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Scott Myers

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"I got my first TV writing job at 55"

Producer Craig T. Williams shares the story about how decades learning the craft, scripts, and networking resulted in landing a TV staff writing gig.



Photo courtesy of Crystal Blake

An inspirational story. In a recent first-person Business Insider essay, producer Craig T. Williams recounts how he landed his first TV series

ig at the age of 55. He and his wife own a New York-based
on company which produces short films, documentaries, and videos
ealth department. That's how they pay the bills. But Craig has
anted to be a TV writer. Here are some excerpts from his essay.


I got my first writing job was through a 20-year-old relationship. I
anager, but that's not where it came from. I was in the WarnerMedia
Writers Program, which was a great experience, to be chosen as one
ters out of thousands of applications — but it didn't come from
timately what got me this opportunity was being consistent and
my creative community aware of that consistency.


er I'd place in a writing contest or get a new opportunity, I'd share
at on social media. Those things built my credibility — and showed
ive people I've been building relationships with all these years what
doing over time. It really is the community you make that will help
start a writing career, more than any other thing that you can do. My
great example.


more money to have a writer's room, and I want you to be one of my
He hadn't read anything I'd written.


ely sent him a script, because he'd said to send him a sample just to
But because I had social proof that I'd been working at my craft,
awards, and mentoring other writers, I put the energy out into the
at I'm a TV writer, before I had any real TV writing job. All this
new was that after 20 years, I was still out there hustling and living

remarkable path to landing a TV writing job. Some takeaways from





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of the article:

...entered writing contests ad nauseam: "...entering contests gave me a sense of accomplishment in my writing because it showed me that people who didn't hate me or love me were responding to it."

At last, past the fear that he was too old. Craig took a pitching class from a screenwriter who told him, "You are not too old. We are in rooms with a whole bunch of middle-aged guys who are doing this, and they're successful. To be frank, some of them aren't half the writer that you are." That was a breakthrough moment for Craig.

He focused on finding his writer's voice: "When I let go of that thinking, I was finally able to concentrate on honing my voice, and decide what I want to write as a Black man, as a creative person, as a father, and as a husband. I decided to write the things only I could write... I started winning contests and fellowships, and that's when I got into the WarnerMedia Access Writers Program."

As ideal as some of the specifics are about Craig's journey into a TV writing room, I see some dynamics which are common to success: persistence. A lot of writing. Building a network of connections in the industry. Putting one's work out there.

The biggest one of all: *Find your voice*. I hear this all the time from producers and TV people: They're looking for writers with a unique perspective and the ability to express that outlook on the page in a clear, concise, and engaging way.

Congratulations, Craig!

[@RedWallPro](#)

For the rest of the Business Insider essay, go [here](#).

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