Foundation

Before a single frame is shot, you make the decisions that every future episode will obey. This phase is pure strategy: the lane, the voice, the look, and the business that pays for it all.

LESSON 1 OF 3

Sub-genre and narrative voice

Pick one lane and commit. Your format is the promise you make to the viewer. The four workhorses are the *docu-series* (a real life unfolding), the *competition* (a contest with a winner), the *social experiment* (people placed in a designed situation), and the *makeover* (a before and after transformation). Borrow from others, but you live in one.

WRITE THE FORMULA

Lock your concept into one short line: **[Show A] meets [Show B] but with [your twist]**. Use two shows almost everyone has heard of, even people outside your world. Big, famous shows, not small niche ones. If people cannot picture both shows instantly, pick more famous ones. Example: *Survivor meets Shark Tank, but for first-time business owners.* The twist is the only part nobody can copy, so make it yours. The formula gives the direction: it tells us what kind of show we are going to watch.

WRITE THE LOGLINE

The formula says what kind of show it is. The logline says what actually happens in it. Write it as one sentence: **the hero must do X before Y, or Z happens.** Example: *A broke line cook must book five paying dinners in seven days, or she loses her shot at her own restaurant.* The formula

points the direction. The logline shows how that direction gets played out, so we understand how it will feel to watch.

CHOOSE YOUR NARRATIVE VOICE

Two voices carry almost every show. **Confessional** is first person and intimate: you talk to a fixed camera in a private spot, same outfit for continuity, a lav mic on your collar, good soft light. It is built for personality-driven journeys where the bond is the point. **Voice of God** is an omniscient narrator recorded later in a quiet, reverb-free space (a clothes closet works), and it is built for competition or process-heavy shows where you need to explain stakes and rules.

CAST YOURSELF

Name your star archetype. This is how your hero is portrayed, the way you come across on screen. The **Underdog** is rooted for because the odds are stacked. The **Visionary Expert** is trusted because they see what others miss. The **Provocateur** is watched because they break the rules out loud. Then pick **3 words that a stranger would use to describe you** after one episode. This is describing you.

QUICK CHECK — 0 OF 1 DONE

MATCH THE PAIRS

Match each star archetype to the reason the audience tunes in.

▼ THINK IT THROUGH, THEN SHOW THE ANSWER

The Underdog	Rooted for because the odds are stacked against them
The Visionary Expert	Trusted because they see what others cannot
The Provocateur	Watched because they break the rules out loud

Each archetype is a different promise to the viewer. Knowing yours tells you how to behave on camera.

QUICK CHECK

You are building an intimate, personality-driven journey about one person changing over time. Which narrative voice fits?

A	Voice of God, an omniscient narrator recorded later.
B	Confessional, first person to a fixed camera in a private spot. ✓
C	No voice at all, just music and B-roll.

ANSWER

Confessional is the intimacy engine. Talking straight to a fixed camera builds the one-sided bond that personality shows live on.

LESSON 2 OF 3

The visual language bible

Your look is a decision, not an accident. Pick one editing style and never drift. **Fast and chaotic** (TikTok native, hard cuts, captions, zooms) reads as energy and youth. **Cinematic slow-burn** (Netflix docu-series, slow pushes, breathing room) reads as prestige and weight. The two cannot share a show without feeling broken.

COLOR GRADE IS EMOTIONAL TEMPERATURE

Grade is how a scene *feels* before a word is spoken. **Warm and saturated** says glamour and wealth. **Cool and desaturated** says grit and hardship. **High-contrast deep blacks** say high fashion and intensity. Choose the temperature that matches your story, not the one that looks prettiest.

THE LUT TRICK

Pick one Look-Up Table (LUT) pack and apply the exact same one to every single video. A LUT is a one-click recipe that pushes any clip into your chosen grade instantly, so a phone shot and a real camera shot end up looking like the same show. One LUT, total consistency, no guesswork.

YOUR TEXT SIGNATURE

Lock one font, one color, and one animation for all your on-screen text: names, locations, quotes, lower-thirds. A consistent text signature is the cheapest way to look like a real brand instead of a folder of random clips.

QUICK CHECKS 0 OF 2 DONE

CHECK 1 OF 2

Your show is a gritty hustle docu-series about clawing out of hard times. Which color grade fits?

A

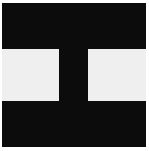


B



✓

C



ANSWER

Cool and desaturated reads as grit and hardship, which is exactly the emotional temperature a hustle story needs.

CHECK 2 OF 2

What is the point of picking one LUT pack and using it on every video?

A. It hides bad audio in your clips.

B. It gives every clip the same grade with one click, so the whole show looks consistent. ✓

C. It lets you change your color grade in every episode.

ANSWER

A LUT is a reusable one-click recipe. The same LUT on every clip is what makes phone and camera footage feel like one cohesive show.

LESSON 3 OF 3

The business engine

A show that does not sell anything is a hobby. Your core product is the logical solution to your on-screen trouble: the tangible culmination of the transformation the audience watched. A chef who saves a failing restaurant sells a cookbook or a supper-club course. A renovation expert sells a design course. The product must feel like the obvious next step, not a random store.

NAME ONE AVATAR

Do not build for an audience. Build for one specific, named person. Give them an age, a job, a hope, and a fear. That avatar is your North Star: every format, grade, and product choice gets measured against "would this land for them?" When you speak to one person, a thousand feel spoken to.

DESIGN SPONSOR-FRIENDLY SEGMENTS

Recurring segments are pre-built homes for sponsors. A *Morning Mindset* segment is a natural fit for a wellness brand. A *Tools of the Trade* segment is a natural fit for an equipment sponsor. Design the slot first and the sponsorship money has somewhere obvious to live.

QUICK CHECKS — 0 OF 2 DONE

CHECK 1 OF 2

Your show follows a chef fighting to save a failing supper club from closing. What should the core product be?

A. A line of branded t-shirts and stickers.

B. A cookbook or supper-club hosting course, the solution to the on-screen trouble. ✓

C. A paid newsletter about unrelated travel tips.

ANSWER

The core product is the tangible culmination of the transformation. The supper-club fight points straight at a cookbook or hosting course.

CHECK 2 OF 2

Why define a single named target avatar instead of a broad audience?

A — So you can ignore everyone who does not match exactly.

B — It becomes your North Star, a clear test for every format, grade, and product choice. ✓

C — Because broad audiences are illegal to target.

ANSWER

One specific person turns fuzzy decisions into clear ones. Speak to one human and a thousand who share their hopes feel spoken to.