

## Ep #34: Give and Take Notes

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On this episode, we're talking all about giving and taking notes. Yes, notes are an imperative part of the business, and you need to understand how to give and take so listen in.

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This is the script reader pro podcast, hands on advice, insider hacks and deeper discussions for the screenwriters who are serious about breaking into the industry.

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Hey everybody, this is Desiree, and this is the script reader pro podcast, and I'm with Scott, my husband. Yes, aren't you always with me?

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You have to be with me. You have to always be with me. You're not right? I cannot function. No. I cannot get work done if you are gone from the house. I don't know why, but it just something feels off, and I just need trouble. This week

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I went out and you were like, I'm trying to keep busy because, because you're not here, I'm such a suck. I'm your kryptonite, baby. Yeah,

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so if you ever want to ruin me, just don't come home and I will just cease to function. This

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could really work in my favor. Good for you. It really could work in my favor. I could use this. You could I really could use this material here.

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But welcome to the show. We are going to be talking about notes today. I'm

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I can see there's like a thought bubble in my thinking, What can I do? Beep, boop, beep, boop, what can you do for what to manipulate the situation? Oh, we're back on that already. Still there. I'm still there, guys. Okay, anyway, yes, we are talking about giving and taking notes.

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Yeah. And so as a writer, you need to understand how to take notes, right? Because you need to get notes. If you're not getting notes on your script and you're thinking it's ready, and you send it out without a single pair of eyes, whether it's your family or friends or paid coverage

service, you're making a mistake. You need. I mean, would you screen your movie with zero people in the audience? Nope, you need to sit. You need to see reactions. You need to understand. Got some tips on how to take notes in the right way, because it's not just about taking notes as you're getting your script ready, but when someone's going to make your TV show or your movie or short or whatever it's going to be, they're going to have notes, and if you don't know how to take them, they're going to fire you yours. They're going to bring someone else in to do what they want to do. It's just how it is. Right?

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This could also be, instead of giving and taking notes as criticism is what it is, yeah, criticism, it's criticism. And I think the whole it all goes back to the fact that, I mean, I grew up with the word criticism as being bad because you're criticizing someone, right? But it really needs to be seen as a good thing, yeah, in some sense, right? Yeah, it's where you can work at things, not to take it personally, yeah, to dwell on it, but use it to your advantage,

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yeah? And some people do it in a way that respectful, yeah, but some people just it depends on the person. Someone just doesn't. Some person might just not have a good way to tell you something's bad. Some people might tell you something's bad in a way that actually excites you, you know, like it just depends on the who's giving the notes, how you're taking the notes. And big thing to remember here people is that someone who gives you notes, they're not perfect, right? Like they're, they're they're not going to deliver a perfect pair of notes every time. Everyone has something going on in their lives at any given moment, sometimes personal things will filter into how that script hit them in that moment. Some people are good at managing that. Some people aren't right. So you're not always going to have a perfect set of notes, but you know, I mean everyone here, you know, a script reader Pro, we've all gotten a lot of notes. So sometimes the places you go those people aren't writers. They don't write screenplays. They don't know how to take them. But we've all been there many times, in many ways, and so that, you know, falls into our viewpoint of how we want to present notes to you. Yeah, they've got some tips in on how to receive notes and be a gracious, good writer that people want to continue to work with. Because if you're not that, you will not work. That's just how it is

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that yes, you know what you were talking about earlier, though about you don't know what someone's going like, what? What's going on? Because I am a pessimistic person. I fully admit that hands down, whenever I read this line in some kind of meme or inspirational quote, it makes me want to vomit. I feel something inspiring coming. And what it is, is when they say, everybody has something going on in their lives that you know nothing about. Barf, barf, barf, barf you know what? I mean, yeah, and I know it's true. I understand that doesn't mean that you can justify your behavior. Being a

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no, not justified, but like, like it HeMan saws. I mean, sometimes I'll, you know, whatever, say, something happens in your life, and you're, you're in, you're you're depressed, or you're in a

dark place, or you're, you have a migraine for four days, and you have a set of notes you got to get in. They might not be your perfect notes. And if you are a writer and you receive notes, I mean, it's happened to me, I've dropped the ball, and I'll admit it. You know, if you get a pair set of notes and you're just like not and this isn't like you, you, you, you think the notes suck because they didn't like your script, that's a different thing. But if you get a set in, get a set of notes or like, I don't think they quite read that deeply enough, I don't think this, I don't really get I think they were confused here, or they mixed up their names, whatever. Right? Like, readers read a lot of scripts, but if you get a pair set of notes like that from anybody, just tell them and say, You know what, I feel like you didn't quite read it. Give them an opportunity. To fix it. Don't just be like, you suck, what a waste of money, or I'm never talking to me again. You You don't know what you're talking about. Writing friend, right? Don't be that person. Give them an opportunity to fix it. Because, yeah, like, with verification, yeah, like, Hey, can you just, I don't, I don't think you quite, you know, I think you missed something here, or, or were you drinking while you read this? Like, whatever it might be,

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right? It's communication too. It's like, just saying, like, just to reiterate, like, there's, that's what they say. I mean, that's what we've learned as parents too, to make sure that your child understands you want to rephrase it in a way, right? So from what I'm understanding is this, is that correct? Or did I not understand that? Yeah, you can do the same thing. Like, yeah. It's easy to misinterpret, yeah, but,

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but, like, Yeah, but give that reader a chance, right? Because any, any reader in the business wants to help you be better. They're not just there to trash you, right? They want to find great work and celebrate it. And then the great readers are the ones who are like, Well, I'm not just going to tell you what worked. It didn't, but I want to offer some insight and tell you why, and all these kind of things, right? But, but if someone has, if you get a fed, and also you just feel like, okay, this isn't, it isn't what I thought I'd get. Isn't what I thought I'd get. Let them fix it. Let give them an opportunity, right? Because I guarantee, if you say, you know, hey, not Oh, I wasn't happy, I'll never use the service that does nothing. But just say, hey, you know, I just disappointed. And then I guarantee that reader, they're going to care, and they like, Okay, well, let me do it again, or let me fix it at the same time. Take the criticism. Yeah, the criticism. But I'm saying, like, if you feel like they miss, I get it. I get it. Yeah. So anyways, that's part of taking notes as well. Like, have a open communication and then how to give notes, right? Because, as a writer, that we're gonna talk about that too, we're gonna talk about taking notes

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and giving notes. Yeah, okay. But before we do that, before we get too into this, yes, we always talk about what we've seen. That's right, sorry, I got ahead of myself there. That's why I'm like, What are you doing? Why are you giving me that face? Did I screw up? Did I say something I shouldn't have well, you've already talked about this, but I love you. You can't use that every podcast now.

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Yeah, what we usually start a podcast with is we talk about something we just watched. What did we watch? Dez, do you remember this title I got

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down here? Yes, I do remember it because I am a phenomenal wife, and there's a new movie in the theater right now that you want to go and see. What's it called, I don't know, ballerina. Hey, good job. And this is the fourth in the series.

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Yeah, it's like, a spin off. It's a spin off. It's not John Wick. It's some.

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Anyway, you just said it's John Wick. And so you're like, I really want to go to this little girl. I said, Okay, fine. I'll watch the other John Wick movies with you. Yeah, so we watched John Wick, but I did. I did have to. I knew there was a dead dog, and I just was like, I will only watch it, if you will pause it and mute

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it. She had to cover her face with a sheet until that part was gone.

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I can't handle it. So it was good. It was very well done, yeah, catch your interest. And it was like, You picked the wrong guide up with, yeah, but, and the wrong vehicle, and the wrong house everything, and the wrong dog to kill,

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yeah? But it's such, it's like, brilliant world building. Like, it's like, here's here's our world, but this is a new way of doing it. It's so anyways, yeah, we watched that. It was enjoyable. It was fun. So I'm glad. How many times have you watched it like 1718, maybe. No, really, honey. Yeah, that many times you've watched John Wick? Probably because every time a new one comes out, I watched the previous one, and then the third came. I watched one. Watching these, I don't know, in my theater at night, when you're sleeping. I don't know. Anyways, yes. So what are we talking about today? We're talking about taking notes, daily notes. I laugh like that. Who laughs like that. This is a mess already. Welcome to our podcast.

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If you're listening to this podcast, for the first podcast ever, listen to another one first, go to a different podcast episode.

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We're real people. This is not AI. Okay, so we're gonna first talk about taking notes and then talk about giving notes. And as a writer, you need to read everyone else's screenplays that you know and give them feedback.

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So maybe what you should talk about both sides, if we're talking about taking notes first and then giving notes, it should have been called taking and giving notes instead of giving and taking notes, all

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right. But I think, you know what? I think I wrote it like that because you don't say, Okay, give me some take and give here. What do you say? Give and take? Do some give and take here? Yeah, I get it. Take and give. I don't have a character say that. Now, can we have a little take and give? I was gonna be like, who came up with this give and take? That's a good line. No one use it. I'm using that. That's mine. Do not take it all right? So taking notes. Here are some tips on how to take notes in the right way. Okay? Number one, be open, right? Be open. Be what is the word? What's the open? B, E, O, P, E, N. Be Amazing. Banana. Be aggressive. Be aggressive. Okay, so be don't be aggressive. Be open, right? Just be open to whether it's a good or bad feedback. Just be open to it. It doesn't mean that everything they say is right. Doesn't mean you have to agree with it, but you want to be open because there you want to look for the kernels of gold in there. Okay, so gold. I got another one. What? Be appreciative or gracious? Yes, Grace, Grace, Grace, Grace, gracious. Be beat. Gracious. Yeah, be gracious, right? Because, I mean, especially if you're like, just getting notes from like a fellow writer, right, and you're swapping scripts or whatever. Be gracious. They took their time, they read it. They took their time. They gave thoughtful feedback. Nothing has angered me more as a waste of time in my writing life than giving then someone say, Hey, can I read your script? And let's swap scripts and make sure. So I read their script, and I give them all these notes, and then I then I get my notes back, and they're like, Yeah, it's really good. And I'm like, that's all you got for me. How is that helpful? I would rather you hated it and told me all the reasons why, but I still like, well, thanks for reading. I appreciate it. You know, you know, let's do this again, if you need to, like, whatever, right? Like, I wouldn't say, Let's do it again, but I would say, I would say, Well, I asked questions. Then I'm like, Okay, well, did this work, did this right? But I would be less inclined to Yes, but you still be gracious next time, because then they're gonna say, oh, Scott read my script and he was just a jerk. He didn't like my feedback, so then you're doing, you know, like you're seen as what not to do. So always be gracious, right? So, and this is the biggest one ever, we can just mic drop it after this, but don't take it

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person now, loudly,

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yes, do not take it personally. Now, Ali, don't take it personally, right? Don't take it an attack. You cannot defend your it's not a personal attack against you or your whole being. It might be, I mean, if you wrote like, I've read scripts where I'm just like, I'd never want to meet this person, I'm going to say you are creepy and go away, right? You take that person you are creepy and go away. Bye bye, bye, bye bye. Now, yeah, so, so, but, but don't take it personally. It's not personal attack on you, right? You have no control over how they're going over how they're

going to receive your work. If it doesn't work for them, it doesn't work for them, that doesn't mean that that's even their movie. Great. That's like, if you want to have you give Desiree a sci fi time travel screenplay and have an honest one. Don't give me a sigh. It doesn't matter if it's the greatest time travel screenplay written ever. Desert is going to say, Oh my gosh. Just give me a headache. I threw it out after a second page three. Do I talk like that? Sorry, right? So I mean, not everyone, not everyone loves every genre, so, you know. And I mean, sometimes you can choose who your reader is going to be, like you can at our company, most companies, you can't. So you don't know if that person hates westerns and is just going to trash it like so don't take it personally. Okay, understand that. You know that it just may not work for somebody. You give a screenplay to 10 people, every single one of them is gonna have a different view on it. Some people will think it. There might be one who think this is, this is the greatest script I read in a long time, while the person next to them will look at them and go, the hell that was the worst piece of trash I've ever read in my life. You can't control that, right? So you have to understand that it just might not work for them. Don't get defensive. You cannot defend your work. You can't even mean. What do you mean? Again, it was a good script, yeah, did you not read it? I've had that come at me sometimes, and I'm just like, like, then they explain why it worked, where I said it didn't, and why the character was motivated because of this. And I'm like, well, but I didn't see it though, you know, and a lot. And that's the thing, is, anytime I if I've given a set of notes, and there is that problem where it's like, okay, I don't think you really paid attention, I'll then read it again and I'll say, Okay, I see that. Yeah, you know what? I did miss that. But I think the reason I missed that is because of these two things, or I'll admit it, right? Like, sometimes you just don't catch everything, but you can't defend your work. It's, I mean, 99% of the time when someone reads your script, it's just silence or a no, right? I'm not talking about coverage. I'm talking when you send it, when you pitch it to someone, send it to a producer or manager or whatever. If they read it, they don't like it, they'll just you'll never hear from them. You cannot defend it. And if you feel, if you're finding yourself, that you're having to explain or defend then, then, instead of that, go and do the work to make sure that you don't need to, or that there's no questions, that there's no or

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doing the work, get other people's opinions Exactly, yeah, because what one person says might not work, might work great in the eyes of five other people. Yeah,

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because it's all personal. It's like, again, that personal view, right? So that's why you always want to get an abundance of different viewpoints, right? And look for the consistency

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and don't necessarily change, like everything that someone is telling you, either, if someone's like, this, this, this, this, this needs to be changed. Don't go into your script and spend a whole day changing what that one person suggests, because then, well, because then it's like you don't even realize how many more holes you're making. Two of things don't don't work now, because you listen to the critique of one person who has some guys.

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He's 17 and has never read a script. You never know but, and that's the thing, like, Don't idolize whoever's reading your script, either even if they're your idol, or you really respect them, or whatever. I had someone that was a writer, writing colleague, I would give, I'd give notes on the script, and I remember when I give them the notes on this script and throw out some, off the top of my head, ideas, not ideas not ideas I thought about for a while, but just in our conversation be like, Oh, maybe you could try this and this, this. He sent an email back to me at four in the morning saying, Here's my new draft of my script, and it was like nine pages longer. And even put every single thing I said and removed everything I didn't think was working yet. Don't do that. It's your script. If you believe that that's Don't, don't do things to please someone just because you think they're smarter than you. You have to go with

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your gut. Without if eight people say the same thing, chances are pretty likely consistency, yeah, that there needs to be some change, or something looked at to alter there, yeah. Or

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if you it's a director and that you're working with, they're going to make your movie, and they say, go and do these things. Don't do them. Change yesterday, right? But, yeah, like you have to, you have to, you know, take it that way. But. You cannot get defensive in that process. You have to look at that note giver with an analytical eye, right? Understand, try and understand where they're coming from, even if they like, they don't point out why. A lot of times there's a note beneath the note. So it's like, okay, so the ending didn't work for me because I had no idea that this character was colorblind. Okay, well, that doesn't mean the ending is doesn't work, right? They say, Yeah, because it didn't work in this and there's that one detail, that's the note. The note is actually you forgot to set up that this character is colorblind. So go back to page 17, set it up, and that fixes your ending, right? So you always want to try and understand where is this coming from? Is it something in the script? Is it a just a personal bias, getting notes like taking them it, you know, a lot of it is about being able to analyze how they came to that that understanding or that reaction, okay,

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but I think too a lot of times with you, and we've talked about this before, where in your brain something you know what's gonna happen, and you know all of the components and all how all the pieces of the puzzle fit into one. So when you're working on that script, you're so close to it that you might forget that little bit or piece that you just assume the reader is going to understand because they know your brain. Yeah, no one wants to be in your freaking

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brain. I that I would not wish that on you know what I'm saying? Though it is. Yeah. As writers, we know every moving part. We know the 17 things that happen between two scenes that never make it in the script. So sometimes we think when a character says this, it makes sense because the audience knows this piece, but it's not actually in the script. You just think it is because you already know your story, right? So a lot of times it's paying attention to that. I got to

look and see why they came to that decision. Or, you know, that that's a great point, great piece of advice, honey. Get many different views. We you know, that's one of my notes here. We talked about that. Get as many eyes on your script as as you can, and know that you're not that they are not going to be everyone's view, right? Not everybody's the same, like me and you, when we read the first pages on our last podcast, right? You're like, Ah, I didn't like the bowl that distracted me. I couldn't get into the script because I didn't understand why they were making that choice. And then my response was, I didn't even notice that really, right? So everyone's got something different, right? So just remember that. And then, and then, you know, a great way to sometimes take notes is, even if it's not eventually something maybe paid for it, maybe wherever it's come from, try and look at it like these notes are from the producer and they're going to make my movie, but these are the things that they find didn't work and need me to fix still doesn't mean you're just going to take them all in and make those changes. But try and look at it from that viewpoint, like, you know, they're, they're saying these things for a reason. They're not just saying it because they just want to trash you or piss you off, right? Try and look at it from that point or like, you know, from like the directors, like, Oh, I really love this, but it was missing this piece. Try and see if it, if you can, you know, see it through those kind of points of view. Does that make sense? Yeah, completely. Yeah. And then you had made a note that you wanted to say, Oh, just

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that, if it doesn't make sense, like, if someone speaking of sense, if it doesn't make sense, then sometimes it just doesn't make sense. Yeah, you know, if they make no sense, they make no sense, right? And how many times do we go to movies and I'm like, okay, they totally lost that point. They put made something like stand out, or made us pay attention to it to then never later come back to that makes no sense. Yeah. So if someone says to you, why did you have this makes no sense, this, uh, alien come out in this scene, and then we never saw an alien again, and it wasn't a sci fi movie. What? What's the point of the alien? Yeah? Well, makes no sense, yeah, so then don't fight. So I like aliens. Why I want that you obviously

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missed the thematic value of a blue alien in a green field. You can't say that anyway, right? But yeah, that that's true. Sometimes something makes no sense. And if they say I didn't get it, well then maybe, maybe maybe they didn't get it because they didn't pay attention. Or maybe they said, as you wrote, didn't make sense. Or maybe the, maybe the word flashback was in the scene heading, and they missed it because it didn't say, begin flashback. So they they were lost because it made no sense. Why are we suddenly here? Like there's there could be endless reasons, but your job is to then stop and go, Okay, let me go back and look at it and and see maybe why it didn't make sense. And

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don't argue the fact that someone doesn't get it. We have this with our kids. She's relentless. You just don't understand what I'm saying. No, we understand what you're saying. We completely understand what you're saying. You don't get us.

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Yeah, it's like, the dog is brown and that's a white wall. And then we'll be like, actually, it's a gray wall. That's a black dog or brown dog, and that's a white wall. Okay, you just said that. Say it in different way. It's a blue it's a brown dog and it's a white wall. Like, it's the same. Sometimes things just make no sense, and you just gotta be like,

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makes no sense, makes no sense. So it does make sense. So move on.

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Yeah. And then, I mean, this is kind of what I alluded to off the star, is that readers can have bad days, right? Like, sometimes you like, you don't know what's going on in someone's world. Unfortunately, just like, just like, my thing, you don't know what is happening. You don't know. But like, sometimes, like, oh, like, I remember, I remember when I went to, once upon a time in Hollywood, right? Couldn't entertain a movie, and I was like, oh, okay, I love tarantula to be great. But I was in a really, really bad mood that day, and I was tired. And I went to the movie, and I remember sitting like, half a theater. I'm like, this sucks, really. Like, I'm so bored right now. Why the hell did I even come? What a waste of money. And then at the end of it, I'm like, that's the worst movie. And then I like, went on my Facebook room, and I'm like, the first three things were like, oh, once, one time Hollywood dinner. I was like, raving about it. I'm just like, why did we have to sit in the car for seven minutes driving down the freaking freeway like this is a movie. So then I went and watched it back a second time when I was in a better mood, and it was a completely different movie. Yeah, I was like, Oh my gosh, right. So that can happen when you're reading, when people read scripts, sometimes they're just gonna have bad days. And, yeah, these are things you can't control, so that's why you need to have more than one viewpoint on a script, and this is what you gotta like. And desert hates when I say this, but put, this is what you put on a post it note on your laptop screen, there's a lot of post it notes, man, I know, like, I don't know how people can even see the screen. Now, with all my advice with your post it notes, it doesn't matter if they don't like it, it doesn't matter if they don't like it, they don't like it. Just still try and get something from the notes and try and try and figure, well, why didn't they like it? And, well, actually, yeah, they gave me a note on how to improve that. Yeah? Like,

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how I knows that if you gave me a script to read and it was about making my What do you say? My imagination? No, my suspend your disbelief. Yeah, suspend my disbelief. Yeah, no, we look No. You look

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it up. It is. Suspend your disbelief, because you don't believe in it. But you have to suspend that, yeah, to enjoy it. No, suspend my belief. Just rewind to a previous podcast and desert it will explain what she said is wrong. Anyways. Yes. So if

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you're if you ask me to read a script where I have to do that, I would hate your script. It doesn't matter the content of your script. It doesn't matter how good your you know the characters, they converse back and forth. I don't care about your description. I could care less about how you set up a visual of where we are or what we're doing. I hate

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it. Yeah, it's just how it is. If you, if you have a script that's about sexual abuse, and your reader has dealt with sexual abuse, they're probably gonna not quite be able to connect with that script yet, right? Like it's just, it's just you never know, right? Or someone whatever. There's endless reasons. But the key is, it doesn't matter, right? I always send notes hoping someone will tell me all the things that didn't work. I already know what works. Well, I think they want to tell me that great, but I don't know what isn't working. So tell me what you don't like. It's a game, right? You're too close to it, right? It doesn't matter if they don't like it trying, if they can give you even one little thing that makes sense, oh, I really like how that character stuttered, or whatever, you're just like, okay, good. So that's the big thing, right? And you know, your story isn't for every person, just like it isn't for every audience. So it's about that right script landing in the desk of the right person talking about me hating. Yeah? So that's that. Those are tips on, on taking from somebody.

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So then giving notes, yeah, a lot of the same taking and giving notes, taking and giving

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notes, yeah, a little take, give a little chat. Chit, let's have a little chat. Chit, I hate

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it when you laugh at your own jokes, because a lot of the times are so bad. All right, okay, so, um,

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moving on. Read these first ones on, because they're very much like, like, the like, how you take notes. So to give notes, what should some things Be? Be open. Be open. Sounds very familiar, personal opinions, yes, yeah. Next, gracious. No. Be Be gracious. Be gracious. Be open. Be gracious. Yeah, be gracious. Like you're you're giving someone notes, like it takes time to read a script, you guys. But here's the thing, that's Yeah, but that's the other way around though. That's when you do notes, but be when you're giving someone else, be gracious. Remember that they spent a long time. That's what we're saying. It takes a long story. Yeah, okay, what was that? That's right, Be gracious. Be

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gracious, because it does for someone who isn't someone who reads scripts daily, like you. It does not take me an hour and a half to read a set of notes or to read a script. It takes me a lot longer because I'm not used to the way that it's laid out, plus, I fall asleep as soon as I read one

page. So think about how long it took that person and then be gracious and thankful for the time they put to give you those notes.

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Yeah, like think of anyone who creates anything, even you desire with your baking. You bake a dough of sour bread, or sour you bake a loaf of sourdough bread. Just whoever knows Desiree makes, she has mastered it. She makes the greatest loaf of sourdough you will ever have in your life. Story that none of you will get to try it anyways. It's like, if you've here's your new sourdough loaf you spent, you spent six months mastering it. Okay? Master here. Please taste it. And that person tastes it, and they're just like, yeah, it's good peanut butter, right? Like, they're not being, you know, you gotta be like, Oh my gosh. You know, understand the process, good, but like, holy, yeah. Like, Be gracious. Don't trash it, because that's they work. They put their blood, sweat and tears. Well,

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I do make a loaf of bread every week for us and every week for the neighbors. And yesterday, I sent a 16 minute video to the neighbors, outlining, like, this is the process of how to actually do from the beginning to end. And I bet you they appreciate it more. And she was just like, Oh my gosh. Like, that's crazy. When I give you a loaf of bread, it's like a 36

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hour process. It's not like throwing some cookies in on a tray, and no, 20 minutes later.

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Anyways, it's the same thing as as. Giving notes, taking notes, same thing, but

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be gracious. Understand that they're they got a lot riding on this, right? So be aware of that. What's the next one?

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Same thing. Understand the script may not be your thing when you're giving notes,

25:12

yeah, and don't take it personally, like, don't read that script personally. Read it step take a step back. Turn your personal biases off. You. If you if you have a problem with something specific, like you, you hate grasshoppers because they landed on you when you were stuck in your manual wheelchair against a window, and suddenly 17 grasshoppers are landing on you and you couldn't move. And now you're reading a script, and it's about, it's a it's an animated script about grasshoppers. You got to shut off the fact that that memory hits you and you trauma? Yeah, you have to. You can't take it. You can't take it on personally. You should personally, let it like emotionally affect you don't like it, don't don't hate it because you don't like that subject or whatever.

25:52

I'm starting to see here that there is similarities here, the same kind of thing we're going over the exact same thing, because it hears, it says, look at the story and all elements with an analytical

26:01

eye, yeah, and try to see it from the intended audience. Like, like you with your sci fi, right? You're like, okay, but you know, I'll have to say, Okay, someone who loves sci fi, let's look at it from that viewpoint, right? Here's a good one, Scott, oh, this is a great one. Just never be this way. Be aggressive. Now. Don't be mean. Don't be mean. Mean. Don't be mean in your notes. Don't be mean for the sake of just being mean. Yeah. And part of being mean is being a know it all, uh huh, right? You try and you try and school someone on how they should have written something like that in general. Oh my gosh, like and like using terms like, oh well, the ending fell flat. Okay. How did it fall that's a pretty crappy thing to say. How about you say? So I wasn't quite sure about the ending. I think it lost a bit of momentum. Like, try and do it in a classy way. Don't just be mean and be like, Yeah, I don't think you have the talent to pull off a final act, you know. Like, had people say to me before, and I'm just like, Wow, thank you for stabbing me right in the face, you know, like, you could have stabbed me in the gut and then just said, Okay, it'll bleed for a bit, but you'll probably be okay. All right. Right. All right, right, instead of

27:03

just like, right, I mentioned on the on the note of stabby staff, oh yeah, Dad's got a new I did get my shirt made. You guys,

27:10

there was an episode A while back. Yeah, where Desiree's? I said, How are you feeling today? You're like, sappy, stabby, but stabby, so she got a tank top. It says sappy and, and stabby, because that is you. Okay? So taking orders at any time for that T shirt, okay? And also, when giving notes, highlight everything that worked and was entertaining and effective, first, like, let them know what was great. Because Come on, man, you want to know that, right? It's like, you're at work, right? And you're having your assessment with your boss. You're like, okay, it's gonna go awesome. And they're just like, Yeah, okay, so you're late too many times you don't clean the coffee pot out. I saw you pick your nose and wipe the booger under the desk. I don't know you're supposed to really nail in those reports, right? Like you're supposed to

27:54

go to the bathroom in the bathroom, and not pick it under the couch in the staff. Yeah,

27:58

I saw you shake your leg and have a turd roll out. You kicked it right under the couch. Could you not have just picked it up? I

28:05

hope you guys are laughing. I'm not rolling your eyes and you're like, Okay, what the heck did I get into it? Am I listening to with this podcast a very different

28:15

turn? Yes, but tell people what you loved and what worked and what was really great, right? Because that's the most important piece for that person. And then you can follow up and say, okay, then that's, here's some things,

28:27

right? But be constructive, though, with the criticism, yeah, and then, okay, and

28:31

there's a, there's a fine line here, right? Because when you're giving someone feedback and something doesn't work, you want, if you have any ideas on you know, but what actually might help that, or what might work? Or, here's an idea I thought of, give them that, right, but don't give it in a way where, okay, so if I were writing this script, what I would do is, I would do it this way, not the way you did it. Like, don't be that person. Don't discount the work that they've done. Yes, and don't think you know more than them you know. Like, be constructive. Offer ideas and suggestions if you have them, but don't say this is, this is better than everything that you have here. Yeah, be that person. It all comes down to something that's going to fit within the current script and story that they have more than what you would do if it was yours. Yeah, exactly, because it's not yours, it's not and if you want to do it, make write your own screenplay. Yeah? And yeah, exactly, exactly what. What is also important is, you know, when you are giving someone's notes, try to understand their vision, right? Like, okay, I think what you're trying to do here is blah, blah. I think your theme that you're trying to really speak to is this. This isn't quite working, but I would do it like this, which and then that note just completely isn't anything like what their story is, right? You want to say, okay, so based on what I'm think you're trying to do here, I think if you did it this way, it might open this up, like, try and fit their vision rather than yours. It's not your script, right? It's not about what you would do. And that's a really hard thing to do. That takes a lot of experience, a lot of reading a lot of scripts to understand how to kind of get that across, and how to hit people with that, right? So, but, but, yeah, try not. It's not. It's not. About you. That's another big thing, right? That I don't have it here, but that should be a post it you put on your laptop if you're reading someone's script, this is not about me their script. It's, it's not, it's not giving notes, because it's about you. Oh, I'm such a great note giver. No, it's, it's not, that's not what it's about. You are providing a service for someone graciously, and so you want to make sure that you're, you're seeing it that way. It's about, how can I help this person see how I received this script and then leave it for them to figure that out if they want it to be received that way, or find a way to make it happen? That makes sense, yep. Does that make sense? Everybody? Yes, yo. Okay. Now use reading other scripts. This is so important as a writer, okay, if you're not important, if you finish the sentence, I know, but I have to, I have to, I have to queue it up first. If you are not doing this, you are not making the best step.

30:46

If you're not doing this, you grow up to be a loser. Grow up to be a loser. Use

30:50

reading other scripts to build your circle, your community, your colleagues. You never know how. You don't know how powerful it is to have someone who has your back in a writing life. Then when you get to that moment where you don't have anybody, and no one else gets what you're going through when something falls through or fails or whatever, you need to have that group. You need to have other like I have. I have a writing group I trust every single person in it. So every time I write anything, I've got eight solid, trusted people I know who will give me feedback that I can trust. If I didn't have that, it'd be much harder to move forward and to grow and all that kind of stuff, right? But it builds your community. You swap scripts so many writers. I'm, you know, when I talk to someone, I'm like, Oh, how many people have read this? And they're like, well, nobody. I'm like, Okay, well, that's the problem. First of all, you need to have like, you need to have as many people as possible giving you your notes. So build your circle, build your community, build

31:42

writing groups. Yeah, and I think it's, I think it's important, when you're looking at these people too, the kind of person that you want is someone who's going to not only cheer you on, but someone who's also going to console you, yes, because you smart. It's not just like, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, but when you have the letdowns, or something didn't doesn't work out, or maybe a scene didn't go the way you planned. It's like, it's okay. You know what? It'll be okay. Tomorrow's new day. Just get writing on that page. You know? Like, yeah,

32:09

exactly. So it mean you need to build your you need to have your people, right? You need to find your people. Even if it's two or three people, it's the same.

32:15

In the real world, it's like anything, yeah, look for those few people. It doesn't have to be a dozen. No,

32:20

big thing I want to end this off with about notes is you have to also remember that every single person who is paid to give you notes all have a very different style, right? Every single, I mean, every single one of us a script reader, pro, we all have a different style. I mean, most places, different companies, they have guidelines of, okay, you know, focus on this. Don't say these things. Address it this way, right? Like, that's just a corporate thing, but everyone who gives notes does it very differently, right? They have a different style, like, my style, very conversational, right? Like, because I write them like, I'm talking to you and sharing ideas. And some people are a little more technical and a little more literal and a little more like cold. So, you know, not cold, but like, you know they're they're viewing it from that outside point, and not sharing personality and things like that. So just remember that everybody you know has their style. It doesn't mean that their style, no, isn't good. It's everybody brings something different to the table, yeah. So just be open. Be open that it's just gonna be it's

33:16

like a friend. If you want the exact same friend with every person, good luck finding the same idea. Why would you want that? But if you want someone to bring a different perspective and to come to the table with something different, you have a variety of friends. One friend gives you this. One gives you this, right? It's good with this one. Isn't great with that. You

33:34

want you know you want your wife to console you, and when you say, I love you, she says, I love you too. Not good for you. So then you get that from your second wife, and then you go, right there. It's the same thing,

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no, you very quickly get divorced from the said first wife. Is what happens?

33:49

Okay, Cody, watch Sister Wives if you haven't okay. So that that's kind of to wrap that up. You know, that is the open and gracious. Don't get defensive. Enjoy the process, yeah, okay, exactly. Don't take it personally. There's so much in this business that's going to knock you over and punch you in the face and stab your knuckle with a pitchfork. It's what the business is. So just be open to growing and you'll be okay. All right, children, thank you. All right. She's father Scott's Amelie of the day. All right. With that in mind, we're going to take a quick break and have our lovely spokesperson tell you about one of our services.

34:27

Feel like you've taken your script as far as you can on your own. We know how frustrating it can be sometimes to get the great ideas that are in your head properly on the page, but imagine having a professional screenwriter jump in and rewrite it for you to create a market ready script. Send us your script for a rewrite proposal, and the pro of your choice will write up a page or so of notes on exactly how they'd approach a rewrite head on over to [www.scriptreaderpro.com](http://www.scriptreaderpro.com) or. Forward slash rewrite and use the code rewrite 15 during checkout for the rewrite proposal to get 15% off.

35:10

Okay, so first question, question, Should I use intercut or split screen in a script when I move between two settings at one? Okay, that's a good one. I don't know what either means.

35:20

Okay, so intercut. So if you're like, you got someone in a car, and you got someone at their house, and this, the scene is constantly, we're on person with the car. We're on a person in the house. We're on person with the car. Like we're going back and forth, back and forth that, you would just say, instead of writing interior car, this character says this, and then interior house, like all these scene headings, you would just say, intercut with. And then you go to that interior you're in the house, intercut with interior car, and then you just write it like you would if they were there with each other. That's what you would normally do. That's what an intercut is. It just takes page space. Makes sense.

35:51

Can you show? First of all, can I ask in the show notes, can you put an example to show? Because it's very hard for you to explain it. Okay, to the listener. I'm lost. Okay,

36:02

sure. Sorry, yeah. I see the script page, and I see that's, that's

36:05

probably, that's the problem. I have no idea what you're talking about. So split screen. So

36:09

look in the show notes, you will see an example of what intercut looks like. And split screen is split screen. I don't know a split screen is a Production Direction choice, right? If they're gonna do, like, here's the two characters split down the screen. That's like, a stylistic thing in a screenplay. Don't write split screen because you're just trying to be campy with, oh, this is a split screen, right? Just put intercut, unless the split screen is there for like, a very specific reason, and then the two are going to turn into three, and then four. And, like, if it's, like, easy for us to understand and see, you know, then, then it's not a problem. But intercut is usually easiest way to do it and make it clear and simple without pushing us out

36:45

of it. Okay, sounds good. So you'll make sure you put that in the show notes. Yeah. Okay. Question two, what makes a script hit a recommend level over a consider impossible answer, every person is different. Every script is different. Every reader is different,

37:00

yeah? Like, I mean, it's it really, it all comes down to the person, right? I will. I mean, I've had very few scripts in my life that I think I would recommend this and say this should be made today, and everyone will love it. But

37:12

sometimes you get people who are a consider that you then move to recommend.

37:16

And I'm not, like, I don't guard my recommend, like, I'm wearing a chastity belt or something nice, nice. But, you know, like, it's just it to me, big difference is, consider is, this is a great script, but it's not quite ready. Recommend is, this is a great script and it is ready. Nothing else can no work needs to be done. Not that. And that's the tricky part, because a lot of times people are like, No, it's not ready yet because I didn't like this and this and this doesn't matter personally, in many of people that I know and on our team, is you look at it, you have to look at it as, okay, so for this specific story, did this writer write this story, that story they want to tell in the best possible way? Is it ready for that? Not is it, oh, I think they still need to add some things here and like, that's just personal stuff, right? But is it ready? Like, can you understand that this story,

because this script's always going to change. Even if it's a perfect script and it starts to get produced, there'll be tons of changes. So it's that viewpoint of I recommend that this script is going to impress everybody who reads it, right? That's the big difference. But it's all personal choices. Everyone is going to be different.

38:15

Okay? Question three, if I were to try to attach talent to a script, which would be the best one? Actors, directors, cinematographers, etc.

38:25

Okay, so that's a great question, and all of them are difficult, right? But, you know, a lot of times these days you'll pitch to a producer or whatever, and they'll be like, Yeah, you know, I like the script. You know, do you have any attachments? And you're like, No, that's not my job. And they're like, Okay, well, come back when you do, and it's like, who am I? I'm just some writer in my basement. I'm gonna, I'm gonna reach out to Tom Cruise, Tom stores, and be like, Hey buddy, I got a great scoop. You wanna read it? Like, can I attach you? Can you cancel everything you're doing for the next seven years? Like, it's not possible, right? And, and if it's an actor that is, you know, doesn't have pull, right? Can't get investing things like that. It won't matter if they're attached to your script, right? If you are going to try to attach someone to a script to be like, I'm interested, or even get, like, a letter of intent, like, if this script gets traction, I would sign on. Would be a director, find a director that you believe has the same kind of style and that kind of stuff, and just reach out to them and try and create a relationship. And that's really the best option if you're gonna, if you're gonna attach someone, because the only reason to have an attachment is to move the needle, right? I have had so many directors and talent attached to projects at different phases, and it's and I'm like, why? Like, why? Why are you going out with this now, with this director attached, I don't even know where they are. Well, they're up and coming. I'm like, Yeah, but is that going to move the knee? If it's not going to move the needle, it might just hold it back, right? Because a lot of times when, like, a producer especially, reads the script, they're thinking script, they're thinking, oh, you know, would be great for this. I think when you get this director, it's like, oh, but they have a director attached, it's like, okay, bye, right? So, I mean, you'll hear it all the time, but it's, it's that weird line. It's, if you're powerful enough to attach someone big and important whose face goes on a poster, and people think, oh, yeah, I'd give two. Million dollars to that budget. Here's the money. Let's make it right. If you're in the system, you're probably going to be able to do that. But outside the system, you have to rely on what is on those

40:07

pages. Okay, sounds good. And final question is, this, is there a better time of year to pitch my script than others? Interesting question, what would you think I would say winter would be better? Maybe that's just, what's the answer?

40:20

The answer is, yeah, it really depends on, you know, who you're, you know, pitching and who you're sending the script to. But like, Hollywood is a town, you know, Fourth of July, kind of, like,

few days before everyone's kind of done, and for at least a couple of weeks, no one's reading anything. Holidays, no Christmas time. End of the year, New Year's people kind of, you know, shut down like after Thanksgiving, right? So end of November, people aren't really, like, keen on everything. So

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when I said winter, winter, though, I was thinking winter, because it's like, there's not a lot going on, there's a lull. Summer tends to be, I would think, busier for most people. So a lot of people are taking holidays.

40:57

It's, well, I mean, the movie business never stops, right? But people have spent all their money by the end of the year, right? Like all their movies, that they've allocated everything they have to wait till, you know, the next year to get their budgets refreshed, or whatever their fiscal year is. But, you know, there's a lot of factors, but yeah, like, you know, come, come Fourth of July, you know, don't pitch someone on July. 2. They're not going to get back to you. They'll probably them buried in their email. Don't pitch someone on December 12, you know, like certain parts of the year where you kind of realize that other things are happening and there's more important stuff. So, yeah, yeah, that's kind of the you know, but if you're pitching everywhere around the world, then time never stops, right, right? So not as much an issue as it used to be. There's not really a better not really a better time. No, just be conscious. If your script is holiday, great, someone will love it anytime of year. If it's not, someone will hate it in

41:42

here. Okay, that's it. Okay, that's the end of our episode today.

41:44

Awesome. Yeah, perfect. If you like the show, if you enjoyed it, what should people

41:49

do? You can subscribe? Give us a five star rating if you agree.

41:53

Yes, Desiree always deserves five stars. You know it and our laughter today, I'm hoping if it made you laugh, hearing us laugh made you laugh, then give us some stars for the laughter. Tell your friends and writing colleagues and anyone about the podcast if you were entertained, if you learned something, check out our website, [scriptreaderpro.com](http://scriptreaderpro.com)

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