



PERFECT YOUR PITCH WORKSHEET

Developing Your Show Idea

- “What if” scenario – What is the show about? What is the essence of the show? E.g. Seinfeld “what if we did a show about nothing?”
- Research current TV programming – Search Deadline.com and Variety.com; write down names and studios attached to projects that seem like yours. These are the studios most likely to buy your work later.
- Determine genre – Sitcom, mystery, comedy, cooking show, reality; genre affects mood, tone, writing style & audience expectations. Having a defined genre helps sell your show.
- Characters – Make them round, multifaceted, complex, filled with desires & fears, have agency (make mistakes, try to fix things); what would the character do in xyz situation?
- Is it sellable? – Is your show an original? Derivative? What are the projected costs? Do you have experience? Investment is a risk—your screenplay or proof of concept. Write a treatment, script, and shoot some sketches to show. You will need something to show once you are in the door.

Writing a Treatment

- Title – Make it catchy and memorable; play on words, “Mad Med,” “Parks and Rec,” “Community,” “Kevin Can Wait”
- Logline – 1-2 sentence description of your show designed to sell the idea. Should tell people what they are watching and what the hook/premise is of show.
- Synopsis – 300-500 word synopsis, a brief but comprehensive overview of the show. Make it engaging; include: setting, general plot of series, story arc (what is happening in every episode).
- Character sheet – Short but detailed character sheet with 1-2 sentences overview of who they are. Brief & specific. What makes them special? Don’t include casting choices or physical details of characters.
- 3-4 episode breakdown – 1-2 paragraph outline of a number of episodes, to see how the show will unfold; for 30 min shows, 200-300 words
- Assemble treatment in this order – Title; Logline; Synopsis; Characters; Episode breakdown.
- Write a script – Use Celtx, Magic Screen Writer, Writer Duets, Final Draft to write your script.
- Register your project – Writers Guild of America, to protect your intellectual property (\$20) & give a time-stamped proof of creation (that it’s yours); also register with Creator’s Vault or file for copyright protection

Pitching Your Show

- Add work to a database – This will help networks find your show. A good service is “[The Blacklist](http://TheBlacklist.com).”
- Choose a company -- Find phone #s, emails, submission ideas for companies that are making shows similar to yours. Get in touch. Look into fellowship programs— 6-8 week sessions at the studio.
- Network -- Meet people, PA, work on film/TV sets as an intern.

- **Practice your pitch** -- The Hook, why is it original/worth watching?; The Audience, who is the show for?; The Trailer, what are the “clips” that flesh out the show, practice on friends/family/anyone who will listen
- **Be a salesperson** -- Why does your show fit their audience? How does it compliment other shows? Why do they need your show?
- **Pitch quickly/energetically** -- No more than 12-15 min, shorter = better, hook them into the premise and let them know why it is a good fit for the network; helps to have lots of ideas if they like you.

Adapted from: <http://www.wikihow.com/Write-and-Pitch-an-Idea-for-a-TV-Show>

Study Guide

[BRIC's Brooklyn Free Speech Team](#) wants you to succeed and we know that you want to succeed but great success comes with great preparation. Here are some great resources to ensure that you walk into your next pitch prepared and ready for success.

Binge watch these videos to ensure that you succeed!

- Larry Wilmore: <https://youtu.be/76PvuKulwAA?t=13s>
- Cannell: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PAKNTaMMUrc>
- Matt Whitecross: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDp1VzEcTio>
- Richard Walter: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8R7YobmX_EM
- Gargoyles original pitch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u8nWTHZVFz8>
- Documentary funding: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uFdrQat9rtI>
- Jacob Krueger: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCpdEPJPoT8>

Software to ensure your success!

- Magic Screen Writer (software): <http://www.write-bros.com/movie-magic-screenwriter.html>
- Writer Duet (software) <https://writerduet.com/>
- Final Draft (software): <https://www.finaldraft.com/>
- Celtx (software): <https://www.celtx.com/>

Online resources. Read! Read! Read!

- Deadline: <http://deadline.com/>
- Variety: <http://variety.com/>
- The Blacklist: <https://blcklst.com/>
- The Writers Guild of America (East): <https://www.wgaeast.org/>
- Creators Vault: <http://www.creatorsvault.com/>
- TV Writers Vault: <https://www.tvwritersvault.com/>
- IMDB: http://www.imdb.com/search/title?title_type=tv_series
- Greenlight my Movie: <http://www.greenlightmymovie.com/>

These examples will help you with putting together your pitch!

- Example character sheets: <http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Characters/LiveActionTV>
- Example synopsis: <http://www.storiesense.com/synopsis.htm>

TREATMENT WORKSHEET

TITLE OF SHOW

LOGLINE

1-2 sentence description designed to sell the show

SYNOPSIS

300-500 words, general plot and story arc of series

CHARACTER SHEET

1-2 sentence overview of each character

EPISODE BREAKDOWN

1-2 paragraph outline of 3-4 episodes