

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!