

Profession: TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

1 –Alternate titles and related professions

Alternate titles: /

Related professions: /

2 –Functions and activities of the profession

Functions

The technical director prepares, organizes, coordinates, and oversees the entire range of human and technical resources required for the technical use and operation of the venue for the shows and events presented by the organizing entity whether public or private.

Activities

He/she:

- Determines and validates, within the framework of the organizing entity's artistic and cultural projects, the technical conditions for the execution and operation of shows and events presented;
- Ensures proper viewing, listening, and seating conditions for the audience during shows and events;
- Provides adequate human, financial, and technical resources to meet the artistic and cultural needs of the show or event that have been agreed upon;
- Supervises the operation of the show or event during the entire preparation and running period
- Manages personnel placed under his/her responsibility
- Organizes technical co-activity between various venues of operation
- Handles administrative management of technical personnel and equipment in place, in conjunction with the relevant administrative services;
- Estimates and fixes the technical budget, supervises it and validates its execution, within the confines of the allocation agreed by the organization;
- Negotiates terms and conditions with service and equipment providers
- Organizes the maintenance of equipment, premises, and buildings;
- Ensures upkeep of regulatory standards of equipment, premises, and buildings;
- Decides the upgrade and replacement needs for equipment and premises and proposes upgrade programs and investments that are required;
- Implements and enforces rules of health & safety and risk prevention for personnel and general public.

3 –Responsibilities

He/she guarantees:

- the proper technical performance of shows and events;
- well-functioning technical teams;
- execution of the technical budget;
- the proper working order of the building and venues of production/exhibition as well as the technical equipment and scenery;
- adherence to the rules of health & safety and risk prevention for personnel and general public.

4 -Skills

Engineering and steering

Specific skills

- Commanding an advanced artistic culture;
- Keeping abreast of trends, developments, and aesthetic movements within the discipline(s) of the organization;
- Analyzing specification sheets and briefs or production requests with the artistic and administrative teams;
- Participating in program scheduling for shows and events, and planning for their execution;
- Proposing options and/or implementing technical adaptations needed by existing constraints;
- Defining human resources and equipment required to answer the technical demands of each show or event, allowing for the proper functioning of the organization's activities;
- Establishing budgets and participating in negotiations;
- Participating in defining and supervising renovation and construction work for scenic areas, in the role of supervisor.

Cross-sector skills

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| Conducting projects, operations or works | Project leadership Defining project goals, challenges, and risks; Identifying and planning for the various stages of the project and mobilizing necessary players and resources; Organizing and leading steering committees and technical groups; Inspecting quality, cost and scheduling ratios; Establishing indicators and leading project evaluation. |
| | Steering operations and programs Budgeting and scheduling the carrying out of a program or operation; Coordinating actions from the project management; Establishing progress reports and consulting indicators and vital signs; Inspecting the execution of works of the program or operation; Considering and comparing compliance between operations. |
| | Organization and managing works Scheduling and coordinating activities of supplier companies on the works; Organizing work site meetings; Inspecting the application of standards and techniques of the operation; Supervising the execution of works and their adherence to safety guidelines and standards; Inspecting completion and compliance of works. |
| Support - Studies | Assistance and technical support to the departments of the organization or community/local authority Writing recommendations or advice in the context of the examination of a project file; Proposing solutions to improve processes and functionality of services; Providing technical support to users of equipment or machinery; Writing and circulating notices, instructions, and procedural notes. |
| | Engineering and conducting studies Differentiating and deciding between various technical and scientific options, basing choices upon studies and diagnostics; Establishing specification sheets for study assignments; Supervising and scheduling the completion of study assignments. |
| | Study assignments Defining and implementing procedures for data collection, treatment, and inspection; Analyzing and interpreting quantitative and qualitative data; Writing and formatting a study report; Communicating and circulating study results. |

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| Asset management | <p>Scheduling of building needs</p> <p>Participating in defining and sourcing equipment and machinery needs; Considering environmental and social impact of equipment and machinery; Scheduling maintenance works; Conducting building inspection, and technical, environmental and economical diagnostics of the level of equipment and machinery and maintenance of the building(s); Logging needs and planning for acquisition or renewal of equipment and machinery; Inspecting the compliance of equipment and machinery and making sure they are to standard.</p> |
| | <p>Building management</p> <p>Conducting an inventory; Organizing maintenance of equipment and machinery and following the completion of works; Estimating and optimizing running costs of equipment; Establishing and enforcing house rules; Maintaining relevant statutory documentation up to date; Drawing attention to risks, malfunctions, wear and tear, and compliance to standards.</p> |
| Surveillance - Observation | <p>Surveillance and observation in the sector</p> <p>Researching, analyzing, and circulating information; Establishing and developing databases of documentation and information; Constituting and developing a professional network; Carrying out comparative studies.</p> |
| | <p>Surveillance and observation of professional practices</p> <p>Researching, implementing, and legitimizing new techniques or new professional practices; Running and moderating discussion groups and workshops on professional practices.</p> |
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Organization and management

Specific skills

Establishing and updating the technical riders of the premises;

Identifying the areas involved in the production and running of shows or events;

Defining the action plans for the technical teams and the types of equipment or other means required;

Organizing the actions of the technical personnel and co-activity from rehearsals through to get-in/take out, operation, maintenance, and archiving;

Supervising reception of external technical teams;

Applying and enforcing work regulations for one's own teams and for service providers;

Organizing the occupation schedules for production/performance spaces of shows and events, and ensuring adherence to reverse scheduling;

Supervising the application of regulatory procedures relating to production and running of shows and events;

Designing and supervising archiving of elements relating to shows and events (plans, set elements, costumes, props, etc.).

Cross-sector skills

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| Organization – Management | <p>Definition and steering of a management or department project</p> <p>Applying the policies of the organization and/or the community/local authority to define organization or department projects</p> <p>Defining with the organization hierarchy assignments, goals, and expected results from one or more departments;</p> <p>Establishing an organization chart;</p> <p>Designing and implementing follow-up indicators or projects or for department activities;</p> <p>Defining functional requirements from information systems and understanding the selection criteria for a software package;</p> <p>Inspecting performance of tests and supervising entry into service of software package and information systems.</p> |
| | <p>Department management</p> <p>Leading, following and supervising department activities;</p> <p>Delegating responsibility;</p> <p>Harmonizing working methods between departments;</p> <p>Moderating department meetings;</p> <p>Mediating and solving conflicts;</p> <p>Organizing circulation of information within and between departments;</p> <p>Participating in defining functional requirements from application software and inspecting performance of tests and entry into service.</p> |
| | <p>Activity reports</p> <p>Organizing tasks according to action plan;</p> <p>Proposing improvements in order to provide better service;</p> <p>Accounting for completed work and conditions of intervention.</p> |
| Evaluation – Quality inspection | <p>Follow-up and inspection of services provided by third parties</p> <p>Verifying technical information from project managers;</p> <p>Accepting and verifying compliance of work and services provided by third parties;</p> <p>Following up work completed by project managers;</p> <p>Supervising delegated workers and public service operators.</p> |
| Upkeep– Maintenance | <p>Organization and inspection of maintenance operations</p> <p>Proposing and scheduling a maintenance plan or plan for equipment and product renewal;</p> <p>Establishing a maintenance protocol and following user instructions for equipment or products;</p> <p>Defining and implementing inspection and traceability procedures for equipment and products;</p> <p>Evaluating wear and tear and risks of malfunction of equipment or machinery;</p> <p>Negotiating with various service providers and suppliers.</p> |
| Other | <p>Use of technical professional English;</p> <p>Undertaking required travel while carrying out assignments.</p> |

Administration

Specific skills

Establishing, adapting and validating technical riders of shows and events;

Negotiating and establishing commercial and maintenance contracts for equipment and machinery;

Verifying insurance policies;

Obtaining necessary official permits (regional, municipal, commissions and audits) and communicating them;

Constituting a contact list of specialized service providers and suppliers.

Cross-sector skills

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| Administrative management | Legal follow-up Supervising the writing of documents and administrative acts; Inspecting the legality and application of administrative acts; Participating in investigating and following up contentious cases. |
| | Public commissions management Establishing the specifications sheet and other relevant documentation for the public market; Defining social and environmental criteria within public commissions; Analyzing technical and financial proposals from suppliers and other businesses with respect to the specifications sheet; Negotiating with suppliers and businesses within the guidelines of procedures laid out for publicly funded projects; Signing contracts and overseeing the execution of agreements. |
| | Compiling files and applying procedures Writing and sending administrative documents; Filling forms; Gathering, classifying, and archiving documents. |

Human resources

Specific skills

Involving teams in the organization's artistic and cultural projects;
Verifying the qualifications of active technical personnel, in particular compulsory training;
Participating in writing employment contracts in collaboration with human resources;
Participating in salary policy;
Encouraging collaboration and co-activity between different teams participating on a contributing show or event.
Involving teams in health issues, health & safety, risk prevention, and hardship in the workplace;
Constituting a list of qualified professionals.

Cross-sector skills

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| Human resources management | Participating in human resource management: Participating in job description definition; Participating in recruitment procedures; Following the activities of a new employee for integration or apprenticeship purposes; Taking note of requests and needs for personnel skills and training; Managing personnel work schedules, holidays, and absences; Evaluating employees. |
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Budget

Specific skills

Defining provisional costs relating to personnel and technical means to stage shows and events;

Making purchases using appropriate bookkeeping practices, in accordance with the legal nature of the organization and concurrent to the nature of the project.

Cross-sector skills

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| Budget management | Budget writing and tracking Planning budget need and writing a provisional budget; Preparing for budgetary negotiations and dividing resources; Tracking and overseeing the budget's execution; Updating the budget with guidance and tracking tools; Writing an annual report. |
| | Budget execution Making and keeping track of financial transactions whether spend or revenue; Managing a fund; Writing a purchase order or other form of commitment to purchase; Verifying invoices. |

Health & Safety and risk prevention

Specific skills

Verifying the proper working order of buildings and venues to house and receive personnel and audiences;

Defining and implementing additional measures offsetting general rules in order to respond to specific operational constraints

Cross-sector skills

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| Safety in the workplace | Organization and implementation of a system of rules controlling hygiene, health, and safety in the workplace; Participating in prevention policies instigated by the organization and/or community/local authority; Carrying out diagnostics on risk levels and alerting decision makers; Contributing to the carrying out and overseeing of the application of rules and guidelines; Developing training and prevention activities about risks in the workplace; Trigger corrective procedures in cases of failure to follow rules. |
| Safety for users | Organization and implementation of safety measures for users Evaluating risk levels and safety of equipment, machinery, a venue, or an activity; Establishing and implementing rules and safety procedures; Giving a technical opinion during safety meetings; Performing periodic inspections of safety conditions. |
| | Inspection of safety rules and guidelines for users Establishing inspection reports on implementation of rules and guidelines; Alerting relevant authorities of any abnormalities or risks relating to user safety; Implementing preventive and corrective measures; Implementing procedures in case of failure to follow rules and guidelines. |

5 –Place in the company’s organizational chart

The technical director is a manager in the technical chain. He/she has a managerial post within the administrative team, placed under the authority of an immediate superior depending on the type of structure and organization.

He/she collaborates directly and closely with the artistic director and the administrative director.

He/she has a hierarchical command over all personnel placed under his/her responsibility.

He/she may delegate certain activities to a deputy technical director, to a stage manager, to a specialized technical supervisor or to any other designated personnel according to their responsibilities within the organization.

6 –Job category

- Under the French national collective convention for artistic and cultural businesses (IDCC 1285): Technical Chain, the technical director is a class 2 or 3 manager;
- Under the national collective convention for private sector businesses in the performing arts (IDCC 3090): Live Arts Technical Chain, the technical director is a class 2 manager;
- Under the national collective convention for technical businesses serving creative production and live events (IDCC 2717):Performing Arts and Live Events Chain, the technical director is a class 7 manager;
- In the French civil service, he/she is part of a technical chain, as a manager in the field of national engineers (manager class A).

7 –Possible paths towards exercising this profession

The profession of technical director may be exercised:

- following a professional experience in another profession within the performing arts, in particular within one of the technical fields, and supported by phases of continuous training;

- after a path of professional training certified at level I, associated with experience within the sector.

8 –Possible variations according to sector or type of organization

The job of technical director may be carried out within professional situations quite different from one another, depending on the type and size of the organization, its activities, and the human and technical resources at its disposal. The context in which the job is exercised determines the scope of the activities and responsibilities and its status.

He/she may lead technical teams of highly variable sizes, depending on the type of organization or establishment.

He/she may handle technical means, scenic elements and infrastructure (machinery) of varying dimensions.

He/she may be responsible for the technical management of an entire program for one or several seasons, or for a specific production, or even for a variety of cultural activities.

He/she may propose external technical expertise or event feasibility studies.

During construction or renovation of scenic areas, he/she is associated to the works by way of his/her position as project manager, and depending on the nature or scale of the project, he/she can be the representative.

In the case of provision of technical service, the technical director is placed under the authority of a project leader who is responsible for the entire overseeing of the technical set-up of the production or event. He/she may have assistants, in particular concerning logistical aspects, and may also engage a supervisor as well as a technical team.

In the case of a public organization, he/she must be aware of the organization’s principles relating to its public service remit as well as the fundamental guidelines governing public commissions.

9–The profession in the future

Factors of change

Institutional and political factors

- Growth of local skills and pooling of resources between communities;
- Increase in number of venues for productions and events under the remit of local authorities;
- Increase in the amount of international cultural exchanges.

Artistic factors

- Development of cross-disciplinary productions and hybrid works that draw on a wider variety of technical teams and technologies;
- Development of new stage aesthetics, introducing new technologies of light, imagery, video, sound, virtual reality, 3D printing, etc.;
- Development of production of shows and events in alternate spaces and venues not designed for the performing arts.

Economic factors

- Increase of co-productions with different types of entertainment promoters, and pooling of resources;
- Emergence of new modes of production relating to budgetary constraints, and necessitating shorter production periods, greater reactivity, continuous reorganization, and a multiplication and greater variety of partners;
- Emergence of new modes of production, distribution, touring, and exhibition relating to international trends;
- Multiplication of non-institutional venues and events;
- Outsourcing of a section of personnel and technical means within service provider companies dedicated to the performing arts and events;
- Variation of financial means.

Technical factors

- Development of robots, and development of online networks;
- Accelerated obsolescence of equipment and machinery related to technological advances;
- Diversification of the organization's offer of service through digital means.

Social factors

- Development of egalitarian policies of access to professions: gender parity, people with disabilities...
- Implementation of policies encouraging sustainable development;
- Increasingly complex regulations relating to health & safety and risk prevention, being applied to both professionals and general public.

Factors of change affecting the profession of technical director

- Development of new areas of expertise and of new proposals for the organization's administration;
- Balance between administrative, regulatory, and management duties and relations with the artists;
- Increase in management duties of co-activity between in-house teams, acting on one or several sites, and outsourced teams;
- Elongation of the preparation phase and of configuration of equipment and machinery before production due to new technologies;
- Greater demands on technological awareness, and more research and development activities, to identify new developments and anticipate needs;
- Adjustment to technological change by developing strategies for purchase and/or rental for new equipment, for adapting work organization, for recruitment for new professions (networks, imagery...), and for personnel training.