

THE SUPERDRAFT CHEAT SHEET

The whole system on two pages. Tape it above your desk. Ignore the voice telling you not to.

YOU MUST WRITE THE BAD WORDS BEFORE YOU WRITE THE GOOD WORDS.

MEET THE TWO VOICES IN YOUR HEAD

Most writing problems aren't talent problems. They're the right voice showing up at the wrong time. Give each voice a name (mine are Phoebe and Philip) and give each one a schedule.

THE CREATOR

A whisper on the wind. Shy. Can't be scheduled, only wooed.

- Brings the lightning bolts
- Owns: Brainstorming, Superdrafting
- Feed with walks, showers, music, dreams

THE CRITIC

A loud, drunken boor. Sneaky, hard-working, terrified of the blank page.

- Brings the hammer, the logic, the polish
- Owns: Outlining, the Rewrite
- Not your enemy, just badly scheduled

THE EIGHT STEPS

1 THE BRAINTRUST TEAM

Cast 4–6 trusted readers. No Braintrust? Find the 100 Idiots. An audience is always right.

3 BRAINSTORMING CREATOR

Go for volume. There are no bad ideas. The Critic waits outside.

5 PREPARATIONS FOR WAR TEAM

Build the war room. Neutralize the Evil Three. Set a deadline and sign a contract.

7 SUBMISSION & CELEBRATION TEAM

Celebrate. Seal the draft in an envelope for one week. Feed the starving Critic books and films.

2 THE PITCH TEAM

Pitch it to everyone. Watch for signs of interest. Rehearse it down to a tight two minutes.

4 OUTLINING THE TWELVE CRITIC

Twelve buoys: 3 for the beginning, 6 for the middle, 3 for the end. Then you can swim the whole coast.

6 SUPERDRAFTING CREATOR

Write fast under the rules of improv. Keep your fingers moving. No backspace. No rereading.

8 THE REWRITE CRITIC

Reread it like a hired gun working on a stranger's draft. Do labeled passes. Kill your babies.

SUPERDRAFTING: THE RULES OF IMPROV

1. Always say yes.
2. Yes, *and*.
3. Make statements, not questions.
4. Be specific.
5. Stay in the here and now.
6. Establish the location.
7. Change, change, change.
8. It's all about relationships.
9. There are no mistakes, only opportunities.
10. Jump, and figure it out on the way down.

Session rules: the timer is your boss. Work for 15 minutes to 2 hours and stop when it chimes. Keep your fingers moving. No backspace. No rereading.

THE CRITIC'S FOUR TRICKS

1. "JUST FIX THIS ONE THING"

Even a typo. The rewrite can wait. Keep going.

2. THE GREAT IDEA

File it in a note. Don't stop to work it in.

3. "QUICK, LOOK IT UP"

Type IOUZ as a placeholder, add it to the laundry list, and research later in timed sprints.

4. GETTING FANCY

Think Elmore Leonard. Short words, active voice, easy to read.

STILL CAN'T WRITE?

- **What Comes Next list:** write it like a shopping list, then enjoy crossing items off.
- **Write Downhill:** stop mid-sentence when you know what comes next.
- **Write anything:** moving your fingers wakes your brain up.
- **Self-care:** sometimes the professional move is a walk.

THE 1-3-2 MOVE

WRITE ACT ONE. THEN ACT THREE. THEN ACT TWO.

Your killer ending becomes a force multiplier, and the messy middle turns into a to-do list of setups for payoffs you've already written. Try it twice before you judge it.

SET A DEADLINE WITH TEETH

Words per hour × **your schedule** × 1.25

The extra 1.25 is the life tax, because life always happens. Then tell people your date. Social pressure is fuel.

FEED THE CREATOR

- **Walk.** *Solvitur ambulando*: "it is solved by walking."
- **Use incubators:** showers, night drives, green and blue spaces, lyric-free music.
- **Use your dreams:** keep a pen by the bed and think about your story for the last half hour before sleep.

SIGN THE CONTRACT

I, _____
will finish the Superdraft of _____
by (deadline) _____
If I don't, my consequence is _____
Writer _____ Enforcer _____
Start date _____