A decorative graphic consisting of a thin yellow circle on the left side. A horizontal bar with a gradient from olive green to white is positioned across the middle. A large black left square bracket is on the left side of the bar, and a large yellow right square bracket is on the right side of the bar. The text "Script Writing for Technical Writers" is centered within the bar.

Script Writing for Technical Writers

Surag Ramachandran

Who is this guy?

- Technical Writer by Profession
- Script Writer & Short Film Maker by Passion
- <http://surag.blip.tv> – My web series, “Bose is always right”



What do you do as a script writer?

- You write a document that shows a story



- You should write the pictures, sounds, and dialogues

- You cannot tell the story



- You cannot write what your characters think

- Leave the filming to the director



Is Script Writing Similar to Technical Writing?

- Screenplays are written as if they are happening now. Stick to active voice and present tense!
- Include only the minimum that the reader is able to follow.
- Break up into small chunks
- Be consistent with your writing
- Do these guidelines sound familiar?

[Script Elements]

- Slugline
- Action
- Character name
- Dialogue
- Brackets
- Extensions



[Slugline]



- Example
 - EXT. A BOMBED HOUSE – DAY
- Written in all caps
- EXT stands for exterior and INT stands for interior
- Next to EXT or INT, name the location and time of action

[Action]



- Example
 - A broken house, thrown out bags, bicycle, blown out cars, and other debris - all lie distortedly.
- Gives an idea about the scene of action
- Do not write whether it is crane shot or a trolley shot or about camera angles

[Character Name]



- Example

- Vikram Narasimhan, 32. Wearing a cap.

- It can also be something like

- Example

- Security Guard 1, Security Guard 2



[Dialogue]

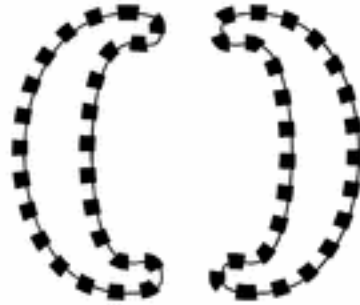
- Example



Vikram

- You have to work hard my boy! Without hard work you cannot achieve your goals.
- The dialogue margin has an indentation of 2.5 inches from the left margin.
- Dialogue is not conversation. A good dialogue gives maximum meaning with minimum words.

[Brackets]



- Example
 - Vikram
 - (getting into the car)
 - Today I will be late from work.
- Brackets contain instructions that act as verbal directions for the actor
- Not really encouraged as verbal direction too is considered as director's job

[Extension]

- Example
 - Vikram (O.S)
 - Wait for me, I am coming.
- An Off-Screen (O.S) voice is heard from a character out of the camera range.
- Another Example for Extension is Voice-Over (V.O). In Voice-Over (V.O) character thinks about a past action and is narrating it. Here Vikram is reminiscing about his morning jogging while drinking evening coffee.

[My Contact Info]

- Send the scanned copy of the signed poster of the super hit feature film for which you have written script to
 - hisurag@yahoo.com
- Shameless self promotion-
<http://surag.blip.tv> – My web series, “Bose is always right”