UNIT 1 PRODUCTION OF AUDIO/VIDEO PROGRAMMES: AN OVERVIEW

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The second block of this course dealt with the concept of ‘multi-media’ course packages in the context of distance education and the role of electronic media in effective teaching-learning situations. This unit takes you through an overview of various steps in producing audio and video programmes. Our intention, here, is not to make full-fledged producers out of you. However we concede and acknowledge the fact (as you will too) that in order to work effectively with a professional in any field, a certain knowledge-base in the area is a prerequisite. The primary purpose of this unit is to contribute to such a knowledge-base and thereby enable you to use the various media in pedagogic situations. This unit highlights certain key areas such as the production process as a team mode operation, and the systems approach.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we shall explore the process of production (of audio and video programmes) and how it operates as a system. After going through this unit, you should be able to:

- describe the major elements of a media production system;
- state the roles and functions of different members of the programme production team; and
analysed the important prerequisites involved in the planning, design and development of audio-video programmes.

1.2 MATERIALS PRODUCTION: A SYSTEMS APPROACH

We often say that the production of a media package is a complex process. Why is it complex? The main reason for its complexity lies in the fact that it involves inputs of various kinds. To understand the basics of its structure, the entire process of media materials production may be viewed as a ‘system’ in which several sub-systems and elements operate together in close unison and harmony. Here, the terms ‘system’ and ‘in close unison and harmony’ need elaboration.

1.2.1 Systems approach

What is a system? A system is a combination of several sub-systems and elements that are inter-related and inter-dependent and operate as an integrated whole to achieve some pre-determined and specific objectives. The term ‘in close unison and harmony’ is important here because it is an essential condition that all parts of the system function well, both individually as well as collectively. That means the production process cannot be accomplished by any one individual part or by a few parts in isolation. Nor can it be accomplished by excluding one or more parts of the system.

Systems are of two types—natural and man-made. The solar system and the galaxies are examples of natural systems. These are beyond human control. Their functioning can be studied, but their behaviour cannot be controlled, predicted or determined precisely. Postal systems, education systems, media systems and machines are some examples of man-made systems. All such systems are deliberately designed, operated and controlled by man to solve a set of problems or to achieve certain pre-determined objectives. The behaviour of man-made systems can be predicted, controlled and manipulated with a certain degree of precision.

Production of audio and video programmes is a man-made system in which several sub-systems and their elements—humans, machines, materials and methodologies operate together in unison and close harmony. It can also be described in terms of the basic parameters—input, process, output, environmental context and feedback—commonly associated with the systems concept. Basically designed along the systems approach, the materials production system aims to achieve certain specified objectives and outputs operating within the limitations of the given environmental constraints. It also has evaluation and feedback mechanisms built into it so that the omissions of the system, if discovered at any stage, can be modified to ensure its maximum efficiency and fault-free operation.

Audio-Video Programme Production System

An audio/video programme production consists mainly of the following two major elements:
• **Basic physical resources or infrastructure:** These include equipment, machines, materials, buildings, studios, or a production complex.

• **People or human resources:** This includes trained personnel who are required to manage the process, operate equipments and provide ideas, expertise and services for programme production.

At the outset, we must point out that there are two distinct levels of production — the amateur and the professional. At the amateur level, for a simple audio programme production, all you need is a microphone, along with a recorder and a few blank tapes. If necessary a playback facility can be used to edit the recorded programme. For a video production at this level, you need a camera, a recorder, a microphone, a few lights (depending on the location), a few blank cassettes and a simple editing console. At the professional level, trained personnel and highly sophisticated equipment are required for both audio and video productions. A more detailed discussion follows in the next subsection.

In a full-fledged media production set-up, the number of people required to provide ideas, advice, and management inputs, to operate and maintain machines and equipments, to provide and manage various services and resources and to execute and control numerous production tasks, will increase correspondingly. In other words, the more complex and numerous the programmes, the more expanded and larger the production system and vice-versa.

The process of media materials follows a systems approach, as it is only through this approach that numerous and varied production elements and tasks are identified, manipulated and accomplished through mutual co-operation and creative interaction among a large number of people — all specializing in their respective disciplines. It may be emphasized that audio-video material production — whether for radio, film or television — is essentially a co-operative activity in which all the elements of the system — men, machines, materials and methodologies - are inter-related at all sages from planning to implementation. Of all the media, however, television is more complex than others, as it subsumes radio and film to a great extent. Our discussion in this and subsequent sections will, therefore, mainly focuses around the process of television programme production.

### 1.2.2 Major strands of TV production

Television production is essentially a process requiring teamwork. It operates as a well-integrated system in which several specialists from different vocations and with diverse backgrounds and expertise interact closely with one another, pooling their talents and services to contribute towards the production of a chain effect and to ensure the overall quality of the final programme. According to Herbert Zettle, “Television is not just a pipeline through which the software is pushed by the hardware people; rather it is a creative process in which people and machines interact to provide the viewer with significant experiences. Television production, therefore, requires an intimate knowledge of the creative process of how machines and people interact.”
Now figure 1 on the next page makes an attempt to illustrate the complexities of this process in simple terms. You will find that it presents a brief overview of the television production process. Here, you will see that production involves a large number of independent processes each linked to the other and all interacting with one another in varying degrees.

(i) **Programme planning and research**

Detailed media, curricular and programme briefs serve as major reference points for scriptwriters and producers of television programmes. The programme brief or the academic note is the first written statement, which forms the basis of a television programme script. It defines the precise details of a programme in terms of title, target audience, duration, programme objectives and content outline or synopsis. At this stage, it is essential to have another look at the special needs of the target audience – their likes and dislikes, their special characteristics, their previous knowledge or entry behaviour, etc. A thorough knowledge of the conditions in which the programme will be received by the viewers, is as important. These details must be further supplemented by more specific research data on the theme of the programme. In fact, this kind of programme research is absolutely essential and must be undertaken at the initial programme proposal stage.

(ii) **Message planning and script development**

It is a decisive and creative stage of programme development and production. What a programme designer or scriptwriter must always keep foremost in mind is the viewers' interest, the programme objectives and the visual and other possibilities the medium can offer. It is important to go through a huge array of materials and select only those which are the most relevant, and look for resources and ideas which match the programme objectives. What is not directly relevant to the programme is discarded. With such considerations and creative decisions, the shape or structure of the programme begins to emerge. Questions like the following are tackled at this stage: How will the programme begin? How should it come to an end? What sequences will form the body of the programme? How will the viewers' attention be attracted and sustained throughout the programme? Here, one should look for visual materials on the topic, consult books, journals and other references and also meet knowledgeable people to get vital and interesting information on the subject.
Programme Planning and Research
- Ideas, briefs, synopsis/academic note for programme
- Programme Research: re-examining of the needs of viewers, context of viewing – specific research on content and its enrichment

Message Planning and Script Development
- Programme design and presentation strategy
- Visual possibilities of the medium
- Selection of materials
- Programme shape and structure–format and style
- Story board and final script

Production Planning and Scheduling
- Planning, budgeting and scheduling of production
- Designing the production script
- Organising various production resources/facilities

Casting and Directing Performers and Artists
- Identifying and casting performers
- Directing artists/talent–dry runs, rehearsals

Final Production, Editing and Capsuling
- Studio/field recording
- Editing and capsules designing, previewing and evaluation

Transmission/Differentiation
- Designing transmission schedule
- Telecast and circulation of programmes

Utilization and Evaluation
- Mounting utilization and evaluation studies
- Monitoring transmission and obtaining feedback from the field
- Feeding research findings back into the system

Fig 1: Major strands of TV Production Process – An Overview

Before a full script is worked out, it is advisable, especially for beginners, to evolve a storyboard. The storyboard is a detailed, shot-by-shot description of the programme on a sheet of paper divided into two vertical columns for audio and video content and a description of programme details. We shall discuss in greater detail the storyboard and the script writing process in the unit 3 of this block.
(iii) Production planning and scheduling

As the final script of the programme evolves and takes some definite shape, the producer is required to initiate simultaneous action on planning, budgeting and scheduling of the production. Production planning requires a lot of table work by the producer and several planning meetings with technical and other programme and resource people. The producer has to prepare a production or a camera script with floor plans and camera cards and plan for other technical requirements for studio recording and/or location shooting. He/she holds separate and joint planning meetings with other programme support staff in various units for finalising graphics, photographs, slides, costumes, make-up, set and lighting arrangements, and also confers with camera crew, technical personnel and the floor staff who assist in the studio. Finally, the producer holds a joint planning meeting in which all the production team members participate to give final touches to the script and its various production details. Bookings of resources, facilities, equipments, studio, production crew and programme talent are the areas of work which are on the top of producer’s job-list and need much advance planning.

The producer who frequently also acts as a director in a television or a radio programme, must hold rehearsals and dry-runs for the performers and artists involved in the programme. In organising and co-ordinating all these tasks, the producer is mainly assisted by his/her production assistant(s) and supported by all other members of the concerned units. For budgeting, the producer must cost out various inputs, resources and services that might be needed and must get the financial sanction of the appropriate authority in advance. Budgeting for a programme also means budgeting for time and resources required to schedule and carryout various production tasks against definite deadlines.

(iv) Casting and directing performers/artist

Before the producer embarks upon actual recording or shooting of various sequences of the production, s/he must identify, select and book suitable performers, artists or experts for the programme. In fact, intelligent casting is one of the secrets of successful productions. The producer-director should be a discriminating judge of faces, expressions, voices and other required traits and must intelligently select the talent crew members. In educational productions, we require presenters or anchorpersons, teachers, specialists, performers and students. Experienced, professional performers and artists are mostly familiar with studio crew and signals. Children and new and inexperienced artists must be dealt with sympathy and understanding. The producer-director should guide his/her cast so that they can realise the production objectives faithfully and exactly in the manner required. This stage of production involves the producer’s close interaction with performers and artists, directing them through initial briefings, dry-runs, camera rehearsals and final recordings. What a producer requires most here is patience, clear communication and confidence.

Directing includes guiding performers and other members of the production team including the technical crew.
(v) **Final production, editing and capsuling**

And lastly, it is time for the main event to happen. That is, the actual production — studio recording or field location shooting or both, followed by sound mixing and post-production editing. This is in fact, the terminal stage of production, where all activities, processes and production personnel are required to work as 'a dedicated team', carrying out various tasks in a well co-ordinated fashion. Here, the operation of the production process as 'an integrated system', becomes quite visible and pronounced. The basic plan for a studio production of average length, excluding post-production processes, comprises the set and lighting, camera rehearsals and actual recording operations, all spread over a period of 2-3 hours. In complex productions involving outdoor shooting and complex post-production editing, the process may well stretch over several hours on different working days.

(vi) **Transmission/dissemination**

After a programme has been finally produced, it is capsuled for transmission or dissemination along with other programmes and series in accordance with the transmission or implementation strategy of the production centre of the institution concerned. It is a standard practice to preview each programme after production and also before telecast or capsuling. A cataloguing system and a video tape recorder (VTR) library for stockpiling a large number of audio/video tapes in an air-conditioned, dust-free room, form an integral part of any media system for proper storage and easy retrieval of materials.

(vii) **Utilization and evaluation**

It is only through a well-designed sub-system of evaluating and obtaining feedback on programme strengths and faults that it becomes possible to assess the efficacy and value of programmes, which need constant revision for improvement.

You have just studied that audio-video programme production is a 'man-made' system in which several sub-systems and their elements — man, machines, materials and methodologies — are inter-related at every stage from planning to implementation. Mainly devised to achieve certain specified objectives, a media production system can be described in terms of its basic parameters — input, process, output, environmental context and feedback. You have also studied that media programme production is a complex process that involves several sub-processes each linked to the other and all interacting with one another in varying degrees. Now try to answer the following question.
Check Your Progress 1

Notes:  
   a) Space is given below for your answer.
   b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

List some of the major steps in the production process.

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1.3 PRODUCTION – A TEAM MODE APPROACH

Production of audio-video programmes depends on effective teamwork. In any educational media production, a whole range of specially trained people with artistic, technical, managerial, communicative and other creative skills, come together, work in co-operation and make their respective specialist contributions at different stages during the making of a programme. Of course, there are machines and equipments, which need to be operated efficiently and maintained in perfect condition. However, it is not so much the working of machines, but the people and their working with one another as a team, which is important for the process.

Educational audio-video programmes are generally designed and produced by a production team or a few teams working on a common project. The number of people working in a production team varies according to the size of the production set-up and the available resources. Their titles and roles also vary from situation to situation depending upon the requirements of the programme. For convenience, however, members of a media production team may be grouped under the following general areas of operation:

- Programme planning
- Programme production – research and scripting
- Programme services
- Technical operations
- Engineering – maintenance and repairs

Figure 2 presents a summary description of the functions covered under each area and the general titles of the personnel who provide ideas, advice, services, operate machines and equipment and execute various production tasks from programme (idea) conceptualization to final production and distribution.
Let us now elaborate on the functions of the important members of the production team.

### 1.3.1 Functions of the team members

The personnel involved in various production tasks and associated with programme development at different stages are important to the production process. Their roles and functions are more or less distinctly defined and they all work as a team with the programme producer or director at the centre of the stage.
Producer

Working under the head of production or programmes, the producer has the over-all responsibility for the successful production of a programme. She/he is the co-ordinator and manager of all activities and is associated with the production process right from the stage of conceptualisation when the media curriculum is planned and detailed programme briefs are designed. She/he confers with the scriptwriters and researchers, prepares the camera script, decides on the programme format, controls production budget and expenditure and co-ordinates with all other people associated with the programme in any way. The producer also selects the cast and deals with artists and performers directing them during rehearsals and actual recording. She/he interacts with all other members of the team and co-ordinates their activities.

Researcher

The researcher carries out basic research for an audio-video programme. He undertakes research studies on students profile, need assessment and testing of scripts and prototype programmes. He also prepares programme briefs, which help design the programme scripts. The researcher thus functions as a bridge between the production team and the target students. Producers and programme writers often do their own research in some cases. It is important to do programme research to get new ideas, interesting situations and relevant and beautiful visual material. Research forms the foundation of interesting and relevant programmes. However, for a discipline-based programme, research may not always be a necessary step in the overall process of production.

Script-writer

The script-writer designs the script for the programme, suggests visuals, graphics, music and effects. He writes all the dialogue, in accordance with the programme objectives and available research data. Some producers write their own scripts for their programmes.

Subject specialist

In educational and technical programmes, it is a common and necessary practice to appoint a subject expert to advise on the treatment given to the content, the accuracy of facts and concepts presented in the programme. Whatever amount of research data the producer and scriptwriters may have collected, there is always the possibility of mistakes creeping in. So, the role of a subject specialist is very useful and important. So much so that the involvement of a good subject specialist may become essential in providing up-to-date information through research.

There are several other members of the team whose roles and responsibilities are indicated in Figure 2. They are all involved to a greater or lesser degree with the execution of various listed tasks. The key production team, however, comprises a few core functionaries: the producer, a researcher, a subject specialist and a scriptwriter. In educational radio, film and television, it is a common practice these days to follow a team-mode production strategy. A competent and dedicated core production group, operating as a team is able to (i) coordinate and organise its activities.
efficiently, (ii) interact with all the other personnel concerned, in an effective manner, and (iii) execute the assigned production tasks most satisfactorily. In fact, it is on the basis of international practice and experience that the team-mode production approach has been found to be the most useful for production of educational media programmes.

However, as we look at Figure 2, we at once realize that the producer is the key-stone of the production edifice and occupies a pivotal position. Surely, the programme producer is in charge of the production process. She/he manages a large number of people and co-ordinates an even larger number of activities and production details. All other members of the team provide support in his/her numerous responsibilities. The position of the producer and his/her core production team is central and pervades the entire scene.

1.3.2 Professional inputs from producers and academics

In any kind of educational media materials development, very often, it is academics who provide the basis and starting point for programme production. They design the curriculum and interpret its underlying philosophy and assumptions, formulate broad educational objectives, identify appropriate content areas and develop tools and techniques for measurement and evaluation. It is also expected of the academics that they suggest suitable teaching-learning strategies including audio-visual materials and provide guidance for an effective curriculum transaction in the classroom. However, in the design of effective multi-media course packages - whether they are low-cost options or high-cost, technologically superior options - the academics and the producers work as a team in the design of audio/video materials. Jointly, they strive to design and organise the curriculum and ensure its effective transactions. Like academics, producers and their associates also attempt to facilitate the teaching-learning process and try to make it more and more effective and enjoyable for the learners.

1.3.3 Characteristics of the team

Let us, for a moment, imagine a meeting of educators, research scientists, media managers, engineers/technicians, graphic artists, photographers and cameramen, make up artists, actors and floor assistants. All these people, as you can see, come from different backgrounds with various kinds of education and professional training. Each one, therefore, has his/her area-specific perceptions and attitudes. Each of them uses a distinct register and vocabulary. This may well result in chaos if the team members do not acquire a working knowledge of one another’s parlance.

Over the years, the media (radio, film and television) have evolved a language and terminology of their own. It is a language of symbols, signals, and abbreviations, which enable the production personnel to communicate effectively with one another. This language and its grammar have acquired international acceptance and currency. A working knowledge of the language of film and television is essential for us if we are to work in effective coordination as a team. In other words, an understanding of the
shot sizes and abbreviations, camera movements, floor manager's cues etc. should be understood in *functional terms* by the teachers/academics who propose to use these media in their teaching-learning transaction.

**Check Your Progress 2**

**Notes:**

a) Space is given below for your answer.

b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

**Why is a basic working knowledge of media terminology essential for all those associated with media planning and production?**

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**1.4 PROGRAMME PRODUCTION PROCESS**

The programme production process, as described in a summary form in section 1.2 of this unit, involves several specialized activities and numerous odd jobs. Each of these tasks has its own complexities and requires elaborate advance planning and forethought. At each step, it is essential to organise, supervise, co-ordinate and manage a number of production elements, tasks and people, often simultaneously and always within a rigid time frame. How does it all happen? Can it be described? To tell you the truth, the programme production process is far too complex to describe faithfully in a few lines or even in a couple of pages. Even so, we shall make an attempt to present below, without being prescriptive in any way, a rudimentary account of the complex process of programme production.

There can be different ways of explaining this concept. However, to understand and describe the production process in a simple way, let us take recourse to the expressions- 'Above-the-line' and 'Below-the-line'.

**Above-the-line and Below-the-line Production**

The production process in terms of the concept of 'above-the-line' and 'below-the-line' concept is shown in Figure 3 on the next page. This kind of dichotomy is also frequently used for working out programme budget and production costs for media materials.
Media programme production covers in a certain sequence a series of steps, which are often flexible and overlapping. Basically, however, as you will have realised by now, it is a continuous process that requires decision-making at every step; co-ordinating with several individuals and agencies;
assigning and supervising various tasks and responsibilities; managing money, time and resources and controlling the flow of numerous activities within a rigid time limit. In the whole process, the producer occupies the pivotal position, and calls the shots. He/She requires a thorough understanding of the various responsibilities, which include a mastery over media terminologies, visualization, script preparation, directing and editing techniques, budgeting both for money and time, and above all good public relations and social intelligence to get on with a large number of people of different tastes and vocations.

1.4.1 Student profile

It is important for the producer, scriptwriter and other members of their team to have as much information as possible about their target audience. To make our programmes more effective and relevant, we must collect such vital information about our students as: their age, sex, their attitudes, beliefs and aspirations, their socio-economic background, their life styles (urban/rural), their existing knowledge and skills, their language, vocabulary, literacy level, their information needs and preferences. It is also important to know the conditions in which the programmes will be heard or viewed. This kind of information about the target audience is very useful for script designers and producers. It gives them greater confidence and insight in tackling the communication problems of their viewers and listeners and in making specific student profiles and is also useful in formulating and refining precise learning objectives and identifying appropriate content and presentation formats.

Audience data can be gathered from several sources such as: books, census reports, gazetteers, research monographs, etc., besides personal field-visits to sample areas for interviewing the audience.

1.4.2 Need Assessment

Need assessment studies help in ascertaining the specific real needs of the target groups and provide vital support in determining appropriate instructional goals. A knowledge of the correct, precise needs of the audience helps in identifying suitable programme topics, themes and content areas. Need assessment studies are carried out by trained research staff and the requisite data are collected through interviews and observation schedules. To get additional information or to verify and validate already collected data, it is useful to have extensive interaction with teachers, parents and other community groups. Media producers, scriptwriters and researchers of the team should also be involved in such need assessment studies, because they ought to know about the overt and covert needs of their target for specific programming.

1.4.3 Programme briefs

Media programmes generally originate from an idea or a theme. Identification of ideas and themes is, therefore, the basic step in the scheme of media programme planning and production. Once accepted, programme ideas and themes are further analysed, researched and expanded into what may be called a programme brief or a programme outline.
Often, this outline is sufficient for the scriptwriter and the producer to design a script around it. However, a more standardized procedure for developing detailed programme briefs on several series, is followed in organisations engaged in large-scale production and regular distribution of programmes.

A programme brief is a written, typed or printed statement of intent. It serves as a basic document for providing all the related information, ideas, sources and suggestions arranged coherently in one place. Producers, researchers and scriptwriters can freely draw upon such prepared materials to design scripts and programmes. There is no standard format for designing programme briefs. Usually, however, a programme brief for a radio or television programme should include the following information:

- Series title
- Programme title (working title only)
- Programme objectives (stated in behavioural terms)
- Target audience
- Programme length or duration
- Brief content outline
- Suggested treatment and possible production resources

Usually, detailed programme briefs are designed jointly by a team consisting of subject expert, researcher, scriptwriter and producer.

1.4.4 Scriptwriting

The script is the most important part of the audio and video production process. It is the blueprint for carrying out the production. It is also the medium for transmitting the instruction / message. Scriptwriting is a highly skilful activity. It is in fact the creative process of putting thoughts into visuals. More information about scriptwriting has been given in unit 3 of this block.

1.4.5 Production Process

Once the final script is ready, it is handed over to the producer, who will execute the production of the programme. The production process is a complex and multidimensional activity. Details of production process have been discussed in the next block.

1.4.6 Feedback and evaluation

Evaluation and feedback have now become an integral part of the development and production of programmes. It is now a common practice to evaluate media programmes at different stages: (i) initial idea or programme planning stage, (ii) story board or script stage, (iii) post-production stage (field-testing). Pre-production evaluation is also called formative evaluation. The main aim of formative evaluation is to test programme ideas and scripts while these are being developed, and thus attempt to improve the quality of the product. Results or feedback data obtained through such formative evaluation are feedback into the system and its related elements and
products to ensure better quality. Content analysis of script, programmes field-testing and monitoring of the broadcasts and utilization of programmes are some of the techniques of media evaluation.

Result of evaluation are used to re-schedule programmes, re-draw story boards and re-write scripts, change or add characters in a programme or series, revise formats of programmes, introduce other interesting and innovative ideas into programming and to fill gaps discovered in materials or content organisation.

Evaluation must be planned from the very outset as an integral part of the media production system. Evaluators and researchers should be included in the programme planning and script development teams. In fact, there is a need for closer interaction and frequent and regular dialogue between evaluators and producers, writers and other members of the production team.

Check Your Progress 3
Notes: a) Write your answer in the space given below.

b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

Describe 'above-the line' and 'below-the line' aspects of production, on the basis of Figure 3.

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1.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we discussed at some length the process of audio-video programme production. Describing the operation of this process as a well-designed and integrated system, we have tried to bring home the point that media materials production is essentially a co-operative activity in which all the elements of the system — men, machines, materials and methodologies are inter-related at every stage from planning to implementation. We have also briefly described the various steps of the materials production process as it moves from the stage of being an idea to the ‘final production’ through dissemination, utilization, evaluation and revision of programmes and thus completes a cycle.

To achieve the best results, audio-video materials production, by its very nature and necessity, should follow a team-mode approach, involving mainly an academic or a subject expert, a researcher, a scriptwriter and a producer as core-members of the production team. There are several functionaries and experts who specialize in their respective fields —
technical, artistic or other — and are associated with the production activity at different stages to contribute to its various aspects. The roles and responsibilities of all these people are distinctly defined and they all work as a team with the programme producer or director at centre stage, acting as a general co-ordinator or organizer of the entire process.

During the making of a programme, the producer’s word is final and he is ultimately responsible for the programme. The producer is, therefore, rightly called the captain of the ship.

To bring order to a situation which frequently appears to be chaotic, the process of media production follows a systems approach whereby numerous and varied production elements and tasks are identified, manipulated, organised and accomplished through mutual co-operation and creative interaction among a large number of people, all specializing in their respective disciplines. Of course, there are several sophisticated machines and a whole array of equipment and facilities which need to be operated efficiently and maintained in perfect condition. The fact, however, remains that it is not so much the working of machines and equipment, but the people (who operate them) and their working with one another as a team which are of utmost importance in media materials production.

We have also examined some of the major strands of the production process beginning with programme research, message designing and script development leading to production planning, casting, directing, producing, editing, capsuling, transmission, feedback and evaluation of programmes.

### 1.6 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: THE KEY

1) Major steps in the production process are:
   - Programme brief development
   - Programme research
   - Message design and script development
   - Production planning and scheduling
   - Casting and directing
   - Actual production and editing
   - Capsuling and transmission
   - Utilization and evaluation

2) The field of media production, by its very nature, brings together a host of professional experts, each specializing in a different and distinctly separate discipline, and having a different kind of education, professional training and aptitude. Over the years, however, the media has evolved a specific language and terminology which have acquired international acceptance and currency. Hence, in order to communicate with one another effectively, all the people associated with various aspects of production, must acquire a basic knowledge of media
terminology and the language commonly used in the studio, on location, in planning and technical meetings, in evaluation and programme preview sessions and elsewhere during the production process.

3) ‘Above-the-line’ production: A kind of division (mostly a budgetary dichotomy) of production elements mainly concerned with non-technical personnel — researchers, scriptwriters, subject specialists, producers, directors, production assistants, artists, performers and others. Above-the-line production staff and facilities may be employed by a production organisation on a regular basis or hired on short-term contracts.

‘Below-the-line’ production: Frequently used for working out budgets and production costs, this kind of division includes all technical, engineering and production personnel who operate equipment and facilities during production as well as the post-production stage. ‘Below-the-line’ production personnel are usually employed by a production centre on a regular basis.