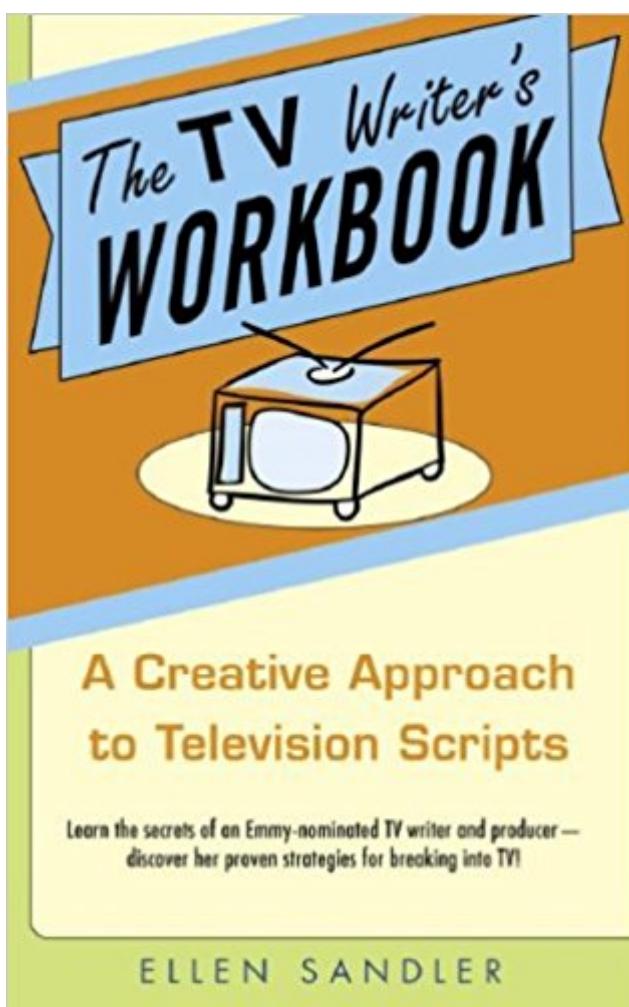


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# The TV Writer's Workbook: A Creative Approach To Television Scripts



## Synopsis

Why is TV writing different from any other kind of writing? How will writing a spec script open doors? What do I have to do to get a job writing for TV? Writing for television is a business. And, like any business, there are proven strategies for success. In this unique hands-on guide, television writer and producer Ellen Sandler shares the trade secrets she learned while writing for hit shows like *Everybody Loves Raymond* and *Coach*. She offers concrete advice on everything from finding a story to getting hired on a current series. Filled with easy-to-implement exercises and practical wisdom, this ingenious how-to handbook outlines the steps for becoming a professional TV writer, starting with a winning script. Sandler explains the difference between "selling" and "telling," form and formula, theme and plot. Discover: A technique for breaking down a show style so you're as close to being in the writing room as you can get without actually having a job there. The 3 elements for that essential Concept Line that you must have in order to create a story with passion and consequence. Mining the 7 Deadly Sins for fresh and original story lines. Sample scripts from hit shows. In-depth graphs, script breakdown charts, vital checkpoints along the way, and much, much more!

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Sandler, whose credits include *Everybody Loves Raymond* and *Coach*, offers worldly, practical advice for those hoping for a career in television writing. Sandler emphasizes that the most important thing to do is sit down and write, but before doing so she recommends aspiring

screenwriters obtain scripts from their favorite shows and study them carefully, breaking down the structure prior to embarking on capturing the feel and characters of an established show in their own spec scripts. After structure, Sandler moves on to the arc of an episode, which follows a set path and must revolve around the show's central character. She cautions beginners against pitfalls that mark a script as a novice effort, such as introducing new characters into a script for an existing show. After a wealth of writing tips, Sandler offers hints for how to approach agents and managers, how to network at social events, and how to survive a pitch meeting. Sandler's accessible guide is an invaluable tool for anyone aspiring to write for TV. Kristine HuntleyCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

Ellen Sandler has over twenty years of experience in the TV writing business. She was Co-Executive Producer and writer on the Emmy-winning hit series *Everybody Loves Raymond*, and has written for over 25 prime-time network television series, including *Taxi*, *Kate and Allie*, and *Coach*. She is a highly-regarded script consultant, and in addition to her Television Writing workshops in LA and NYC, is a frequent featured speaker at schools and universities across the country.

It's true, the title is misleading as this book is almost specifically for those looking to write 1/2hr TV sitcoms and is specifically geared to Multi-Cam at that(though I've applied most the concepts for my Single-Cam Spec).So if that's not what you want, look elsewhere but if it was you want, well this book is exceptional.Ellen is a master at her craft and can walk you through, step by step, on how to write a great Sitcom spec script that will stand out from the competition. She'll teach you how to pick your show, know your show, write your show and then pitch your idea. All the while she'll give personal examples of her own experiences that show behind the curtain how things work in the TV biz.I found the things most helpful from this book were how to think of a concept for your show, what NOT to write as your concept(made me scratch three of my ideas I previously thought were golden) and how to study your show with page/plot breakdowns.If your looking to write a Sitcom Spec Script buy this book!

I've read a lot of them and this one actually opened my eyes the most. Why? I'm not sure if it was accumulated knowledge from all others that made this one tip over my brain but she had some great ideas about writing in general. In particular her thought on "Why THIS day?" really opened my eyes because it's true, why did the story happen on THIS day and not some other one? A great addition to

a writer's library. Well, mines all digital but you get my meaning!

Just finished this book on my Kindle and I absolutely recommend it to anyone who is interested in writing for television. I've taken several classes and read many books along this theme, but The TV Writer's Workbook is unique in that it includes a detailed, pragmatic approach to story/script structure as well as plenty of up to date information on what to do with your scripts once they're finished. There is a ton of detailed inside information about the evolution of a TV script from pitch to outline to the many many drafts all the way to the day of filming (mostly from Everybody Loves Raymond). It's not as hilarious/sarcastic as Thomas Lennon and Ben Garant's 'Writing Movies for Fun and Profit...' but the down-to-earth approach and the acknowledgement that we're actually in this to make money reminded me of that book, which I've read and re-read at least three times. Like Lennon and Garant, Sandler is a working writer with lots of experience, and I take her advice much more seriously than anything that someone leading a 'writer's workshop' might espouse. I am confident that I will be referring to this book again and I will very likely check out her analysis service when (not if!) I finish up the two scripts I'm working on.

As a reader of MANY books on writing and screenwriting, it is nice to get a book that actually delves into the details of a writing process. Whereas other books will tell you to write an outline and a treatment and then a script, Sandler does the same thing but digs deep into each one of those steps, letting you know both the process and giving you detailed examples of what something should look like. A veteran of the business, I would recommend this book for anyone unsure of how to begin the process of writing for television and she will take you through it step by step, including how to pitch a script or idea once you get in the room, information that most authors seem to avoid or skim over.

This book was recommended to me by a highly respected professional staff writer, of many years, in the entertainment business. He said, "This is the only book you'll need to help you write your sitcom script". He was absolutely correct, in my opinion.

A very informative book to learn from our just God reading if you have an interest in how T.V. scripts are written.

This is a brilliant book on so many levels. Not only is it written by someone who has "been there,

done that," (Sandler was Co-Executive producer on Everybody Loves Raymond, and an Emmy nominee) but by someone who really knows how to \*teach\* what she knows. It's rare to find both qualifications in the same individual. The exercises alone make this book worth the price, but the insider tips and behavioral insights make it priceless. A "must have" addition to every TV writer's library.

This is one of many books I have read on the subject of writing for television, specifically the half hour sitcom and I have found this book to be the most valuable. Ellen is clear, honest, encouraging and clearly full of knowledge and experience that can help guide you through the scary first steps of writing your first TV script. It's not just a book you read, it's a book you keep with you as you work and constantly refer back to for helpful tips on character motivations, plot, dialogue and rewriting. This was the exact book I have been looking for.

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