

Help with writing

Some quick notes from the workshop on Wednesday

- [Generating an idea](#)
- [Fleshing out the idea](#)

Generating an idea

The first step is to get all of the elements together, the genre, the technical elements... etc. Once you have these elements together, you should then start considering ideas. If you think of an idea, then move onto the "elevator pitch". Pitch your idea as if you have just walked into the elevator with someone, and you only have the time that you are both in the elevator to get your idea across, it should be simple and concise. Once you have a few ideas, write them down. While you can make the film without writing the idea down, the direction of the crew won't always be clear, and people will have different versions of the idea floating around in their head. By writing it down, the whole team knows what is happening and will be able to more concisely develop a plan.

Before you start generating ideas, take a look at some of the old film entries on the 48 hours website. The winners' entries can give you some inspiration about what you want to do. Some examples of ideas brought up were people trapped in a building, and a group of zombies being hunted.

Fleshing out the idea

Once you have your board idea, you can then start fleshing it out. Remember, there is a *hard limit* of 5 minutes. The film *cannot* exceed this, or else, you will vaish. This equates to about 4 pages of dialog, as dialog can go by really quickly. Start considering characters, motives, and the challenges of the story. Every good entry to 48hours has to have some sort of challenge or obstacle driving the story forward. In the ideas mentioned before, the challenges were fairly obvious, although some ideas might not have any obvious ideas.

Examples of these sort of ideas include, you find footage of the future, except it's in a really bad game with people glitching through walls and the like, these events start to play out in real life in true buggy fashion. In this idea, there is no clear obstacle, no clear motive. To really make something out of this, a challenge of some description would need to be introduced. One of the challenges came up with for this idea was for the main character to have some sort of existential crisis, *am I really just a character in a video game?* This central challenge creates tension and helps pull the story though.

Another thing to consider is the characters. Having relatable or likable characters helps the audience connect with the story, making the viewer more emotionally invested in the story, making them want the character to secede. Once you have built up a likable character, another good writing tool is to have some sort of tragedy befall them. This can really draw an audience in.

In the zombie example idea, the writer gave the individual zombies depth, by having them have relationships, they were relatable, and of cause, the tragedy that befall them was being hunted by humans.

Finally, you need to figure out the start, middle, and end. The start setup the story and introduce characters etc. The start should also present the problem for the characters to overcome. Because you don't have much time, you want to start on is late in the story as possible. This is not a feature film, you don't have the luxury of building up the story slowly from the start. The problem needs to be introduced as soon as possible, so that you can that ball moving.

The middle should be where you want all of the action to occur. Most of the action will be around here. Finally the end should provide some sort of closure on the plot.