**Who is a film director?**

A film director interprets a book or a script, then translates that interpretation into a movie. It is very hard to create a movie without actors, producers, camera operators, sound engineers. More than two hundred people can be involved into creating of a movie. The director is the very person responsible for top-manging of them all. He must use his technical, creative, interpersonal and leadership skills to accurately deliver his vision throughout the whole film making process.

**Today I would like to talk about leadership skills.**

What leader traits are vital for a director? Being directive? Democratic? Task-oriented?

Making a movie is like leading a business with multiple divisions and multiple goals.

It means managing real people. With different approaches and difficulties. This can come as a rude awakening to many new directors after spending months in the imaginary world of screenplays, fictional characters, and shot lists.

“It’s very difficult. Actors have egos. Sometimes he won’t do what you think he should. Production designers often go off on their own – you see the set and you say ‘this is not what we talked about’.” - says three-time Academy Award winner [Oliver Stone](http://www.oliverstone.com/).

So how do you get everyone rowing in the same direction? Stone’s advice is simple.

## Rulebook

“You start with a script.”

Think plan on a page. Think strategy summary. Think mission statement. It doesn’t matter what it is called. But it matters greatly that everyone in the business buys into it.

“There has to be something greater than yourself. People respect that. If they don’t respect you as a director the script still stands as a shining light. That works for people.”

You need to have some sort of a rulebook. Boundaries for yourself and your staff.

Moreover, it is important to have a vision of how each day is going to go. Plan things down to the smallest detail. If you wait until the day of the shoot to figure out shots or set dressing, you will slow things down and waste people’s time. People will begin to talk. If you show up prepared and focused, and allow your crew to support you, then people will trust you and follow you. Traits: prepared, consistent,

**Balanced.**

Film-making is one of the most stressful professions. If there is one person who is expected to work well with people as well as in solitude, who is good with intuition in addition to logic, who knows to make the best of technology and art, who must be able to follow the rulebook while keeping room for spontaneity. This can be seriously damaging to his own physical and emotional health, and if he allows that to happen, something for which millions have been invested can be ruined, not to mention the inspiring hard-work and belief of some hundred people. He needs to keep readjusting his expectations from the film at different stages of its making and from himself at different points in his career. To go through all that a director must have a lot of vital energy, confidence and bravery, stress-resistant

**Director must know when to make a hard decision.**

A crew is like a small family during production. A big part of job as director is to make sure that everybody gets along. He is the Daddy or Mommy of the set, and he needs to adapt a leadership mindset to have success. Many indie productions has been torpedoed not by a lack of money or a decent script, but by on-set drama between personalities and the director’s inability to effectively handle these conflicts or situations.

“Sometimes an actor is wrong. To say ‘no’ is the key. If you get the wrong actor you are screwed” – says Oliver Stone

**Emotionaly Intelligent**

To effectively communicate with every person on a set, to be able to maintain almost a telekinetic connection, a director should be a very good psychologist and maybe even a good actor. For your information, Stanislavsky said that a director must be the best actor in a troupe.

## Be Aware of The Demands You Will Be Placing on People

That’s a marked contrast to many independent film productions. To be an effective leader you need to be aware of the strains you will be placing on your team and how to soften that strain in their experience. You want people who are going to be driven and passionate about your project, but you don’t want to suck them dry. Quite often, simply maintaining an upbeat attitude and acknowledging your team for doing a great job is half the battle. Take each person aside and personally thank them for participating in your project. You want people leaving your production ready to work with you again, not relieved the shoot is over.

## Final Thoughts

The underlying message here is to be thoughtful and aware of your cast and crew. Directing means being consumed with a vision of your story, your shots, and your actors' performances. Paying special attention to the people who are going to help you realize that vision will increase the quality of your production.

All the investigative work for the script and all your visualisation can go for a toss if you are unable to communicate with your team members. Because technicians of different talents and streams need to come together to give expression to your vision, the least you can expect is that they will recreate what you have in your mind.