# EABA
## no boundaries role playing

Here are nine of Sandy Petersen's Rules of Gamemastering

**Number One: Three strikes and you're out**
Whatever the ultimate penalty inflicted in your campaigns (in most games, it's permanent PC death), give the player three chances to avoid this result. If you maintain this rule, then your players will blame themselves rather than you, when disaster looms. This makes the whole game more easy-going and happy. To use the 3-strike rule, first you give them a hint that something Bad is looming. Then you give them proof. Finally you present the bad thing itself (but with a chance to escape).

**Number two: Act as enablers instead of referrees**
I've see lots of GMs gloat over how thwarted some plan of the players that would ruin the way the game was "supposed" to go. Personally I do not have much respect for the so-called "storytelling" style of play. I feel players deserve as much freedom as possible. The only reason that a GM should hinder a player's action is if said action would harm the fun for most of the party (in which case you should *still* let the player do it, but make it difficult, and give the other players a chance to stop it).

**Number three: Keep NPC conversations to a minimum**
Nothing is duller than hearing a GM talk to himself.

**Number four: Don't make the players stand in line**
Yes I know they don't "stand in line", but if they're holding a sequence of what amount to one-on-one conversations with you, then you're a bottleneck, hindering the game. Stop hamming it up so much - you're a GM after all, not a player.

**Number five: Never permit players to let you make their decisions for them**
Many players will ask things like, "What do the elders of my tribe think about this?" or "I do a Divination. What does the Sun God say?" Make the players choose their own fate.

**Number six: Never help a player unasked**
He or she won't thank you. If you make a habit of helping them, then they'll feel that the only reason they won was because you helped them out. When players need help try to arrange things such that they feel they did it by themselves.

**Number seven: Every player is the hero of the story**
There aren't "critical characters" and "supporting characters". *Everyone* is the star. You don't have to be a big important king to be an essential character - Aragorn and Theoden aren't the heroes of Lord of the Rings - that role falls to Frodo and Sam. This is an especially hard rule to remember, because the players try to violate it all the time.

**Number eight: Be flexible**
The players shall think of things that never in a million years would have occurred to you. When this happens, don't forbid them, try to help them. But do try to think out the ramifications first. One useful trick, when they come to you with a brilliant idea, is to figure out a reason why it can't be done right this instant. Then, while they're doing other things, you try to think out the problem.

**Number nine: To limit something, give it to them as an ability**
If a player comes to you (this really happened to me) and says, "I need 30,000 francs. Since I'm the prime minister, I'll just requisition it out of the treasury for my own private needs." If I'd let him do this, it would have overthrown the financial basis of the game, in which money was purposely scarce. I replied, "Okay, the treasury will send it, but this costs you grave political capital back home, where you'll be perceived as looting the public treasury to line your pockets. The more you take, the bigger trouble you'll get." Then I gave him the special power to exchange his Status for money (status was, of course, far more valuable in this game). He never dared do it. The bottom line was, because I let him do what he asked, he felt empowered. But because what he asked to do had drawbacks, he didn't do it. Thus both of us were happy.

BTRC

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**OTHER CREDITS:**
In addition, **EABA** owes a debt to the role-playing games that have gone before. These may have themselves had inspiration from *other* role-playing games, but I'm just crediting the ones that inspired *me*.

**Dungeons & Dragons**¤ (1974), by Dave Arneson and Gary Gygax, for starting the idea of formal role-playing systems, as well as for some of the most fundamental game mechanics like attributes, skill rolls, and so on. Every role-playing game owes something to **Dungeons & Dragons**.

**Champions**¤ (1981), by George MacDonald and Steve Peterson, for internally consistent and intuitive game mechanics, point-based adventurer creation and attribute-based defaults. From beginning as a superhero game it has morphed into the **Hero System**¤ (1984), a quite good universal system.

**Call of Cthulhu**¤ (1981), by Sandy Petersen, for making a story-driven horror system that has taken on a life of its own. The depth and detail of the support material is a benchmark that all role-playing games should strive for.

**GURPS**¤ (1986), by Steve Jackson, for being the first Ùuniversal systemÓthat didn't have a particular genre welded to it, and for making a strong effort to have rules that matched reality where reality was needed. **GURPS** has more licensed fictional gameworlds than any other role-playing game, and that it works fairly well for all of them is a testament to the utility of its game mechanics.

**Over the Edge**¨ (1992), by Jonathan Tweet and Robin D. Laws, for blurring the categories of adventurer abilities and encouraging a free-form play style less dependent on having a rule-book sitting in front of you.

**TimeLords**¨ (1987), **3G**³¨ (1988) and **CORPS**¨ (1990), by Greg Porter. These are my own designs, and concepts I originated for these games and those inspired from the above systems are part of **EABA**.