

Production Coordinator interview questions

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What to expect

Production coordinator interviews focus on your ability to keep a production moving. You will be asked about scheduling, budgeting, problem-solving and how you work with cast, crew and suppliers.

Employers want to know you can stay calm when plans change, because they almost always do.

- **Process and logistics:** Questions about how you build call sheets, manage schedules, track budgets and organise travel. They test whether you understand the daily rhythm of a production.
- **Behavioural:** Questions that ask for past examples of working under pressure, resolving conflicts or managing tight deadlines. They show how you actually behave when things go wrong.
- **Scenario and problem-solving:** Hypothetical situations such as a cast member becoming unavailable or a supplier delivering late. They assess your judgement and how you prioritise.
- **Technical:** Questions about software like Movie Magic Budgeting, Movie Magic Scheduling, ShotGrid, Excel and Google Workspace. They confirm you can use the tools the production relies on.
- **Compliance and safety:** Questions about risk assessments, WHS obligations and production paperwork. They check you understand the records that keep a production legal and safe.
- **Stakeholder and client-facing:** Questions about liaising with cast, crew, suppliers and clients. They test your communication and negotiation skills.

Most production coordinator interviews start with a phone or video screen with a production manager or line producer. If you progress, you meet the production manager and possibly a head of production in person. Some employers ask you to complete a short practical task, such as building a call sheet or reviewing a budget, or to bring a past production to discuss as a case study. Final conversations often cover rates, hours and availability, since productions run to fixed schedules.

1. Walk me through how you prepare a call sheet from start to finish.

Why they ask

This tests your process knowledge and whether you understand the daily logistics of a shoot.

How to structure your answer

Use a chronological walk-through: start with the schedule check, move to information gathering, then distribution and final issue.

Example answer

"First I check the shooting schedule and confirm locations, cast and crew requirements with the first assistant director. Then I pull together sunrise and sunset times, travel times from the production office, and any special needs like parking or catering. I build the call sheet in Movie Magic Scheduling or Excel, distribute a draft to heads of department for feedback, and issue the final version by an agreed time, usually by 6pm the day before. I keep a running list of changes for the daily production report."

2. Tell me about a time you had to manage a schedule conflict between two departments.

Why they ask

This looks at how you handle competing demands and whether you can find workable compromises.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR: describe the situation, the task, the action you took, and the result.

Example answer

"On a recent production, the art department needed extra time in a location that the lighting crew also needed for a night shoot. I listened to both heads of department, looked at the overall schedule, and realised we could swap the order of two scenes to give art a full morning and lighting a full evening. I updated the call sheet and informed everyone, and we lost no shoot time."

3. You arrive on set and the lead actor is unwell and cannot work. What do you do?

Why they ask

This tests your judgement under pressure and how you prioritise when the day's plan falls apart.

How to structure your answer

Use a judgement-under-pressure structure: confirm the problem, alert the right people, assess options, act, and update everyone.

Example answer

"First I confirm with the actor and the first assistant director that they are genuinely unable to perform. Then I alert the production manager and line producer immediately. I check the schedule to see if any scenes can be shot without the lead, or if we can bring forward scenes with other cast. I also check if any location or supplier costs can be mitigated. I coordinate with the assistant directors to release crew only if they are not needed, and I update all affected parties."

4. How do you track a production budget and keep expenses under control?

Why they ask

This checks your financial discipline and whether you can spot problems before they become serious.

How to structure your answer

Explain your method step by step, from setting up the tracking system to weekly reconciliation and reporting.

Example answer

"I use Movie Magic Budgeting for the top sheet and a detailed Excel spreadsheet for daily expenses. I reconcile petty cash and purchase orders weekly, and I flag any variance over a set threshold to the production manager as soon as it appears. I also keep a running cost report so we know where we stand at the end of each week. I don't wait for month-end to find out we've overspent."

5. What compliance records do you maintain on a production, and why?

Why they ask

This tests your understanding of WHS, insurance and broadcaster obligations, and your attention to detail.

How to structure your answer

List the records you keep, then explain the purpose of each one in plain terms.

Example answer

"I keep risk assessments, daily call sheets, and production reports. I also hold signed contracts, insurance certificates, and location agreements. These records show we have met our WHS obligations and network or broadcaster compliance requirements. If an incident happens, we have a clear paper trail to show what was planned and what was done."

6. How do you handle a supplier who is late delivering equipment?

Why they ask

This assesses your problem-solving and stakeholder management when a key input is at risk.

How to structure your answer

Use a problem-solving structure: gather information, assess impact, explore alternatives, act, and follow up.

Example answer

"I call the supplier immediately to find out the delay and if they can give a revised ETA. If the delay risks the shoot day, I look for an alternative supplier or see if we can adjust the schedule to shoot scenes that don't need that equipment. I keep the production manager and the relevant department head informed. After the shoot, I review the supplier's performance to decide whether to rebook them."