The Top 10 Mistakes People Make in … Production

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Previously of Gamelab,
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Exploration Summer Programs
“Production” runs from the idea to the product.

Pre-Production – Production - Releases - Support

That’s a lot of room for really spectacular “diversions”.
1. No Publishing Plan

You should know from the start what you’re making, for whom, how they will get to see it, how they will participate, and how they will support you and it by participating.

2. Wrong People, Wrong Roles

Genres aren’t the same. Audiences aren’t the same. Tech isn’t the same.

Who owns the bits, the features, and the truth?
3. Building Your own Platform (or not)

Don’t reinvent the wheel. Buy the right one from the right people.

4. No Plan, or an Old One

Keep just enough documentation.
Keep it just enough up to date.
Refer back to it all the time.
5. Only Present a Finished Product

Iterate. Test. You will be wrong the first time. Done is better than perfect.

6. Unclear Feedback/Approval Process

Who owns things, and who makes the call?
Who are your stakeholders?
Every delivery should show the good, the bad, and the ugly.
7. Going Dark

No news is always bad news. The less you want to talk to someone, the more you probably need to. Check in regularly. “Scrum” can help.

8. Let the Schedule get Dusty

Deadlines slip a day at a time. The most self-directed, motivated teams have the big picture. You can’t avoid crunch, but you can be honest and ready for it.
9. Flipping the Bozo Bit

Testers are never wrong, they just may not have the right problem.
The same goes for producers, programmers, artists, clients,
This can happen in a meeting, with a client, anywhere. It’s always bad.

10. Underestimating distance

Distance introduces ambiguity, noise, and ‘wiggle room’.

Tools only go so far, and they require effort.
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Each person needs to know what they’re doing, why, when, and who to show it to.

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Don’t get obsessed with tools. Business design, and technology are not opponents. People over process. Check in lightly and frequently.
Resources

*Dynamics of Software Development* by Michele McCarthy

*Agile Manifesto*

*Developing Online Games: An Insider’s Guide* by Jessica Mulligan and Bridgette Patrovsky

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