



## PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH IN THE SCREEN SECTOR

### *Embedding Development and Progression to Build Creative, Resilient Teams*

In the screen sector, performance is driven by passion, talent, and innovation. People don't just want a job; they want to create, build, design, and make an impact. But the key to long-term success isn't just brilliant work, it's retaining brilliant people.

This guide outlines how the screen sector can foster a culture of performance through meaningful development, autonomy, and support, helping individuals grow, stay engaged, and evolve into the future leaders of your business.

#### 1. GROWTH IS THE SECRET TO RETENTION

Your team is full of makers, doers, and thinkers. But even the most talented professionals will move on if they feel their growth has stalled. People want to be stretched, trusted, and given space to develop their craft and career. Retaining talent isn't about holding on tight; it's about opening doors.

##### What makes people stay?

- **Autonomy:** Give the freedom to shape their role and own their work.
- **Clear career pathways:** Helping talent see where they can go next, whether it's mastering their discipline, leading teams, or exploring new tech.
- **Recognition and challenge:** Celebrating great work while offering the right level of stretch and support.

#### 2. MAKE DEVELOPMENT PART OF THE PROCESS

In fast-paced environments, development can fall to the bottom of the priority list. But the best learning often happens in the midst of real work. Growth doesn't need to slow things down as it can enhance delivery, creativity, and collaboration.

##### Embed development into the everyday by:

- **Assigning stretch projects:** This could be leading a client pitch, taking ownership of a new production workflow, directing a short-form project, or experimenting with new storytelling formats, tools, or platforms.
- **Offering technical and craft-specific training:** Whether it's cinematography techniques, post-production pipelines, animation, narrative design, or Unreal Engine for virtual production, training ensures teams stay sharp and businesses remain competitive.
- **Creating peer learning culture:** Encourage cross-discipline knowledge sharing. It doesn't matter on the role - whether it's writers, producers, editors, designers, animators, directors or developers - they can all benefit from open sessions where they exchange practical insights, creative approaches, and lessons learned.
- **Supporting continuous learning:** Provide access to masterclasses, industry short courses, or events across the screen sector - from film festivals and BAFTA panels to games conferences and skills workshops - so your people are constantly inspired and evolving.
- **Line management training:** Great creatives don't automatically make great managers. For those stepping into leadership roles, whether that's leading a film crew, running a writers' room, or heading up a dev team, equipping them with the skills to manage people as well as projects is essential. It sets them (and their teams) up for sustainable success.

#### 3. CONVERSATIONS THAT FUEL GROWTH



The screen sector thrives on feedback and dialogue, but how often do those conversations focus on career development rather than just project delivery?

**We recommend:**

- **Monthly one-to-ones** should go beyond project updates. They're an ideal opportunity to discuss career aspirations, skill development, and personal ambitions. These meetings also serve as regular check-ins on well-being, ensuring a two-way dialogue where employees feel heard and managers gain insight into what's working well, where challenges may exist, and how to best support individual growth and success.

It's also important to connect these conversations to the annual appraisal process where applicable. Appraisals should reflect the progress discussed in monthly one-to-ones and quarterly reviews, with goals revisited and new objectives set for the year ahead. This, in turn, should directly inform and update the individual's personal development plan.

- **Quarterly reviews** to reflect on development, map progress, and adjust goals.
- **Personal growth plans** that align ambition with business needs, whether that's moving into leadership, deepening craft expertise, or cross-skilling across disciplines.

These conversations should feel collaborative and energising, not corporate or tick-box.

#### **4. PROVIDE THE RIGHT SUPPORT AT THE RIGHT TIME**

The screen sector often demands a lot, tight deadlines, high expectations, and shifting scopes. Supporting people properly isn't just about learning; it's also about wellbeing, clarity, and having the tools to succeed.

**Support strategies that make a difference:**

- **Mentoring across levels and disciplines:** pair artists with producers, writers with developers, juniors with leads.
- **Coaching** for emerging leaders or those navigating tricky transitions (e.g. moving from doing to directing).
- **Secondments or side quests:** short-term moves into new areas to spark curiosity and deepen understanding.
- **Holistic wellbeing:** acknowledge burnout risks in fast-paced environments and build support around mental health, workload management, and team culture.

#### **5. SUCCESSION PLANNING**

Succession planning is crucial in the screen sector, where roles are often fluid, and teams scale rapidly for projects.

**What succession looks like in the screen sector:**

- **Spotting future leads early:** This should not just be based on output, but on collaboration, vision, and emotional intelligence.
- **Supporting pathways into leadership:** It's important to recognise that not everyone wants to manage, nor is everyone suited to it. Leadership can take many forms, and forcing people into management roles as the only perceived route to progression can be demotivating and counterproductive. To build a truly supportive and inclusive career development environment, businesses should offer clear and valued alternatives.

That means creating parallel pathways in creative, technical, and production-focused tracks where individuals can grow, lead, and be recognised without having to take on formal people management responsibilities. This not only ensures talent is nurtured in ways that align with individual strengths and ambitions but also avoids



pushing employees and workers into roles that may not suit them simply because no other options exist. By broadening what leadership looks like, businesses can empower people to thrive in their areas of expertise while still offering meaningful progression.

- **Developing talent across projects:** Rotate people between different projects or departments so they can stretch their skills. For example, a production coordinator might move from unscripted to scripted formats, an editor could take on both short-form promos and long-form features, or a game designer might switch between core gameplay systems and narrative-driven content. This broadens experience without needing to leave the business.
- **Future-proofing specialist roles:** In TV and film, certain craft roles are especially vulnerable - editors, script supervisors, colourists, or sound designers. If one person leaves mid-production, continuity and delivery can be at risk. Building depth means pairing juniors with seniors, encouraging shadowing on set or in post, and making sure critical knowledge isn't held by just one person. In games, it's a similar story for narrative designers, UX researchers, or technical artists - often small teams where a single departure can cause bottlenecks. Investing in mentoring, cross-training, and documentation helps spread expertise, so projects don't stall and the next generation of talent is ready to step up.

## 6. IN SUMMARY

In the screen sector, performance is personal. Growth is not about climbing a ladder; it's about deepening skill, expanding influence, and creating space for brilliance. When you embed development into your culture, you create more than strong teams, and you build a sustainable, exciting place to work.