



METRO SCREEN

EXTRA INFORMATION TO ASSIST YOU WITH YOUR BREAKS APPLICATION

1. What is a synopsis?

The synopsis of a project regardless of genre or length can be a single line [Logline ,see below], a paragraph or up to a page in length. The purpose of a synopsis is to detail the basic plot and motivations of the characters and their situations in an accurate and concise manner, thereby engaging the reader.

Types:

- Logline [a brief one-sentence summary, providing both a snapshot of the films plot, and its emotional 'hook']
- Short Synopsis [up to 50 words]
- Long Synopsis [up to 150 words]
- One Pager

A synopsis should incorporate the following:

- Whose story it is; who are the major characters and how do they interact?
- The setting and period of the story
- The motivating incident that initiates the story
- How the story unfolds, and its major developments
- A sense of the stories dynamics including tensions and conflict
- The climax and resolution.

Main elements of a synopsis are:

- The 'Hook'
- The main conflict [should be one, but no more than two]
- Supporting characters
- The main resolution
- Summary and ending

As a synopsis is often the first contact a project assessor, producer or investor will have with your project, it should be written in a way that is as dynamic and engaging as possible.

Ask yourself, does your synopsis?

- Allow your producer to economically pitch the project?
- From the first quick read can anyone immediately understand the idea?
- Does the synopsis give an accurate description and 'feel' of the story?

2. What is an Outline?

An outline for a short film can be up to several pages in length. It is primarily written like a short story, is an extension of the synopsis and should include all the elements listed above. It includes all action in the story without dialogue and should be written in an engaging way to draw in the reader. It can sometimes incorporate 'pitch' elements, which would include information that would give the reader a better understanding of the dynamic elements of the story, subject, characters or style intended. An outline describes the plot structure to your story and avoids unnecessary embellishments.

3. What is a character breakdown?

A character breakdown is a documented matrix of the elements that describe the essential particulars and motivations of the principal and supporting characters within a script. It usually contains the following information:

- Character name [proper name, nickname, title etc.]
- Background [sex, age, place of birth, occupation, cultural identity, social position, habits, relationship to the other characters etc]
- Psychology [flaws, fears, self perception and internal aspirations etc]
- Emotional base [sympathetic, empathetic, antipathetic, etc.]
- Role [protagonist, antagonist, friend, love interest, catalyst, comic relief etc.]
- Character objective [prime motivation, active choices, main actions etc.]

4. What is a Creative Concept?

A creative concept is a succinct and structured description of the range of visual and narrative devices used to create mood, atmosphere and an intended meaning within a film or other screen media project. It allows the reader to make a critical assessment of the creative narrative elements and the aesthetics of the project, and to identify the techniques that are employed to carry the story, and how they might affect the audience

5. What is a Director's Statement?

A Director's statement should provide information on how the film will look and what processes will be used in order to achieve the 'look'. It should respond to the following points: How will the story be told? What conventions will be used? What is the visual style of the film? If referencing styles of films, how will you achieve the look and feel? Will colour or other thematic conventions be used to convey themes and ideas? How do you envisage the finished film? Are actors chosen and have they agreed to participate? In what locations do you think the film should be filmed? What is the genre(s)?

6. What is a Producer's Statement?

A Producer's Statement addresses: The films entire budget, methodologies and timeframes, locations, actors, costumes, SFX, safety, crew recruitment. How will the film be marketed – what are the plans once the film is finished? Which film festivals will the film be entered into? [elaborate in Marketing Plan]. Think 'what needs to be organised and thought of in order to make this film the way I want?'

7. What is a Bio(ography) and CV?

When writing a bio, remember the difference between bio and biography. A Bio is short and a Biography long. We require a short bio [between 25 and 50 words].

You should write in the third person: what this means is that you write your professional bio as though someone else is talking about you. So instead of writing "I am" and "I graduated", you would write "Jane Smith is" and "She graduated".

Use your full name [first and last] the first time. After that, just use your first name, or your last name.

Briefly highlight your main achievements. The purpose of a professional bio is to demonstrate your professional credibility. Unlike a **CV or Resume** [which should include your complete career history], a professional bio only needs to cover the "high points" of your experiences and achievements.

Don't be bland - let your personality show. Since your professional bio is an advertisement for you, let it demonstrate who you are through your writing style.

8. What is a Treatment?

A Treatment describes the action that takes place within the story, following the plot structure and looking in detail at the way the narrative unfolds. Normally it does not contain dialogue. It is generally longer and more detailed than an outline [or one-page synopsis]. It may include details of directorial style that an outline omits.

A Treatment reads like a short story, except it is told in the present tense and describing events as they happen. There are two types: the original draft treatment, created during the writing process, and the presentation treatment, created as presentation material which contains a detailed written summary, or presentation, of a film's story, with action and characters described in prose form.

9. What is a Marketing Plan?

Your marketing plan should address the following points.

- Target audience – who are they? [age, gender, life style, background etc.] If the film has more than one target audience, break out your description into primary and secondary audiences.
- The story and selling points – the essence of what makes the story interesting and marketable in the current marketplace. [i.e. artistically and factually, including genre, cast, director, locations, etc.]
- The plan – a brief explanation of how the film will be positioned for release.
- Focus on marketable elements from the story that can be highlighted for the film's campaign.
- Release strategy – a description of how the film's release will be executed in all media [festivals, theatrical, home video, television, non-theatrical, etc.]
- Marketing materials – a complete list of all materials and services you will need for your film's campaign.
- Publicity activities – press opportunities for the film and its key talent.
- Promotional activities – all the opportunities you wish to explore for the film's release, from simple promo partner opportunities to promotional special events.
- Budgets- a detailed breakdown of the total print and advertising budget [P&A] for your film's theatrical release. Include budgets for home video, broadcast and other ancillary distribution activities if appropriate
- Home Video and Broadcast Plan- marketing plan should consider the full life of the film, and identify how to implement marketing initiatives throughout the entire cycle.

10. What is a budget?

Film budgeting refers to managing the budget for a film during its production phase. A budget is typically divided into four sections: above-the-line [creative talent], below-the-line [direct production costs], post-production [editing, visual effects, etc], and other [insurance, completion bond, public liability etc].

Please see our website for a template budget which should be used when applying for Breakout and Indigenous Breakthrough programs.

If you are successful for any of the Breaks programs a standard A-Z Budget template will be provided.



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