The Unspoken Truth

I’m going to let you in on a little secret.

The reason screenwriting is the “bastard child” of the film industry is simple:

If we could avoid it, nobody would ever write a screenplay.

Consider this: When you come up with an idea for a movie — is your GOAL to write a screenplay? Is your ultimate end-game a 100-page script that people read, smile about, and then congratulate you on... before putting it on the shelf?

No. Of course not.

Your GOAL is to turn your idea into a movie.

Well, that puts us in the same boat.

Producers — those elusive people who will buy or option your screenplay, entice A-list actors with it, get investors to fund the making of it, and assemble the director and the crew to turn it into a film — they wish we didn’t need screenplays either.

So why do we have screenplays?

Because filmmaking is an incredibly complex process. We need a blueprint to make sure we end up with a film that works.

Think about that for a second. You know what that means?

Screenplays only exist to be turned into films.

You don’t want to write screenplays; you want to write movies. So if you’re not writing screenplays that connect with producers, you’re writing for your bookshelf.

Yet, everything out there on the topic of screenwriting is focused on the story. It’s time we had a ROADMAP for writing screenplays producers can actually use.
The Two Stages

In the “Screenwriting Roadmap” video on the FAST Screenplay website, I explain the two stages of turning your idea into a movie:

— **Stage 1:** Turn the idea into a screenplay.

— **Stage 2:** Turn the screenplay into a film.

The *screenwriter* manages the first stage. But it’s the *producer* who manages the second stage. As you can see from this illustration, if you write screenplays producers can’t use, your ideas will never become movies.

So as the *writer*, your job is to get from **Point A** to **Point B**. NOT just idea to *screenplay*... but from IDEA to the producer’s “YES”.

“Genius — no question about it. Your program is helping me understand what my teachers at UCLA have been teaching.”
—Paul Mintzer, PhD, USA
How Do We Get There?

When I began searching for screenplays to produce in Australia in 1999, I became the person on the other side of the table.

Before then, I was a writer/filmmaker. I had been writing screenplays since I was a kid, but my goal was to create an independent film studio that would produce 3-6 films each year. I needed many writers — not just me.

The trouble is, 99% of screenplays submitted to production companies are unusable. If you’ve read The Missing Ingredient, you know why. But knowing WHY only gets us so far.

HOW do we turn ideas into screenplays producers can use?

The Typical Solutions

The world of screenwriting education is a strange place. There are teachers and gurus of all types peddling a hundred different “sure-fire” ways to turn your ideas into screenplays that sell.

But most of them are writers who would prefer to be selling their own work than showing you how to sell yours. And the rest are teachers who have been taught how to teach screenwriting. They don’t have hands-on experience using screenplays.

So they attempt to solve the problem by focusing on story.

Now don’t get me wrong, creating compelling stories is the first phase in creating screenplays that sell.

But it’s only part of the equation. They’re not teaching what producers actually NEED in a screenplay, and how to align with those needs.

So to get us all the way to Point B, I took a different approach.
Let’s Reverse-Engineer the Screenwriting Process

I need to make one thing perfectly clear.

You can learn important and useful information, skills, and techniques anywhere. Good storytelling skills are essential, and I have the utmost respect for teachers like the late Syd Field, Robert McKee, John Truby, and all the others.

But the fact is this:

You can only reverse-engineer the complete screenwriting process from the finish line.

Creating great stories does you no good if you can’t get them into the hands of the producer — or if producers can’t use the stories you’re sending them.

The reason the story formulas and screenwriting classes weren’t churning out marketable screenplays is because no one was teaching what producers really need — from first-hand experience.

So I decided to reverse-engineer the complete process, all the way to the sale, from a completely different perspective to those screenwriting gurus.

The producer’s perspective.

See, in order to actually build an independent film studio that produced 3-6 films per year, I’d need a LOT of great screenplays. And I’d need a way — a system — for ANY writer to turn ANY idea into something someone like me could actually use.

Producers can’t use formulaic, cookie-cutter scripts.

We can’t use screenplays that don’t take into account our needs.

And writers must be able to do this on their own, without someone like me looking over them every step of the way. Only then would it be truly reverse-engineered.
The Process has 7 Phases

When you reverse-engineer the complete process from the END of the process, you discover that screenwriting has 7 distinct phases.

And even though every writer is unique, and each has their own way of doing things, and no two project are ever the same, the truth is this: It doesn’t matter who you are, where you are, what “level” you’re at, or what kind of movie you’re writing...

To go from idea to screenplay to the sale, every writer must complete all 7 phases.

Each phase is completely different to each of the others.

Four of the phases are writing phases. The other three are what I call “alignment” and selling phases. (I’ll explain that in more detail in a minute.)

But in a nutshell, the 7 phases look like this:

When you understand these 7 phases, you’ll have a clear, concise ROADMAP through the entire screenplay development process.

You’ll never get lost along the way, because at any point, you can step back and see where you are and how to proceed.

Turning your ideas into screenplays (which get turned into movies), then, becomes a simple matter of moving forward through the PROCESS, one step at a time.

So let’s take a closer look.
How to WRITE Anything

To understand how this works, let’s start with the natural writing process.

No matter what you’re writing — a screenplay, a novel, a non-fiction book, anything — we can break it down into FOUR phases:

1) **The story development phase**
   You’ll always start with an idea in your head. In the first phase, you have to FOCUS that idea into a cohesive story.

2) **The first draft phase**
   Once you have a story mapped out, you need to APPLY it to the page by writing a first draft.

3) **The rewriting phase**
   The first draft will always be imperfect, so the next phase is to STRENGTHEN your story until it’s solid — until it expresses your idea effectively.

4) **The polishing phase**
   When your writing expresses your ideas effectively, the last phase is to TWEAK the reader experience, to make sure the ideas are clear in their mind.

Some writers prefer to start with a blank page and write stream-of-consciousness. But really, all they're doing is using the second phase to “find” the story through a "sketch draft". They’re just blending those first two phases.

Truth is, it doesn’t matter if you’re writing a big Hollywood blockbuster, or a quirky independent Australian film, or an experimental European arthouse film.

**This is the PROCESS for turning ANY idea into a screenplay.**

If you skip any of the phases, your work is incomplete. Skip the first phase, and you may have a meandering mess on your hands. Skip the rewriting phase, and your work will be scattered and ineffective. Skip the polishing phase, and it won’t be an engaging read, so it won’t get noticed.
Let’s Make it Stick

So let’s simplify.

I want you to always remember this four-part process. Just knowing it will help you avoid getting stuck along the way.

That’s why I created a simple acronym to make the ideas stick — ”FAST”. FAST stands for:

FOCUS
APPLY
STRENGTHEN
Tweak

...the four phases of the writing process.

Now, ultimately, writing is about taking the ideas from your head and putting them into the reader’s head. To do that effectively, your writing must be a page-turner experience.

In other words, it needs to READ fast.

The reader will never know how long it took to write your story. They only care about how fast it reads. When a screenplay (or anything) reads fast — it’s working. The reader is connected, engaged. They want to find out what happens next.

And as the writer, you want to WRITE fast.

To quickly write material that READS fast — you need to master the nuances of writing.

When you write quality, original, compelling screenplays quickly, you’ve mastered the process. Speed comes when the skills are intuitive.

So F.A.S.T. seemed to be the perfect choice.
How to SELL What You Write

But remember, screenwriting isn’t just about the writing. And here’s where every other approach I’ve ever seen falls down.

When we reverse-engineer the complete process from the END of the process, we find that there are 3 additional phases.

Let’s work backwards.

The final phase of the whole process, obviously, is selling your work:

1) **The marketing phase**
   In the final phase, the PAYOFF is to find and connect with the producer that’s perfect for your project. Here, you draw them in and win them over.

But before you can do that, you need to make sure your screenplay is exactly what the producer needs. A page-turner is great, but if they can’t use it, it doesn’t matter.

So after the TWEAK phase you need:

2) **The feedback phase**
   Here, you send your script out for notes and feedback, and then use what you get to ALIGN your creative goals with their business needs. That’s when you’ll have a screenplay that’s ready to sell.

But when I reverse-engineered the process, I realized something.

We could add a phase at the very beginning of the process to “pre-align” you for the job ahead. With the right SETUP, we can get your natural creativity in sync with industry needs. Then in the FOCUS Phase, you’ll create viable material naturally. So we start with:

3) **The preparation phase**
   To avoid spending a lot of time getting nowhere, you can first SETUP your writing process, and prepare you for what producers actually need.
From Idea to Sale

So here's the complete process:

- **SETUP** your process to prepare for the job of writing screenplays
- **FOCUS** your ideas into a compelling screen story
- **APPLY** your story to the page
- **STRENGTHEN** your story until it's solid and effective
- **TWEAK** your words into a page-turner
- **ALIGN** your screenplay to the notes and feedback
- **PAYOFF** the process by connecting with your project's ideal producer

With this basic framework, you can drop any knowledge, skills and techniques you need into its appropriate place in the process.

By creating a PROCESS-based approach to screenwriting, FAST Screenplay works with and amplifies everything else that's out there. To understand how, let's dig deeper.

The Whole Nine Yards

Now that you have a picture of the overview, let's zoom in on each phase.

I'm going to talk about the FAST Screenplay system, but if you take the time to learn the process, you can get started immediately, even if you can't join us in the system.
The SETUP Phase

Along the way, I’ve discovered something I call the 5% rule.

Basically, it says that for every 100 people who have an idea for a movie, only 5% will do anything about it.

Unfortunately, out of 100 people that do something about it, only 5% will continue to take action until they succeed.

The reasons people quit are simple:

- Fear
- Laziness
- Procrastination
- Self-imposed pressure
- Negative inner dialogue... etc.

So before we spend months or years working on a screenplay idea, the first thing to do is SETUP the process. What you want to do is PREPARE for the journey ahead (so you don’t get derailed along the way) and PRE-ALIGN with the industry’s needs.

There are 2 basic “Movements” of the Setup Phase:

1) Prepare for the Marathon of Writing

2) Prepare for the Business of Writing Movies

Most new writers completely underestimate what it takes to write and sell a screenplay. The fact is, the job is not difficult. Eventually, you’ll be turning ideas into sellable screenplays in as little as a month or two.

But when you’re first starting out, there’s a LOT to learn. If you don’t prepare yourself, you will burn out before you learn it all.

So in the first Movement of this phase, you want to lay a solid writing foundation.
Start by identifying the reasons you want to do this, carving out a writing environment and unleashing the power of your creative instincts. Prepare yourself to see the unlimited story possibilities that are all around you, and develop a method to capture them and turn anything into a story.

Within the FAST Screenplay system, we incorporate a wide array of tools to ignite your natural imagination and creativity, kill writer’s block, and conquer procrastination.

Then in the second Movement, you need to understand what producers really need in your screenplay — and WHY they need it.

Screenplays only exist to be turned into films. So you need to understand the business of how that’s accomplished. Go behind the scenes and get a sense of the production process. Remember, you’re creating a blueprint that hundreds of people will use to stay on target through the filmmaking process.

Explore things like budget and genre and screenplay formatting, so you can prepare your innate creativity to think in ways that are pre-aligned with industry needs. Think about the audience and their needs.

Within the FAST Screenplay system, we go into extraordinary detail so that as your brain ponders these insights and exercises (even while you sleep), you are setting yourself up to create material producers can use in the FOCUS Phase.

When you’re finished with the SETUP Phase you’re prepared for the job ahead. You write daily, your imagination is ignited, and you understand the needs of the producer and the needs of your audience.

How long does the SETUP phase take?

First time through: Approximately 1 month to learn (1–3 weeks Accelerated)
On future projects: Fly through in minutes; review only as needed.

SUCCESS TIP: Turn writing into a consistent daily habit, even if you only spend 10 minutes a day. This will make writing less “scary”.

“The writer is completely supported, honored, and recognized uniquely and individually. That makes FAST a gleaming standout from the rest.”
—J. Burch, USA
The **FOCUS** Phase

Now that you’re prepared for the job of writing *and* the business of writing movies, you’re ready to explore your ideas, and turn them into a story.

Enter the story-development phase.

We call it the “Focus” phase because this is where you focus your stray ideas into a compelling screen story your audience is eager to see.

Chances are, you have an idea for a movie. In fact, you probably have *lots* of movie ideas. So which one do you choose? How do you know you’ve picked the best one? And since it’s just a fragment of an idea at this point — how do you know it’s good enough to spend all that time on?

That’s what the Focus Phase is all about.

This phase is a process of exploration — it’s about *finding* the story that’s most effective at saying what you’re trying to say.

Most writers get themselves stuck by demanding a perfect story immediately. But you can take the struggle out of it by breaking the story development process into its broad movements.

**There are 3 basic “Movements” of the Focus Phase:**

1) Gather Your Ideas

2) Shape Your Ideas

3) Map Your Ideas into a Plan

Since FAST Screenplay is PROCESS-based, *we build your story organically.*
In the first Movement, start with the underlying *motivation*. There’s something you’re trying to say. First, we find it, so that we can build your story out of that. You want to explore *all* your ideas so that you can find the one that’s perfect for where you are today.

*Within the FAST Screenplay system,* we show you an array of tools that help you *know* which idea is the right one to pursue. We show you how to make it the best it can be, and how to *test* your idea before you put time into it.

*Then in the second Movement,* you need to *shape* that idea into a compelling screen story. Here’s where you can use formulas from your favorite guru, or invent your own. The vast majority of screenwriting tips, blogs, classes and courses are written about this *one* movement. You’ll structure your story, build characters, create subplots, and basically flesh out your story world.

*Within the FAST Screenplay system,* we have dozens of detailed lessons, tips and techniques to create a powerful story they can really use. But the most important aspect of the system’s design is that each step grows out of the previous one, so you can fly through it on future projects.

*In the final Movement,* it’s time to map your ideas into a story plan which will guide the writing of your draft in the next phase.

*Within the FAST Screenplay system,* we cover everything, from outlines and treatments to extremely innovative techniques that put you in control.

*When you’re finished with the FOCUS Phase* you have a detailed roadmap for the writing process. You’ve outlined an original, compelling screen story and fleshed it out. You’re ready to get it on the page.

**How long does the FOCUS phase take?**

**First time through:** Approximately *2 months* to learn (1–5 weeks Accelerated)
**On future projects:** Fly through in hours; zoom into detail as needed.

**SUCCESS TIP:** Never judge your ideas. There is no such thing as a “good” idea or a “bad” idea. There is only EFFECTIVE or INEFFECTIVE.
The APPLY Phase

Many writers prefer to write “stream of consciousness”. In other words, they like to sit down and start writing whatever comes to mind. And there’s a reason it’s such a popular way to write — it’s the very best way to tap into your creative subconscious.

But guess what?

It’s even more EFFECTIVE when you start with a roadmap.

If you’ve done the work of the Focus Phase, you now have a crystal clear ROADMAP for your story. (It’s no coincidence that this report is call The Screenwriting Roadmap.)

See, as you write, ideas spark ideas. One idea will trigger a new set of ideas that will often lead you to wildly random story ideas as you write.

It’s the way our brains work, and it will always happen this way.

On the positive side, this can be one of the most effective and creative ways of writing.

But without a roadmap, it’s easy to get lost. So now that you’ve got one, we’re going to let it act as the GUIDE rails that keep you on track.

And it leads to the most powerful first draft you’ve ever written.

There is only 1 “Movement” in the Apply Phase:

1) Get It on the Page

There are 7 distinct guides you can use, but the goal is the same: Fill the pages.
When the ideas are in your head, they’re “perfect”. They’re a part of creative imagination, so your brain has a natural affinity for them.

The problem is that if there are any holes or problem areas, your brain says, “I don’t know what’s going to go there, but something brilliant will go there.” That’s why it’s essential to get those ideas out of your head and onto the page.

But putting your ideas down on paper may cause your inner critic to protest. You may start judging yourself or thinking your work is terrible.

That’s why I strongly recommend that you move through this phase as fast as you can. Don’t re-read your work. Just get the ideas out of your head and onto the page. We’ll judge it and work with it in the next phase. But we can’t do anything until we have something to work with.

Within the FAST Screenplay system, you’ll get guidance every step of the way. We introduce some powerful new speedwriting techniques, and I’ll show you exactly how to create a wave of momentum that pushes out the draft as quickly as possible (while still creating quality work).

Ironically, this is the phase everyone imagines when they think of “writing”.

But it’s the shortest and easiest phase of all.

**When you’re finished with the APPLY Phase** you have the best first draft you’ve ever written. You’ve tapped into your creative subconscious and found the “magic” in your story.

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**How long does the APPLY phase take?**

**First time through:** Approximately 1 month to learn (1–10 days Accelerated)

**On future projects:** Fly through in a few days, a week, or as long as you like.

**SUCCESS TIP:** Experiment with speed writing techniques. The most powerful writing you ever create will come spontaneously from your creative subconscious.
The STRENGTHEN Phase

There’s an old cliché you’ve probably heard: “All writing is rewriting”. And there’s a reason why it’s true: Ideas cannot pour out of our heads fully formed and perfect. It’s just not possible because of something we saw in the previous phase:

Ideas spark ideas.

As you write, your creative subconscious will come up with NEW ideas, characters, and storylines that take your earlier ideas in new directions.

Your brain is attempting to find the most powerful and effective way to express what you’re trying to say.

That’s why the best approach to rewriting is to understand that it’s a PROCESS. You start with one draft, and end with a new draft. And through this process, you’ve taken LESS effective words and made them MORE effective.

It never ceases to amaze me that MOST screenwriting courses treat rewriting like some kind of add-on module. Rewriting is an intrinsic part of the process.

There are 3 “Movements” in the Strengthen Phase:

1) Inspect and Analyze Your Draft
2) Strengthen the Elements
3) Review the Experience
Before you start the first Movement, it’s important to take a break. You need as much distance as possible before inspecting and analyzing your draft. You’re not out to judge yourself. The point is to identify the problem areas, and create a plan to fix them.

**Within the FAST Screenplay system**, I introduce the world’s first and most comprehensive REWRITE process. I’ll show you a simple way to identify what’s working (and what’s not) and how to organize it into a clear plan for dealing with the changes you need to make.

Then in the second Movement, you simply address the issues, and rework the areas you need to fix. The key to managing the rewrite is to create a clear path through the changes. It’s important to remember that everything is interconnected, so one small change at the start can have a huge impact throughout the story.

**Within the FAST Screenplay system**, the rewrite process takes you through the **6 Levels of every screenplay** — the Big Picture, the Whole Story, the Act Level, the Scene Level, the Dialogue Level, and the Experience Level. You’ll fix each level organically, which enables you to fly through rewrites on all future drafts.

In the third Movement, you need to review the changes you made from the perspective of the reader, to make sure they don’t affect other areas. As you whittle your draft into shape, your story grows more solid.

**Within the FAST Screenplay system**, you’ll learn precisely how the levels impact one another, and how and when to loop through the rewrite.

**When you’re finished with the STRENGTHEN Phase** you have a solid draft of your screenplay which tells the story you wanted to tell in a powerful and effective way.

### How long does the STRENGTHEN phase take?

**First time through:** Approximately 3 months to learn (3–8 weeks Accelerated)

**On future projects:** As little as 3-4 weeks, or as long as you like.

**SUCCESS TIP:** There is no pressure to be “good”. Remember: The greatest thing about writing is that you can always change it later!
The TWEAK Phase

Screenplays are the cinema experience on the page. Your goal is to give your reader the same emotional experience they’d have if they were sitting in the theatre.

This is where you turn your solid story into a page-turner they CANNOT put down.

There are several reasons this is essential: First, if the story grabs them and doesn’t let go, that means the reader is hooked; they’re connected to your story and they want to find out what happens next.

But more importantly for you, the screenwriter — the page-turner screenplays is the screenplay that gets RECOMMENDED. When a reader loves your work and can’t put it down, they WILL tell other people about it. And that’s how you get noticed.

BREAKTHROUGH INSIGHT: A “fast” screenplay is a screenplay that reads fast (a page-turner). No one will ever care how fast you wrote your screenplay. They only care how fast it reads.

Most writers don’t polish their work, and as a producer on the receiving end, it’s immediately obvious.

But consider this: Every word puts an idea into the reader’s mind. If their first idea is that your screenplay is sloppy, what do you think their next thought will be?

There are 2 basic “Movements” in the Tweak Phase:

1) Maximize Your Impact

2) Control the Speed of Your Read

As the writer, you have complete control over your reader’s experience.
Where the Strengthen Phase is about making your story solid (the structure, characters, dialogue, subplots, scenes, etc), the Tweak Phase is about adjusting the individual words and pages to make sure the reader experience is exceptional.

In the first Movement, you begin to look at issues like pacing and the experience your reader will have on individual pages. It’s time to trim the fat and get rid of anything that doesn’t have to be there. You’ll amplify your characters and the detail and texture of your work until every word is compelling.

Within the FAST Screenplay system, you’ll discover breakthrough techniques you’ve never seen anywhere else which take the reader experience to a whole new level. You’ll tighten and trim and make your pages irresistible. As always, each step builds organically upon the previous step, so you can fly through it when you polish future drafts.

Then in the second Movement, you dig down to the finest detail, to make sure your work is impeccable. You need to fix any spelling and grammar mistakes, swap less effective words for others that bring your screenplay to life, and you polish to perfection.

Within the FAST Screenplay system, we have some of our most exciting exercise in this Movement. You’ll learn specific techniques that practically force the reader to keep turning the page. You’ll learn to see your pages in a whole new way, and we’ve got dozens of checklists and details to make sure everything serves your goal.

When you’re finished with the TWEAK Phase you have a page-turner screenplay the reader cannot put down. Every page grabs their attention and pulls them through.

How long does the TWEAK phase take?

First time through: Approximately 1 months to learn (2–3 weeks Accelerated)
On future projects: Fly through in hours; zoom into detail as needed.

SUCCESS TIP: Remember to design an emotional rollercoaster for your reader. The more emotions your story lets them experience, the more likely they’ll be to share it with others.
The ALIGNMENT Phase

Once you’ve got a gripping, production-ready, page-turner screenplay the reader can’t put down, you’re ready to send it out for notes and feedback.

As I was reverse-engineering the complete process, I realized the very key to success:

**In order to make a sale, your project must be ALIGNED with the immediate needs of a producer or production company.**

So you need to be more than a great writer — you need to understand how to get helpful notes and feedback from *any* source, and how to *use* them to deliver what the producer needs, in order make your project come to life.

Interestingly, Alignment is the *one skill* that ALL professionals have (even if they don’t call it that or even know they have it)... but NO amateurs do.

Alignment is not about “appeasing them” or writing whatever they want. It’s about *aligning* your creative goals with *their* wants and needs.

**There are 2 basic “Movements” of the Alignment Phase:**

1) **Understand Their Needs**

2) **Align to Their Expectations**

This phase accomplishes two objectives at the same time, so let’s look at it closely.
In the first Movement, you need to get as many readers as possible to give you notes and feedback on your screenplay. The key is to NOT worry about people's opinions. You'll find that everyone tends to have a different opinion — and they often conflict. So don’t even try to take all of it on board.

Rather, look for common issues or problems a wide variety of people have. It’s crucial that you stay open to ideas that challenge what you love about your screenplay. Remember, it’s your project; you don’t have to change a thing if you don’t want to. But if you’re open to looking at your project objectively, you can find ways to make it even more effective.

Within the FAST Screenplay system, we go in detail into the single most powerful way to get notes and feedback. I’ll show you how to get notes from anywhere, and I even present you with checklist for giving notes, that you can give to your readers. Then I show you how to interpret even the most obscure notes, and how to use those notes to see exactly what to fix.

Then in the second Movement, it’s time to implement the changes. And here’s where the most important skill of all is developed. Screenwriting is writing for movies, so you’re always going to end up working with a team. Look for ways to satisfy their needs (align to their notes) while also achieving your own creative objectives.

Within the FAST Screenplay system, I show you how to plug your notes and feedback into your rewrite process, and then how to test your changes to be completely certain your script is working, and what to do if it’s not.

When you finish the ALIGNMENT Phase you’ve got a production-ready screenplay producers can actually use. You’ve answered all notes and feedback and mastered the skill of alignment.

How long does the ALIGNMENT phase take?

First time through: Approximately 1 month to learn (2–3 weeks Accelerated)
On future projects: Use this phase as needed, and to troubleshoot.

SUCCESS TIP: Notes and feedback reveal EXACTLY what the reader is looking for. Master the art of alignment, and success becomes inevitable.
The PAYOFF Phase

By this point in the process, you’ve mastered the ability to turn your ideas into compelling screen stories that become page-turner screenplays the reader can’t put down — and then ALIGN them to the producer’s exact needs. All that’s left is getting your project into the hands of its ideal producer.

This is the Payoff Phase.

Since Setup/Payoff is the fundamental dynamic of all storytelling, the Payoff Phase is the final phase in the screenwriting process.

Most writers want to jump straight to this phase — not realizing that being here does you no good if you’re not prepared... with a page-turner screenplay.

The only way a screenplay will ever be turned into a film is if a team of people want to spend the time, money and energy required to turn it into a film. That means gathering investors, a director, a cast, locations, crew, visual effects teams... and an endless list of elements. And that’s the job of the producer.

In this phase, you’ll identify your project’s ideal producer, and develop a UNIQUE, one-of-a-kind marketing plan. We’ll introduce you to a radical, breakthrough approach called the “Promise Progression” which grabs their attention, draws them in, and exceeds their expectation at every step.

There are 2 “Movements” in the Payoff Phase:

1) Create a Marketing Strategy

2) Move Forward as a Professional

Whether this phase excites or terrifies you, it’s part of the complete process.
So in the first Movement, it’s time to create your marketing strategy. Here, you’ll create your logline, synopsis and pitches, and then identify the producer(s) who are perfect for your project. You need to make contact and grab their attention — in a way that works for them. Always use a targeted approach, so you draw them in individually. If you pitch to a producer who’s wrong for your project, you expose yourself as an amateur.

Now, as I was reverse-engineering the complete screenwriting process, I realized that we could reverse-engineer the marketing process, too — with a concept I call the “Promise Progression”. Basically, with each step, you exceed your previous promise.

Within the FAST Screenplay system, we cover it all: loglines, synopses, pitches (about 10 varieties), titles, agents, lawyers, deal memos, production companies, query letters, competitions, you name it. And we carefully craft a “promise progression” that is irresistible to producers seeking material.

Then in the final Movement, with your plan in place, you take action and implement. But here again, don’t worry about perfection. You can always tweak, adjust, improve. You’ll always put your best foot forward — you want to be treated as a pro — but you’ll always focus on adapting.

Within the FAST Screenplay system, this is where it all snaps together. You’ll see how EVERY step of the entire process works together as a whole. You’ll discover how and where to look to adapt the process to you, and you’ll have a unique, one-of-a-kind path to your own career.

When you finish the PAYOFF Phase you have found and connected with your project’s ideal producer. You’ve also snapped the final pieces of the FAST Screenplay puzzle together, so you can use it as a whole on all future projects.

How long does the PAYOFF phase take?

First time through: Approximately 6 weeks to learn (1-5 weeks Accelerated)
On future projects: You’ll create new marketing plans in hours; zoom into detail as needed.

SUCCESS TIP: There is no competition. Tell the story only YOU can tell.
How to Fly Through It

If all of this seems a little overwhelming, please don’t worry. It’s really not.

Think of it like golf swing, or like playing the piano, or driving a car. There are a hundred little things you need to learn — and when you first do them, it seems like so much information you’ll never understand it.

But as you DO it — as you experience each detail — you pick it up quickly.

In fact, the goal is to “fly through” it intuitively on future projects.

I designed FAST Screenplay to be truly “fast”.

Here’s how it works:

- Immerse into one step at a time. Learn that simple step, and then move forward the next day.

- When you finish a Movement, you’ll see how the steps snap together.

- When you finish a Phase, you’ll see how the Movements snap together.

On future projects, you may only need to fly through the Movements. If some projects need more work on the details, simply zoom in to the detail you need.

To make it easy for you, at the end of each phase is a FASTtrack step. These steps show you how to “fly through” the process on each new project.

Think about the golf swing, or the piano, or the car.

With a little practice, it becomes second nature.

With a complete, step-by-step organic process, as it becomes second nature, each new project gets faster and better. If you need more improvement on any step (or Movement or Phase), drop other techniques and skills right into the process.

“It really is the best way to learn to write a screenplay. Nothing compares to this — I’m enjoying this so much. It should be taught as part of a degree programme!”
—Lynz Wilmshurst, New Zealand
How to Guarantee Success

When we first began building FAST Screenplay, we launched the system with a Charter Group of participants.

I’m pleased to say that as of this writing:

100% of writers who have completed the system as instructed have achieved professional results.

They’ve optioned and sold screenplays (one feature was produced and distributed already, another TV pilot was shot and is pending a sale), acquired agents, won competitions and been hired for paid rewrites.

Because FAST is the complete process, it guarantees success.

What if your screenplay is rejected? The system shows you exactly what to do about it, depending on who rejected you and why.

What if you’re not a skilled writer? The steps of the system are designed to make you a skilled writer, so simply do them as instructed.

What if you have no talent? You’re listening to the wrong people. Anyone can be taught to write. Just move through the phases one step at a time.

What if nobody wants to read your screenplay? That’s what the Alignment and Payoff phases are all about — how to break through those barriers.

The secret to success is simple:

Keep moving forward.

Less than 5% of people take action. Less than 5% of those keep taking action. There are enormous opportunities all around the world — producers need screenplays and the 5% of 5% are not writing enough quality material.

Success is yours if you simply take action.
I Want to Help YOU

One of my greatest frustrations has been this 5% rule.

Over the years, I’ve discovered that it’s impossible to predict which writers will go all the way... and which ones are just talkers that will give up at the first challenge.

And the truth is:

The next great story can come from literally anywhere.

FAST Screenplay was designed to run without the need for interaction from me. But I want to increase that percentage — so we have more great stories to turn into films.

That’s why I still interact with users going through the system.

Over the past 4 years, I’ve watched hundreds of writers go through the system. We’ve had some big successes, but I’m still waiting for that “breakout” hit.

So now — with you this time — I want to help you through any rough patches, and keep you going.

So if you join the full system now, you’ll get personal support and interaction to guarantee your success. All you have to do is complete the steps. You get:

- Unlimited, lifetime access to all future FAST Screenplay groups
- An interactive experience, with direct access to me
- Access to Forums and the FAST Screenplay community
- The ability to move through one-step-per-day or at your own pace
- A jump-start on the competition!

We have a 100% success rate when writers complete the entire system. It’s been called “a masterpiece”, “genius” and “amazing”. And we continue to add new video, audio and multimedia content, expanding and tweaking the system.

If you’ll let me, I will help YOU go all the way to whatever goal you have in mind.
A World of Opportunity

Now, if you’re not in Hollywood, you may be thinking this is all just a pipe dream. I certainly found that attitude to be rampant in Australia.

But I grew up in Los Angeles, so I know that all of this is very doable, by just about anyone, just about anywhere in the world.

Here’s the thing:

Over just the past few years, the film industry has changed radically.

World-class “Hollywood-level” films can now be made anywhere.

And they are!

The technology to make and distribute films has been dropping in cost each year, while expanding in scope. We can make better films today for a fraction of the cost of just 10 years ago. We are seeing a true renaissance in independent filmmaking.

Someone is going to write those stories. Why not you?

One benefit I gained by migrating to Australia (and teaching screenwriting Down Under) is that I can see the opportunities most people can’t.

I can see what I call The New Screenwriters Paradigm. There’s a whole new way to launch a professional screenwriting career — and in the years ahead, it’s going to radically change the old way of doing things.

In fact:

Hollywood is now the least effective way to break into Hollywood.

If you live outside Hollywood, the opportunities have never been better. And that’s why I built FAST Screenplay as an online system. So you can do this from anywhere.
One Last Thing

I know that little feeling in the pit of your stomach.

That feeling that says, “This all sounds really great, and I’d love to give it a shot... but I’m not sure if I can really do it.” The part of you that’s hesitant.

First of all, please know that there is no “correct” answer. There is only the answer that is right for you.

I don’t want you to join the FAST if you have any hesitation about joining.

Read that again. I’m serious. If you even have the slightest doubt in your mind about whether you can do this or not, DO NOT SIGN UP. I will not in any way think any less of you. (Heck, how would I even know??)

Just know this:

Caution is wise. Fear is not.

I’ve tried to give you as much value as I possibly can in these reports and videos as a way to prove myself, and to show you that I can help you through your fear.

If you can’t participate, that’s okay. Just don’t let fear stop you. Caution and fear are different — they come from different places. Caution tests the waters; fear avoids it.

Re-read these three free reports. Read them closely. Re-watch the video. Consider it carefully. Pick them apart for flaws of logic, flaws of presentation, flaws of style.

If after reading them all carefully, you’re still hesitant, I beg you not to join. Seriously. I want FAST writers who want to be there — excited and ready to go. You can challenge me... you can pick to me to pieces. But I need you to engage in the process. You can’t develop this craft any other way.

And in closing, just know this: Whatever you decide, I wish you phenomenal success beyond even your wildest imagination.
Special Note to Screenwriting Teachers

Since I’ve just laid out my whole system for you, and you can surely see the logic of it, and it’s probably already inspired ideas for your own classes, I figured I should add this little notice:

You are free to present this to your students — with one caveat:

Since this is a proprietary system that I’ve developed, I am not putting it into the public domain. Rather, I’m sharing the overview while maintaining my copyright. Therefore, you may share it with your students on two conditions:

1. **You are not permitted to teach this system**. You may distribute this report to your students, unaltered and unabridged. (The reason is that I don’t want some bastardized version of the system getting taught out there; it’s been meticulously designed for many very specific reasons.)

2. **You are not permitted to claim the ideas as your own**. Any violation of either of these points will be considered theft of my intellectual property.

Seems fair and reasonable, right? Well, you’d be surprised how many people want to take these ideas, call them their own, and then dilute the system’s effectiveness by presenting bits and pieces of it. It works as a whole system.

If you want your students to use this system because you can see how clearly effective it is, simply present them with this report in its entirety (and give them the other two reports, too, while you’re at it). I don’t think that’s asking too much.

As creative people, we need to respect one another’s creations. Cool? Cool.

Sorry to the writers. Just had to put it out there.

I’m pretty sure we’re all good.
About This Report

How do you convince a jaded, cynical screenwriter that you’re not out just to sell them something — that, instead, you genuinely want to help them achieve what they’re trying to do, partly because it will help you in your own efforts?

That was my challenge here. I don’t know if I’ve succeeded or not, but the approach I decided upon is the same one I always use: Demonstrate your value, be 100% honest, and trust that those who can see its value will find you.

I’m sure you can see the “marketing logic” in this whole thing. You’re not stupid. If anything, I’m assuming you’re smart. You want to write. That’s an activity of the mind!

The basic challenge standing between us is the question of “trust”. If you don’t know me, you don’t know if you can trust me. That’s reasonable. The world is full of charlatans, false promises, and folks who only want to part you from your money.

And there will be many who, even after reading everything I’ve said here, watching my videos, maybe even contacting me directly... will still assume I should be lumped into that category. All I can say is that they’re wrong.

To prove you can trust me, I’ve shown you exactly what I’ve got. I’ve offered to let you use this roadmap immediately without paying a cent. Many will do just that, and stop right here. But they’ll miss out on the greatest tool in the screenwriter’s toolkit.

I’m proud of FAST Screenplay. I’ve seen that it works. I know what it took to build, and I’ve worked harder than you probably imagine to get to this point.

The one thing I know with 100% certainty is that if you do nothing more than use what you’ve learned in this report (even if you do nothing further), you will write faster and better than you ever have before. And you will begin to develop skills that come from using a system.

Naturally, I hope you’ll join me in FAST Screenplay and go all the way to the sale. I want you to write and sell your ideas, so they can be turned into films. But what I want most is for you to write. So I wish you massive success, regardless of which way you choose to go. Always remember to enjoy the process!
Jeff Bollow is an award-winning director/producer, best-selling author, screenwriter, film festival organizer, and international speaker.

He started in Los Angeles as an actor at age 12, with appearances in movies, TV, commercials, theatre, and radio. Credits include Don’t Tell Mom the Babysitter’s Dead, Columbo, Lost Valley, “Ann Jillian”, “Gabriel’s Fire” and many more.

As a teenager, he worked every job in film production on features, shorts, and music videos — from production to AD to camera to sound to lighting to editing to distribution. Companies include Universal/MCA, Castle Rock, Propaganda, DNA and the Oxygen Network. His first production job was as a PA on then-6-year-old Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen’s first music video. He later worked on 5 films in 4 months for legendary B-movie producer Roger Corman.

Jeff began making short films, including IFC New Filmmaker Award-winner “The Duel”, among several others, before migrating to Australia in 1996, where he wrote and co-produced an indie feature abandoned in post-production. It was then that he began seeking screenplays to produce.

Unable to find any, he began teaching, eventually offering his FAST Screenwriting Workshop over 85 times to nearly 1,400 participants in 10 cities in 6 countries. In 2002, he founded Screenplay.com.au. Jeff is internationally recognized as a dynamic and passionate speaker and teacher, in addition to being an accomplished script editor. He has done paid rewrites, mentoring, and dozens of script consultations. Jeff is also the author of two books: Writing FAST: How to Write Anything with Lightning Speed and the Apple Training Series: iLife 08 for Apple.

Frustrated by his absence from production, Jeff produced and directed the ATOM Award-winning educational DVD Making Fantastic Short Films in 2006, and co-founded the Big Mountain Short Film Festival which ran for 5 years in New Zealand.

Jeff has directed television in New Zealand, theatre in Australia, and sci-fi drama in the US. He is currently writing a new book and developing several projects. His goal is to build an independent film studio to make thought-provoking films about the future.
More Information

To learn more about the people and projects mentioned here please visit the websites below.

**FAST Screenplay**  
http://FASTscreenplay.com  
A complete, step-by-step systematic approach to screenwriting that focuses on the writing process. Writers start with nothing — before they even have an idea — and end with a powerful, un-put-down-able screenplay that’s aligned to producers’ needs — and a one-of-a-kind roadmap for selling it. FAST Screenplay is a self-guided, move-at-your-own pace complete screenplay development system for any writer, with any idea, anywhere in the world.

**Embryo Films**  
http://embryo-films.com  
Independent production company based in Sydney, Australia, devoted to feature film, television, and non-broadcast production.

**Screenplay.com.au**  
http://screenplay.com.au  
Founded in 2002, Australia’s Screenplay Development Centre is home to the very best workshops, software, and services intended to develop commercially-viable feature film screenplays in Australia.

**Writing FAST: How to Write Anything with Lightning Speed**  
http://writingfast.com  
Best-selling book by Jeff Bollow that introduces the FAST System approach to writing, and is applicable to any form of writing. FAST is an acronym for FOCUS, APPLY, STRENGTHEN, TWEAK, and is a streamlined approach to the four phases of the writing process.

**Jeff Bollow**  
http://jeffbollow.com  
Personal bio website for producer/director and author Jeff Bollow.

Since we can achieve anything we set our minds to, let’s focus our minds on our greatest imagination.