Chapter 8

HR & Artist management

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Learning outcomes

After reading this chapter you should be able to:

- Understand and explain the basic principles of human resource management;
- Apply these principles to recruitment and employment in the entertainment industries;
- Understand the issues around equality of opportunity, specifically within the entertainment industries;
- Appreciate the roles and functions of the main entertainment unions and industry bodies.

Introduction

This chapter is about employing and being employed in the entertainment industries. It considers the context of that industry, and then provides an introduction to the generic principles of human resource management, before applying these to the specific context of recruitment and employment in entertainment, while also exploring alternatives to employment. The chapter goes on to consider the issue of equal opportunities, before concluding with an introduction to the main entertainment unions and industry bodies. While it is impossible in one chapter to consider examples from every sector of the entertainment industries, the chapter does offer examples from music, theatre, film and television.

Overview of jobs in the industry

The most prominent jobs in the entertainment industries are performance roles: actors, dancers, musicians, broadcasters and presenters; the people in front of the camera, holding the microphone and on the stage. It is evident, of course, that there is a whole range of jobs essential to running the sector. These include those who initiate and commission the work (producers, writers, directors, managers, broadcasters, venue managers); those who present it (promoters, venue managers, broadcasters and increasingly Internet sites); those who sell it (marketing, press officers, box office); those who enhance it (sound, light, make up, costume); and those who manage it (administrators, tour managers, stage managers and floor managers). Beyond this lies the ancillary parts of the industry, which could be characterised as the Business to Business (B2B) segment. These are the jobs that support and exploit the industry – the recording studios, prop and costume stores, post production facilities, graphic designers, PR agencies, industry lawyers, accountants, financiers, critics, lighting hire, publishing, casting directors, agents, venue designers, seat upholsterers, wig makers, shower fixers, licensing enforcement bodies, and many more.

Job titles

Within individual industries, job titles and roles are not always 'fixed'. For instance, in theatre, the Administrator can be the Chief Executive Officer and the person who is responsible for its strategy and management; or it can denote the person who does the general office work, similar to an office assistant or clerk. Similarly, a Producer in theatre, film and television can be the person at the top who initiates a project, takes the risk and sees the whole project through from beginning to end, or the person or business who has had very little to do with the project other than contributing to its finances and getting its name 'above the title'. In the music industry, the word 'producer' can denote a great creative person who, through their input into the sound, selection and ordering of repertoire and influence on instrumentation and recording, can be seen as just as responsible for any subsequent success as the band members. On the other hand, they could be a jobbing staffer at a recording studio who engineers the work of a range of artists.

Scale

Organizations in the sector range widely in scale. The recorded music industry, for instance, is dominated worldwide by three major labels (Universal, Sony and Warner), and the live music industry by Live Nation, which is a large promoter/producer owning many venues, US radio stations, and festivals in the UK. Digitally, Apple's iTunes is a big player, and Google and Facebook are enormous and are very much changing how the sector works. At the other end of the scale, there are many small to medium sized enterprises, and many sole traders, such as session musicians, workshop leaders and so on. Theatre is defined by scale based on audience numbers: small scale theatre plays to audiences of around 200 people, middle-scale around 500 and large-scale around 1,000, although these numbers are not fixed. According to Creative Blueprint (2012), 85% of businesses in the creative and cultural sectors in the UK (and 86% in England alone) employ fewer than five people.

<<Figure 8.1 here>>
Figure 8.1: The UK's Creative and Cultural Businesses by Sizeband
Source: Creative Blueprint (2012)

Employing and being employed in the entertainment industries

Competition

Work in entertainment is appealing, and can even appear glamorous. This may be because it appeals to people's innate creativity, because of an assumed proximity to celebrity, or because of an overestimation of what those in the entertainment industries earn. Whatever the reason, it means that there is a lot of competition for many of the positions in the industry. In turn, this competition helps keep wages down.

A word about pay...

There is a huge disparity in pay in the entertainment industries. Those at the top can command huge fees and salaries that would overshadow the top pay in many other industries. At the same time, according to the National Careers Service at the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (2010), 73% of those working in the performing arts earn less than £20,000 per year. It would take an actor in small scale theatre more than 311 years to earn Jennifer Aniston's fee for one film; and the same actor more than a thousand years to earn what Johnny Depp has been paid for the next instalment of *Pirates of the*

Caribbean (based on ITC/Equity minimum of £400/week 2011-12; film fees according to Vanity Fair, 2011).

...and conditions

Self-employment, part-time and occasional employment, and multiple job-holding are characteristic patterns of employment in the creative industries (see Figure 8.2). While this has long been the case, according to the European Monitoring Centre on Change (EMCC, 2006), it is becoming increasingly pronounced. The EMCC goes on to say that work is 'fragmented and intermittent', reflecting the production patterns of the industry. Many jobs are short term, with some, such as a performer in an advert or a session musician, potentially lasting for even less than a day. There are few long term jobs; EMCC lists these as those 'in orchestras, acting groups, film production companies, as actors in television or radio soap operas'. There are also some in dance companies such as the Royal Ballet, and in broadcast media there is also a 'relatively high proportion of workers on permanent contracts' at 79% (Randle *et al.*, 2007, p.17).

<<Figure 8.2 here>>
Figure 8.2: Self-employment rates in the UK's Creative and Cultural Industries
Source: Creative Blueprint (2012)

Technicians, backstage and front of house staff in venues often fare rather better, with the potential for season-long or even year-round work. The same is true of those with management skills (fundraisers, marketers, chief executives) who can work in a variety of roles. Two-month contracts are common for performers in subsidised regional theatre, where the pattern is often four weeks rehearsal and four weeks performance. Commercial theatre usually has a shorter rehearsal period than subsidised theatre and, for instance in the West End, it is impossible to gauge how long a show might run as it is dependent on its ability to recoup at box office. A show that is apparently very good may still close early (e.g. *Spring Awakening* at the Novello Theatre, which received great acclamation, closed after ten weeks), while shows that are panned by the critics can still sell (*We Will Rock You* is in its 10th year at the Dominion). This is a big challenge for all of the sectors in the entertainment industries – no-one can really know in advance which products will be successful.

However, even eight- or ten-weeks' work is long-term compared to some film or TV acting jobs, which could be less than a day, although if this is for an advert it may still be lucrative. Similarly, a musician may go on tour for weeks or longer, while a session musician may just work for half a day. This is also true for non-performers: stage manager contracts in theatre often mirror performers' contracts, and a designer may work for one employer for the equivalent of a couple of weeks at a time, perhaps while working on other contracts.

Multiple job holding

This may mean embracing a main (or desired) job in the entertainment industries alongside a secondary job within or outside the industry; or it may mean having several short or medium term contracts either in succession or simultaneously. Stereotypically, that may be an aspiring performer who works in restaurant or a bar, but it could equally mean a musician in a band who also works as a session musician and delivers workshops in schools; or a stage manager, director or designer who works for a succession of theatre companies. Television is similar: 61% of those in independent production companies are freelance or sole traders and 51% work in more than one sector (Skillset, 2005, quoted in Randle *et al.*, 2007, p.17).

These working patterns, which may involve multiple contracts either simultaneously or in turn, lend themselves to self-employment. But they can make it difficult for staff to stay in the industry once they have families, and this is perhaps a reason why retention of women, for instance in film and television, is poor. This in turn has a negative impact on pensions (Sargent-Disc, 2011).

Tax and National Insurance

Self-employment or freelancing in essence means being a one-person business, where the worker is responsible for their own tax and National Insurance (NI). Those in employment have their tax and NI contribution taken from their pay by their employer through the PAYE scheme. In addition, the employer is obliged to add a contribution as proscribed by the Inland Revenue. Self-employed people have to manage their own tax and NI, filling in a self assessment form and paying their tax annually rather than as they are paid. This is not as onerous as it may sound, and HMRC can be helpful if its advice is sought. It is not in the worker's or the employer's gift to describe an employee as self-employed though: the IR will confer this status based on their own definition.

Anti-social working

Work in the live parts of the sector is often anti-social in that by definition it has to take place when audience members have free time, i.e. at evenings and weekends, and for pantomime, over Christmas. Work in television and film tends to have long hours and may be on location. Some workers, such as stagehands, have to start work before everyone else can, and finish after them. All producing sectors tend to have increasingly busy periods towards deadlines, as in the gaming sector, for example (Creativepool, n.d.; Prospects, 2011).

Entry routes and progression

Unlike many professions, there is no formal entry requirement or minimum standard which needs to be achieved to enter much of the industry and no formal progression structure once someone's in. It is, in fact, possible for people to enter the acting and singing professions at the top and with no training at all; and while that is rare, reality television perhaps encourages people to think it happens more often than it does. It is also possible to train for years and not find an entry point; and how good a practitioner is or the amount of time they have dedicated to their craft will not necessarily have a positive impact on pay, conditions, or even on whether they gain employment. Performers, particularly, are often valued for their ability to put 'bums on seats' over their technical ability.

Training

Multiple job holding and short-term contracts mean that training can be sporadic or non-existent, and even when in permanent employment, training can be very limited. According to the Creative and Cultural Skills' (2009) Workforce Survey, 30% of firms in the creative and cultural sectors spend less than £1,000 pa on training, and another staggering 57% spend nothing at all. This may mean that there is much on-the-job training, and mentoring may be particularly important. Consequently, individuals need to be clear about their own training needs and take training where they can. Workers within the entertainment industries tend to be highly qualified, with 46% of creative and cultural workers in England having a qualification above Level 4' (Creative Choices, 2008) and the majority of computer games designers being graduates (Creativepool, n.d.). There are many good courses now that train

or educate people in a range of aspects including arts and entertainment management, stage management, performing, technical and media, and computer arts, games technology and animation, at degree level and beyond.

Subjectivity

For many performance positions, ability can only be judged very subjectively. How good a singer or actor one is, or how well a performer will fit into a band or theatre company, is arguably a matter of opinion, taste, whether or not they are liked by the 'gatekeeper', and even how they look. All of this means that as well as an industry that is overcrowded with people determined to break through and succeed, it can be easy for people who are not devoting their life to a performing career to enter the market on a temporary or part-time basis, adding to the competition. Anyone who has the knowledge and a couple of spare hours can contribute to a film crowd scene, for instance, or even become an extra on a soap – something which may be interesting to them, but a vital part of the annual salary to the jobbing actor. And of course the increasing sophistication of technology such as CGI means that filmed crowd scenes no longer need to use performers at all.

Family business

Sometimes people follow their parents into the industry, and have relationships with others in the industry, creating dynasties, such as the great theatrical dynasties (Redgraves, Richardsons), musical families (Marleys, Carter/Cash, Arden/Osbournes, Gordys and Jacksons); those in film and television (Clooneys, Coppolas, Dimblebeys, and Grades); and even in wrestling (Harts and McMahons). There is also a tendency for people to wish to work with people they know and like, or know from experience they can rely on. This is not significantly different from other industries, where business is often kept in the family and professions from army to doctor are often followed by generations, but its visibility and lack of entry qualification can lead to charges of nepotism.

Geography

Much of the industry's UK workforce is based in London and the South East: 45% of the performing arts workforce (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, 2010); half of the UK audio visual industry (Randle *et al.*. p. 68); around half of the people working in the games sector (Creativepool, n.d.); and 57% of Britain's creative industry employees as a whole (Freeman, 2010, p. 55). Even within London, sectors cluster together, creating areas like the branded 'Theatreland' around Shaftesbury Avenue, or the music shops in Denmark Street. Businesses that make their money from entertainment may also cluster in these areas, such as Soho's internationally renowned film and media cluster (Freeman, 2010). Urban centres are also important (e.g. Sheffield for music; Liverpool and Dundee for games), and many regions have several theatres and of course many clubs and small scale venues. Many regional theatres still host their auditions in London, however, and there are few respected theatrical or television agents outside the capital. Clearly, living in London can be a great advantage, particularly for multiple job holders.

<<Figure 8.3 here>>
Figure 8.4: London's Theatreland

To summarise: The entertainment industries are characterised by high competition, a disparity in wages, short term and fragmented working, lack of clear routes of progression, multiple job holding, great subjectivity and possible nepotism, with many available

opportunities concentrated in London and the South East. While some of these characteristics are clearly negative, many create an exciting and dynamic working environment. There are a number of strategies to ameliorate the worst effects, including joining unions and membership organizations to protect rights and negotiate for higher wages and better conditions (see pages xx); using agents to find work and to negotiate pay (see pages xx); and supporting organizations which help lobby for appropriate legislation, advocate for members or just provide information or a platform (Birds Eye View, Women in Film and TV, British Black Music, Women in Technology for instance).

Human Resource Management

Put at its simplest, Human Resource Management is the management of the most precious asset of the company, its people. People are often the biggest part of the running costs of an entertainment organization (see Chapter 13). More importantly, people are the essential means by which things are produced, whether goods or services. People drive a company forward, providing initial impetus and ongoing labour, as well as initiating innovation and change. Even in a technological age, people are needed to imagine all of the ways technology can be developed and exploited and to implement, evaluate, sell and distribute these applications. And of course there are many jobs where, for now at least, human beings are still better than technology.

So, if people are necessary to achieve an end result, such as putting on a show or building a set or producing music or designing a computer game, it is necessary to attract people to work on a project, to retain them and monitor how well they work, to reward them appropriately and perhaps incentivise them to work in different ways, to train them and to develop them. In a nutshell, this is Human Resource Management. This discipline used to be called industrial relations and then personnel management, and the change of phraseology reflects a change in emphasis, from the idea that employees were to be controlled from above, to what Goss considers a more inclusive and open management style, which recognises the potential of the employee as a resource who adds value when s/he is involved at all levels (1994, pp. 3-4).

The principles of HRM: Attracting people to work for a company

At the outset of careers in entertainment management, many people will work with those they know, and may be happy to work without payment. This is not always sustainable in the long term, as people need to pay bills, and may want to further develop their work with people from beyond their immediate circle. The most usual way of doing this is for people to apply for jobs, or to create companies and recruit people to work with them, and to pay them to do so. Having said this, many people in the entertainment industries continue to work with people they know throughout their career, people they find stimulating, or fun to work with creatively, and sometimes this becomes permanent. Examples abound in the entertainment industries, partly because of the nature of bands and theatre/dance companies in providing, even necessitating, long-term relationships (some, like Keith Richards and Mick Jagger, go as far back as school). Many more will work with each other sporadically or when they can, or recall people they have worked with in the past for specific projects or roles. In their 2003 study of entry into film careers in London and LA, Blair *et al.* maintain that 'the importance of building and maintaining a network of contacts was critical to progressing a career' (p. 625). Networks are incredibly important throughout the entertainment industries, particularly at the point of entry.

Recruitment

It is often necessary or advisable for companies to advertise employment opportunities so that the widest field of candidates is available for selection. Some funding bodies will insist on this as a condition of funding, and it will be the policy of many organizations to try to widen the pool of people applying to work with them. This is about more than equal opportunities: creativity can be inspired by new stimulus as well as existing relationships. Nonetheless, and possibly because so many jobs are short-term, there is much word of mouth in the sector's job market. Consequently networking (through being a casual staff member, a volunteer or getting involved in workshops and training; through social media; or through going to parties and speaking to people) can often be most effective. Direct approaches can also work: performers, in particular, send CVs and a headshot to theatres, theatre companies, directors and casting directors, in the knowledge that plays are continually being cast. Performers, designers and directors also get work from decision-makers seeing their work. Performers therefore often contact decision-makers to invite them to performances. In theatre, it is often the case that people will not come to see a performer unless they are represented by an agent (see pxx). In music, bands play not only for pay, enjoyment, to improve and to build an audience, but also to be noticed by A&R people (see pxx) in the hope of getting a record deal. In addition they send their work to radio stations, as in the UK these are still huge influencers of record labels.

Many entertainment companies are not monolithic but are microcosms. While some industries largely need to recruit for the same sort of positions, individual organizations within the entertainment industries often recruit for a variety of people with a wide range of skills. For instance, a theatre may recruit performers, directors, writers, as well as stage managers, lighting and sound designers, alongside publicists, customer service staff, managers, cleaners, and so on. How these are recruited falls into two main methods: a more typical recruitment system, whereby people apply for posts and explain how they would be able to fulfil them, usually at interview; and a recruitment system for performers, where the ability to fit into a role is demonstrated at audition. There is also some middle ground, where for instance designers may show a portfolio of past work or even create work in response to a brief in order to demonstrate suitability at interview.

The recruitment process

Jobs for performers, stage managers, and technicians are advertised in specialist press such as *The Stage* and 'tip sheets'. Agents, Equity members and those who are in Spotlight can also access SBS (Script Breakdown Service), a specialist casting sheet which is the only place some jobs are advertised. Online there is Equity, Castcall and Castweb. Backstage staff will also find jobs advertised on StageJobs Pro.

Musicians' jobs are advertised in *The Stage*, *Music Week* and *Bandit A&R Newsletter*. Local notice boards (for instance in music shops, rehearsal studios and band hangouts, and of course online) can still be effective for singers, instrumentalists, managers and so on looking for bands. There are also online notice boards such as Joinmyband and Musolist. Managers may find jobs in some of these places and also in *The Guardian* and specialist press such as *Arts Professional*.

Figure 8.4 – *The Stage* logo

Casting

The recruitment process for performers in theatre, film, radio and television is called casting. Performers will usually be asked to audition for their jobs, in front of the director, the producer, and/or a casting director. This will be through open or closed auditions, or casting calls. Open auditions are advertised and anyone can attend. They tend to be for minor, non-speaking roles, or sometimes for people who are not (or not yet) professional performers (as has happened for some roles in the *Harry Potter* films). There is suspicion that some open auditions may be more about press and PR than they are about recruitment. They are nonetheless potential entry points to a competitive industry. They can therefore be very busy, and don't always give performers a lot of time to show their skills: as Natalie Gallacher (2012) of Pippa Ailion casting says: 'It's a quick in and out, 16 bars or a few lines of script'.

Closed auditions are much more usual. Here, performers will be invited to audition in response to one of the following:
- an approach by the performer's agent to the director, producer or casting director of a production;
- an approach, usually via the performer's agent, by a director, producer or casting director who has seen the performer's work, or their information/headshot in *Spotlight*, or has had their work recommended to them and has done an availability check;
- by a director, producer or casting director having sifted through performers' CVs submitted in response to a casting breakdown;
- by a director, producer or casting director having looked at the performer's unsolicited CV;
- a direct application by the performer, through their CV and headshot, for an advertised role.

According to Gallacher (2012), the first three routes are the most common. At auditions, performers will be asked to demonstrate their skills, often through set pieces. For a theatre actor, this is often two pieces of the actor's choice (traditionally a Shakespeare and a modern), but actors could be asked to sight-read a piece of the script that is being produced, or to improvise with other auditionees or with performers who have already been cast. This last is becoming much more common, as is directors sending text in advance so it can be properly prepared.

Dancers may be asked to take part in an observed class, or to learn a routine taught to them in a large group which they will then demonstrate in smaller groups or alone. Singers auditioning for theatre roles will often be asked for two contrasting songs. Of course, those auditioning for musical theatre may be asked to do all of the above. Since the 1980s, this idea of the performer having the 'triple threat' has dominated, particularly in West End musical theatre. However, there are still many parts in British musicals where one skill, e.g. acting, is seen as being most important.

Those auditioning for minor and chorus roles may be seen for five minutes at their first audition. Performers auditioning for film will often be asked to sight-read and to do a screen test. Successful auditionees may be recalled to as many as five auditions, which will often increase in time and intensity and with successively more important people judging them, up to the producers. Similarly, musicians who want to join a band, pit band or orchestra will usually be asked to play or sing in an audition. For shows, musicians are usually asked to prepare two contrasting pieces. Musicians auditioning for bands may be asked to perform a song in a similar style to that of the band, or play alongside the band. Figure x shows where casting comes in the process and gives an overview of the production process for live shows.

<<Figure 2: Show Development Process here>>
The show development process showing phases for production management, design and crew (top), cast, director and DSM (middle), and administration, marketing and producers (bottom).

Solo artists, bands and A&R

Bands and solo artists do not usually audition, but traditionally strive to be signed by record labels or music publishers, either majors (EMI, Sony, Universal, Warner or BMG) or smaller independent labels ('indies'). A&R stands for Artist and Repertoire, but these days this actually means scouting for talent, and is the process by which bands and solo artists are selected to be 'signed'. The labels employ a (now somewhat reduced) number of A&R people whose job it is to recruit bands or solo singers for the labels to invest in, develop and exploit. A&R people (often known as 'A&R men', a perhaps historical reflection of the domination of men doing the job) go to gigs – on spec, on word of mouth, or by invitation – and go back to the label to make recommendations. They then have to convince a whole range of people back at the label to even come and listen to bands they recommend. If the band/artist is liked by the label, they may be offered a record deal. This usually involves the band being paid an amount of money up front to produce a number of tracks, an album or albums. This is then recouped by the record label when the artist releases the tracks.

For understandable reasons, getting signed is seen as a major goal for many unsigned bands. To get there means playing gigs which are not always profitable so bands can get on the radar to be heard. On top of the members' initial investment in the band (instruments, transport, marketing, time etc), an investment in promotion to raise awareness amongst agents, managers and A&R is usually also necessary. While the 'signing fees' offered by record companies can look big, £60,000 is not a lot when split between band members. It also has to be remembered that this 'signing fee' is actually an advance against future sales, and while it is not repayable if the artist doesn't sell enough records, as it is recouped from sales, the artist sees no more royalty income until the debts have been paid back. In addition, the band needs to pay back some of the things the label are paying for on the band's behalf, such as producers, studios, legal advice, equipment, touring expenses, promotion costs, etc. And as music lawyer Ann Harrison (2012) reminds us, the manager has to be paid out of the gross income or advances too. This means a lot of sales in a market that is declining, at least for physical product, before a profit is reached. Harrison (2011) argues that bands are too often in a hurry to sign and can then spend a couple of years trying to back out of a bad deal. 'Signing isn't everything', she says: 'Go with your instinct and only sign if the deal feels right for you. And get some advice first, not after it has gone wrong!'

<<Figure 8.5 here>>
Figure 8.5: Typical Investment in a newly signed act

Entrepreneurship

Not everyone working in the industry wants to go through processes such as this. Many arts and entertainment workers are highly entrepreneurial and want more freedom and control over their income, their work, and the rights to their work. Some may even create their own company so that they can employ themselves, rather than risking unemployment. So many actors, writers, directors, dancers, choreographers, musicians and so on therefore set up their own companies, and find ways to create, distribute and sell their own work.

Music: DIY

Record labels no longer own the means of production, but they are the means of marketing and cash flow, and they have access to world markets. Advances in technology and related changes in the ways people discover and listen to music mean that musicians are now more able to record and distribute work themselves. This ownership of the means of production has benefits, including the possibility of bands retaining the rights to their own music, keeping any income and retaining artistic control. However, the mythology about artists such as the Arctic Monkeys and Sandi Thom who have 'made it' totally independently is just that. As Andrew Dubber (2007) says: 'PR, traditional media, record labels and money were all involved'. There are several reasons that 'do-it-yourself' is difficult: First there is a cashflow issue in that the band has to invest in itself before the money comes in, something which a major label is in a better position to do. In addition, labels of all sizes have contacts and expertise, as well as established systems and routes to market including access to international markets. And many bands would rather spend their time creating music than managing, marketing and distributing.

Case studies: The DIY model

There are many benefits of the do-it-yourself model. Ingrid Michaelson gained success in this way, although she then created her own label and made a global distribution deal with a major (RED, part of Sony). She says: 'It's virtually impossible to get an album into stores these days unless you have a distribution company – and you can't get that unless you have an actual label' (Widran, n.d.). Conversely, successful artists who have had major label backing such as Roger McGuinn of the Byrds have chosen to work independently making individual deals with distributors like iTunes and Amazon, or, like Price, setting up their own label (although he still uses majors' distribution) (Reevers, 2011). And some musicians are doing it themselves. Bassist Steve Lawson feels that the record label model is 'broken', and sells his recorded music directly through Bandcamp, iTunes, Amazon, and at gigs, and plays live, often duetting with singer/songwriter Lobelia, at 'house concerts' in the UK and the US (Lawson, 2011). It will be interesting to see if more musicians manage without labels in the future, and whether there are any high profile musicians who manage their whole career without the backing of a label.

Representation: Agents

Agents are the go-betweens who find work and negotiate pay rates for many people working in the entertainment industries. Agents can specialise: there are, for instance, agents for walk-on parts for actors, for child performers, for session musicians, for dancers, for designers, directors and writers, and so on. Whoever they represent, agents are regulated by the Department of Trade and Industry, and have to comply with the minimum standards set by The Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses Regulations (2004). Unlike agents in other industries, who charge employers for finding suitable workers to fill vacancies, entertainment agents take their commission from the artists themselves. According to Equity (2011), this is usually 10-25% of what the worker is paid for the job. This is the only way an agent can be paid – they cannot take money up front or as a joining fee. Some agents may ask for a payment for a performer's entry in 'the Book'; this is a book showing photographs and details of everyone the agent represents, and is more usual for models and walk-ons. Any such payment should be commensurate with the cost of the Book, and artists should ask to see the last copy of the Book so they know what they are paying for.

Those seeking an agent usually need to be proactive and invite agents to see their work. Most large, reputable agents are based in London, and it is therefore easier to attract them to the London dates of a tour. Agents also go to showcases of performers in their final year in drama school. Agents will rarely see amateur work. When agents go to see work, they are not necessarily judging how good a performer is, but whether they will be able to attract work and sustain a career in the short or longer term, and whether they can assist with that.

Managing people in the industries

Anecdotally, people in the entertainment industries, such as performing artists, 'creatives' and celebrities, can be difficult to manage, and there is a common stereotype surrounding the wild, unmanageable artist. While this is possible, it is difficult to find evidence that artists are more difficult to manage than anyone else. One big difference with other industries, however, is that the manager is often hired by those s/he has to manage. Bands and theatre companies will often appoint a manager and have the power to dismiss them or not to appoint them for future contracts, and yet the manager has to be responsible for the company and have some authority. In addition, the artist can grow bigger than the manager, having more power and earning more. This can make a traditional hierarchical management relationship a difficult balancing act. Another difference may be the different priorities of performers and managers, where managers may want to increase sales or grow markets, and performers want to focus on performing or developing their product, sometimes in less marketable directions.

Equal opportunities

Traditionally, there have been two main arguments for equal opportunities: a business argument and a moral argument. I'd like to posit a third argument. The entertainment industries has a special role, not only in its ability to provide role models like other industries in the public eye (sport, teaching and politics, for example), but also to reflect and even shape our society. I will call this the Cultural Argument.

Equal opportunities: The business argument

The business argument holds that employers would be remiss not to want to attract people from a diverse range of backgrounds in order to employ and retain the very best talent. Diverse talent brings with it not only the skills necessary to do the job, but a cultural understanding that may also contribute to the business in different ways. In addition, according to the Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development (2011), employees want to work for good employers, and to feel valued at work. Further, there is legislation to ensure equality of opportunity, and it costs businesses in both cash terms and in loss of reputation to fall foul of the law.

Equal opportunities: The Law

Legislation regarding equality has been developed gradually over time, but all previous legislation was superseded or absorbed by the Equality Act 2010 (Home Office) which now protects people from discrimination on nine counts (age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation). Employers in all sectors including entertainment need to comply with the law, not only in terms of employment practices but also in provision of goods and services. Equal opportunities law is not the same as positive discrimination. It does not allow for quotas and does not suggest that excluded groups are favoured in recruitment, training or promotion. Instead it aims to offer equality of opportunity, by, for instance, encouraging employers to advertise in a wider range of publications so that information about job opportunities is available to a wider spectrum of potential employees.

Equal opportunities: The moral argument

The moral argument accepts that certain sections of our society have been and continue to be discriminated against, and that this has led to some sections of society being under-represented in many sectors. This argument holds that all people should enjoy equality of opportunity, and that it is the duty of all of us, whether individuals or companies, to address this.

Equal opportunities: The cultural argument

If entertainment holds a mirror up to nature, to paraphrase Shakespeare, it is important that what it reflects does not have missing pieces. Since the Equality Act 2010 (Home Office), all public bodies have a duty that goes beyond employment to "promote equality and foster good relations" between people with protected characteristics and the rest of society. However, the entertainment industries has a unique place in creating works that show us back to ourselves and that help us to conceptualise ourselves as individuals and as a

society. As Miriam O'Reilly (2012) tweeted about television: 'Television has an enormous influence on shaping society. We can't leave fair representation of women to the whims of so-called creatives'. It is important, then, that the whole of society is represented, not only on stage and screen, but in conceptualising, making and managing our entertainment. If it is not, there is a danger that our view of ourselves is only partial and that a 'hegemony' is reinforced, where only the views, understanding and lifestyles of a dominant group are shared.

Equal opportunities policy

For all of these reasons, and in some cases because there is a level of encouragement (or what may be seen as coercion) by funders, many companies in the entertainment industries have an equal opportunities policy, and many of these not only comply with but try to better the law. This is evident through extensions of policy to cover those who are not currently protected by law, including, for instance, those who are discriminated against on other grounds, such as socio-economic or HIV status.

Despite its adoption of such policies, the entertainment industries does not have a good record of employing the widest spectrum of people, nor of representing a variety of people of different genders and backgrounds through its many products. Women, for instance, 'make up only 6% of employees in the games industry', and ethnic minorities only 3% (Skillset, quoted in Prospects, 2011). Some sectors of society feel themselves to be invisible, or depictions of them to be restricted, limited or stereotyped: 'Films are perpetuating harmful and out-of-date sexual, racial and gender stereotypes, according to the biggest-ever study of its kind into cinema audiences' opinions. Of 4,315 adults across the UK who were surveyed, a clear majority believe cinema too often falls back on discredited stereotypes, including sexless older women, drug dealing, over-sexualised black people and gay people whose lives are dominated by their sexuality' (Hill, 2011).

Equal opportunities and portrayal: The case of film

The most recent survey of how people are portrayed in film was undertaken by the UK Film Council in 2011. It found that people in some groups felt that film portrayal of them was partial, stereotypical, and outdated. This is important if we believe that film has the power to shape our world – and most of us do: '69% of the general public say that films have the power to educate about real life issues...1 in 2 of the general public also go further to say that film has the power to challenge stereotypes' (ibid, p.9). If film educates and challenges us, then we may feel it's important to get portrayal closer to real life. Some may even feel that we may want to use this power that is particular to the entertainment industries to shape a better society. Unions and industry bodies often play a role in doing that.

Working with entertainment unions and industry bodies

The main unions which represent the different sectors within the entertainment industries are Equity, the Musicians' Union, BECTU and The Writers' Guild. In addition there are many smaller unions representing the plethora of other workers, such as designers, directors, theatre technicians, etc. Good management should mean that managers work in cooperation with unions rather than in opposition, so it is useful to understand what unions do and what they are trying to achieve, in order to appreciate how they might impact on a company's work.

What entertainment unions do

The key aims of unions in the entertainment industries are the same as in other industries. They are there to represent their members, protect jobs, negotiate contracts with employers, improve pay and conditions of service, monitor safety in the workplace and campaign for increased equality. They often lobby governments on behalf of the entertainment industries. In addition, they publish house magazines and offer a range of benefits, from insurance discounts to personal advice. Unions have national offices, branches and divisions; plus 'deputies' in companies.

...and what they don't

Unions are not agents. Membership of a union will not in itself get work for a member, nor does it vouch for the standard of the member's work. Membership of a trade union is voluntary. It is illegal to demand that a potential employee should be in a union before they can be employed, or to demand they do or do not join one once they are employed.

Equity

Equity is the UK Trade Union representing professional performers and other creative workers from across the spectrum of the entertainment, creative and cultural industries. Equity negotiates minimum terms and conditions across the entertainment industries; allows performers to register their 'Professional Name'; and collects and distributes royalties and other payments. Other benefits of Equity membership include insurance, and, for dancers and choreographers, the Dance Passport, which provides access to support and services from unions throughout Europe.

Musicians' Union

The Musicians' Union (MU) represents 30,000 musicians working in all sectors of the music business, from gigging to orchestras, jazz and musicals. While the MU provides the usual services of a union, many musicians join it initially for its generous insurance scheme, which entitles members not only to £10m of Public Liability Insurance but also up to £2,000 instrument and equipment cover. In addition, it has championed many bands' rights protection and offers legal assistance for disputes over unpaid fees, cancellations, injury compensation, intellectual property rights, or help with contracts for recording, song-writing, touring or merchandising. It also offers teacher services, recognizing not only those dedicated to teaching music, but also the necessity of a portfolio career for many members.

Broadcasting Entertainment Cinematograph and Theatre Union (BECTU)

BECTU is the independent trade union for staff, contract and freelance workers working in broadcasting, film, theatre, entertainment, leisure, interactive media and allied areas, and its 25,000 members come from all aspects of the entertainment industries, including technicians, scenic artists, cinema artistes and game developers.
BECTU is recognized by many employers in the media and entertainment industries, from large scale employers like the BBC, the RSC and Odeon, through to smaller companies like the Eden Court Theatre, Inverness. In some cases, BECTU agreements are with groups

of employers, such as with the Society of London Theatre (SOLT), which represents the West End, or the Producers' Alliance for Cinema and Television (PACT), which represents independent producers.

What about a union for managers?

Entertainment managers are not represented by a specialist union, but there are amalgamated unions such as Unite, which have traditionally attracted entertainment managers, for instance through their 'Finance & legal' and 'Community, youth workers & not for profit' divisions. Managers may also feel they are sufficiently represented and advised through their management associations such as SOLT, ITC and TMA for theatre managers, BPI and MMF for music and TIGA for managers in games development.

What unions mean for managers

Perhaps the most important ongoing impact that unions will have on a company and its management will be the negotiation of pay and conditions, or 'collective bargaining'. The large unions such as Equity, the MU and BECTU negotiate minimum terms and conditions across the entertainment industries. Where there is a major employer such as the BBC, they will do this directly with that company, and BECTU sometimes negotiates new House Agreements directly with individual managers. However, the industry is too fragmented with very many small and medium employers for each union to be able to do this with each individual company. Consequently, unions negotiate with industry bodies representing managements of different sectors and scales to agree terms, resulting in deals such as the ITC/Equity contract, the Equity/TMA Subsidised Repertory Agreement and the BBC/BECTU Agreement. These agreements stipulate pay and conditions of employment, which individual employers (or 'houses') can agree to vary to create 'house agreements'. It is important for managers to be aware of these as they will greatly inform budgets and schedules.

Trade associations

As well as collective bargaining, trade associations offer a range of benefits to members such as legal and management advice, research and lobbying.

ITC: The Independent Theatre Council represents small scale, often touring, performing arts organizations and their managements.

TMA: The Theatrical Management Association represents middle scale and building-based theatre.

SOLT: The Society of London Theatres represents theatre managers and producers in London's West End.

BPI: British Phonographic Industry, now the British Recorded Music Industry, represents record companies. Its membership accounts for around 90% of all recorded music sold in the UK.

TIGA: Representing the games industry.

Other entertainment unions, allied organizations and trade associations include:

Association of British Orchestras

Association of British Theatre Technicians: (stage managers, production managers, administrators)

Directors' Guild of Great Britain

Federation of Entertainment Unions (lobbies on areas that are of interest to all member unions e.g. BBC Charter, tax breaks for British film production, training, equalities)

NUJ (National Union of Journalists, of interest here for presenters)

Society of British Theatre Designers

Writers' Guild (writers for television, film, radio, theatre, books, poetry, video games).

For a full list of guilds, unions and trade associations, see the Skillset website (Skillset, 2012).

Seminar activities

1. As technology and access to it develops, will people still need to move to London to work in sectors of the entertainment industries?
2. Do you think the arts and entertainment industries behave as meritocracies? Does the 'cream' always rise to the top? Is this true of Eastenders? The Royal Shakespeare Company? X Factor?
3. Actors in crowd scenes have been replaced by CGI in films from *Star Wars Episode 1: The Phantom Menace* to *Titanic*. Will there come a time when actors are no longer needed in film, not even in principal roles? What about in live theatre? What about other performers – dancers, or musicians? And what does CGI mean for others – makeup and hair artists? And what about designers?
4. Is the music industry still male dominated? Why is this? Are other sectors dominated by one gender? Why?
5. Do you think there will be more successful, independent unsigned artists in the future? How will they market themselves? How will they make money from their work?
6. Do you think it is the responsibility of the entertainment industries to provide a diversity of role models? Do individual artists have responsibility to be role models, or to represent or be a spokesperson for their race, class, sexuality or gender?
7. Do you think that equal opportunities work? What are the downsides? Does representation in employment and within entertainment matter? If it does, would other measures, e.g. quotas, be more effective?
8. Do you think the lack of, or poor, portrayal of certain groups in film also applies to other sectors, e.g. theatre, music or gaming? What is your experience? Why do you think this is?
9. Do you agree that film has the power to shape what we think, and to educate us? Can you give any examples? Does television, theatre, music, in fact the whole entertainment sector, have the power to shape our lives in this way? Has a piece of entertainment ever shaped the way you think? If this power exists, is there any downside to it?
10. According to Randle *et al.* (2007), the predominance of internships as a route of entry is an issue for equality in the UK film and television sectors. Why would this be an issue? For whom? What, if anything, would you do about it?

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