



The idea for a motion picture or a filmstrip grows out of a specific training need. The shooting script organizes the subject matter and provides directions to the cameraman for the translation of these facts to the film medium. The script is also a means of reaching agreement between technical advisors and visual specialists as to the accuracy of the ideas, techniques, or procedures as they have been visualized by the script writer.

Educational or training film scripts are unlike Hollywood scenarios in that they appeal to the intelligence of the audience instead of the emotions. The sole purpose of a training film is to guide the thinking of the audience into preconceived channels. This should be done as interestingly as possible . . . it can even be done entertainingly . . . but the PRIMARY purpose of training films is not to entertain. It is to teach. A training film is not just an idea in somebody's mind . . . it is the answer to an existing training problem. And unless the film is the RIGHT answer to this problem, it is unlikely that the film will have much value.

Unless the instructor really needs the film, he will not use it; and unless it tells students something they need and desire to learn, they will not respond to it intelligently.

So the project supervisor who writes the script must first learn as much as he can about the reasons why the film is needed and about the people who need it. He should know the background of the audience so that he can eliminate much of the subject matter with which his audience is already familiar and devote the film footage to teaching the things they need to learn. The continuity of thought of the learner is a fragile thing, and the writer must present his subject so that HE WILL NEVER LOSE audience understanding during any second of the 15 to 20 minutes of the film. The film moves on at 36 feet a minute . . . there is no chance to go back and see the scene again. Once the learner has lost the train of thought, he may be befuddled for the rest of the film. The really good motion picture or sound filmstrip is one in which audience understanding is immediate, continuous, and complete.



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FADE OUT LIVE ACTION SOUND  
FADE IN NARRATOR  
NARRATOR (OVER DISSOLVE)

The campaign was quickly mobilized.

NARRATOR:

Public health nurses passed out literature to school children, which explained why they should have their pets inoculated.

NARRATOR:

Quick announcements were made.

NARRATOR:

Placards were posted, designating the neighborhood locations of the emergency clinics.

NARRATOR:

Sound trucks spread the message through all residential . . .

NARRATOR:

. . . and business areas.

NARRATOR:

Quarantine posters were put up, on trees . . .

DISSOLVE TO:

53. EXTERIOR LOCATION - Medium  
 Shot of public health nurse in uniform distributing literature to school children coming out of school entrance.

54. EXTERIOR LOCATION - Med. Shot  
 of people entering church.

55. EXTERIOR LOCATION - Med. Close  
 Shot of man, placing placard in store window - CAMERA HELDS for placard to be read.

56. EXTERIOR - Location - Full  
 figure shot of sound truck travelling up residential street. Stickers on outside of truck announce forthcoming vaccination clinics to be set

57. EXTERIOR - Location - business  
 street - same as in previous scene.

58. EXTERIOR - Location - Med. Shot  
 of man taping up quarantine poster to tree. Poster is readable.

The shooting script briefly details action and voice continuity.

# CONTINUITY SHEET

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5-087

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## ACTION

TRAVEL SHOT - WBEZ sound truck traveling up residential street -  
 Stickers on outside of truck announcing - "PROTECT  
 HUMAN LIVES! PREVENT RABIES! HAVE YOUR DOG VACCINATED  
 TODAY! CONSULT YOUR NEWSPAPER FOR LOCATION OF NEAREST  
 EMERGENCY CLINIC."

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 "HAVE YOUR DOG VACCINATED TODAY! THERE IS AN EMERGENCY  
 CLINIC IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD! CONSULT YOUR NEWSPAPER FOR  
 CLINIC SCHEDULE".

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 "RABIES IS A FATAL DISEASE! PREVENT ITS SPREAD! HAVE  
 YOUR DOG VACCINATED TODAY! CONSULT YOUR NEWSPAPER FOR  
 LOCATION OF NEAREST EMERGENCY INOCULATION CLINIC."

For shooting, each scene is copied on a separate continuity sheet which gives all the details of action in the scene.

The project supervisor thinks in terms of pictures; but in obtaining information for the script, he frequently works with people who are verbalists. He must constantly evaluate ideas and subject matter in the light of their pictorial rather than verbal possibilities. He must always keep in mind the unique requirements of his medium . . . the film which must move the story forward with every foot and every word. Since it is a different language from the scientific paper or other verbal means of expression, he must seek ways of making the best use of the visual medium and still maintain the same validity as the scientific paper which has

greater flexibility for qualification and explanation.

The writer of any motion picture or filmstrip script works within a limited but somewhat flexible pattern. His film must not be more than 20 minutes in length . . . preferably 15 minutes. This time element applies to both motion pictures and filmstrips, and in filmstrips this means an average of about 85 frames. He cannot present more than approximately five basic concepts, and all his visualization as well as his commentary must be devoted exclusively to the direct advancement of these concepts. His budget is limited. He must seek out the



simplest and least expensive methods of translating his ideas to film. He must plan his action to take place in the fewest possible locations; and wherever possible, he must find these locations in or near Atlanta because the expense of travel is a serious limiting factor. He must be sure that the film can be produced within a reasonable period of time. He must be certain that his picture continuity is made up of basic and enduring information, because it is frequently almost as expensive to revise a film as it is to produce it in the first place.

The script is the transitional stage in the translation of an idea to film. In training films it amounts to a distillation of a vast amount of material to a continuity of basic facts which will result in a straightforward and logical visual presentation. It tells the cameraman what pictures to shoot, where and how to shoot them, and indicates how each of the scenes or sequences fits into the story as a whole. Narration in a shooting script is only tentative. It helps to give meaning to the action description and is a rough gage of scene length. But the PICTURE is always the important thing at this stage. In a perfect script, the action would be so delineated that the final film would show

exactly what the script described . . . no more and no less. But this seldom happens --- especially in a training film. Scripts are the result of constructive evolution, and generally this evolution continues to some degree through the shooting and editing stages of the film. And, of course, the commentary is not revised finally until the PICTURE has been completed and edited (except in the case of lip-synchronous dialog when both picture and sound are recorded on the film simultaneously).

The routine of script preparation is basically similar for all films whether motion pictures or filmstrips regardless of the subject. The amount of time it takes and the number and type of problems to be solved depend upon the complexity of each subject. A simple procedural film offers few problems because it can be observed directly and checked easily for accuracy. A script of this type can be written in a few days or weeks. Other subjects may require several months.

The creation of a Communicable Disease Center script requires close teamwork from the very start. The project supervisor works throughout the film with the technical advisor who is responsible for the accuracy and sufficiency of

Many minds contribute to the development of every film idea.





the content of the film. Upon assignment of the subject, the supervisor's first step is to consult with the technical advisor and survey with him the material to be included in the film. The technical advisor presents ideas and facts . . . the project supervisor considers the pictorial aspects of the ideas and facts and how they may be arranged and blended to make a good filmstrip or motion picture.

They combine their talents to determine the scope of the film and decide what should and can be shown. Technician and supervisor may make a field trip to observe what the film will depict and to select locations and perhaps make tentative arrangements for cooperation in the production of the film. If further film research is necessary, they decide where, when, how, or from whom the information can be obtained.

At this point, the project supervisor submits a production outline of the proposed film to the Chief of the Story Development Branch. This gives the facts about the film, as nearly as it can be done at this stage. It includes a description of audience, objectives, basic concepts, approximate film length, and cost. The Chief of the Division uses this outline as his basis for approval or rejection for production.

The information about the subject gathered from all sources is studied and integrated by the project supervisor. He resolves all the data he has into four or five basic concepts. Then picture by picture or scene by scene he details the action which will give an accurate representation according to his understanding of the subject. He may first write a treatment or synopsis of the film and then expand this to arrive at his script. If the action is quite technical, he makes rough sketches of his ideas for use as illustrations for the technicians. Whatever his method, he ends up with a preliminary script.

The preliminary script is checked from every angle to ascertain that it is accurate, that it will make a good film, that it will be the kind of film that will be utilized by the intended audience, and that it does not ask for things that cannot be put on film, either by the nature of the subject matter or because of any production limitations that may exist at the Production Division.

The technical advisor checks it carefully for accuracy of content. Generally he asks other specialists in the field to review the script and make suggestions. This usually brings to light any controversial ideas presented in the film and often suggests important things that have been overlooked.

The Chief of the Story Development Branch analyzes the script to make sure that it embodies sound educational principles, and that it will stand up as a good motion picture. He is interested also in checking the probable length and cost with the original estimates. If production problems are apparent, the cameraman and film editor or both are asked to review the script from their standpoint.

The Chief of the Utilization Branch checks the film from the viewpoint of probable use and, based upon evaluation reports of other films in the library, is often able to make valuable suggestions.

The project supervisor gathers all the suggestions made regarding the script and incorporates these ideas in his next draft of the script. Sometimes these suggestions are conflicting or cannot be fitted into the film continuity. However, the supervisor considers them all and uses his own judgment in selecting those that will make the best film presentation. Usually the film is checked again with the technical advisor after these revisions have been made to make sure that there are no inaccuracies in the script.

Every film subject presents different problems both from the script and production angles, but certain basic things have to happen in every case. In writing filmstrip and motion picture scripts for the training of scientists, the writer himself must use scientific methods. He must first seek the facts, and through consultation with qualified specialists, check and recheck their validity for use in the film presentation. He uses every means available to him to make sure that not a single frame in the film is inaccurate or misleading. If he succeeds in these things and meets the technical requirements of good film production, his script is ready to go to the cameraman for actual production.