

Pitch Prep Program - Syllabus

Welcome to the Pitch Prep Program! This is a preliminary syllabus to allow you to get started on your Prep Work (as there is quite a bit!) and have a look at what we'll be doing throughout the month. You'll receive a final confirmed syllabus with dates & join links before Orientation. If you have any questions in the meantime, email dorian@roadmapwriters.com Looking forward to a great month! :)

PREP WORK:

1. Watch these Webinars:

- [We've Been There: Practical Advice on Roadmap's Career Writer Program](#)
- [Identifying Your Screenplay's Theme](#) / Password: THEMEGURU
- [Identifying Your Story Engine](#) / Password: STORYENGINE

2. Review all of the materials in the [Resources Folder](#), which contains:

1. A Hitchhiker's Guide to Pitching
 2. General Written Pitch Guidelines of what should be included in a written pitch
 3. ScriptMag article on Common Logline Mistakes
 4. How to Write a One-Page Synopsis + 11-Point Synopsis Exercise*
 5. Notes on TV Structure + 8-Point Synopsis Exercise*
**Please complete one of these exercises to compose your initial synopsis.*
 6. Exec Activities Tracker Template Excel doc - we'll talk about this @ Orientation
 7. Example Feature synopses for a few well-known (and 1 random) films
 8. Example pitches for Features and TV (both 1-Hr & 30-Min.)
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ASSIGNMENT #1:

Submit to Dorian as a **WORD (.doc or .docx) or **Google Docs** file:**

1. A draft of your 2-pg. pitch including all sections outlined in the General Written Pitch Guidelines in the [Resources Folder](#).
 - a. Read all the materials in the Resources Folder to help you get an idea of how to present your project.
 - b. Don't worry if you don't quite know what to put in all of the sections. Complete as many sections as you can. Focus on your Synopsis.
 - c. For TV, don't forget to include a Season One arc + Series blurb.

****DUE the Friday before Written Pitch Clinic #1**

SESSION FORMATS:

Sunday Webinars

Moderator: Briana Hansen (Director of Writer Outreach, Roadmap Writers)

Contact: briana@roadmapwriters.com

FORMAT: These 90-Min. Webinars take place on Sunday afternoons usually @ 4:00pm PT. They consist of a 30-60-min. lecture followed by 30-60-min. of Q&A (so come with questions!) There are at least 3x Sunday Webinars per month and all are included in your program. You'll receive the topics, dates, & join links in your confirmed syllabus prior to Orientation.

Orientation & Logline/Comps Clinic

Hosted by: Dorian Connelley (COO, Roadmap Writers)

Contact: dorian@roadmapwriters.com

FORMAT: We will cover the ZOOM video conferencing interface that will be used for the program, Career Writer Program advice & orientation topics, and begin the Written Pitch Clinic Lecture. We'll cover the Title, Format, Genre, Logline, and Comps sections. You'll then have 10-15 min. to compose your logline and then we'll workshop each writer's logline together.

Written Pitch Clinic #1

Hosted by: Dorian Connelley (COO, Roadmap Writers)

Contact: dorian@roadmapwriters.com

FORMAT: We'll continue the rest of the Written Pitch Clinic Lecture including Setting/World, About Me, Characters, Synopsis, Season One, and Series sections. Following the lecture, we'll look through the notes on the marked-up pitch documents (which you will have submitted prior - see page 1 for the ASSIGNMENT) for anyone who wants to stay. You will receive a Word and/or Google Docs copy of your marked-up pitch document to use to complete your revision for the following week.

Pitch Prep Webinar

Hosted by: Chris Deckard (Literary Manager, Fictional Entity)

Contact: deckardroadmap@gmail.com

This lecture and Q&A will cover:

- The general structure of a verbal pitch
 - Honing in on the basic goals of pitching
 - Tips on holding an exec's attention during your pitch
 - And you'll hear an example verbal pitch to get you off on the right foot!
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Written Pitch Clinic #2

Hosted by: Dorian Connelley (COO, Roadmap Writers)

Contact: dorian@roadmapwriters.com

ASSIGNMENT: Email Dorian your revised 2-pg. pitch in Word or Google Docs format no later than end of day **the Friday prior to Written Pitch Clinic #2.**

FORMAT: Dorian will have marked up your revised pitch documents ahead of time and during the session we will read through each writer's pitch together in its entirety, fixing any last issues & areas of confusion along the way.

Verbal Pitch Prep

Hosted by: Alexandra Davies (Director of Education, Roadmap Writers)

Contact: alex@roadmapwriters.com

ASSIGNMENT: Start thinking about how you translate your written pitch into a 5-7 min. verbal pitch. Practice it in the shower, with your dog, or to your kids!

This 45-60-min. lecture will cover:

- Learning the art of delivering your verbal pitch.
- How to pitch conversationally (without reading!)
- How to structure and efficiently incorporate all of the necessary elements of a pitch (tone, characters, plot).
- How to make your pitch relatable and universal.

****Following the lecture, you will have the opportunity to deliver your verbal pitch for practice and notes - *don't be shy!***

Branding Clinic #1

Hosted by: Briana Hansen (Director of Writer Outreach, Roadmap Writers)

Contact: briana@roadmapwriters.com

PREP WORK: Take a look at your body of work and start thinking about some of the thematic thrulines you see in each of your stories. Reflect on your own personal story and see if you can find any connections between it and the type of stories you tend to be drawn to - this will give you a great starting point for drafting your personal logline!

- Hone in on what you, as a writer, deliver.
- Learn to see beyond genre and better understand how your own perspective seeps into every script you write and capitalize on that.
- Create an exciting and quickly digestible personal logline to better pitch yourself – and your scripts – to executives.

BONUS! [Owning a Room](#) - Watch this webinar at some point to help you get a sense of the approach to selling yourself that will hopefully put you at ease with this whole process.

Verbal Pitch Roundtable #1

Hosted by: Justin Ross (Executive VP of Development, Bohemia Group Originals)

FORMAT: You'll take turns delivering your verbal pitch in a Roundtable setting and receive feedback from the exec on strengths and areas of improvement specific to your verbal pitch. Learn from notes on your own pitch and from notes given to your peers!

- You should aim for your pitch to last 5-7 min. total, but don't kill yourself over it.

ABOUT YOUR HOST: Justin Ross was born and raised in the Midwest. He began his film career as a screenwriter. In 2008, he joined Intrinsic Value Films first as Creative Executive. During his tenure at Intrinsic, he secured relationships with top talent, including Scott Free Productions and the estates of authors Ray Bradbury and Philip K. Dick. Mr. Ross joined Bohemia Group Originals (the production arm of international talent management company, Bohemia Group) as Director of Production in 2015 and was promoted to Executive Vice President of Development and Production in 2016 where he championed the company's first feature, A DARK PLACE (distributed by Gravitas Ventures). Further credits include Associate Producer on the Spike Lee Executive Produced SON OF THE SOUTH and Executive Producer on the forthcoming MORE THAN RIVALS by the writer of HOOSIERS and RUDY. He currently lives in Los Angeles and continues to write, connecting his two passions: good people and great stories.

Branding Clinic #2

Hosted by: Briana Hansen (Director of Writer Outreach, Roadmap Writers)

Contact: briana@roadmapwriters.com

PREP WORK:

- Rework your logline based on what was discussed in Branding Clinic #1.
 - Come up with Writer Comps.
 - Reach out to three people who know you/your work well and ask them to give you three adjectives to describe it.
 - Prepare an elevator pitch of yourself that will last ABOUT one minute (this is different from your personal logline, though it can be included in it or woven into it).
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Verbal Pitch Roundtable #2

Hosted by: Marilyn Atlas (Manager/Producer, Marilyn Atlas Management)

FORMAT: You'll take turns delivering your verbal pitch in a Roundtable setting and receive feedback from the exec on strengths and areas of improvement specific to your verbal pitch. Learn from notes on your own pitch and from notes given to your peers!

- You should aim for your pitch to last 5-6 min. total.

ABOUT YOUR HOST: Marilyn R. Atlas is a talent and literary manager and award-winning producer. Among her credits as film producer are *REAL WOMEN HAVE CURVES* for HBO, which won the Audience Award at the Sundance Film Festival; *A CERTAIN DESIRE*, starring Sam Waterston; and *ECHOES*, which won the Gold Award at the Texas International Film Festival. Marilyn has also produced a variety of programming for the cable/pay TV market. In live theater, Marilyn co-produced the West Coast premiere of the musical *God Bless You Mr. Rosewater* by Ashman and Menken (the writers of *ENCHANTED* and *TANGLED*). She also co-produced the award-winning play *To Gillian on Her 37th Birthday*, which was made into a film starring Michelle Pfeiffer and Peter Gallagher. In 2014, she co-produced the play *Detained in the Desert* at the Guadalupe Theater in San Antonio, TX. Her additional credits as a producer in live theater include *Today's Special* and *As I Sing*. In addition to Marilyn's film/TV credits, she has sold (first time) novels "Chasing the Jaguar" to HarperCollins, "Hungry Woman in Paris" to Grand Central Publishing, and the "Ave Maria Bed & Breakfast" to Hachette Publishing, and the "Last Ride of Caleb O'Toole" to Source Books. Her Lifetime movie *THE CHOKING GAME* based on the YA book by Diana Lopez aired in summer 2014. Previously, Marilyn developed the *BRIDES' MARCH* for Lifetime Television as well as a limited television series. She previously produced the short musical version of *REAL WOMEN HAVE CURVES* in Los Angeles in 2009 and is involved in the current development of a full-length production for 2018. Marilyn is currently developing a TV pilot based on the Gary Phillips series of novels "High Hand" and "Shooter's Point" featuring strong-willed African-American protagonist Martha Chainey. She is also developing a Chinese historical epic with the Metan Development Group and *CODEBUSTERS*, a children's show for TV based on a series of best-selling books. Marilyn is also featured in the book "Write Now!" from Penguin/Tarcher. She is the co-author of a relationship-based, screenwriting guide called "Dating Your Character," about an organic approach to character creation for Stairway Press' 2016 catalog.

Opening Pages Analysis

Hosted by: Joey Tuccio (CEO, Roadmap Writers)

Contact: joey@roadmapwriters.com

FORMAT: Joey will give several volunteer writers specific feedback on their opening 3 pages. The pages will be shared on-screen with the rest of the group so everybody can learn from the feedback. The Opening Page Analysis will start with a lecture on some of the immediate reasons an executive might pass on your work... *and you might not even know you're doing one of these things!* Remember, most execs won't read past page 5 if they aren't hooked from the start.
