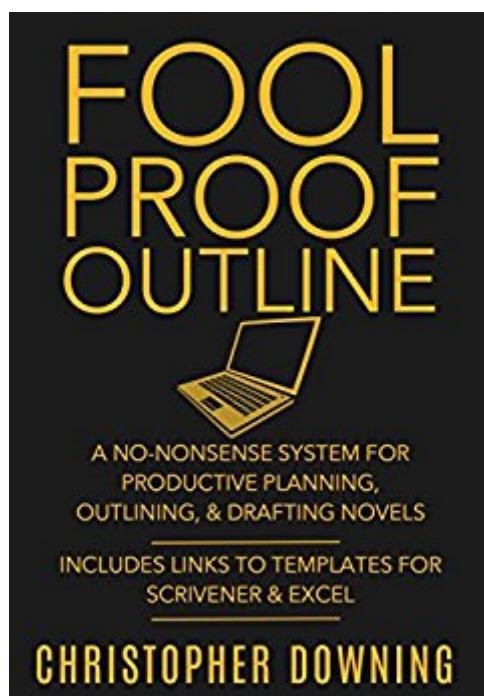


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# Fool Proof Outline: A No-Nonsense System For Productive Brainstorming, Outlining, & Drafting Novels (Fool Proof Writer Book 1)



## **Synopsis**

Build an outstanding outline every time! The Fool Proof Outline can help anyone quickly go from idea to 1st Draft. How? By elaborating parts of a story that matter most to you and your readers. By offering an organizational system that keeps your head clutter-free. By taking the fear and frustration out of writing. The Fool Proof Outline is filled with just the right amount of brainstorming prompts, both challenging you to engage readers emotionally and propelling your novel toward completion. Character, plot, and scene questionnaires are also included to keep you focused one step at a time. Even the most seasoned writer will appreciate the Fool Proof Outline, yet it offers an ease-of-use that will benefit writers of every level. The ebook contains a link to the Fool Proof Outline in both Scrivener and Excel. If you've been considering Scrivener, this is a wonderful place to start! You'll also get access to the Fool Proof Outline's online site, where you can ask questions and share your success. No registration necessary. The Fool Proof Outline is the result of an incredible evolution far beyond my earlier outline template, The Ultimate Novel Template. Those familiar with that early version will shout with joy at the improvements. I do!

## **Book Information**

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## Customer Reviews

I can't wait to get started on my novel! This book helped me immensely! I've been brainstorming the old fashioned way.

This is a \*newly updated\* and redone Scrivener template that improves upon the templates I purchased from this author prior to this one. (I also had left a 5-star review for that product because it was fantastic.) In this iteration, the Scrivener template is now one comprehensive template, as opposed to several (that had some elements of the template repeated in each). In addition to the very comprehensive template, there is now an expanded e-book that elaborates on all the sections inside the Fool Proof Outline template. I have to say, the template alone will shorten any writer's drafting time with all the prompts inside. I especially like all the scene work, which includes a checklist for every type of scene imaginable (dramatic, climactic, first scene, dialogue, action, etc). The template contents represent a wealth of story structure knowledge that will get you up and writing in no time. At this price point, there is no reason not to purchase if you are a Scrivener user. If you are not (yet) a Scrivener user, then this template will shorten your learning curve for set-up. Incredible effort, great product. 5 stars.

The book is okay, but not my favorite. Buy it for the Scrivener template it links to. Also, to understand this book (and get the most from the template), you'll also want to read *Make a Scene: Crafting a Powerful Story One Scene at a Time*. To be honest, I didn't care for the "Make a Scene" book, but it DID help me understand more of Downing's advice. If you're a fanatical outliner (plotter, not pantser), this book is well worth the cover price. In my opinion, the template is best for a book that's about 80k words. If you're writing shorter reads (or epic tales), you'll probably modify the number of recommended scenes. But, if you're looking for a good, straightforward series of story beats in an outline format, this book is very good.

I've got nine books on, but it's taken me so long to finish each one I'm not making sustainable money. I can \*write\*, I can think of good concepts and plots but I have a serious flaw: I get to the end of the first draft and discover the middle is so soggy the book is unpublishable and requires an entire, lengthy, agonizing rewrite. Or three. In 2014 I literally wrote 342,000 words for a single 80K novel, which I STILL HAVEN'T PUBLISHED BECAUSE IT DOESN'T \*\*\*\*ING WORK. Solution: I need to outline tightly and completely before I write the first draft. I have not yet tried Downing's outline system, and so my rating is for accessibility of and gut reaction to this method on initial

encounter. I have high hopes. I will amend this review after I finish my next book using Downing's template.

Christopher Downing's book does a great job of explaining the purpose of each item in his Scrivener template (new and revised from his first one, which I also bought). The explanations are excellent-clear, concise, and helpful. If I have questions, he's great about responding when I've contacted him through the book-related website. One of the absolute best things the book does is summarize/synthesize Downing's experience and writing advice from some of the best people in the field and then >BONUS< those things are included in the template. This was huge for me. I didn't have to figure out where to put a doorway of no return, for example. It's right there in the template, in a suggested location. I can, of course, adjust things to suit myself and my story. But the template is such a great guide that I'm able to stick to its parameters without feeling annoyed or creatively blocked. As a reforming panster who is determined to master using Scrivener for drafting my novels, this book and template are incredibly helpful to me.

As a somewhat newbie writer who started as a "pantser," I thought I'd learn as I go. And I did by reading a lot of how-to books, watching a boatload of You Tube and attending more than my fair share of classes/seminars. But it seemed the more I learned, the less I wrote. What happened to my joy in sitting down with my laptop and escaping into the world I'd created? To watching my stories unfold as the characters revealed themselves word by word across the screen? If that old saying is true about a little bit of knowledge being a dangerous thing, then what does having whole lotta knowledge get you? In my case, it had me scrambling for my notes and books in order to remember what needed to happen when or what questions I should be asking, what points to consider and what rules to follow. This kind of killed my creative vibe—much like having my mom call the moment my partner and I start fooling around. Christopher Downing to the rescue! In his book, *Fool Proof Outline*, Mr. Downing lays out a concise, comprehensive and easy-to-follow guide that enables an author to plan, outline and draft their stories. But it's not just a how-to book. He took things even further by providing a downloadable outlining template (for either Scrivener or Excel) for free. (Free, people!) Although calling it an "outlining template" doesn't do Mr. Downing's creation justice. It's like a template on steroids. Templates within templates that include all the different questions you need to answer beforehand—such as story basics, developing the emotional background and potential conflicts of the main characters. It breaks down the acts of your

plot, allowing you to bang out the major beats of your story as well as create summaries as you work out the details of each scene by gently guiding you through all the questions and checklists that need to be covered and addressed during the planning (and even writing) process. All of them contained in one Scrivener project binder (or Excel workbook), allowing you to jump from plotting to character development to planning your pacing with nothing more than a click of your mouse! Hands down, the Fool Proof Outline is the best purchase I've made this year and cannot recommend it enough. In my eyes, FPO is the premier tool for writers looking to improve their stories and simplify the writing process. As for that lost joy? Oh yeah, its back! "big time.

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