

Working in TV

There's more to it than you might think! *by Freya Davis*

TV is still very much a part of our culture – most people watch it every day and some people spend up to a quarter of their time in front of the box. Working in TV is seen as glamorous and desirable but there's much more to it than presenting or acting: without the behind-the-scenes jobs, there would be no television. So what options and opportunities are out there? We meet the people involved.

Research and production

If you're an ideas person and like to get things off the ground, research and production might just be your thing. This is all about thinking up new concepts, script-writing and getting the team together to make a programme. Scheduling and budgeting fall into this stage, too.

On the job

Amy's a researcher. She says, 'I work on a weekly magazine programme for a major TV broadcaster. My work's really varied - including looking for possible contributors and scouting locations for filming, getting permission to film, and checking scripts. No one day is like any other – and I love it!'

Design

For a creative person, design – or developing the 'look and feel' of a programme – may be of interest. A historical series, for example, will need someone to source props, design sets, create costumes, make-up and hairstyles that all reflect the period. Design is also related to graphics and special effects that are used in a finished programme.

On the job

Max is a graphic designer. He says, 'Most programmes need some kind of graphics. That's where I come in! I use computer software to create the opening and closing sequences for a number of TV programmes. It's great because I get to use my creativity as well as my IT skills.'

Technical operations

The technical operations area of TV includes cameras, sound and lighting – all specialist areas that require highly trained people. They have to work closely together to create a programme according to the director's vision.

On the job

Tom is a script supervisor. He says, 'I'm part of the camera crew, and it's my job to make sure that all parts of a programme are filmed and come together in the end. That's because filming doesn't usually happen in sequence from beginning to end. I have to be super-organized – and I can't miss a trick!'

Post-production

A TV programme needs to go through an extensive post-production process before it is released for public viewing. The filmed material, called footage, may be cut, or chopped and pieced together, before sound and visual effects are added to make the final programme.

On the job

Sally is an editor. She says, 'It's my job to piece together the final programme that people watch. I pick the best bits of footage for each scene, and join them together using specialized editing software. It's a long, slow process, and I have to be really patient!'

1. Match the job descriptions to the jobs.

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|---|----------------------|
| 1 creating the text for a television programme | A presenting |
| 2 estimating and/or deciding the amount of money a production will cost | B script writing |
| 3 assembling separate recorded components of a production | C editing |
| 4 creating plans and deciding on times for recording a programme | D budgeting |
| 5 introducing and appearing in a television programme | E scouting locations |
| 6 obtaining objects that are used within scenes during a television programme | F sourcing props |
| 7 designing and producing appropriate clothing for television characters | G scheduling |
| 8 searching for appropriate places to record television programmes | H making costumes |

2. Read the text quickly and choose the best type of job from the box for each person.

Design	Post-production	Research and production	Technical operations
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- Dana:** I studied sound engineering at university. I wouldn't say I'm super creative myself, but I love helping others to realise their creative vision. I'm very organised and detail-focused.
- Nigel:** I'd love to work in TV. I took a course in the history of fashion. This gave me a strong idea about what clothes were popular during different eras. Also, I style hair, I'm pretty good at it.
- Jason:** I've been a bit of a computer nerd ever since school. I post a lot of things on YouTube. I love editing my own videos. I'm calm, hard-working and patient.
- Christine:** Ever since I was young, everyone has always commented on my creativity. I love thinking up stories and have worked on some plays. I'm also good with numbers and dates, and very organised.

3. Read the text again. Are the sentences true or false?

- Some people spend half of their time watching television.
TRUE/FALSE
- Research and production jobs are often suited to people who have new ideas.
TRUE/FALSE
- Budgeting comes under technical operations within the television industry.
TRUE/FALSE
- Hairstyles must be faithful to the historical period of the programme.
TRUE/FALSE
- Technical operatives are relatively unskilled people who lift cameras and lights.
TRUE/FALSE
- The start of a programme can be recorded after the programme's final scene.
TRUE/FALSE
- The process of editing a television programme can be a lengthy one.
TRUE/FALSE