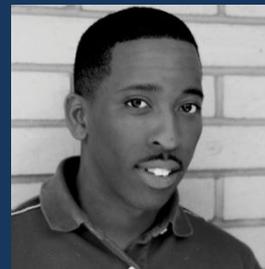


R2S Career Factsheet: Writer

'Script writing can sometimes be a lonely task. Each script has its high and low points and should go through a number rewrites. I always tell writers never fall in love with your first draft. All good scriptwriting is 70% rewriting.'

Format is also very important to script writing whether you're writing for stage, screen or film. If your script isn't presented in the right format you've already lowered your chances of somebody taking any interest in it.

A good way to learn about formatting and structure is to read other scripts. There are many websites online that you can source popular scripts from. If you have a favourite film, try to look for a version of the script and read it while you view the film. This will help you to understand how a writer has structured a script or scenes for the director's interpretation.'



Dominic Armstrong,
Freelance Scriptwriter,
Author of *Lynch's Road*

Duties:

- Coming up with themes and ideas
- Researching background material
- Developing believable plots and characters
- Laying out the screenplay to an agreed format
- Preparing short summaries of your ideas and selling (known as 'pitching') them to producers or development executives
- Getting feedback about the first draft of your work from producers or script editors
- Re-writing the script if necessary (you may need to do this several times before arriving at the final agreed version).

Skills:

- Excellent writing ability
- Creativity and imagination
- Storytelling skills and an understanding of dramatic structure
- Self-discipline and motivation
- Willingness to accept criticism and rejection of your work
- An organised approach to work, for meeting deadlines
- Good presentation and networking skills, for marketing and promoting your work.

There are no set educational requirements for scriptwriters, although a college degree is preferred. Candidates must be able to express ideas clearly, create believable characters, and develop a compelling story. It would be preferable to have at least a GCSE grade A*-C in English Language and a higher qualification in Creative Writing. Many scriptwriters have a college degree in English, Journalism, Drama, or other related field. Courses in creative writing and scriptwriting for all levels from beginner to advanced are widely available at colleges, adult education centres and universities.

Some scriptwriters begin their careers as assistants to scriptwriters or other related positions and move on to become scriptwriters once they gain the necessary skills and experience.

What does a scriptwriter do?

A scriptwriter is a person who writes the script for a film or television show; his or her main responsibilities is to tell a story in a quick and clear way while still developing characters and setting.

Who employs a scriptwriter?

The majority of writers are self-employed, they are contracted freelancers. This means that they write their scripts and then sell them to television or theatre companies. These companies may provide a contract of employment for a scriptwriter which means that they will work for them by providing scripts for a period of time.

How much can you earn?

How much a scriptwriter earns is very much down to the quality and content of the script they have written; also the track record of the writer plays a big part in how much they can earn. First time scriptwriters are likely to get paid less, whereas regular scriptwriters for a television series will get a good regular income.

Salaries can vary from less than £5,000 to over £100,000 a year.

Career Development:

- Film Director
- Actor
- Production Manager

Useful Resources:

<http://www.wisegeek.com/what-does-a-scriptwriter-do.htm>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/studentlife/careersandchoices/dreamjobs/mediaandentertainment/writer.shtml>

http://www.ehow.co.uk/list_6524491_creative-writing-courses-uk.html

Top Universities for Creative Writing:

1. University of East Anglia
2. Oxford University
3. Sheffield Hallam University
4. Regent's College