

Video Scriptwriting & Storytelling — Workbook

This workbook gives you structured exercises, repeatable worksheets, and production-ready templates for every module in the course. Complete each section alongside — or immediately after — its corresponding module. The goal is not to fill forms but to produce real, usable assets: a beat sheet for your next video, a voice document for a client, and a script template you will reuse for years.

Story Structure Foundations

Apply the Story Circle and 3-Act arc to a real video idea you are currently planning.

Exercise: Story Circle Mapping Exercise

Choose one video idea you have been postponing — a YouTube tutorial, a brand film concept, or a product ad. Map it through all 8 steps of Dan Harmon's Story Circle. Write one sentence per step. Do not skip steps 1–2 (the setup) or steps 7–8 (the return and change) — these are the most commonly skipped and the most commonly missing from underperforming videos.

- What is the ordinary world your viewer or protagonist starts in, before the video's central question arrives?

- What specific desire or problem crosses the threshold — what does the character need that they do not yet have?

- What is the payoff or transformation delivered at step 5 (Find) — and how will you tease this in your hook?

- How is the protagonist (or viewer) measurably different at step 8 (Change) compared to where they started at step 1?

Worksheet: 3-Act Structure Planner

For the same video idea, fill in each act with specific content — not just labels. Act 2 (Confrontation) should have at least 3 distinct sub-points or content units that escalate in complexity or stakes.

Video title / working title

Target platform (YouTube long-form / Shorts / TikTok / LinkedIn / pre-roll ad)

Total target runtime (minutes:seconds)

Act 1 — Setup content (what you establish in the first 10–15% of runtime)

Act 1 estimated runtime

Act 2 — Confrontation sub-point 1

Act 2 — Confrontation sub-point 2

Act 2 — Confrontation sub-point 3 (optional 4th for longer videos)

Act 2 estimated runtime

Act 3 — Resolution: the payoff sentence (what the viewer now knows or can do)

Act 3 — CTA placeholder

Act 3 estimated runtime

Checklist: Story Structure Quality Check

- My story circle has all 8 steps filled in with specific content (not generic labels)
- Step 2 (Need) names a specific emotion or problem — not a vague topic
- Step 5 (Find) is the highest-value moment in the video and I have planned to tease it in the hook
- Step 8 (Change) describes a concrete, observable difference in the viewer — not just "they learned something"
- Act 1 of my 3-Act plan is under 15% of total runtime
- Act 2 has at least 3 content units that build on each other rather than repeating the same point
- My Act 3 resolution connects directly to the CTA — the action follows logically from the transformation

Hook Writing Mastery

Write three competing hook variants for your video and evaluate them against the platform and formula criteria from the module.

Exercise: Three-Hook Variant Workshop

For the video you planned in Section 1, write three distinct opening hooks — each using a different formula (choose from: Bold Claim, Open Loop, Pain Point Mirror, Curiosity Gap, Story Drop). Each hook should be 2–3 sentences maximum and must stand alone — a viewer who reads only the hook should feel a clear pull to keep watching. Then apply the 11pm tiredness test: which hook would make you stop scrolling if you were exhausted?

- Write your Bold Claim or Curiosity Gap hook — what counterintuitive or specific revelation can you promise in the first sentence?

- Write your Pain Point Mirror hook — what exact frustration does your target viewer feel right before they search for this content, and can you name it precisely in one sentence?

- Write your Open Loop or Story Drop hook — what is the most emotionally charged or surprising moment in your video, and can you start the script at that moment before rewinding?

- Read all three aloud and record yourself. Which one created the strongest pull in your own voice? What specifically made it stronger — the promise, the specificity, or the emotional resonance?

Worksheet: Platform-Specific Hook Calibration

Take your best hook from the exercise above and adapt it for three different platform contexts. The core promise stays the same; the length, visual cue, and urgency level change per platform. Core hook promise (the one idea that makes a viewer stop)

YouTube long-form version (up to 8 seconds / ~30 words): verbal hook + visual hook description

YouTube Shorts / TikTok / Reels version (under 3 seconds / ~10 words + on-screen text note)

LinkedIn video version (professional credibility signal in first 3 seconds)

Pre-roll ad version (must survive a 5-second skip threshold — conflict or curiosity before any context)

Planned A/B test method (how will you test two hooks against each other for this video?)

Checklist: Hook Readiness Checklist

- Each of my three hook variants uses a distinct formula — no two are the same archetype
- My best hook makes a specific promise — not a vague topic claim ("about productivity" vs "the 12-minute routine that eliminated 3 hours of email")
- The hook matches what the thumbnail or title promises — no bait-and-switch
- I have written a visual hook alongside the verbal hook for my chosen platform
- The hook would pass the 11pm tiredness test — I genuinely want to see what comes next
- I have planned at least one mid-video re-hook at approximately the 40–60% timestamp

Scripting Techniques and Voice

Build a voice document for yourself or a client and apply the conversational sentence rules to a script excerpt.

Exercise: Sentence Rhythm Audit

Paste 10 consecutive sentences from a script you have written previously (or from a transcript of a video you have recorded). For each sentence: count the word length, mark any passive voice, flag any hedge phrases ("basically," "kind of," "really"), and circle any sentence over 20 words. Then rewrite every flagged sentence using the conversational sentence rules from the module. Compare the two versions aloud.

- What is the average sentence length in your original excerpt? Is it above or below the 12–20 word target?
- Count the number of times you use first person (I/my/me) versus second person (you/your) in the excerpt. What is the ratio, and what does it reveal about your default voice?
- Rewrite your three longest sentences using the split-at-conjunction technique. Do the shorter versions lose any meaning, or only unnecessary weight?

Worksheet: Voice Document Builder

Complete this voice document for yourself as a creator, or for a client whose scripts you are writing. This document becomes your reference for every script you write for this voice — paste it at the top of every blank script document.

Creator / Brand name

Average sentence length (count from 3 existing video transcripts)

5 signature phrases to USE (exact phrases this person naturally says)

5 phrases to NEVER use (too corporate / too casual / off-brand for this voice)

Default emotional register (circle: warm / authoritative / energized / calm / playful / other)

Self-disclosure ratio (does this creator reference personal experiences frequently, occasionally, or almost never?)

Humor style (absurdist / deadpan / self-deprecating / observational / none)

Transition language examples (3 specific phrases this person uses to move between topics)

Core brand tension (the belief or contrast that makes this creator or brand different from competitors)

One sentence that could only come from this voice — your voice touchstone

Checklist: Script Speakability Checklist

- I have read the full script aloud and recorded it
- Every stumble is marked and the corresponding sentence has been rewritten
- No sentence in the script exceeds 25 words
- All passive voice has been converted to active voice
- Hedge phrases (basically, kind of, really, sort of) have been removed
- The script uses contractions consistently (you'll, it's, don't) rather than formal expansions
- The voice document was consulted during writing and the script matches the voice profile

Exercise: Beat Sheet Construction

Using the beat sheet framework from the Pacing lesson, write a complete beat sheet for your planned video. Number each beat, specify the timestamp target, and write one sentence describing what emotionally or informationally changes for the viewer at that beat. Do this BEFORE writing any prose. When complete, color-code by beat type: yellow for teaching, green for story/emotion, blue for interrupt, red for CTA.

- Does every two-minute block in your beat sheet have at least one pattern interrupt planned? If not, mark the gap and add one.
- Is there a re-hook beat at approximately 40–60% of total runtime that introduces a new promise or tension?
- Count consecutive beats of the same color. Any run of 4 or more same-color beats is a pacing risk — what can you insert to break the pattern?

From Draft to Publish-Ready Script

Run a complete draft through the three-pass revision system and produce a production-annotated final script with CTA.

Exercise: Three-Pass Revision Live Run

Take a complete rough draft of your video script (or the draft you built from Sections 1–3) and execute all three revision passes. Use a different text color for each pass so you can see the layers of revision. Pass 1 is structural (section level, big moves only). Pass 2 is line-level (every sentence). Pass 3 is performance (read aloud, mark stumbles). Time yourself: the goal is to complete all three passes in under 60 minutes for a 10-minute video.

- After the structural pass: list the three largest structural changes you made (deleted, reordered, or added). What script problem did each change fix?
- After the line-level pass: how many sentences did you cut entirely? What percentage of the original word count survived? (Most professional edits cut 15–25% of the first draft.)

-
- After the performance pass: what was the most surprising stumble — a sentence that looked clean on the page but tripped when spoken? What does that reveal about how you write versus how you speak?
-

Worksheet: Production Annotation Worksheet

Take three consecutive paragraphs from your revised script and add full production annotations. For each paragraph, add at minimum: one camera direction, one B-roll description (specific enough to direct or source), one on-screen text note (or mark OTS: none), and one audio direction. Then review: could a director who has never met you execute these three paragraphs correctly from your annotations alone?

Paragraph 1 — narration / dialogue text

Paragraph 1 — [CAM:] direction

Paragraph 1 — [BROLL:] description

Paragraph 1 — [OTS:] on-screen text or none

Paragraph 1 — [MUSIC/AUDIO:] direction

Paragraph 2 — narration / dialogue text

Paragraph 2 — [CAM:] direction

Paragraph 2 — [BROLL:] description

Paragraph 2 — [OTS:] on-screen text or none

Paragraph 2 — [MUSIC/AUDIO:] direction

Paragraph 3 — narration / dialogue text

Paragraph 3 — [CAM:] direction

Paragraph 3 — [BROLL:] description

Paragraph 3 — [OTS:] on-screen text or none

Paragraph 3 — [MUSIC/AUDIO:] direction

Self-assessment: could a director who has never met you execute these 3 paragraphs correctly from annotations alone? (Yes / No / Needs these specific clarifications:)

Checklist: Publish-Ready Script Final Checklist

- [] All three revision passes are complete (structural, line-level, performance)
- [] The script has been read aloud in full and all stumbles revised
- [] Every key fact, statistic, or CTA has an on-screen text note
- [] B-roll descriptions are specific enough to direct or source from stock (no vague descriptions)
- [] The CTA uses the Transformation Callback formula — it names what the viewer now knows before asking for the action
- [] The final word or phrase in the script is an active verb or forward-motion invitation
- [] The script has been shared with one other person for a cold read (they have not seen the video idea before)

Your Action Plan

1. Choose one video idea you have been postponing and commit to scripting it as your course project before completing Module 2
2. Complete the Story Circle mapping for that video and identify which step is hardest to fill — that gap reveals your script's structural weakness
3. Write three hook variants using three different formulas; read all three aloud to a trusted viewer or record yourself and watch it back
4. Build a Voice Document for yourself before writing a single line of prose — this step alone will cut your revision time in half
5. Create a beat sheet for your video before writing the prose script; confirm every two-minute block has at least one pattern interrupt
6. Write your first complete rough draft in one uninterrupted session without editing as you go — turn off the internal critic entirely
7. Run all three revision passes on separate days if possible: structural pass immediately after drafting, line-level pass the next morning, performance pass the same day as your shoot
8. Add full production annotations to your final script before sending it to a director, editor, or filming yourself
9. Write your CTA last, not first — only after completing the script will you know exactly which transformation to reference
10. Publish the video and screenshot your 30-second and average view duration retention rates; use these as your baseline benchmark for the next script

