

A warm, dimly lit desk scene. On the left, a stack of books sits next to a potted plant with green leaves. In the center, a white ceramic mug filled with coffee sits on a wooden coaster. To its right is a pen holder with several pens. In the foreground, a dark notebook lies flat with a pen resting on it. In the background, an open book with highlighted text is visible, along with a pair of glasses and a small globe.

NARRATORA

SAMPLE OUTPUT

YOUTUBE SCRIPT

Five Mistakes In Every First Screenplay

A tight 9-minute script generated from a script-notes archive, structured for retention.

LENGTH

9 minutes

FORMAT

List explainer

SOURCE

Script notes archive

STATUS

Sample output

Production Notes

TARGET RUNTIME	8:30 – 9:30
WORD COUNT	~1,320 spoken words
DELIVERY	Fast, warm, no condescension
RETENTION DESIGN	Open loop at 0:20, payoff at 8:05
ON-SCREEN TEXT	Marked as ON SCREEN

Cold Open — 0:00 to 0:35

I read three hundred first screenplays. Not two hundred and ninety-nine of them had different problems — they had the same five. [BEAT.] And the fifth one is the reason readers stop on page twelve, so stay for that.

[ON SCREEN: 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 — the fifth greyed out.]

One — The Story Starts Before The Story — 0:35 to 2:20

First screenplays almost always begin eight pages before the interesting thing. We meet the character. We see their apartment. We learn their routine. And then, on page nine, something happens — and page nine is where the script actually starts.

Here is the test. Delete your first five pages. Read it again. If you lost nothing except comfort, they were not scenes. They were you warming up. [BEAT.] Keep them in a separate file. Do not put them back.

Two — Everyone Talks Like The Writer — 2:20 to 3:55

Dialogue in a first draft tends to have one voice with several names attached. And the giveaway is that everyone is equally articulate, equally witty, and equally willing to say what they mean.

Real people are not. Real people avoid, deflect, repeat themselves, and answer a different question to the one they were asked. [ON SCREEN: two lines, before and after.] A character who will not say the thing is more interesting than a character who does.

Three — Nothing Costs Anything — 3:55 to 5:20

Your protagonist wants something. Fine. What do they lose by trying? If the answer is nothing, there is no story — there is an itinerary.

Stakes are not explosions. Stakes are: if this goes wrong, something they cannot get back is gone. Time. A relationship. Their own idea of themselves. The smallest stake in the world works, as long as it is genuinely at risk.

Four — The Middle Is A Waiting Room — 5:20 to 6:45

Act one is usually strong, because you were excited. Act three is usually strong, because you knew where you were going. Act two is where first drafts go to sit down.

The fix is structural, not inspirational: in the middle of your script, the goal should change. Not the obstacle — the goal. Whatever your character was chasing at page thirty should not be the thing they are chasing at page seventy.

Five — The Script Is Explaining Itself — 6:45 to 8:05

[SLOW DOWN.] Here is the one that makes readers stop on page twelve. First screenplays explain. Characters state their own motivation. Action lines tell us how to feel. Someone arrives specifically to ask a question the audience is assumed to have.

Every one of those is the same mistake: you do not trust the reader. And a reader can feel that faster than any other flaw in the script, because it is on every single page.

The remedy is brutal and simple. Take any line where a character explains why they did something. Cut it. Read the scene. Nine times out of ten the scene got better, because the audience got to do the work — which is the only reason they came.

Close — 8:05 to 8:45

None of these five are talent problems. They are all first-draft problems, which means they are all second-draft solutions. [BEAT.] Write the bad version. Then fix these five, in this order. That is the whole job.

[END CARD.] Full checklist in the description.

NARRATORA

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