The Outline

Your Script Outline

I. Plot Point #1: Opening & Closing Images

  A. The first image introduces your story to your audience, so make it a good one! Ideally, the first image is a visual representation of your entire story, especially its theme.

  B. Your closing image is your last contact with your audience, so make it strong. A good closing image, like the spinning top in Inception, can even change our interpretation of the entire ending.

  C. It's probably best to decide what your opening and closing images are going to be *after* you've got a solid draft under your belt and have a clear understanding of the theme you're trying to convey.
I must give credit where credit is due: I didn't spend too much time thinking about opening and closing images until Blake Snyder mentioned them in his screenwriting book Save the Cat (which I highly recommend).
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II. Plot Point #2: Inciting Incident
  A. IncidentThe inciting incident is that event that changes the course of your main character's life. If the inciting incident didn't occur, your main character would've taken another path…and you'd have an entirely different screenplay.

III.   Your Script Outline — Plot Point #3: The 6 major problems that lead us to the first act break with insurmountable problem
  A. First Act BreakThe first act break marks the end of your set-up: you've introduced most, if not all, of the key characters.
We know about your main character, his goal and the obstacles he faces. He's done his prep work, and now he's ready to go.
In a lot of movie plots, the main character has to go on a journey in order to achieve his goal. Because of that, often times, the first act break involves a physical location change. For an example, read screenwriting tip #2 in Writing a Comedy Script: Tips from The Hangover.
  B. Plot Point - Problem
    1. What does the protagonist want?
    2. What does the antagonist want?
    3. What do we learn
    4. what new problem is introduced that leads us to the next point
  C.
  D.
  E.
F.

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Amateur screenplays are notorious for elaborate first acts that are simply too long. Although there are no hard and fast rules, this break usually occurs between pages 25-30 in your screenplay. Keep that in mind when you're fleshing out your script outline. Your Script Outline --

Plot Point #4: the Midpoint
The midpoint, as its name implies, is the at the middle of your screenplay's second act. It changes the entire direction of your story.
or example, in a "good vs evil" type story, the good forces have experienced setback after setback. But at the midpoint, something happens that changes their fortunes for the better. For the first time, success seems like a possibility.

In a comedy or drama where people of different personalities are thrown together, the midpoint marks the moment where they stop seeing each other as enemies, usually by accomplishing a minor, but important, goal together.

Your Script Outline — Plot Point #5: the Point of Commitment
The point of commitment is where your main character reaffirms his commitment to his goal. It's another plot point that I didn't think much about until I read Viki King's screenwriting book, How to Write a Movie in 21 Days.

According to Viki, the point of commitment happens around page 60 of your screenplay. At first I was skeptical, but then I started looking for it – and lo and behold! – it was there, just as she said…usually clocking in 60 minutes into the movie.
I wouldn't spend too much time on this plot point when writing your script outline, but because I'm personally interested in psychology and human motivation, I think it's an interesting point to include. You'll often discover you already wrote in a point of a commitment in your screenplay, even if you didn't consciously intend to do so.

Your Script Outline — Plot Point #6:
All Is Lost: At this moment, your main character has experienced an extreme setback. He's the farthest he can possibly be from his goal, and it seems impossible for him to accomplish it. This moment usually marks the end of Act II.
To learn about the three essentials to crafting the perfect "all is lost" moment, read this article, or, for a more detailed writing guide, read *Trough of Hell: How to Wrap Up the Middle of Your Story with Maximum Impact*.
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Plot Point #7: the Climax
In the climax, your main character has gathered his resources (both internal and external). In this final showdown, he will test his mettle against the antagonistic forces that have thwarted him from achieving his goal.
If he has a tragic flaw, in the climax, he demonstrates that he has overcome it. All the

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lessons he learned during the second act will pay off in the climax.

Your Script Outline — Plot Point #8: the Resolution
Ah, we're almost done!
If your screenplay has a happy ending, the resolution is the best part for your hero. He gets to enjoy the fruits of his labor. His world is in balance again.

CREATE DETAILED OUTLINE WHICH INCLUDES:

FIVE CORE ELEMENTS: the protagonist and his or her goal, (2) the supporting cast and what they each want, (3) the beginning and end, (4) the five major plot points, and (5) the order of events, sequences, and act divisions.
Opening
Closing Image
What is the protagonist's fatal flaw
What does the protagonist want (the fatal flaw is what gets in the way of that)
Inciting Incident - forces the protagonist to take an action they've never taken before. It is a incident that forces the protagonist to deal with their fatal flaw. Inciting incident and climax are the highest stakes.

Each plot point is a series of problems you create for the protagonist to solve.

I. PLOT POINT I - prompted by the inciting incident
Problem
   A. PROTAGONIST AND HIS OR HER GOAL
      a.) describe scene: what happened, what's the conflict.
   B. antagonist and his goal is in direct opposition to what the protagonist
      a) describe the conflict
   C. By the end of the scene,
      a)what has happened,
      b)what has the protagonist learned
      c) how are they changed and what new problem has been created.

Plot Point II is prompted by Plot Point I and follows the same format as Plot Point I

Plot Points II-VI are all the same.

VI. Plot Point VI is the first act break is creates the pro

  A. FIRST ACT BREAK ENDS WITH PROBLEM THAT HAS TO BE SOLVED

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BEFORE THE STORY ENDS
        a) protagonist goal
        b) antagonist goal
        C) super block to the protagonist success....this problem cannot be resolved until the protagonist overcomes his fatal flaw.

VII. POINT OF COMMITMENT
    A. CHARACTER REAFFIRMS GOAL BY ESTABLISHING WHAT'S AT STAKE
    B. DECIDES NEXT VITAL STEPS THAT HAVE TO BE TAKEN

VIII. ALL IS LOST
    A. CREATES FOUNDATION FOR THE CLIMAX, SO THIS IS A MINI CLIMAX EN ROUTE
    B. INSURMOUNTABLE PROBLEM HAS BEEN CREATED
    C. END OF ACT II

IX. CLIMAX
    A. CHARACTER'S FATAL FLAW IS REVEALED
    B. FATAL FLAW MUST BE OVERCOME TO SOLVE THE INSURMOUNTABLE PROBLEM
    C. SHOWDOWN BETWEEN PROTAGONIST AND ANTAGONIST

X. RESOLUTION
     A. HERO HAS SOLVED PROBLEM
        1a. How is the hero changed by the end of the story?
     B. WORLD IS IN BALANCE AGAIN

CHARACTER

TOM FONTANA'S QUESTIONS "The Three Pieces of Information
The Head: What is the character's education or lack thereof?
The Heart: What do they believe? What makes them laugh? What makes them cry?
The Crotch: Who does the character want to sleep with?"

Creating Characters That Drive Plot
LAJOG EGRI "Every object has three dimensions: depth, height, width. Human beings have an additional three dimensions: physiology, sociology, psychology. Without a knowledge of these three dimensions we cannot appraise a human being."
–Lajos Egri, *The Art of Dramatic Writing*

As stated in the quote above, Egri's method involves coming to an intimate knowledge of your fictional character's physiology, sociology, and psychology in order to

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understand how they might behave in any given situation. Below are the questions he proposes you answer in order to do so.

Physiology

1. Sex

2. Age

3. Height and weight

4. Color of hair, eyes, skin

5. Posture

6. Appearance: good-looking, over-or-underweight, clean, neat, pleasant, untidy. Shape of head, face, limbs.

7. Defects: deformities, abnormalities, birthmarks. Diseases.

8. Heredity

Sociology

1. Class: lower, middle, upper.

2. Occupation: type of work, hours of work, income, condition of work, union or nonunion, attitude toward organization, suitability for work.

3. Education: amount, kind of school, marks, favorite subjects, poorest subjects, aptitudes.

4. Home life: parents living, earning power, orphan, parents separated or divorced, parents' habits, parents' mental development, parents' vices, neglect. Character's marital status.

5. Religion

6. Race, nationality

7. Place of community: leader among friends, clubs, sports.

8. Political affiliation

9. Amusements, hobbies: books, newspapers, magazines, he reads.

Psychology

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1. Sex life, moral standards

2. Personal premise, ambition

3. Frustrations, chief disappointments

4. Temperament: choleric, easygoing, pessimistic, optimistic

5. Attitude toward life: resigned, militant, defeatist.

6. Complexes: obsessions, inhibitions, superstitions, phobias.

7. Extrovert, introvert, ambivert

8. Abilities: languages, talents.

9. Qualities: imagination, judgement, taste, poise.

10. I.Q.