

NXTLVL INTERACTIVE, LLC - Traditional Pilot Beat Sheet

A traditional beat sheet outlines the key plot points and structure of a 48-minute episodic television pilot. This format is commonly used in the industry as a guide to crafting compelling storytelling. **KEEP IN MIND** this is not the only way to achieve your vision, however it is crucial to fully understand the rules, before deciding to break them.

Here's a breakdown of the beat sheet:

1. Teaser (5 minutes):

- Introduce the cold open, setting the tone and mood of the show.
- Most people will make up their minds if they enjoy your show or not simply by the cold open.
- Present an exciting or intriguing event to grab the audience's attention.
- Introduce the main characters or provide context for the story.

2. Opening Act (10 minutes):

- Establish the main characters and their world.
- Set up the central conflict or problem that the protagonist will face.
- Explore the protagonist's ordinary life and their goals/desires.

3. Inciting Incident (5 minutes):

- An event occurs that disrupts the protagonist's ordinary world.
- The inciting incident sets the main story in motion and sparks the protagonist's journey.
- Get wild with it. Challenge your instincts and do something interesting here.

4. First Plot Point (10 minutes):

- The protagonist is forced to make a decision or take action in response to the inciting incident.
- This decision propels the protagonist into the main conflict and introduces the main story goal.

5. Rising Action (10 minutes):

- The protagonist encounters challenges, obstacles, and opponents.
- New information is revealed, and the stakes are raised.
- Subplots and secondary characters are developed.

6. Midpoint (8 minutes):

- A significant event or realization that shifts the direction of the story.
- The protagonist makes a major discovery or undergoes a transformation.

7. Low Point (5 minutes):

- The protagonist faces a setback or major obstacle, leading to a moment of doubt or failure.
- All hope seems lost, and the situation appears dire.

8. Second Plot Point (5 minutes):

- A new piece of information or event that propels the story towards the climax.

- The protagonist finds renewed determination or a new plan to confront the main conflict.

9. Climax (5 minutes):

- The highest point of tension and conflict in the story.
- The protagonist confronts the main obstacle or antagonist head-on.
- The main story goal is achieved, or a significant turning point occurs.

10. Wrap-up (5 minutes):

- Tie up loose ends from the episode's story arc.
- Provide closure for the pilot's events while leaving room for future episodes.
- Set up potential storylines for future episodes.

11. Closing Scene (2 minutes):

- The final scene of the pilot that leaves the audience with a lasting impression.
- This scene may set up a cliffhanger or hint at what's to come in the series.

Keep in mind that this is just a general guide, and the beat sheet can be adjusted to suit the specific needs and genre of your episodic television pilot. Happy writing!