

## WGA LEADERSHIP'S PROPOSALS TO UPEND THE INDUSTRY

### *What People are Saying*

Talent agencies and writers are currently negotiating the structure of our long-term business agreement. Since the last agreement was put in place 43-years ago, seismic shifts in the media landscape have dramatically changed the business of Hollywood, creating new challenges and opportunities for writers that agents are effectively equipped to navigate. Rather than working with agents to create an agreement that will serve the best interests of writers in the current and future media landscape, WGA leadership appears set on using the process to cause chaos. Both the WGA's 27-point proposals and "Code of Conduct" are sweeping attempts to remake the entire entertainment ecosystem in ways that would harm the businesses of writers, producers, actors, directors, studios and agents. As WGA leadership continues their roadshow, they're generating more questions than answers. **Below is a snapshot of what industry leaders and some writers are saying about WGA leadership's proposals for a new agreement and approach to the negotiations:**

*"I'm not leaving my agent. I don't know anyone who is," the writer said. "The thing is, so few writers ever find themselves in a position where any of this s— matters. You have to create a show that goes the distance for any of it to really matter. And very few of us ever do that."*

-Hollywood Writer; [The Wrap](#)

*"It's a surprising time to disrupt the industry this way. It feels almost negligent."*

-Hollywood Prominent Writer; [Hollywood Reporter](#)

*"It's difficult to see where the give is. Packaging has been part of the entertainment industry for decades. It's difficult to imagine how the business would move forward without packaging. It would require an all new deal structure for many television shows."*

-Dan Stone, former Assistant General Counsel at the Directors Guild; [Deadline](#)

*"It's crazy. They (WGA) should be turning their attention to Disney Plus and WarnerMedia and all these big platforms that are going to try to bring prices down and extend the work span of writers."*

- Senior Executive at a Top Management Firm; [Variety](#)

*"The guild panel was absolutely intractable about their positions," one attendee told Variety. "I already knew what their proposals were before I went to the meeting so I kept wondering why I was there."*

-Hollywood Manager; [Variety](#)

*"Sources say the managers wanted assurances that the guild would not be coming after them next after the WGA finishes its "divide and conquer" campaign against the agents. Unlike agents, managers are not licensed by the state and are not franchised by the guild and are allowed to produce projects to which their clients are attached. 'There's a lot of anxiety on all sides right now. Everyone's concerned where this whole thing's heading.'"*

-Hollywood Manager; [Deadline](#)

*"The answers [the guild gave] were not satisfactory in any way ... They don't seem to understand the industry. They're going to do real damage."*

- Hollywood Lawyer; [Hollywood Reporter](#)

*"I found myself feeling ill," said another. "I couldn't believe my ears." He added that it was 'wishful thinking at best' for the WGA to believe that studios would pay writers more if they (the studios) no longer paid packaging fees to the talent agencies."*

-Hollywood Lawyer; [Hollywood Reporter](#)

*"Another lawyer agreed, saying the studios 'will just pocket' the money they would have paid in packaging fees."*

-Hollywood Lawyer; [Hollywood Reporter](#)

*"It's completely wishful thinking and kind of insane... This is terrifying for me [and] they didn't seem to have much of a plan."*

- Hollywood Lawyer; [Hollywood Reporter](#)

*"The [guild's] answers didn't take a deep dive, seemed to be speculative [and] weren't very empirical," said a fourth lawyer. "I didn't leave feeling comforted [or] with any more knowledge or [their] point of view."*

-Hollywood Lawyer; [Hollywood Reporter](#)

*"It's going to be chaos,' said a fifth attorney, if the guild forces members to fire their unsigned agents and rely on word of mouth, the WGA website, managers, attorneys and less prominent agents to find work."*

-Hollywood Lawyer; [Hollywood Reporter](#)

*"If this isn't a case of cutting off your nose to spite your face, I don't know what is...I can't understand destroying your own representation."*

-Hollywood Lawyer; [Hollywood Reporter](#)

*"If the WGA gets its way, my clients will be less well represented and I'll have less leverage [when negotiating for them]," said one of the lawyers. "This is actually worse than a strike."*

-Hollywood Lawyer; [Hollywood Reporter](#)

*"The WGA was unprepared for the questions it received," said one, "which was a surprise to me."*

- Hollywood Manager; [Hollywood Reporter](#)

*"It was an abject f\*\*\*ing disaster," said another. "The point was to get managers on their side, [but they achieved] the exact opposite. I wouldn't trust [a particular WGA executive] to organize a barbecue let alone this negotiation."*

-Hollywood Manager; [Hollywood Reporter](#)

"It was a very cogent presentation at first and then the questions started flying," said a third, "and *they didn't have good answers.*"

- Hollywood Manager; [Hollywood Reporter](#)

"*It was awful,*" said a fourth manager. "*They really don't know what the f\*\*\* they're doing.*"

- Hollywood Manager; [Hollywood Reporter](#)

"This raises the possibility that writers will be unrepresented during television staffing season, the Spring period in which broadcast series hire writers to staff their writing rooms. *At the meeting, the guild asked managers, working with entertainment lawyers, to bridge the gap and procure employment for their clients. 'They f\*\*\*ing said this,' said one of the managers, shocked because state law prohibits managers from procuring employment.*"

-Hollywood Lawyer; [Hollywood Reporter](#)

"*The guild executive's response was that the managers should get agency licenses themselves. 'So you can strike against us too?'"*

-Hollywood Manager; [Hollywood Reporter](#)

"*'Why should we help you if you're just going to stab us in the back?'* said another."

-Hollywood Manager; [Hollywood Reporter](#)

"*It's a dangerous road that they're going down,*"

-Hollywood Manager; [Hollywood Reporter](#)

"*It was the same old thing,*" said a manager leaving the meeting. "*The WGA wants the writers to leave, and managers want them to try to compromise.*"

-Hollywood Manager; [Deadline](#)

*"They were talking at us, not with us, which is disappointing. And they seemed unnecessarily militant, which is unfortunate."*

-Hollywood Manager; [Deadline](#)

*"I don't think they really want to negotiate," said another manager who was there. "They are not bending on what their demands are, so how can you negotiate?"*

-Hollywood Manager; [Deadline](#)

*"There are a lot of really wonderful agents who genuinely see themselves as our advocates, and I'm very wary of turning all those people into enemies,"*

-Hollywood Writer; [Vanity Fair](#)

*"I'm a union member. I understand we collectively stand for all. We fight in defense of all. I'm deeply grateful to be part of the WGA. But my agent repped me long before I joined the guild. She's the reason I'm in the guild. She is tireless, back-breaking, and loyal."*

-Angela Workman, Hollywood Writer; [Twitter](#)