

## The Dos and Don'ts of Writing an Original TV Pilot - Reading

(<http://masteringfilm.com/the-dos-and-donts-of-writing-an-original-tv-pilot/>)

### Part 1

Fill in the gaps with the words from the box.

consistent	stand out	devices	infinite	introduce
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#### Pilots Do's

Do find a **premise** **c** that's fresh and original. Mimicking what's already on television will not make you **stand out** in the writing crowd.

Do choose a premise that has **infinite** story possibilities. Networks **crave** **d** long-running series like *Law & Order* and *Friends*.

Do set up the series **franchise** **a**. Your pilot script should act as a **blueprint** **b** for the entire series. It should **introduce** the premise, characters and structure that will come into play on a weekly basis. Only use flashbacks, voiceovers, or other clever storytelling **devices** if you envision them in future episodes.

Do be sure your characters talk in distinct, **consistent** voices. If a character speaks in slang he must always speak in slang.

#### Which highlighted words from the text mean:

- a) a right to sell a company's products in a particular area using the company's name
- b) an early plan or design that explains how something might be achieved
- c) an idea or theory on which a statement or action is based
- d) to have a strong feeling of wanting something

#### Fill in the gaps with words a-d:

Many young children often **crave** their parents' attention.

The experiment is based on the **premise** that children learn faster than adults.

He opened a restaurant but has to pay fees for the **franchise**.

The Ministry is working on a **blueprint** on how to reform the education system.

## Part 2

Use the words in brackets to form a word that fits in the space in the same line

### Pilot Don'ts

Don't hold back too much information. If you're thinking about **dropping a big bomb** **b** in Season 5, episode 10, and then everyone will "get it", think again. When readers are **confused** (CONFUSION) by a lack of information in your pilot script, there won't be a season 1.

Don't make the pilot episode all about backstory. The characters should be in **motion** (MOVE) when we meet them, and backstories should emerge in natural, character-specific dialogue.

Don't write a pilot that will only be of interest to a **limited** (LIMIT) audience. **Tapping into** **c** universal themes and future trends will **ensure** (SURE) more viewers, which, for networks translates into more advertising dollars.

Don't be shy. In this racy age of television, bold and daring will take you a lot **further** (FAR) than bland. Executives would much rather read an edgier sample that proves you have the to take chances and **push the envelope**. **a**

**Which highlighted expressions from the text mean:**

- a)** to go further than the usual limits by doing something new, dangerous, etc
- b)** to announce shocking news
- c)** to manage to use something in a way that brings good results

**Fill in the gaps with expressions a-c:**

With this new product the company is trying to **tap into** the Asian market.

Maybe you should talk to your parents about your plans instead of just **dropping a bomb** on them.

Some teachers really **push the envelope** when they fraternise with their students outside of class.

## What was so good about these TV pilots? - Listening

Fill in the gaps with words you hear.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TqfZW3HYhys>)

### 10. The X-Files

It showcases the partners' **chemistry**.

### 9. 24

It throws the audience into **the action**.

### 8. Mad Men

It has intelligent **writing** and retro **tone**.

### 7. Prison Break

It offered **pulse**-pounding action and thrilling **suspense**.

### 6. The Walking Dead

It has a cliffhanger **ending**.

### 5. Game of Thrones

It was highly **anticipated**.

It combines **stunning** visuals and epic **fantasy** elements.

### 4. The Sopranos

It shows excellent **writing**, **acting** and **directing**.

### 3. Twin Peaks

It is praised for its creation of **mystery** and **disturbing** storylines.

### 2. Breaking Bad

It introduces the audience to the **complicated** world of the protagonist.

### 1. Lost

It's regarded one of the best pilots in the TV history due to its special **effects** and **outstanding** cast.