

First off...thanks to everyone who sent in their email positivity last week. Glad you all didn't think I was phoning it in.

Unfortunately, I wanted this week to sort of continue along the lines of dealing with notes and rewrites because we were supposed to meet with a producer to go over the script I handed in, but the meeting has been pushed to the 14th so I'll have to wait until next week to talk about that.

Which means I have to figure out something else to talk about this week. A task that's not easy to focus on when I'm fighting with apple to download and install iOS 5!

Anyway...

I realized a couple of weeks ago that many of you probably have no idea what a Creative Executive does on a day to day basis so I thought I would take the opportunity to clue you in...maybe give you a little insight as to why it takes forever for someone to get back to you or read your script.

Obviously, our main goal is to get a movie set up at a studio and get it greenlit. That's a no brainer, but you might not realize what goes into that. I'm going to give you a hypothetical situation so that you understand the process.

First: Networking.

We are constantly meeting with other Creative Execs, managers and agents. When we get together we chat about projects we're working on, things they have in the fire yadda yadda.

The point is to get agents and managers to give us some of their choice scripts. Also, if another creative Exec has a project their company passed on, they might offer it to us if they think it's something that we would be interested in. (This scenario poses other problems...we'll come back to this.)

Okay, so we've met with an agent at ICM who has this script written by this up and comer. By up and comer I mean an established writer who has working in the industry doing TV or other stuff and is now making the move to features.

"UP AND COMER" DOES NOT MEAN YOU!

He gives us the script and we read it. We like it. So now we meet with the writer. Have a conversation, give her notes and do everything in our power to get her to do a re-write for free. Because she's an up and comer, she'll probably agree.

She goes off and does a re-write and resubmits it to us.

We re-read it. We give her more notes. (this can go on for a while.)

Finally we get the script to a point where we want to take it out. We now need to package the script.

We need a director and at least one top list actor to show interest. We put together director lists, actor lists and discuss who we can get to and who's completely out of reach.

We land on our top choices and start making the rounds. We get ahold of their agents, pitch them the project and then, hopefully, send them the script.

Then we wait.

And wait.

And wait.

Finally, the agent calls us back and either says, "They loved it and want to meet with you!" or "Yeah, it's going to be a pass right now."

If we get the first response, we meet with the actor or director. (Just for shits and giggles, let's assume that we got a director.)

If we get the second response, we move down the list. Rinse and repeat until we get that first response.

Now that we have a director, they will more than likely want to meet with the writer. The director will give THEIR set of notes and send the writer off to do yet another rewrite.

Now, while that's happening, we have to start thinking about cast. We'll have discussion after discussion with the director as to who their dream cast would be. We give them the cast list that we came up with before and they will take away or add to it.

Here's where it gets a little tricky...if we snatched a director that means something in this fucking town, they can pick up the phone and call almost anybody they want to. They have a lot of street cred and have a good reputation. Actors will want to work with them or have worked with them and want to work with them again.

A DIRECTOR WITH NO ARTISTIC STREET CRED WILL NOT GET A MOVIE MADE!

They will be able to make phone calls, but probably won't have people lining up to be in their movie. Prime example of a director like this? Actors who now want to be directors. Sure, they can call their actor buddies up, but doesn't mean they will jump into the flick.

Okay, so now we have our director and we have narrowed down the cast list. Around this time, the writer finishes her re-write and we are good to go.

So now it's off to the races again. Hopefully we found a director with some street cred who can navigate around the actor's agents and managers. Otherwise it's just like the process above except this time we can say "with so and so attached to direct!"

In rare occasions we'll get lucky by staying "in agency." What this means is this: We got the writer from ICM, right? Well guess what...ICM also reps actors and directors! Imagine that! Now, this could be a good pay day for ICM so it's in their best interest to play nice and give us access to their clients. Which means everybody plays nice and no one holds up the process.

Staying in agency makes life a lot easier!

Okay, back to getting a movie made...we've finally found our actor. YAY! Feel sorry for the writer cause guess what? Time to do a re-write based on your star's notes. HOO-RAY!

Wanna know the best part about actor's notes? They supersede everyone else's notes!

AWESOME!

That thing you had in your first draft all along, that everyone told you to change? Well, the star wants it back in, so it goes back in. YIPPIEE!!

Once that's done we now have a package. Time to go to the studios and get that chedda (that's slang for money.)

Hopefully the studios like the package we've put together and they give us the green light. Boom. Bust out the champagne and the red carpet. We've made a movie. This is a very general idea of how shit gets done. There's a whole slew of other stuff involved. The writer will probably be doing studio notes on the script. Money has to be discussed. Co-stars have to be discussed. Locations. Yadda yadda yadda. And any one of these stages can kill a movie.

But, for the sake of this example...it went smoothly at the studio level. Bring on the Oscars!

Now, remember what I said about what would happen if a script was given to us NOT by an agent but by a peer? Let's go back to that. Should that happen it gets a little dicey because instead of us being handed a writer, we now have to go to that writer's agent to see if the script is still available. It might have sold to someone else or they might have a better deal somewhere else.

That adds another layer of Hollywood bullshit to have to deal with.

Okay, so that's what we're doing day in and day out. Right now, we currently have 15 projects in different stages of development. Some are being rewritten, some are out to directors, some have directors attached and are now out to cast, some have actors involved and are out to directors...blah blah blah.

Material that comes from an agency is first and foremost. They always take priority.

Next we follow tracking boards, talk to friends, read the trades, read Deadline Hollywood...constantly keeping an eye out for that next project that might be a hit with the right package put together. When we see something that catches our eye, we pounce. Make calls, set up meetings, do whatever it takes to get a piece of that script and turn it into gold.

While we're doing that, we're also reading the material, discussing the material and working on our notes of the material. Scripts come into us every day and because 95% of them come from an agency they take priority because it means we have to move on that script before someone else snatches it up.

THAT'S why there's a stack of scripts on our desk.

THAT'S why we haven't called you back yet.

THAT'S why we haven't read your script.

And most importantly...

THAT'S why you shouldn't fucking bother us about it!

It just gets you moved down the pile. That's all it does.

Do you think that you're the only script I have to read? I have close to 30 scripts loaded onto my iPad from months ago that I haven't gotten to yet. Unfortunately there are always more important scripts to read than yours. Time sensitive material that we have to jump on. You and your script? You're not going anywhere. You can wait. I know it sucks but that's just how it is. Accept it and move on.

So when you email me or call me and ask me if I had a chance to read a script, keep in mind that I'm fielding 29 other calls from people who think THEIR script is the only one on my desk too. It gets annoying and doesn't do you any favors.

Now you know...

Till next week...