

TEAM BUILDING AT YOUR CORPORATE RETREAT OR CONFERENCE



If you're looking for a way fun and creative way to break down walls and help build team spirit within your organization, think about having your gang work together writing, shooting and editing their own short film!

And then having that film shown to their peers at a fun Film Festival!

Here's how it all works:

We'll divide the people at your conference into teams of 20. So, if you have 200 people attending your conference, that's 10 teams of 20. That's the easy part.

Each team has three hours to come up with a concept, write the script, cast the actors, scout locations, and of course, shoot the film. You'll be using easy-to-use home video cameras, which we'll show you how to use.

We'll bring in a couple of professional editors who will take your footage and enter it into our computer-based editing suites overnight. Each team will have two hours assigned to them to edit the whole film together on the second day.

That same night, all of the short films will be shown at your very own Film Festival, which can be a casual or a more formal affair – whichever you think will be more fun. We'll supply all the popcorn you can eat, and you supply the beverage of your choice. (We recommend hot chocolate).

Okay, that's the overview.

For the conception and shoot, you may be wondering if there's enough for everyone to do. Well, there sure is, and it's only limited by your imagination and creativity. That's to say that it's not limited at all.

There has to be a Director, or perhaps a team of Directors. This person is the boss. The visionary. The artiste. In other words, you better make sure you pick the right person.

Of course, good Directors rely on the team around them to make them look good.

Each team will need a Writer, or team of Writers. They're the "idea people". They don't get the respect a Director gets, but are probably more important. After all, without them, a script would just be a collection of blank pieces of paper, and that's no good to anybody.

Each team will need an Assistant Director, who organizes and controls "the set" on behalf of the Director while shoot is in progress. Pick someone whose voice can cut through the clutter of a noisy lunchroom.

You'll also need:

- A Director of Photography, perhaps a Camera Operator and maybe even a Camera Assistant. (We'll show you how to work the camera but the rest is up to you).
- A Script Assistant (who notes "best takes" and where they are located on the videotape, etc.).
- Set Decorators.
- Location Scouts.
- Props and Wardrobe people.
- People to make cue cards.

And, of course, the Actors. Whether you have one Actor, five Actors, or 15 Actors is totally up to you. Just remember the number of headaches a Director has during a typical production is usually directly proportional to the number of Actors on set.

But that's not all.

As an option, we'll supply a professional Graphic Designer, with their own computer right on-site, who can assist your Marketing and Promotion Team whip up a design for your movie posters. After all, what's a movie without the pre-release hype?

We can output your movie poster overnight, and they'll be ready the morning of the Festival – before the editing of your epic is even completed – just like in real life. Hang them in strategic places around the resort or hotel for maximum impact.

Of course, your Marketing and Promotion Team may come up with other ways to market and promote your film, but we'll leave that up to you. We don't want to give you all of our ideas!

Okay, here's one. What's a movie without previews? However, instead of doing the preview on film or videotape, perhaps an ambitious group will get up enough gumption to stage a "live preview" during lunch on the second day with the actors acting out a key part of a key scene. Or, highlights from several key scenes. Just enough to whet the appetite of your audience without giving the whole thing away. Or, maybe your preview has nothing to do with the film at all, generating a sense of mystery and foreboding. Again, the choices are as broad as your imagination. You can even have people who are just in charge of the preview.

Who does what, and how much, is decided within the dynamics of the 20 person team.

As mentioned, on the day after the shoot, each team will be scheduled to spend two hours with our professional Video Editor, in a professional, computer-based edit suite. Who attends that edit session is up to each team, but it makes sense that the Director is there, and perhaps the Writer, too.

Although there is a professional Editor, it's your show, and he or she is working for you. The editor will help you out whenever and however they can, but will ultimately be taking directions from you. It's also important to be prepared. There will be another team of anxious filmmakers knocking at the door at the end of your two hour session.

(Now you can understand the importance of your Script Assistant noting “best takes” as well as noting exactly where they are on the videotape.)

It's important to mention at this point that there will be a team of brilliant to semi-brilliant facilitators roaming the grounds who will offer encouragement and technical advice. Perhaps more importantly, they will each be carrying a coin that can be flipped in the event there are disagreements to settle within the teams. Our facilitators are experienced video pros, but as an added twist, we'll bring along a hilarious comedic actor to be one of the facilitators, just to really spice things up.

The night of the Film Festival can be a dress-up affair, with the stars each making their own conspicuously late arrival on the red carpet.

A Joan Rivers-type can even be there to ask them a couple of off-colour personal questions, critique their outfits, and be rude to their companions.

A live video feed and camera can be used so the riff-raff already assembled inside can enjoy the spectacle outside.

Our comedic actor will also be used to MC the Film Festival. He'll welcome everyone with a few corny jokes, perhaps having to do with some of the shenanigans that have transpired during the day. Our MC will make sure the evening moves along as quickly and as efficiently as possible.

As with all the really cool Film Festivals, the Director of each film often makes a short introduction before their film is shown, and perhaps answers a few questions from the adoring throngs after it, including such standards as “What, or who, was your inspiration for this film?” The Director may or may not remember to acknowledge the rest of his or her team. Again, just like in real life!

As an option, a pre-arranged red ribbon panel can give out arbitrary awards for Best of Show, Best Actor, Best Actress, Best Director, and perhaps one or two fun ones, such as the prestigious “What-Were-They-Thinking?” award.

Another option is to have a professional camera crew videotape a cross-section of all of the “behind-the-scenes” activity as the teams are planning, shooting and editing their short films. Together with footage recorded at the Film Festival and, of course, from the actual finished films, this can all be edited into a real documentary style production, and distributed to all attendees at a later date. A wonderful memento!

Your gang will find out that making a film or video is the ultimate collaborative exercise. All in all, a memorable, hilarious, creative, team building experience... and great fun, too!

For more information, please contact:

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