

CRASH COURSE IN SCRIPTING FOR VIDEO AND ANIMATION

with Connie Malamed

Mastering Instructional Design

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You First!



Answer in Chat: Your Experience

What is your experience with writing scripts for video or animation? Write 1, 2, or 3 in chat.

1. No experience
2. A little experience
3. Very experienced

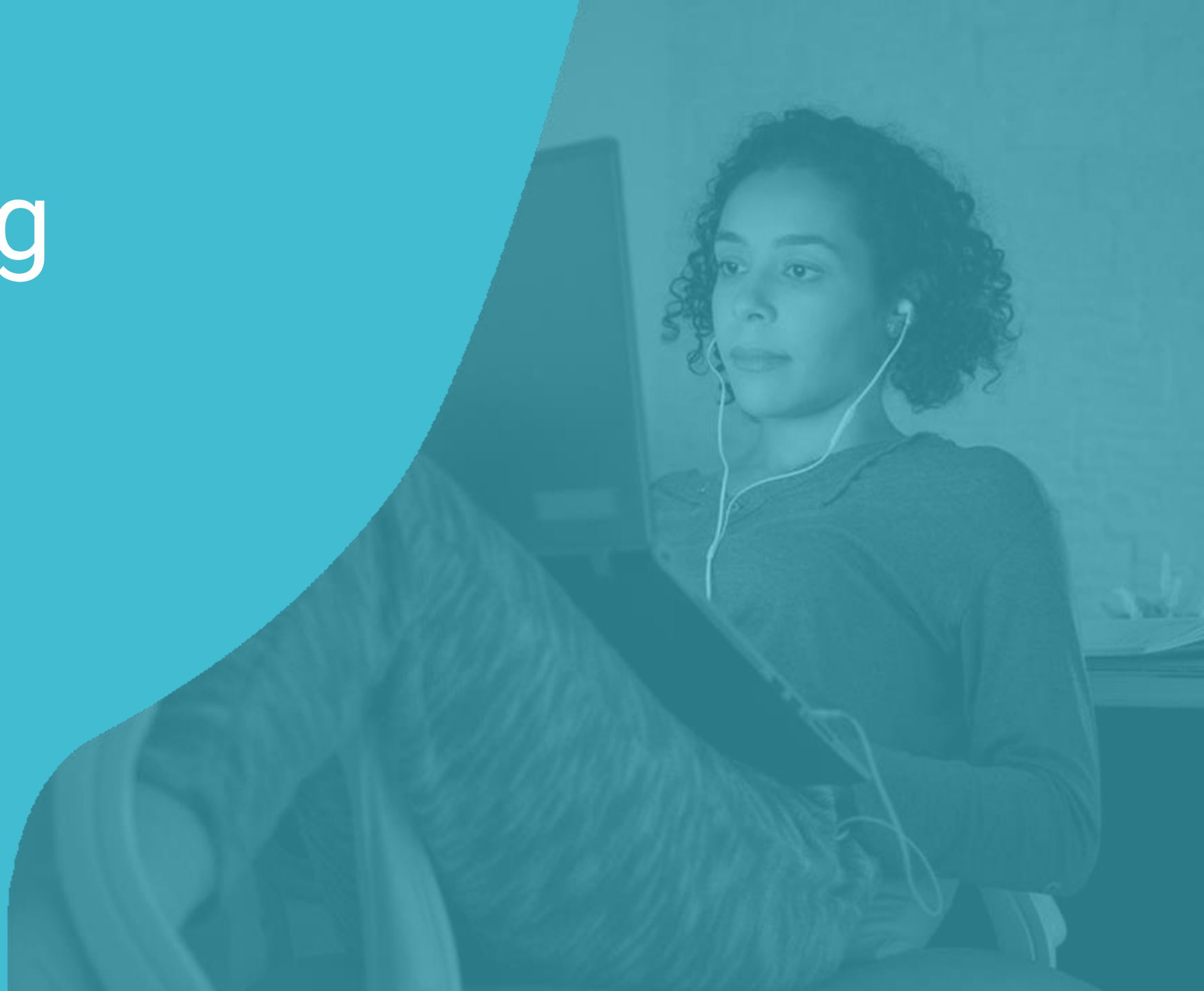
Popular Types of Instructional Videos

TYPE	DEFINED
Demonstration	Shows how to perform a task or use a product.
Explainer	Breaks down complex topics into digestible segments
Scenario-based	Simulates real-world situations; may be used for interactive decision-making
Role-play	Characters model effective or ineffective behavior
Talking Head	Footage of a person speaking directly into the camera (can get boring)
Screencast	On-screen recording of interface with voiceover and highlights

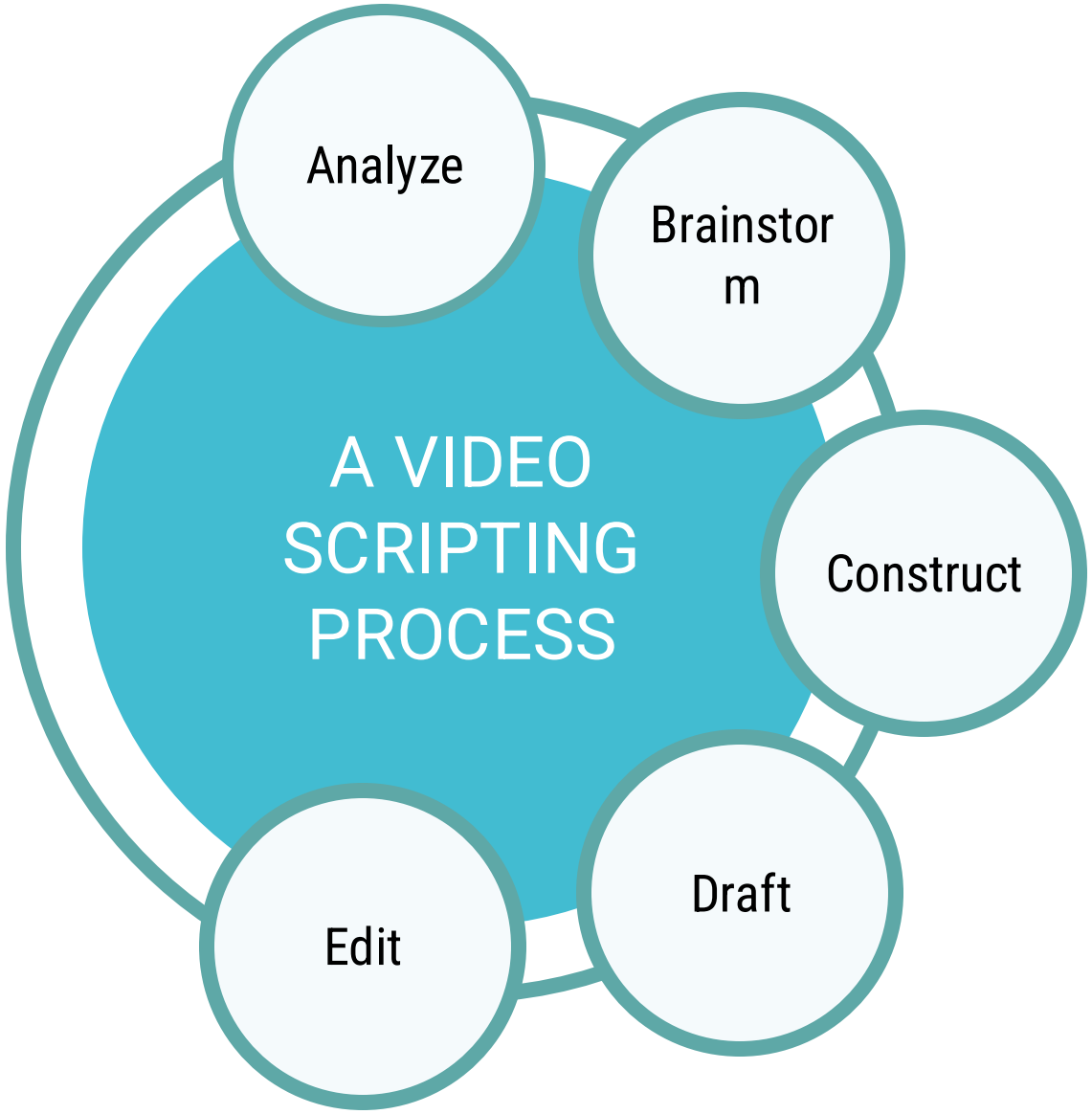
Answer in Chat

What type(s) of videos and animations do you want to create?

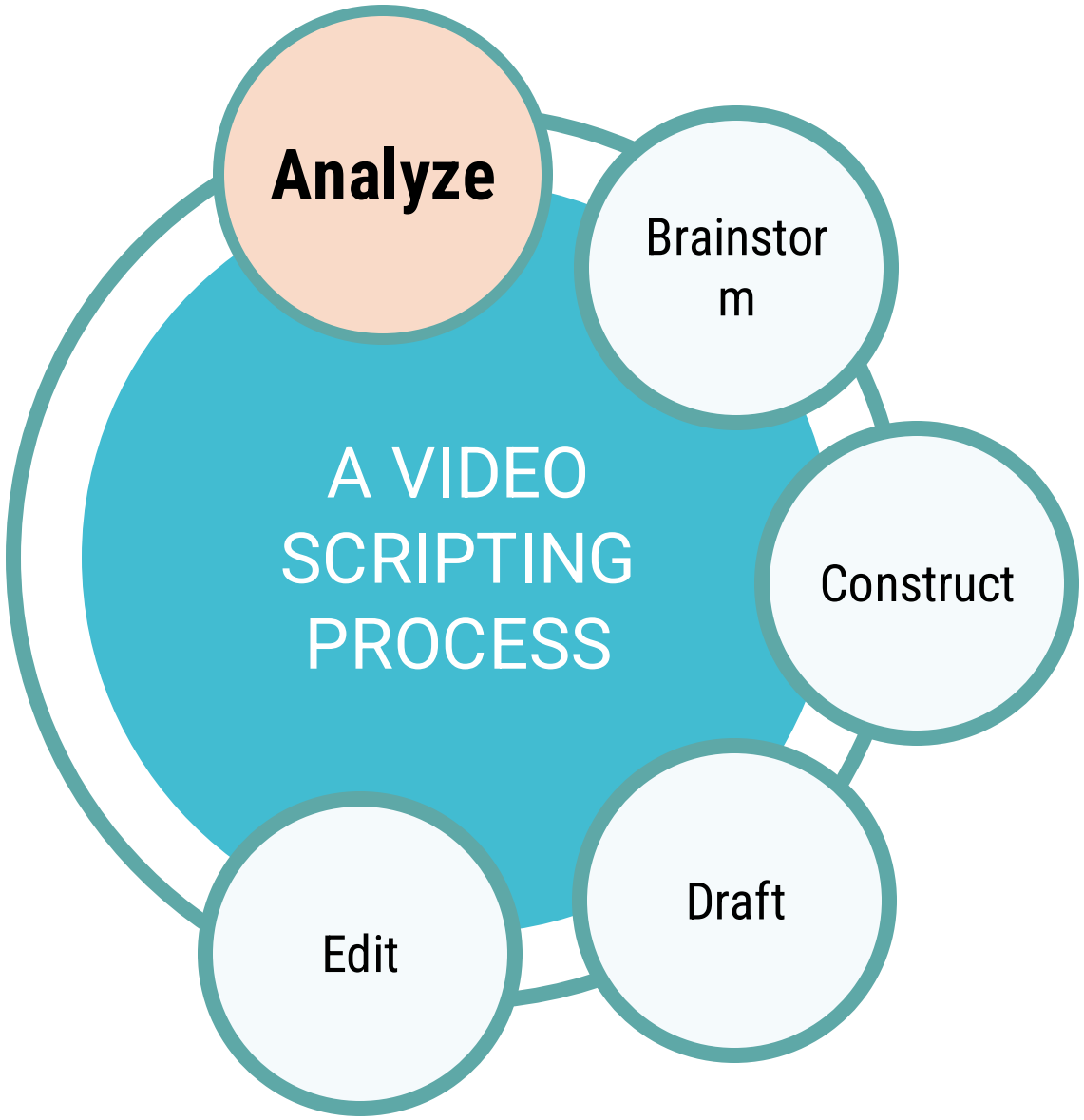
A Scripting Process



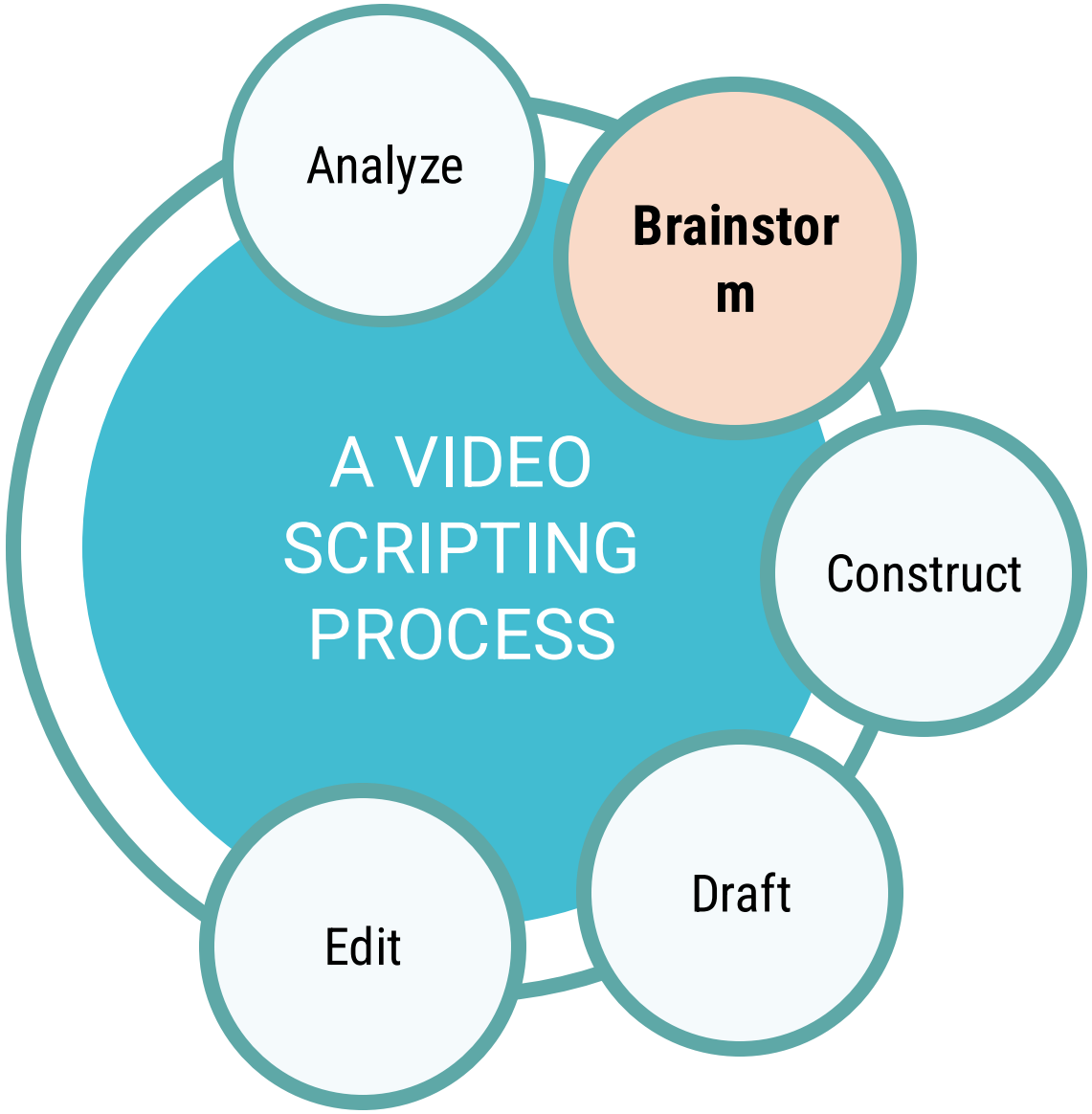
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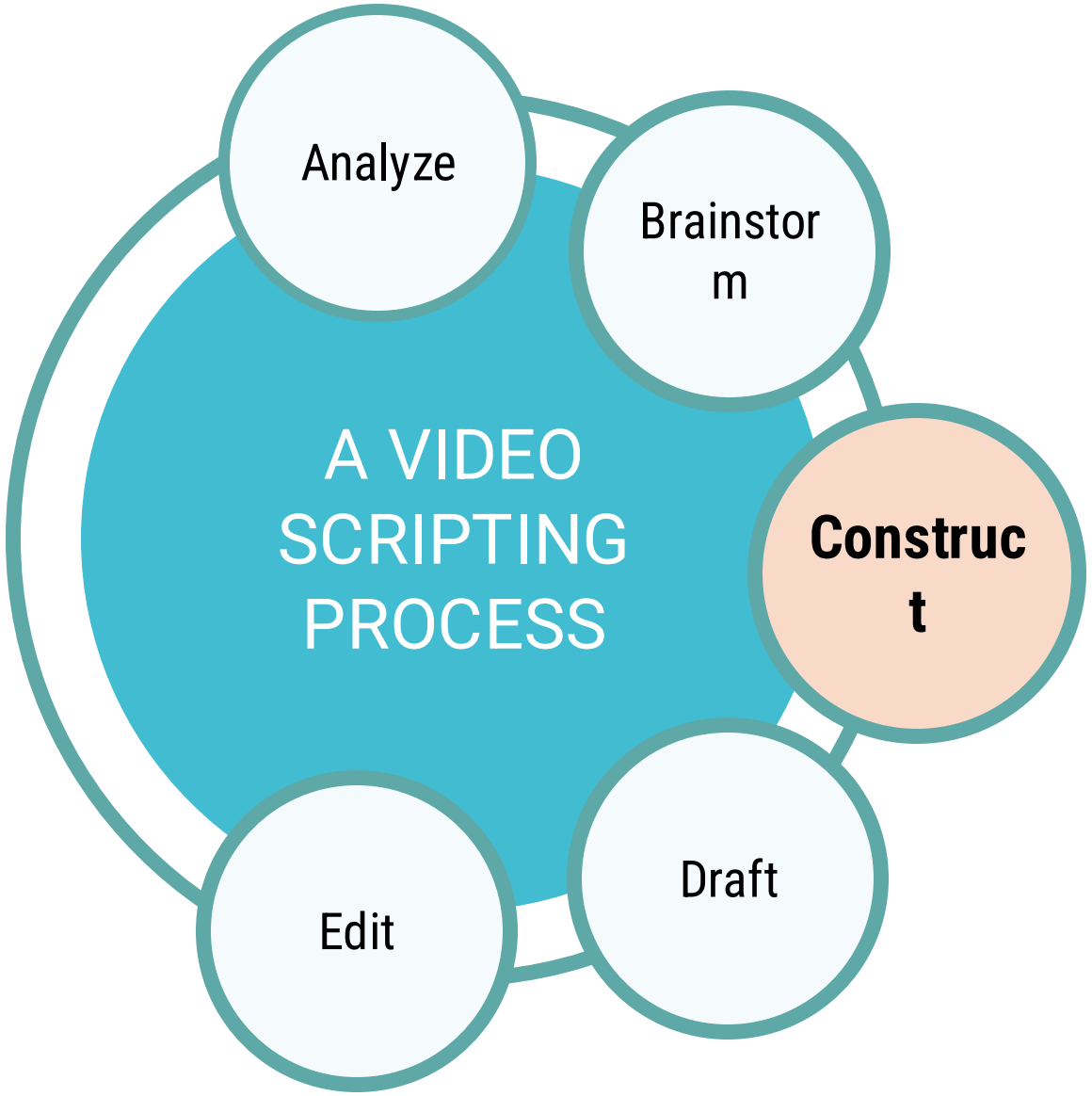
A process for writing an instructional script.



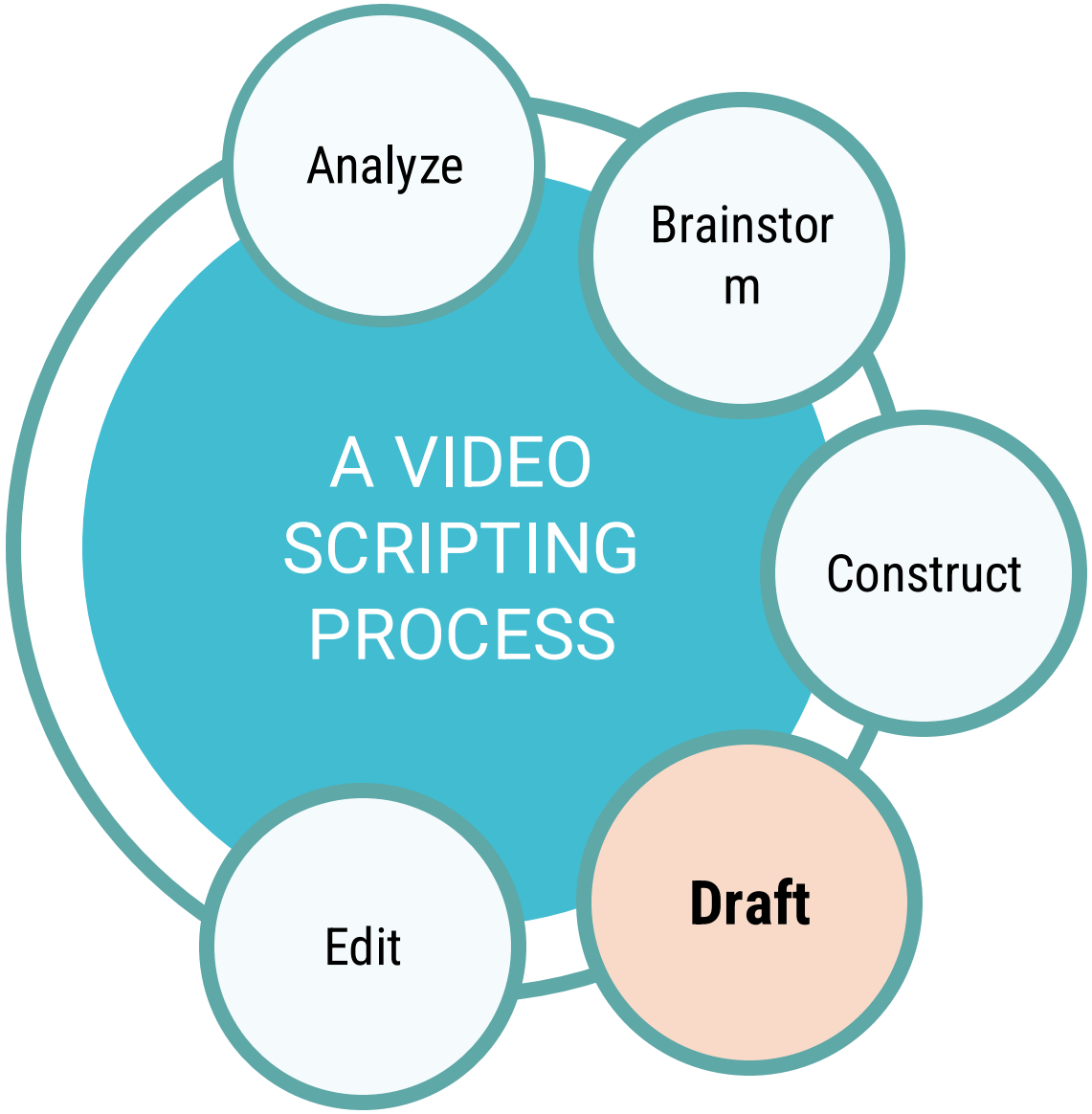
Identify audience characteristics, needs, performance objectives, technical requirements.



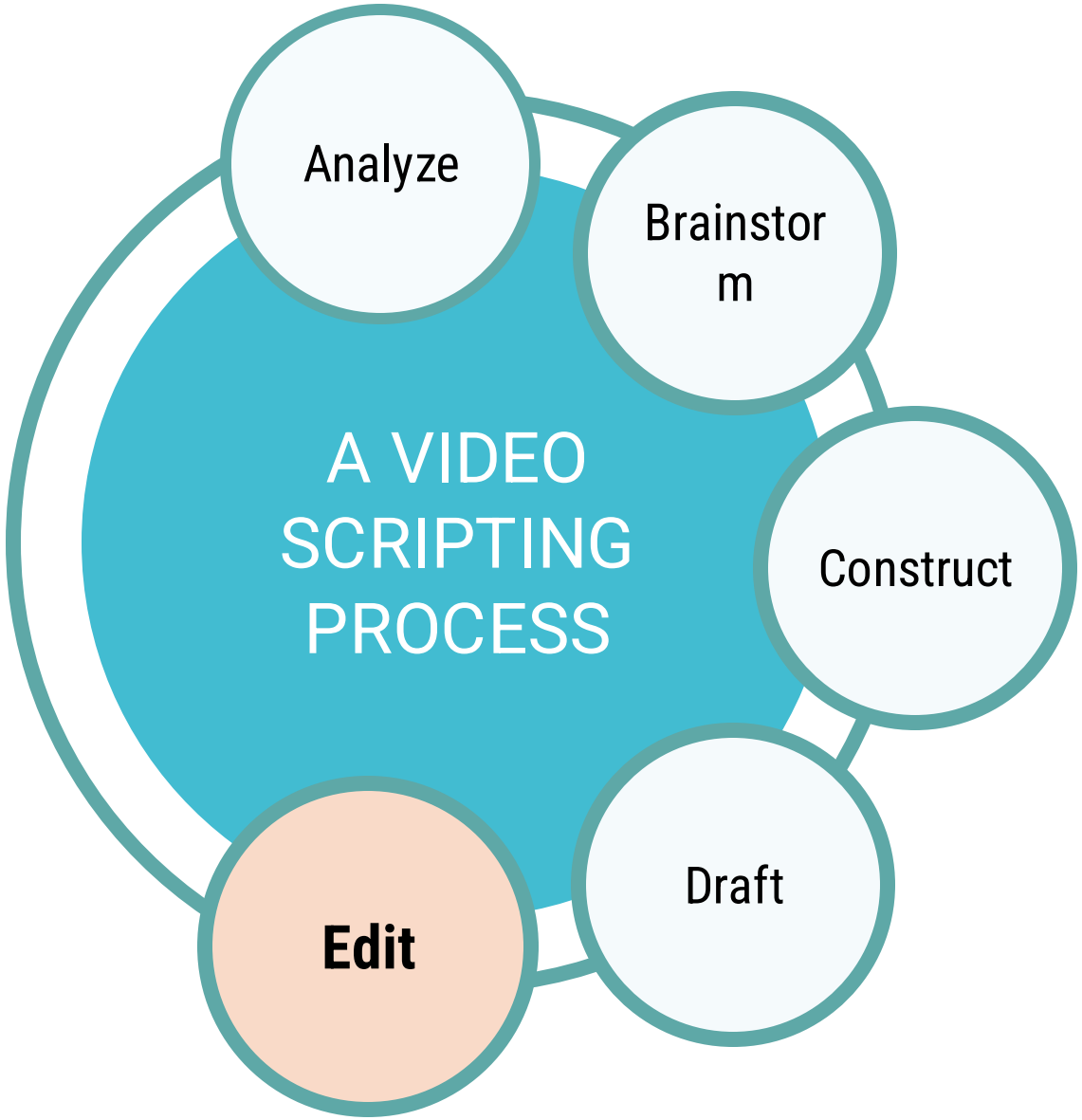
Generate creative ideas for a meaningful and engaging experience.



Build the foundation with an outline and treatment.



Write a draft version. Get feedback and revise.



Do a quality check and make the final revisions.

Preparing to Write a Script



02

When to Use Videos for Learning

Demonstrate a skill



Model behavior



Tell an action-based story



Explain visually



Record a Screen



Interview experts



Get Approval Before Scripting

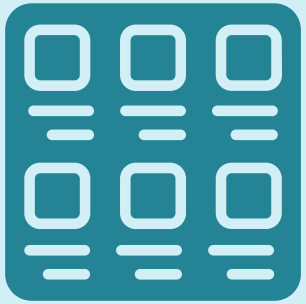
Rough Outline

1
2
3

Treatment



Optional Storyboard



The Treatment

A written summary that communicates your vision of the video to stakeholders, clients, and production teams.

Example Treatment

Video Treatment

See the note at the end.

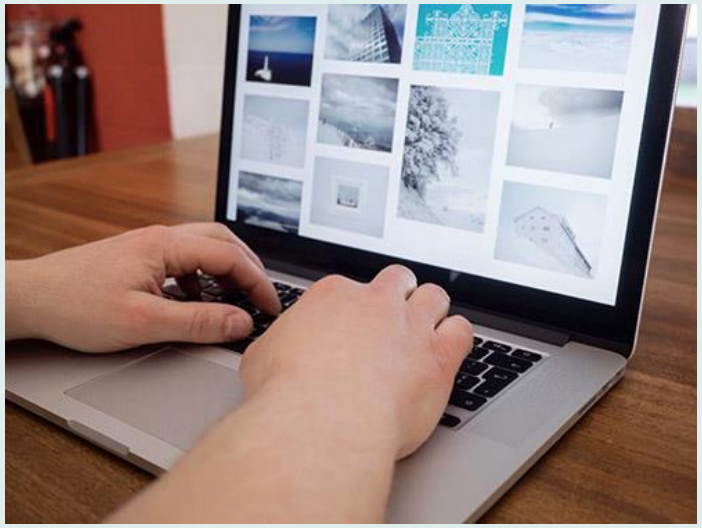
Video Title	How Far Can You Grow?
Target Audience(s)	New hires working as professionals for the first time
Target Length	5 microlearning videos @ 3-5 minutes each, one per performance objective.
Performance Objectives	Learners will be able to: • Identify where to get help for personal or workplace issues • Develop a growth plan with their supervisor • Register for a mentor program • Fill out a weekly work record • Select benefits using the online system
Accessibility	• Video captioning

	• Develop a growth plan with their supervisor • Register for a mentor program • Fill out a weekly work record • Select benefits using the online system
Accessibility Requirements	• Video captioning • Full transcripts available
Description	These five brief videos will target new college grads in their first professional jobs at NovaNova Solutions. According to survey data, this audience prefers short and fast-paced mobile-ready videos. Each video will open with upbeat music that fades out during the training portion. The talent will consist of peer employees who have worked at NovaNova for one to two years. We will use humor, visuals, animation, and plain language to communicate key points. The treatment goal is to keep new hires interested and informed. The videos will reside in a mobile platform with interactive capabilities that we will leverage to ensure the audience remains engaged and attentive.
Talent	Previous new hires: Vikram, Kianna, David

Identify Existing Assets



Logo and Branding

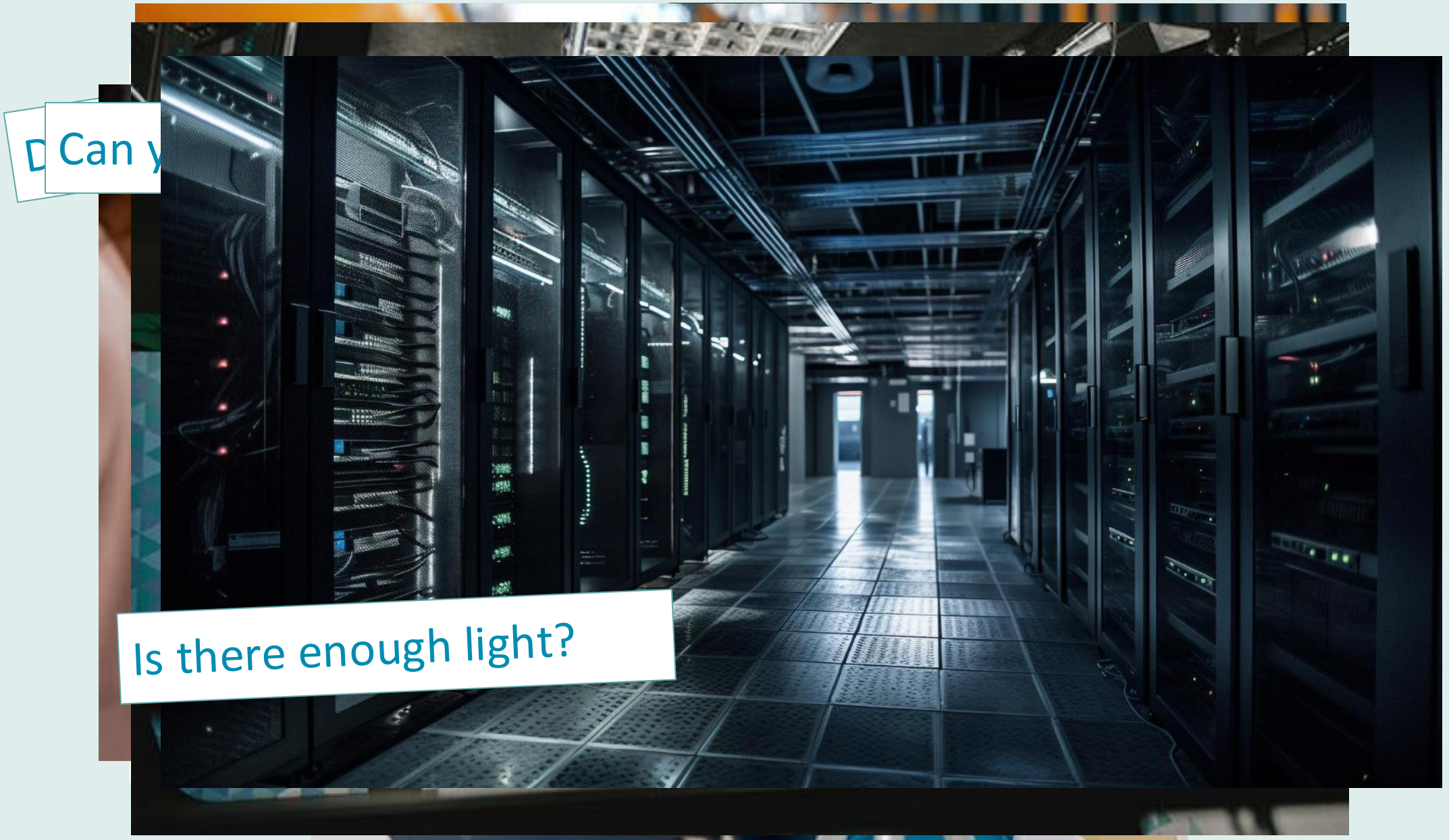


Organization’s Photos

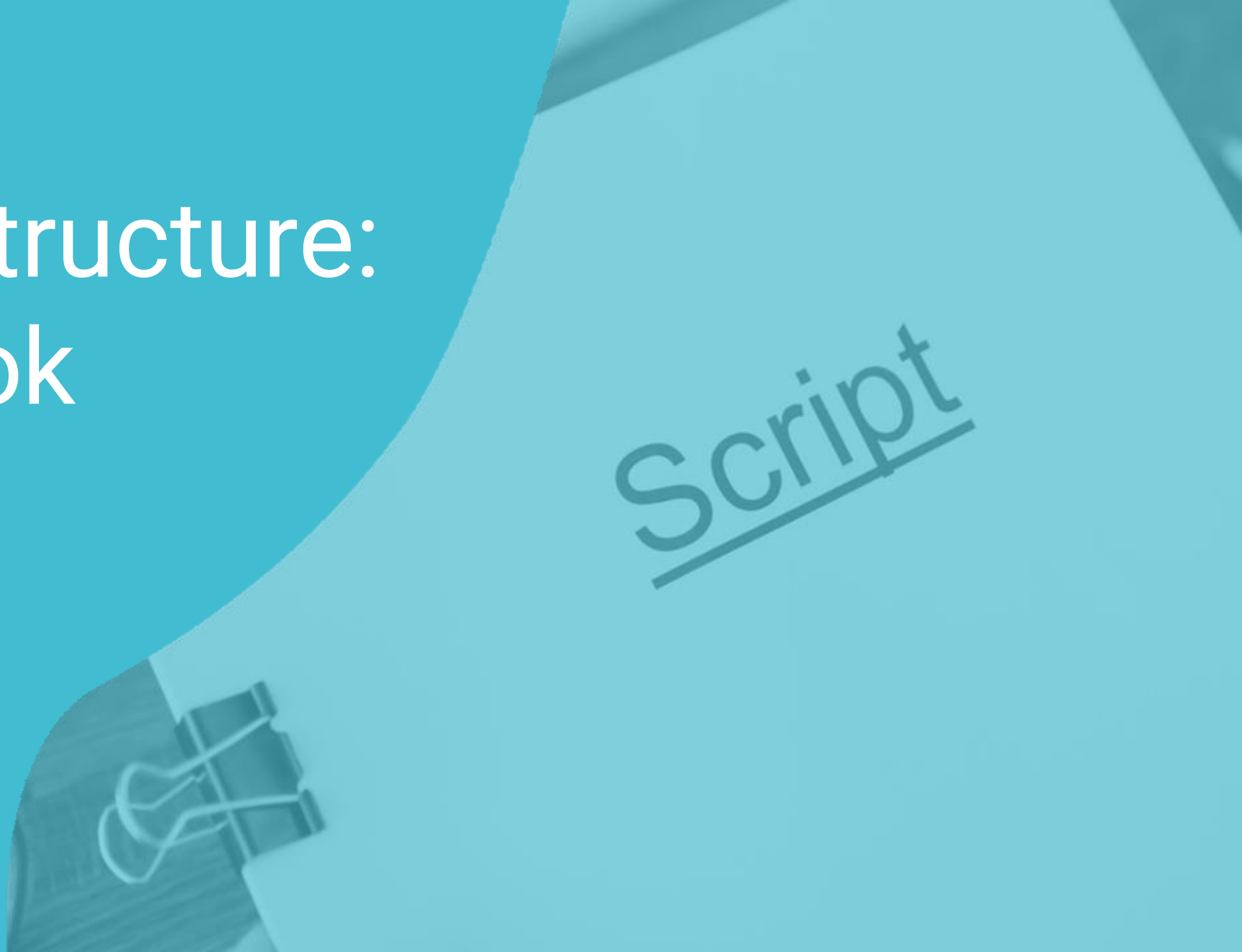


Video Footage

Scout Locations (when applicable)



Script Structure: The Hook



03

Standard Script Structure



THE HOOK

- ✓ Grab attention
- ✓ Evoke interest
- ✓ Suggest what the video is about



THE BODY

- ✓ Main content
- ✓ Explanation
- ✓ Demonstration
- ✓ Dramatic conflict



THE CLOSING

- ✓ Summary
- ✓ Resolution
- ✓ Call to Action (CTA)

The Hook: Sets the Tone

"Ever wonder why your course isn’t engaging learners?"

Compelling Problem

"Did you know instructional designers spend 110% of their time looking for stock photos?”

Surprising Statistic

”Meet Devon. She didn’t think she needed to wear a hard hat in the warehouse. Then her forklift tipped over.”

Tell a Short Relatable Story

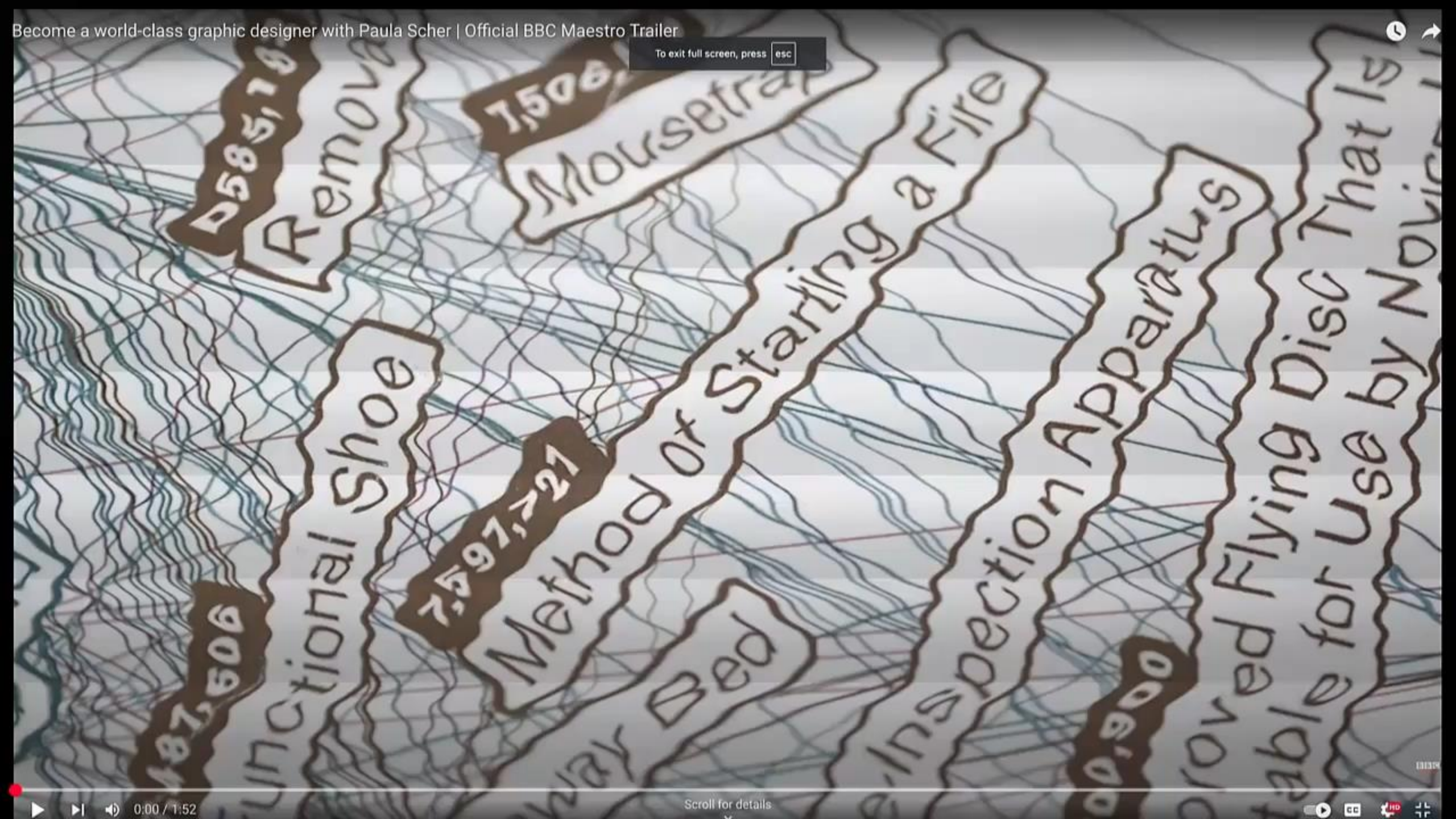
Analyzing Hooks

You'll be watching two video hooks. After each one, answer this question: Do you think it's an effective way to start a training video and why?


Two 2-minute Rules to Beat Procrastination (in 2 minutes)
Business Model Generation
Play (k)
0:00 / 2:26 • Intro ›

Answer in Chat

Was this an effective way to start a training video? Why or why not?


Become a world-class graphic designer with Paula Scher | Official BBC Maestro Trailer
To exit full screen, press esc
Removable Mousetrap
Functional Shoe
Method or Starting a Fire
Inspection Apparatus
Flying Disc That Is
Scroll for details
0:00 / 1:52

Answer in Chat

Was this an effective way to start a persuasive video? Why or why not?

Script Structure: Body and Closing



04

The Main Content: Show, Don’t Tell



Don’t just present information, demonstrate it.



Don’t explain how characters feel, show it by how they act.

The Main Content: Show, Don’t Tell

Break the content into digestible bites. Use visual cues to separate them.

Model ideal behaviors or demonstrate how to perform a task.

Use a relatable scenario showing a challenge, conflict, or obstacle that a character must overcome.

The Closing: Call to Action (CTA)

- ✓ Resolve stories and scenarios
- ✓ Summarize what the viewer just learned.
- ✓ Reinforce the value of what they just learned.
- ✓ Guide them to the next logical step.

The Closing: Call to Action (CTA)

“Now check your Inbox. Can you spot any potential phishing emails?"

"Walk through your work area today and identify three potential hazards you hadn’t noticed before. Share them with your team."

"Pause and reflect: When have you witnessed bias at work? What was your response? What could you do differently now?"

Harvard Business Review

Script Formatting and Conventions



05

Two-Column Format

Spotting Fraud in Banking

Duration: 4 minutes
Estimated Word Count: ~600

VISUALS	AUDIO
WS – A busy bank branch. Customers wait in line while tellers assist them.	NARRATOR: Meet Imani. She's been a bank teller for two years. She's great at her job—quick, friendly, and helpful.
MS – Imani greets a smiling customer, an elderly woman.	NARRATOR: But today, she's about to face something tricky… fraud in action.
CUT TO – A man in sunglasses and a hat enters, looking around nervously.	NARRATOR: Fraudsters don't always look suspicious. But their behavior? That's where you spot the red flags.
CU – The man hands Imani a withdrawal slip for $4,900.	NARRATOR: Let's walk through Imani's experience and uncover three key fraud warning signs.
TEXT ON SCREEN: "Sign #1: Unusual Transactions"	IMANI VO (thoughts): I wonder why this customer wants to withdraw just under $5,000…? That's a red flag.
MS – Imani hesitates, scanning the account details on her screen.	NARRATOR: Large cash withdrawals—especially just under reporting thresholds—can be a red flag.

Three-Column Format with Timing

TITLE: Don't Take the Bait: Spotting Phishing Emails

Duration: 70 seconds

TIMING	VISUALS	AUDIO
0:00–0:05	Animation opens with a calm office scene. Alex is a man in his 40's. He is viewing his computer monitor and checking email.	**Music:** Light background music. **VO:** "Meet Alex. Just another typical day… until this email shows up."
0:05–0:10	Close-up of screen: an email with subject line: "URGENT: Account Suspended!" and an unusual-looking logo.	**Music:** Music fades out. **VO:** "It looks urgent. It *seems* legit. But is it?"
0:10–0:20	**Graphics:** Red flags pop up around the email: • Generic greeting • Urgent language • Suspicious sender address • Unknown URL	**SFX:** Ping sounds with each red flag. **VO:** "Phishing emails try to trick you with fear and fake urgency. Look out for these warning signs."
0:20–0:30	**Zoom in** on the sketchy link. Cursor hovers but doesn't click.	**VO:** "Hover over links. If the URL looks odd—don't click."
0:30–0:40	Alex clicks on the link and gets a malware message.	**VO:** "One click can cost you."

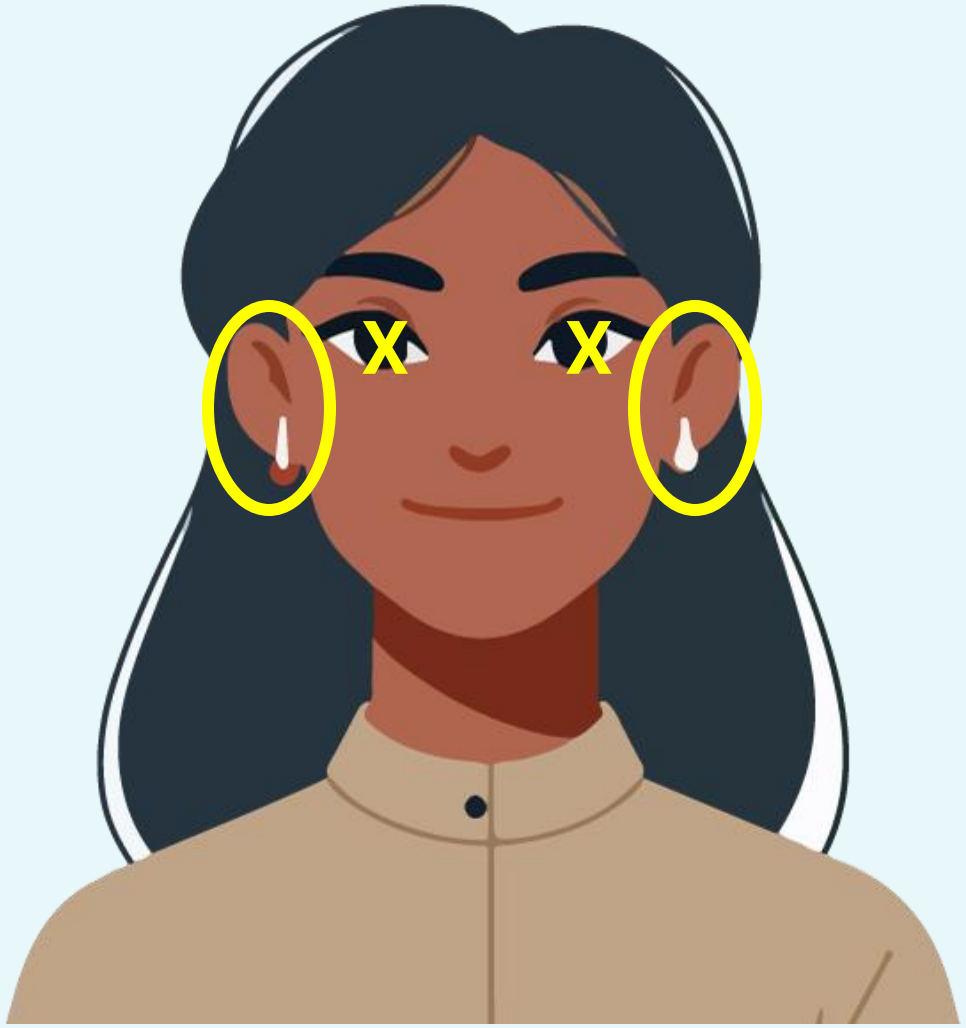
Video Storyboard

PROJECT NAME: _____

DATE: 00/00/0000

SCENE:	SHOT:	SCENE:	SHOT:	SCENE:	SHOT:	SCENE:	SHOT:
SCENE:	SHOT:	SCENE:	SHOT:	SCENE:	SHOT:	SCENE:	SHOT:
SCENE:	SHOT:	SCENE:	SHOT:	SCENE:	SHOT:	SCENE:	SHOT:

Elements of a Strong and Effective Training Script



Write for the ears not the eyes: read your script aloud

Evidence-based Guidelines

Break content into small digestible chunks



Use conversational language (you and we)



Avoid reading text that is already on the screen



Support learner control



Use realistic or human elements

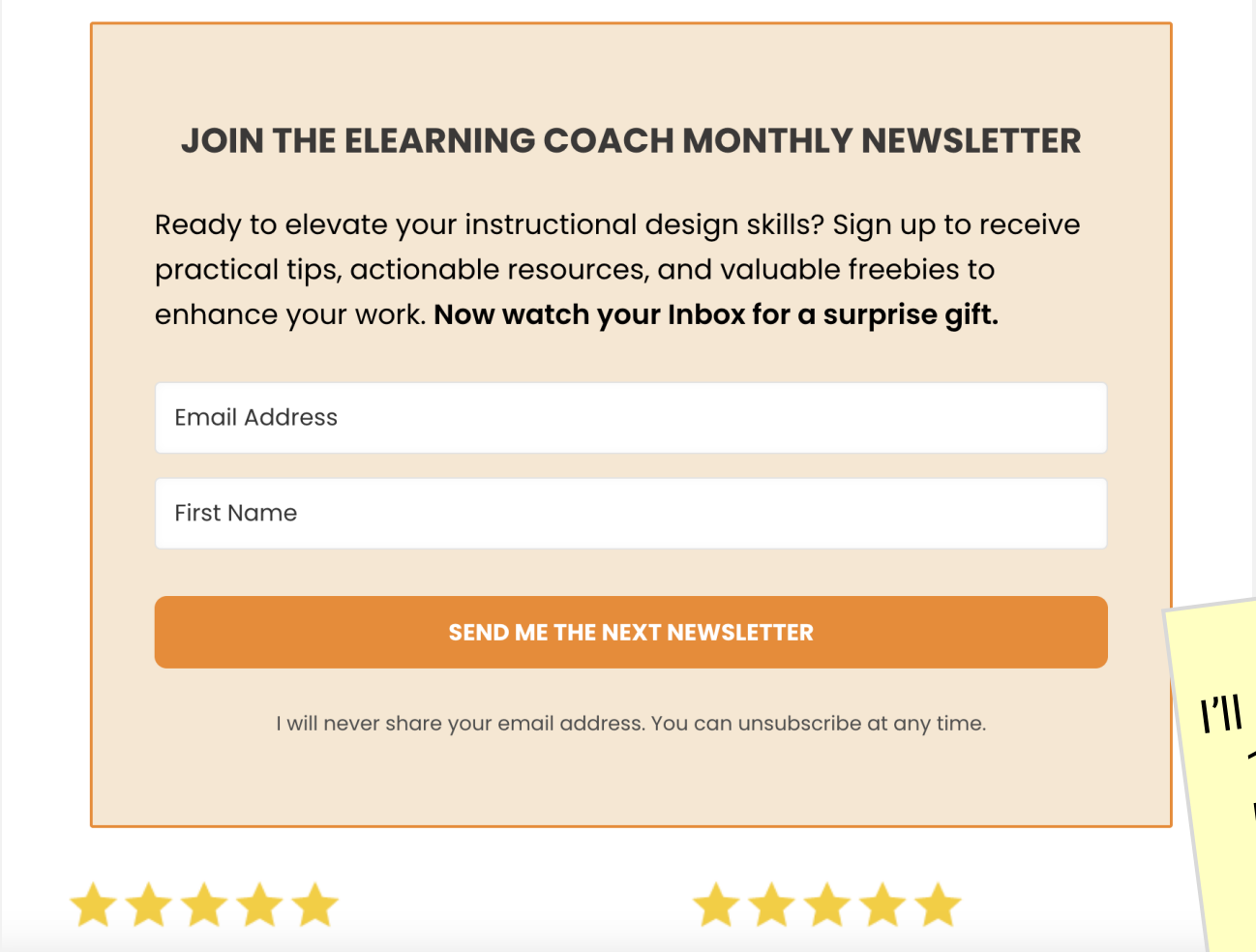


Use visual cues to guide attention



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