

THE PRODUCER'S PERSPECTIVE

A PRODUCER'S OPINION ON EVERYTHING BROADWAY AND BEYOND

THE WRITER'S EDITION

We get a lot of [script submissions](#) here at the ol' Davenport Theatrical offices.

Sometimes they are emailed to us. Sometimes they get mailed to us.

Sometimes they get pressed on us when we're at an industry event (I don't recommend this, btw).

But we get a lot of them.

We do read them all, even though admittedly it can take awhile, because we read each one with care, and because, well, we get a lot of them (so if you're still waiting on a response, please be patient - we'll get to it, but just probably not as fast as you'd like, or we'd like, to be honest).

And yeah, sometimes we get VIP requests from agents or other producers that go to the top of the pile.

I got a script the other day that went to the very bottom of the pile, however, and because it did, I thought I owed it to the writer to blog about why.

It looked like @\$%@.

It actually looked like it had been given to someone else, returned, and they were re-scripting it to me.

There were some erased notes on the cover. Pages were dog eared. It was fastened together poorly (the last page was hanging on by a "chad" and something tells me the last page might be important).

The formatting of the script was all wrong. Now, I'm not a formatting Nazi by any means, but this script was formatted so incorrectly it looked like I was staring at a modern art mess-terpiece rather than a script (one of the reasons scripts are formatted the way they are is to make them easier to read!).

There was a demo too. It was a CD, with the title of the show sharpied on the front. Or at least I think it was the title. I really don't know because it was so illegible it might have been a recipe for chicken cacciatore or the Pythagorean theorem, for all I could read.

It was a mess.

I was so shocked that I almost chucked it in the trash. If the writer didn't respect his materials, why would I?

This person spent probably a year putting this together, and yet couldn't spend one more day presenting it in a way that might make it easier to sell?

Your script and your demo are your sales package. And you want them to represent what is inside.

Why sure, the content is what counts, and a pretty binder ain't going to make up for a sh@tty play, but that doesn't mean you don't pretty her up before sending her off into the world.

Or think of it this way (and one of my script coverage clients gave me this analogy so props to her – you can tell she's a writer) . . . if a real estate agent wants to sell an apartment, they don't just invite people in as is. They clean it up, often add another coat of paint, maybe a piece of furniture, or maybe they remove furniture. They "stage" it (pun intended), making that apartment as inviting as possible so that people will want to step inside and look around.

They don't show it if it looks like a frat house, hours after an end-of-finals party.

Your script is valuable. Treat it as such. And we will too.

Best,

Ken

P.S. By the way, if you need help with formatting your script, [get this](#) – it's what I use and what the industry uses, and actually helps make writing faster.