**Stages of Film Production**

**1. Development**

This stage starts as soon as one think about doing a project. It is where the idea of the story comes and the story is created, written, organized and planning is done for a project. In development, a preliminary budget is made, key cast are attached, key creatives are chosen, main locations scouted and multiple script drafts may be written. It is the phase of film production where the groundwork is done to show what the project will be and how much it will cost to make.

Development can take months or even years to get the project green-signal or approval by a studio or funded independently and move into pre-production. The crew involved in the development stage is quite minimal compared to all the other stages, as it’s just a small group of creatives and executives crafting the story and associated budget. Once a project finds finance, it will move into the pre-production phase.

**2. Pre-Production**

It is where all the planning takes place before the camera rolls and sets the overall vision of the project. Pre-production is where scripts are amended, budgets are adjusted, actors are cast, locations scouted, the crew employed, shooting schedules prepared, sets designed and built, costumes made and fitted, and everything to do with the shoot is planned and tested. The pre-production stage can last many months depending on the subject.

**3. Production**

This is when the camera rolls. It is nearly always the most expensive phase of film production. Everything that has happened up to this point is to make principal photography go as smoothly and efficiently as possible. Communication between all parties is crucial during the shoot and the production must maintain a full set of records and strive to remain on time and on budget. The Writer, Director, Producer, and countless other creative minds finally see their ideas captured on film at this stage. Production is usually the shortest of the five phases, even though it is paramount to the film and where most of the budget is allotted. Production is the busiest time, with the crew swelling to hundreds. The crew works extremely hard during this period, with shooting hours each day ranging up to sixteen hours. Projects run to strict schedules with cast only contracted for a certain timeframe, so the crew is crucial in squeezing out every bit of energy to see the project successfully completed on time

**4. Post-Production**

This is where the footage is edited, sound is mixed, visual effects are added, a soundtrack is composed, titles are created, and the project is completed and prepared for distribution. In this stage the post production crew work to connect the scenes that were shot individually during production stage and tries to tell the story as clearly as they can. Usually post-production begins while the shoot is still going, as footage is gathered as soon as the first day of shooting commences. This helps see the project finished as soon as possible, but can also help identify problems with the footage or any gaps in the story while the shoot is still happening. If needed, shots can be picked up on later days without too much interference in the shooting schedule.

**5. Distribution**

Once the film is completed, it must be distributed. This is how producers make their money back and a considerable amount of time and energy is invested to secure the right distribution deals for their projects. The other four stages of production are somewhat dependent on this stage, at least from a business perspective. Distribution is the final stage in a project for producers looking to make a return-on-investment. This can be from cinema distribution, selling to a TV network or streaming service, or releasing direct to DVD.

Whatever the distribution plan is, the producers must spend many hours planning and marketing their film to ensure the biggest audience and largest return. With the digital age and rapidly converging technologies, viewers are watching content in new and different ways, meaning that the distribution phase is constantly evolving.

Although distribution is the final stage of the project, the channel of distribution and marketing of the project will be planned in pre-production. If it is planned badly and fails to garner good distribution, then all the other phases will be wasted as nobody views the final product and covers the cost of the project.