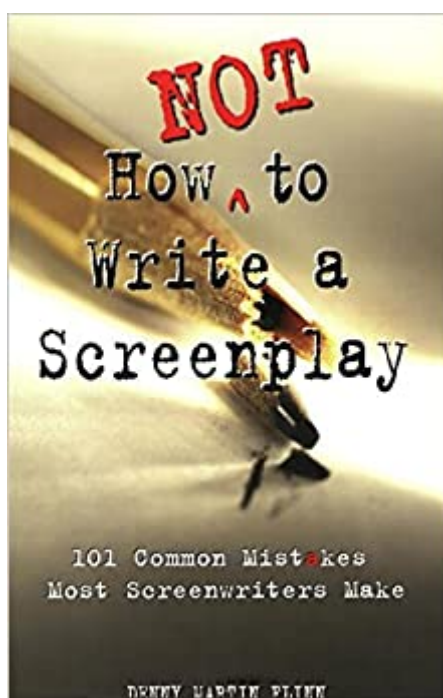


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# How Not To Write A Screenplay: 101 Common Mistakes Most Screenwriters Make



## Synopsis

All good screenplays are unique, but all bad screenplays are the same. Flinn's book will teach the reader how to avoid the pitfalls of bad screenwriting and arrive at one's own destination intact.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

How Not to Write a Screenplay is an invaluable addition to any aspiring screenwriter's shelf--and you'd best make the shelf within arm's reach of the computer. Author Dean Martin Flinn, an experienced script reader, details the common rookie mistakes that drive script readers crazy. Flinn makes no pretense of being able to teach anyone how to write the next Great American Film--or for that matter the next Stupid Summer Blockbuster. Instead he offers information that will help keep the novice screenwriter's opus from being immediately tossed on the trash pile (arguably a more valuable service). As Flinn says in his introduction, if you follow the advice in this book, "you may not write a particularly good screenplay, but you won't write a bad one." Flinn offers practical advice on formatting, such as the proper form for a slugline and where to set your margins, and more general rules of thumb on giving the actors room to interpret their roles and avoiding dictating camera angles to the director (who will ignore them anyway). The second half of the book deals with content, also in a remarkably pragmatic way--structure, pacing, plot resolution, and dialogue that really stink are all handily dealt with. Flinn illustrates almost all his points with excerpts from screenplays both good and bad (names have been changed to protect the guilty), giving the reader concrete examples of the difference between poorly and well-structured scenes. Not sucking is an unusual goal for a screenwriting manual, but any script reader will agree it is a noble one. --Ali Davis

Denny Martin Flinn is a produced screenwriter and the author of the successful book "How NOT to Write a Screenplay" (1580650155, GBP14.99).

Read Denny Martin Flinn's: How NOT to Write a Screen Play. It's is a MUST- Read and a hoot to boot! (In addition to being an invaluable guide to eradicating all FLINN's 101 common (baaad) mistakes which I discovered I'd baked into my spec script ( while I imagined I was saving that dratted cat...!) Flinn's 1st section on "FORM' is about more than how to indent and leave all the uniform white spaces in the right places aka the "LOOK' Hollywood expects. Flinn's second section, CONTENT, is for those of us who keep trying to tell instead of show what the darn cat's up to. Flinn's Part 3, DEVELOPMENT is priceless offering nuggets like, "just nod your head and smile" then pursue the point (with the development gurus.) Ask Ok, (if we go with your idea and) the girl doesn't die on page 30, how do we keep her in the story? That's even a pretty good line to pursue even if it's your critique group telling you to kill one of your darling cats. As Flinn says, you might learn something. I did.

This is an easy read with many good examples on how to write and format a professional screenplay. It is probably not a substitute for a college education, but for story tellers who want to write their story in the form of a script for a movie, this is a must read. There are other books on the topic, but this one seems to cover all the basic elements needed to make your screenplay look professional. I enjoyed reading it because it is not written as a dry text book. Rather it tells a story about how to write a great screenplay from the perspective of the author who has read hundreds of them. This author uses many examples from movie screenplays to keep his story interesting and make the points he wants to impress upon the reader. Those points create the outline for writing a successful professional looking screenplay. My only criticism is some of the examples he uses are longer than needed to make the points. Notwithstanding, as I stated, it was a quick and easy read packed with useful information. I will use it as a reference as I write my screenplay. I am sure I will wear it out.

Pros-Really insightful. This book is great for beginners. I bought two other books, but I have not opened them because this one tells me everything I need to know.-Contains information on formatting. I don't know how many books tell you about formatting a screenplay, but "How Not" is probably the most detailed.-Funny as sin. It takes a good writer to impart information onto the

audience. It takes a great writer to make it entertaining. Cons-The format of the book is weird. It is divided into two chapters: Form and Content. I wish the Form section was divided into chapters like description, formatting, action, etc. I had trouble trying to find specific information a few days after reading good advice. That is why I deducted one star. The book is more helpful than I can explain here. If you really need some information about how to write, buy this first.

This is a good book. Very enjoyable. Very easy read. I originally bought it for class, but found myself reading above and beyond the homework requirements. It's great for tips on formatting. It's got some theory about good story writing in general too. The theory stuff is nothing new. I've read pretty much the same guidance in every other writing book. But what makes this book stand out is how fun and easy to read it is, all the many tips about formatting, and the confidence it gives you on how professional your screenplay will be after applying these tips and rules. It's written by a script READER, though, not a producer or professional screenwriter. Reader's filter the good scripts from the bad ones, and pass the good ones onto a producer or agent. So yes, this is a good book to read and apply to your writing. But no matter how clean and professional-looking your script is, if you don't have a good pitch or strong story, it still won't go anywhere. Fortunately, there's other books that specialize in that. Use this book in combination with those.

Truth is, this book is only truly helpful if you don't know a darn thing about screenwriting. If you like me and have a couple screenplays and a couple books on screenwriting under your belt this will be more for "filling in the cracks", as you should already know most of these don'ts. So while the "Don'ts" of the boom aren't exactly revelatory to the intermediate screenwriter, the second half of the book, the "do's" of screenwriting, are actually very insightful. Dennis gives you a unique perspective of how to not only write a good screenplay but how to write a sellable screenplay. For those in screenwriting only for the craft I wouldn't recommend this book but if you like me and hope to make a living off of writing one day, this is not a bad buy.

I read the book from cover to cover, but because it's broken up in very bite-sized, digestible chunks, it's easy to keep coming back to over and over again. You can learn a lot from bad examples. This book is great in that respect. Where he provides several great examples of what not to do, he is never a jerk about it.

After writing my first screenplay I bought several books to help me tighten things up and make sure I

had a good structure. This book will help you make a presentable screenplay and avoid a few common formatting and descriptive mistakes. Even as a first time screenwriter having read no books I had avoided almost every mistake mentioned. I only learned 3 or 4 things I didn't already think about. It's good as a reference and might help you catch a couple things you didn't think of. If you know nothing of screenwriting and need the basics this will be helpful. If you know the basics there are better books you could choose that will help more with structure and story. I liked the book, it had a fun format. It just wasn't as useful as I'd have liked it to have been.

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