

Sound Trainee 3 Stage Plan

If you are having a career change, studying filmmaking or recently graduated and want to pursue a career in the film industry then it's time to get organised. After you have meticulously ploughed through the [MFJF career guides](#) and settled on a potential career path it's time to start making a plan, we can help you do that too. The route to production sound is not easy. Production sound is a small team, which works in your favour when it comes to asking questions and getting some real hands on experience; however, finding teams that have a trainee can be thin on the ground, especially if there isn't the budget to support it. Look at other areas of the industry to find credible experience to give your CV some depth. Some sound experience is better than no sound experience at all.

The three stage career plan is designed to break down those initial steps, to gain enough experience to find paid work in the industry.

Stage 1 is your very first steps in the industry, where your CV is looking very thin on experience. This is when you should be focusing on building your knowledge of the industry and skills. Once you have laid this initial groundwork, you should have improved your chances of success when applying for entry level opportunities.

Stage 2 will see your journey begin in earnest as you gain experience and build up your list of industry contacts. Work experience, collaborations and internships are vital tools to create career focus to your CV, and provide you with the necessary experience for paid opportunities. One key task is to get industry references, which is a crucial way to elevate your applications.

Stage 3 should see you equipped with a CV that boasts multiple credits or internships and some excellent references. By stage three you should be on your way to find a permanent position or have established your own network of contacts to help you find regular, sustainable work.

Obviously, in the film industry everyone has varying degrees of success finding work; it's dependent on the opportunities you make for yourself, and how you grasp those that come your way. Having received feedback from productions and companies, we have based the three stage plan on our experience of what makes a successful candidate. This checklist should give you some pointers of how to improve your chances of success.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
<p>EXPERIENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> If studying push for work experience via college/university. <input type="checkbox"/> Work towards 5 credits on short films. <input type="checkbox"/> Consider taking runner positions to get a foot in the door and experience life on set. <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to work on student productions. <input type="checkbox"/> Look to the collaborations board and work with other MFJF members on their projects. <input type="checkbox"/> Take your driving test if you do not have a licence. <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer to drive vans and minibuses to gain experience. <p>SKILLS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Do you know how to swing a boom? <input type="checkbox"/> Do you know how to coil a cable? <input type="checkbox"/> Do you know how to mic up an actor? <input type="checkbox"/> Build on your floor box/bag. <p>KNOWLEDGE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Research example CV's to see what a great stage 1, 2, 3 CV should look like. 	<p>EXPERIENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Create a network of contacts from short films, keep in touch with boom ops and mixers. <input type="checkbox"/> Look for trainee positions with creative skillset or AMPS. <input type="checkbox"/> Use your contacts to find trainee positions on commercials, promos, corporate, TV drama or digital content. <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to work on short films as a trainee/assistant. <input type="checkbox"/> Post on the MFJF collaborations board to seek out other members. <input type="checkbox"/> Have 2 or 3 mixers or boom ops (1st assistant sound) to act as a reference. <p>SKILLS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Are you able to demonstrate a professional attitude on set? <input type="checkbox"/> Are you adaptable when working on different productions. <input type="checkbox"/> Driving licence and your own car (if possible). 	<p>EXPERIENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Work consistently for 2-3 years a trainee on low/medium budget feature films. <input type="checkbox"/> Work on short films as a boom operator. <input type="checkbox"/> Gain experience in all areas of the industry that employ production sound to maximises your chances to earn money. <p>SKILLS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Do you feel confident working with new people? <input type="checkbox"/> Are you able to fit into an established team. <input type="checkbox"/> Do you have the skills listed in the previous two stages plus a hearty work ethic and drive? <input type="checkbox"/> Do you know how to swing a boom? <p>KNOWLEDGE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Look for work before the job your are on finishes. <input type="checkbox"/> Have a network of mixers that know who you are and what you can do. <input type="checkbox"/> Keep refining your CV, try and keep it down to one page.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Use MFJF CV builder to help create a CV<input type="checkbox"/> Research kit hire companies to see if they are recruiting.<input type="checkbox"/> Read <i>Producing great sound for film and video</i>.<input type="checkbox"/> Read <i>The Location Sound Bible</i><input type="checkbox"/> Read <i>Production Sound Mixing</i>.<input type="checkbox"/> Use MFJF industry essentials to find training courses.<input type="checkbox"/> Have you learnt basic set etiquette?<input type="checkbox"/> Do you know what everyone on a film set actually does?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Do you know how to mark up a sound report sheet?<input type="checkbox"/> Can you efficiently prioritise tasks. <p>KNOWLEDGE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Continue to look to the resources section for training opportunities.<input type="checkbox"/> Do you know what is required from you as soon as you set foot on set?<input type="checkbox"/> Do you know all the terms for the set amenities and the general film lingo?<input type="checkbox"/> You will need credits and be able to demonstrate relevant experience.<input type="checkbox"/> Familiarise yourself with becoming self employed.	
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