



# LIFE IN THE FAST LANE

## *Liz Elkington*

*Liz Elkington is a Director and TV Producer for Sky Movies, bringing film-themed shows like Alex Zane's Guest List to the small screen. She lives in Chiswick with her husband Chris and their twin four-year-old sons, Bailey and Reece.*

The start of my day is always busy because I've got to get the twins up and ready for school. It's the sort of job where if you've got a family, life is very 'full', but I feel incredibly lucky to have a job which I love, and so it's all about becoming an expert juggler and managing your time well. I drive to the office and begin the day dealing with emails and phone calls or prepping for upcoming shoots. My role is very varied, but it essentially breaks down into four key areas: script-writing, filming, edit-producing and developing ideas. There's never a typical day. I could be in central London interviewing movie talent at a press junket, and then maybe I'll come back into the office to chase up a set visit that we're keen to get an exclusive on, before hotfooting it to the edit suite to complete a programme for an on-air deadline.

Next, I could be booking talent for movie specials and upcoming shows; from working on the Oscars to bespoke documentaries, that's a big part of what I do. We like to give our viewers a strong calibre of celebrity, and we find that usually stars and PRs are very receptive because they know that on Sky Movies we're passionate about film and we're not going to ask about their personal life.

I've witnessed very few diva tantrums throughout my career. It seems to me that the more successful a star is, the less likely they are to act up because they don't have anything to prove. It's occasionally the ones who are on their way up who are more prone to delusions of grandeur.

I interviewed Carey Mulligan recently. She's a great new talent and has a really lovely demeanour and I think her star is going to keep rising. Michelle Pfeiffer is someone who I grew up watching on screen and she was an absolute pleasure to interview. That's the beauty of this job. You get to meet so many different and interesting people. But people are people, no matter how famous they are, so you can't really be star-struck if you want to succeed in TV. While it's definitely my dream job, it's not as glamorous as people think. It involves long hours and is fraught with difficult decisions, deadlines and politics.

You have to be very diplomatic in this industry and it's often a case of trying to keep a lot of people happy. It's a small team so we have to turn our hand to everything, whether it's as producer, director, researcher or tea-maker! It makes things hectic, but it's absolutely brilliant because you get to know every area of the job. I am beat when I get home, but it's my time to hang out with Chris and the boys; although I don't think it's the kind of job where you can just switch off. Publicists from America might be calling and you're conscious that



deadlines are looming. I'm constantly on top of it, but in such an erratic and fast-paced job it's important to make space for relaxation and quality family time. I love seeing something through from concept to finished project. I recently directed my first 3D shoot for a behind-the-scenes exclusive on an upcoming British feature film. Something I love about working at Sky is that we really pioneer new technology and embrace creative, innovative ways to shoot. I think that's what always

fascinated me about the media in general. You have that opportunity to put concepts out there and communicate with such a wide audience, and that's a massive privilege. **S**

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