

## A NOTE TO APPLICANTS

From a Script Reader

While the scripts received need not be *exactly* the industry format, they should be as close to it as possible (courier font, size 12 etc). Do not use published scripts as a guide, as these are frequently changed by publishers to make it easier for the layman. There are many online script resources to download or view proper screenplays at, such as [www.script-o-rama.com](http://www.script-o-rama.com) or [www.iscriptdb.com](http://www.iscriptdb.com).

Readers often have to go through as many as a hundred and fifty short film scripts to narrow down to about ten, so try to keep the format of your script simple (if you are not using Final Draft, use the tab-key rather than centring your text, avoid bold, *italics* or underlining text) and uncluttered. At best, it looks unprofessional. At worst, amateurish.

The Readers need very little excuse to put your script aside in favour of one of the other one hundred and forty-nine: "If they don't know how to write a script properly, it doesn't bode well for them making a film..."

NOTE: The Reader's choices are made on *scripts* and not proposals. Do not submit a three page synopsis explaining why you want to make the film and how you are going to make it.

DO NOT let your script be bogged down by descriptions of camera movements or shot transitions. At this stage, the Readers are interested in your story, and frequent uses of "High Angle Shot Of" or "Dissolve To" betrays a lack of experience with the unpredictable vagaries and of shooting and editing. Detailed notes on style and form should be left until the interview stage.

DO NOT try and write the sort of film Filmbase wants ("Well, it's set in two rooms with only three actors and there's a valuable lesson about tolerance and it would be *perfect* for ten grand!"), write the film that *you* want to make. Most of the Readers are film-makers or screenwriters themselves: they've seen an *awful* lot of films and read a similar amount of scripts. What they really want is something *different*.

Most short films follow the structure of a joke: you have the set-up, the build-up and the punch-line. If you're going to go down this route (and most applications seem to) be aware of the dangers of falling into cliché and predictability, *particularly* if your script involves guns, gangsters, suicide, serial killers, immigrants or the "dark side" of the Celtic bleedin' Tiger. That's not to say you *shouldn't* write about these topics, but for the love of God, try and bring something *new* to it.