams.
- On-the-job supervision and delegation exercises with an experienced set decorator.
- Group projects to practice team management and coordination.

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7. Maintenance of Set Elements

Competencies

- Problem-Solving: Addressing issues related to the set (e.g., breakages, wear and tear).
- Repairs and Modifications: Understanding how to make quick repairs or replacements on set.
- Organization: Keeping track of set decoration inventory and managing materials during production.

Training Methods

- Workshops on basic repairs for props and set elements.
- Practical exercises on maintaining sets during production.
- Troubleshooting exercises for common on-set issues, such as props falling out of place or set pieces being damaged.

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8. Problem-Solving and Adaptation

Competencies

- Flexibility: Ability to adapt quickly to last-minute changes to set designs or script revisions.
- Creative Solutions: Using resourcefulness to find creative ways to solve design challenges on a limited budget or timeline.
- Time Management: Handling unexpected challenges without causing delays to the production schedule.

Training Methods

- Scenario-based training that presents unexpected challenges (e.g., set damage, last-minute changes).
- Workshops on creative problem-solving in production design.
- Time management courses focused on high-pressure environments.

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9. Finalization and Removal

Competencies

- Dismantling and Restoring: Properly deconstructing and storing set elements after filming is complete.
- Return and Recycling of Materials: Managing the return of rented items and the disposal or recycling of materials.
- Clearance of Set: Ensuring the location is left as it was before production began.

Training Methods

- Practical sessions on clearing sets and managing the return of materials.
- Discussions on the logistics of recycling and disposing of set elements sustainably.
- Shadowing experienced set decorators during wrap-up stages of a production.

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10. Research and Sourcing

<mark>**Competencies**</mark>

- Research Skills: Ability to research and source period-specific, location-specific, or culturally relevant set elements.
- Sourcing and Procurement: Knowledge of where to find unique items, from rental houses to antiques, ensuring authenticity.
- Negotiation Skills: Ability to negotiate prices and arrange the rental or purchase of materials.

<mark>**Training Methods**</mark>

- Field trips to prop houses, rental facilities, and antique shops for hands-on sourcing experience.
- Workshops on how to conduct historical or thematic research for set design.
- Negotiation training tailored to the film and television industry.

Set Decorator Training Pathway—Potential Timeline

1. **Month 1-3:**
   - Introduction to set design principles and set dressing basics.
   - Training on sourcing materials, props coordination, and basic set dressing skills.
   - Begin shadowing experienced set decorators and assisting with small-scale setups.

2. **Month 4-6:**
   - Hands-on experience with dressing larger sets and collaborating with the production designer.
   - Training on budget management and supervising set dressing teams.
   - Continue shadowing and begin taking on more responsibility on set.

3. **Month 7-12:**
   - Managing entire set dressing processes for smaller productions or portions of larger sets.
   - Leading a team of set dressers under the supervision of senior decorators.
   - Practice on budget management, problem-solving, and adapting to production changes.

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Evaluation of Competencies

- **Self-Assessments:** Trainees periodically reflect on their skills and areas for improvement.

- **Peer Feedback:** Receiving input from the production design team and other departments.

- **Practical Tests:** Hands-on exercises where the trainee dresses a set, adheres to budget, and manages logistics.

- **Final Project:** Dressing a set for a small-scale production and handling all aspects of set decoration from sourcing to removal.

This Training Pathway will equip a Set Decorator with the skills needed to create visually compelling and well-organized sets, ensuring both the aesthetic vision and practical requirements are met.

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GRIP

Grip Responsibilities

A Grip in film and television production is responsible for the physical setup and manipulation of equipment used to support cameras, lighting, and other equipment. Their key functions include:

1. Camera Support
- Grips assist with the movement and positioning of cameras, often working closely with the camera department to ensure smooth and stable shots.
- This includes setting up dolly tracks, operating camera dollies, cranes, and jibs, and ensuring that the camera can move safely and smoothly during the shot.

2. Lighting Support
- Grips assist the electrical department in setting up and manipulating lighting equipment, including flags, diffusers, and reflectors, to control the lighting environment.
- They may rig lights, control light intensity, and block light in specific areas using flags, scrims, and other tools.

3. Rigging and Set Construction
- Grips are responsible for setting up rigs that support various pieces of equipment, including overhead rigs for lights and cameras, and large set pieces.
- They install and secure gear, ensuring safety and stability for all equipment, props, and elements that require suspension or movement.

4. Safety and Stability
- Grips ensure the safety of all equipment, crew, and talent on set by securing gear and preventing accidents.
- This includes securing heavy equipment, ensuring rigs are stable, and making sure that all moving parts are properly secured before use.

5. Set Dressing (Specialized)
- While primarily a function of the set decoration department, grips may assist with set dressing tasks that require moving heavy or large objects, such as rigging large props or adjusting set pieces.
- They may also assist with adjustments to the set for specific camera angles or lighting needs.

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6. Camera Movement Equipment
- Grips handle the physical equipment for camera movement, such as dollies, tracks, and cranes, which allow smooth and controlled camera movements during filming.
- They ensure proper setup and operation of these equipment pieces for dynamic shots, including close-ups, tracking shots, and crane shots.

7. Special Effects (Practical)
- Grips often assist with practical special effects, such as controlling elements like smoke, wind, or explosions.
- They may handle the setup of wind machines, rain rigs, or other physical effects to create specific on-set environmental conditions.

8. Outdoor and Location Work
- When filming outdoors or at remote locations, grips are responsible for setting up and maintaining equipment in less controlled environments.
- This includes securing lighting, cameras, and rigs in unpredictable weather conditions, and handling outdoor equipment like tents, umbrellas, and generators.

9. Transporting and Maintaining Equipment
- Grips handle the transportation, storage, and maintenance of the grip gear, including dollies, rigs, clamps, and stands.
- They ensure that all grip equipment is in good working order and ready for use during filming.

10. Collaboration with Other Departments
- Grips work closely with various departments, such as camera, lighting, and special effects, to ensure that the necessary equipment is in place and operates smoothly.
- They collaborate with the camera team to achieve specific shots and with the electrical team to manage lighting setups.

A Grip plays a crucial, hands-on role in ensuring the technical aspects of a shoot are smoothly executed, providing stability, safety, and support for the camera and lighting departments. Their role is physically demanding and requires a high level of technical expertise and coordination with other departments.

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Grip Training Pathway

1. Camera Support

Competencies

- **Camera Equipment Handling:** Knowledge of how to set up and operate camera support systems (dollies, tracks, jibs, cranes).
- **Stability and Movement Control:** Ability to ensure smooth and controlled camera movements, preventing jerks or instability.
- **Coordination with Camera Department:** Effective communication and coordination with the camera team to achieve specific shots.

Training Methods

- **Hands-On Practice:** Practice assembling, operating, and adjusting camera support equipment (dollies, cranes).
- **Shadowing:** Work alongside experienced grips during a shoot to observe camera handling techniques and coordination.
- **Workshops:** Attend workshops that focus on camera movements, including basic dolly and crane operation.

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2. Lighting Support

Competencies

- **Lighting Equipment Setup:** Ability to set up flags, diffusers, scrims, reflectors, and other tools to modify light.
- **Light Control:** Understanding how to manipulate lighting to achieve the desired effect on set (e.g., creating shadows, diffusing harsh light).
- **Collaboration with the Electrical Department:** Ability to work closely with electricians to implement lighting plans and ensure proper equipment placement.

Training Methods

- **Practical Training:** Hands-on experience with common grip tools used in lighting modification (e.g., C-stands, flags, gels, and reflectors).
- **Mentoring:** Shadowing a key grip or gaffer to learn how to adjust and manage lighting setups.

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- **Workshops:** Attend workshops on light manipulation, controlling light intensity, and blocking light.

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3. Rigging and Set Construction

Competencies

- **Rigging Safety:** Knowledge of rigging techniques and safety protocols for securing heavy objects and equipment.
- **Set Assembly:** Ability to rig and secure lighting, cameras, or other equipment for specific shots.
- **Understanding Structural Support:** Knowledge of the load-bearing capabilities of materials and rigging systems to ensure safety.

Training Methods

- **Hands-On Rigging Training:** Practice setting up rigs for lighting, camera equipment, and other set components.
- **Safety Courses:** Training on safe rigging practices, including how to properly secure equipment and handle heavy loads.
- **On-the-Job Experience:** Participate in setting up rigs on real production sets, under supervision, to develop skills in rigging and securing equipment.

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4. Safety and Stability

Competencies

- **Safety Protocols:** Understanding and applying safety procedures to ensure the stability of equipment and safety of crew and talent.
- **Weight Distribution:** Knowledge of how to distribute weight properly on rigs and setups to avoid accidents.
- **Preventative Maintenance:** Ability to identify potential hazards before they occur and take preventive action.

Training Methods

- **Safety Workshops:** Attend courses focused on production set safety, rigging, and equipment handling.

- **Simulation Exercises:** Practice responding to safety scenarios, such as securing equipment or dealing with potential hazards.
- **Mentorship:** Shadow an experienced grip to observe how they manage safety on set and handle equipment risks.

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5. Set Dressing (Specialized)

Competencies

- **Heavy Set Piece Handling:** Ability to move and position large set pieces, props, or elements that require physical strength or specialized equipment.
- **Precision Placement:** Ensuring set pieces are placed precisely according to the production's vision and camera needs.
- **Adaptability:** Ability to adjust the set to meet changing needs, including repositioning elements for specific camera angles or lighting setups.

Training Methods

- **Set Moving Practice:** Work on set with the production designer or set decorator to handle large set pieces.
- **Collaboration with Set Decorators:** Learn how grips interact with decorators and set dressers to ensure the set pieces are functional and safely placed.
- **Physical Conditioning:** Participate in physical fitness or strength training to build stamina for lifting and moving heavy set pieces.

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6. Camera Movement Equipment

Competencies

- **Dolly and Crane Operation:** Ability to operate dolly systems and cranes to execute smooth and controlled camera movements.
- **Camera Track Setup:** Proficiency in laying down and securing tracks for smooth dolly shots.
- **Coordinating with Camera Operators:** Understanding camera operators' needs and adjusting movement and equipment to ensure optimal shot execution.

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<mark>Training Methods</mark>

- **Simulation Training:** Set up and operate a dolly or crane for practice, working with a camera operator to understand movement requirements.
- **Hands-On Workshops:** Participate in camera movement workshops that focus on the mechanical aspects of operating camera support systems.
- **On-Set Experience:** Gain experience on set, operating camera movement equipment in real production environments.

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7. Special Effects (Practical)

<mark>Competencies</mark>

- **Physical Special Effects Handling:** Knowledge of how to set up and manage practical effects (e.g., wind machines, smoke rigs, rain machines).
- **Collaborating with Special Effects Team:** Ability to work with the special effects department to ensure seamless integration of physical effects.
- **Operation of Effect Equipment:** Understanding how to set up and control machinery that creates effects such as wind, rain, or explosions.

<mark>Training Methods</mark>

- **Practical Workshops:** Attend workshops on operating sfx equipment used on set.
- **Collaborative Exercises:** Work alongside the special effects team to understand how grips support their needs during practical effects creation.
- **Simulation and Testing:** Practice using effect machinery under controlled conditions to ensure proficiency before working on live sets.

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8. Outdoor and Location Work

<mark>Competencies</mark>

- **Location Setup:** Ability to adapt grip equipment and setups to outdoor or location-based shoots with varying conditions (weather, terrain).
- **Handling Equipment in Challenging Environments:** Working with specialized outdoor gear (e.g., rain covers, sturdy platforms) and securing equipment in difficult locations.
- **Managing Outdoor Safety:** Ensuring safety protocols are followed when working with equipment in unpredictable outdoor settings.

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Training Methods

- **Location Training:** Hands-on experience working with outdoor production teams to set up equipment and manage logistics.
- **Outdoor Safety Courses:** Attend specialized courses on outdoor safety, including equipment handling in unstable conditions.
- **Field Practice:** Participate in location shoots, adjusting grip setups for various weather and environmental factors.

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9. Transporting and Maintaining Equipment

Competencies

- **Equipment Maintenance:** Knowledge of how to maintain grip equipment, such as dollies, tracks, cranes, and clamps.
- **Transport Logistics:** Ability to pack, transport, and unpack equipment securely and efficiently.
- **Inventory Management:** Organizing and tracking grip equipment to ensure it's available and in working condition for each shoot.

Training Methods

- **Maintenance Workshops:** Practical sessions on inspecting, maintaining, and repairing grip equipment.
- **Logistics and Packing Exercises:** Training on how to pack and transport large pieces of equipment safely.
- **On-the-Job Training:** Hands-on experience with loading, unloading, and maintaining equipment on real shoots.

Grip Training Pathway—Potential Timeline

1. **Month 1-3:**
   - Introduction to grip equipment, including basic rigging, lighting support, and camera movement tools.
   - Safety training and shadowing experienced grips during a production.
   - Basic hands-on experience with dollies, cranes, and grip tools.

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2. **Month 4-6:**
   ○ Advanced training on camera support systems, rigging techniques, and special effects setup.
   ○ Collaborating with the electrical and camera departments on larger-scale projects.
   ○ Starting to operate and set up specialized equipment like wind or rain rigs.

3. **Month 7-12:**
   ○ Leading the setup of camera tracks, handling special effects, and coordinating with other departments.
   ○ Managing outdoor setups and complex location work.
   ○ Taking on more responsibilities in equipment maintenance and transportation.

Evaluation of Competencies

- **Practical Tests:** Simulations of specific grip functions (e.g., camera dolly setup, rigging safety, special effects).

- **Shadowing and Mentoring:** Feedback from senior grips and department heads.

- **Self-Assessment:** Periodic self-reflection on skills development and areas for improvement.

- **Performance Review:** Evaluation after completing various on-set tasks to assess the development of key competencies.

This Training Pathway will provide grips with the technical and practical skills needed to excel in their roles, ensuring they can effectively support the camera, lighting, and special effects departments while maintaining safety and quality on set.