



Personals

Characters routinely meet non-player characters and engage them for enjoyment, to gather information, to persuade them to do something (or to not do something), and even to command them to do something (or not do something).

Many Personals are automatic (following the general rule that, if the situation is trivial or unremarkable, there is no need to resolve or role-play it). When a non-trivial Personal arises, the player must decide the process and state it for resolution.

Why Not Just Role-Play? Personal situations are the essence of social interaction and they are perfectly suited for role-playing. The Personal system gives structure to the role-playing situation. Without a structure which gives options to the character, role-playing becomes an interaction between the personality of the player and the personality of the referee. The Personal system gives options to the player and gives structure to the role-playing response of the referee.

THE PERSONAL SITUATION

Personal interactions are governed by laws of behavior. Rarely can a character simply walk up to another and ask detailed questions and expect detailed answers, or give orders and expect them to be obeyed. When a character encounters and interacts with a non-player character, the player must consider the purpose of the encounter, its goal, and adopt strategies to help accomplish that goal.

HOW THIS WORKS

A Personal Situation is a role-playing situation which allows a character to interact realistically with a non-player character. It proceeds through several escalating steps based on the intentions of the character (the Actor) and the responses of the non-player character (the Target).

RESOLVING A PERSONAL

Purpose	___ D	Select a Purpose. Purpose determines the number of dice to be rolled.
Strategy		Select a Strategy. Strategy provides a Base Point Value.
Tactic	X ___	Select a Tactic to implement the Strategy. Some tactics are inappropriate.
Laws		Apply the best applicable Law to create a Mod.
Mod1		Apply up to two Mods, as available.
Mod2		
Target No. =		Roll the dice specified by Purpose against the Target Number.

The values create the Target Number; the dice are rolled, compared and success of the Personal is determined. Failure terminates the Personal (subject to Please Reconsider). Success allows the Personal to continue with a new interaction.

THE ELEMENTS OF THE PERSONAL

Every Personal Interaction (for short, its called a Personal) consists of a Goal, Participants, a Purpose, and supporting Strategies, Tactics, and Mods.

The entire sequence of a personal from start to finish is called an Interaction.

The Goal

Every Personal has a Goal: a statement of the desired results. Goals are usually stated as a phrase or a sentence, and are subject to approval by the Referee.

The Participants

The Participants in a Personal are the Actor and the Target.

Actor. The Actor is one or more characters resolving the Personal. The Actor is typically a Player Character.

Target. The Target is one or more characters who are the object of the Actor's activity. Targets are typically role-played by the referee.

The Purpose

A Purpose is a subordinate Goal within a Personal. There are four general Purposes: Carouse, Query, Persuade, and Command.

Strategies

Players implement their Purpose with a Strategy. The Player selects a strategy and determines its value. The Actor determines the Strategy value based as points from the Strategy table.

Tactics

Actors add strength their Strategies with Tactics. The Player selects a Tactic and determines its value. Tactics are typically multipliers applied to Strategies.

THE FOUR TYPES OF PERSONAL

There are four general types of Personal: Carouse, Query, Persuade, and Command.

Each Personal is generated with 2D; but they have escalating Difficulties: Carouse 1D, Query 2D, Persuade 3D, and Command 4D.

Check <Personal>

Check Personal is resolved by noting the appropriate Personal and any Mods. Roll the appropriate number of dice: if the result is equal to or less than the Personal plus Mods, the check succeeds. Otherwise it fails.

Carouse (Difficulty= 1D)

Carouse is a general enjoyable social activity, paraphrased as "Let's Have A Good Time!" The Actor and Target interact socially, getting to know each other better. Neither asks anything of the other or makes any demands of the other.

Carouse has a social purpose. When successful, the participants establish a foundation of acquaintance and familiarity which allows later attempts at Query or Persuade. For example, businessmen have dinner together to get acquainted before they start negotiating a deal. A salesman may take a client to an athletic event before a later meeting presenting their line of products.

The casual friendship created by Carousing is expressed as Mod +1 per successful Carouse (to a reasonable maximum of 6).

Query (Difficulty= 2D)

Query is devoted to obtaining information or performance of a discretionary duty, paraphrased as "Tell Me About X." The Actor asks the Target some question. Often, the Target already has a responsibility to provide simple answers, and Query is devoted to obtaining additional information, elaborating, or assistance.

Query is an information gathering activity. That information may be a goal in itself, or it may be helpful in determining what specific actions will later be requested.

Functionaries often decide whether to help a customer based on their reactions to their requests. Query is the method of asking for their help.

Persuade (Difficulty= 3D)

Persuade is devoted to obtaining decisions which the Target is free to make, paraphrased as "You Should Do X." Its goal is to make the object decide to do something (or to decide to not do something). It implies that the Target will use some rationale (usually provided by the Actor) to make that decision.

Persuade is a convincing activity. Some action by the Target is necessary, and Persuade is the Actor's attempt to make that happen. Extreme examples of Persuasion may be coerced.

Command (Difficulty= 4D)

Commands are not easily given. Individuals may be persuaded to do things, but rarely do they obey commands without a social structure to back them up, paraphrased as "I Require You To Do X." Its goal is a specific action (or inaction) by the Target. It depends on external social structures or social dominance to bring about obedience.

Command is an order-giving activity. Authority figures (for example, police officers) can give commands; organizational superiors (for example, those with a higher rank in a company or military unit) can give commands.

THE FIVE LAWS OF PERSONAL INTERACTION

Personals are governed by the Five Laws: a series of statements detailing how social interaction operates.

Law 1. Similarity. Similar people cooperate.

Law 2. Superiority. Superiors give commands.

Law 3. Inferiority. Inferiors use politeness and flattery.

Law 4. Comfort. Comfort promotes cooperation.

Law 5. Violence. Violence compels obedience.

The Five Laws are universal: they apply across many different cultures. For example, there is no culture in which inferiors bark commands at superiors. When a traveller encounters a society in which this occurs, then there are cultural forces at work which explain it. Perhaps, barking orders is perceived culturally as behavior for inferiors. In practice, those "orders" are obeyed only when a superior actually wants to.

The triggers for the Laws are binary: a character is Similar, or not; is Superior, or not; is Inferior, or not.

If the character can point out (to the Referee) facts supporting the Law, it allows a Mod based on the Five Laws Table.

The Laws of Similarity

Social interaction is enhanced when the speaker demonstrates common links with the listener. When the Actor can establish common interests, a Strategy can provide Mods which support a positive result.

Similarity (and common interests) is established by obvious observable facts (a uniform; an obvious career, an interesting insignia on a shirt).

For example, a non-player character may wear a shirt with an Imperial Army logo: an Army veteran can use that fact to establish similarity. Or, in the course of Carousing, a character may learn facts which support similarity.

Similarities, include: common skills, knowledges, careers, life pursuits, or homeworlds.

The Law of Superiority

Superiors have the charisma to support Query, Persuade, or Command.

When the Actor can establish superiority, it provides positive Mods.

For example, superiority in Rank, in an appropriate Characteristic, or even being armed.

The Law of Inferiority

Inferiors support Query or Persuade by appealing to Superiors.

When an Actor can establish Inferiority, it provides Positive Mods.

If Inferiority is used in an Interaction, the Actor cannot subsequently use Similarity or Superiority.

For example, inferiority in Rank, or in an appropriate Characteristic.

The Law of Comfort

Personals become easier as the level of comfort rises. Providing Comfort typically involves hospitality: buying meals, picking up the check at dinner, providing a ride to a destination, providing a small helpful part, or bit of advice.

When the Actor can establish Comfort, it provides positive Mods.

For example, after casually meeting the Target, he offers a ride to the hotel, or he buys a shared meal.

The Law of Violence

Personals backed by violence have a greater risk of violence in response.

The use of Insult or Pain as a tactic makes the Personal Violent (or Threat of Violence). The Actor may use Fighting skill (or any subordinate Knowledge) as a Mod.

If the Personal fails, the interaction ends and become a Fight.

DISTANCE

Personals take place at a distance which allows for conversation, typically Vshort or Talking. A meaningful Personal cannot be accomplished at a distance greater than Vshort.

By Communicator. Personals can be attempted by Communicator, subject to a Mod -4.

STATING A PERSONAL

The components are simple words or phrases which convey the process. Because this is an on-going role-playing situation, there is no need to repeat the data sought, or the identity of the clerk. The Personal tells the referee enough information to resolve the situation.

TALKING TO THE CLERK

The ship needs a replacement part for the J-Drive. Engineer Gustav Windhoek knows exactly what the part is, but for some reason the drive logs don't reflect the proper part number. He goes across the tarmac to the parts window. There's a sign posted: "Closed For Inventory. Come Back Tomorrow."

He taps on the glass to get the clerk's attention.

The Referee rolls 2D each for the Clerk's Carouse (= 5), Query (= 9), Persuade (= 7) and Command (=8). These values are behind the screen.

The clerk comes to the window, "We're closed. Come back tomorrow."

Gustav asks "Can you help me?" Check Query (=9). Query (Difficulty = 2D) Gustav rolls 6. The Clerk asks, "What do you need?"

"My Drive Reciprocator comes in three alternate variations, and I can't find the identifier for the one I have. Check Query (=9) Gustav rolls 11. "Whoa! That's way beyond me. You need to talk to the Lieutenant. Over there."

THE INTUITIONS

Related to the Personals are the three Intuitions: **Insight**, **Luck**, and **Curiosity**. Characters from time to time are awarded values for these Intuitions in the current session (they cannot be accumulated).

The Procedure

At the beginning of the current game session, the Referee may decide to use the Intuitions. Each player rolls 2D (ties reroll). The highest roll receives **Insight**. The second highest receives **Curiosity**. The lowest receives **Luck**.

Each Intuition can be used by its character as desired in the current session

Check Insight. The character can see (or puzzle out) correct action, which usually expresses itself as a question: "Why don't we try (blank)?"

Roll 2D. If the result is equal or less than **Insight**, the proper course of action reveals itself to the character.

Check Curiosity. The character wonders about the nature of objects or the environment, which usually expresses itself as a question: "Why is that (blank)?"

Roll 2D. If the result is equal or less than **Curiosity**, the nature of the object becomes apparent.

Check Luck. The character is naturally lucky. When a negative event occurs, he has a chance that it will miss him. "Just lucky I guess." Luck applies to its holder: it cannot be shared or transferred to others.

Roll 2D. If the result is equal or less than **Luck**, the negative event does not happen.



Personals

Interacting with other sophonts requires a knowledge of the principles of interpersonal actions.

Personals

Purpose	Strategy		Tactics															
			Interests	Enemies	Logic	Authority	Morality	Culture	Emotion	Indebted	Payment	Begging	Politeness	Flattery	Referral	Familiarity	Insult	Pain
1D Carouse	Casual	1	+3	+2		no						no	no	x2	x2	x2	no	-8
	Enjoyment	2										no		x2	x2	x2	no	-6
	Discussion	3			x2	x2	x2	x2	x2						x2	x2	no	-6
	Active Listen	4																-6
	Appeals To	5			X2		x2	x2	x2		x2	x2	x2	x2				+4*
2D Query	Enjoyment	1										no		x2	x2	x2	no	-6
	Discussion	2			x2	x2	x2	x2	x2						x2	x2	no	-6
	Active Listen	3																-6
	Appeals To	4			X2		x2	x2	x2		x2	x2	x2	x2				+4*
	Force of Will	5			x2	x2	x2	x2	x2		no						x2	+6*
3D Persuade	Discussion	1			x2	x2	x2	x2	x2						x2	x2	no	-6
	Active Listen	2																-6
	Appeals To	3			X2		x2	x2	x2		x2	x2	x2	x2				+4*
	Force of Will	4			x2	x2	x2	x2	x2		no						x2	+6*
	Charming	5		x3		x2	x2	x2	x2	x2		x2		x2	x2			-4*
4D Command	Active Listen	1																-6
	Appeals To	2			net		x2	x2	x2		x2	x2	x2	x2				+4*
	Force of Will	3			x2	x2	x2	x2	x2		no						x2	+6*
	Charming	4		x3		x2	x2	x2	x2	x2		x2		x2	x2			-4*
	Angry	5		x3	x2	x2	x2	x2	x2	x2							x2	+6*

THE FIVE LAWS

		Carouse	Query	Persuade	Command
1 Similarity		+1	+1	+1	
2 Superiority			+1	+2	+3
3 Inferiority			+1	+2*	
4 Comfort	+2		+1	+1	
5 Violence			+1	+2	+3

*if Begging, Flattery, or Politeness.

The Five Laws are a series of statements governing interactions.

Similarity. Similar people cooperate.

Superiority. Superiors give commands.

Inferiority. Inferiors use politeness, flattery and begging.

Comfort. Comfort promotes cooperation.

Violence. Violence (or its threat) compels obedience.

DISTANCE

If by Communicator, Mod -4.

THE BASIC RULES

Purpose	D
Strategy	
Tactic	X
Laws	
Mod1	
Mod2	

1. Select a Purpose
2. Select a Strategy
3. Select a Tactic
4. Apply the best applicable Law
5. Apply up to **two** Mods, as available.

Target No. = Roll against the Target Number.

Each success in Carousing increases Cameraderie +1.

Any Failure stops the Interaction (but Please Reconsider may be possible).

MODS

Personals are influenced by several circumstances.

Strategies. After the first use of a Strategy, Mod -1 per use of a Strategy.

Tactics. After the first use of a Tactic, Mod -1 per use of a Tactic.

Urgent. If there is a time constraint, try a Purpose only once with Mod +2.

Deliberate. Carefully planned query or persuasion allows using a Third Tactic.

(Threat of) Violence. Use of Fighting as a Mod. makes a Personal Violent. If a Violent Personal fails, the Personal becomes a Fight.

Bluff. Use Flux as Mod at the last minute before resolving the Personal (can be used once in the conversation).

Brazen. Mod +3 in Query or Persuade.

Please Reconsider. A Failure can be rerolled as **Please Reconsider** IF Begging/Politeness/Flattery are possible for the Strategy. For the rest of the Interaction, only Inferior Mods can be used.





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Personals

THE PURPOSE

A Purpose is a subordinate Goal within a Personal. There are four general Purposes:

Carouse

“Let’s Have A Good Time!”

The participants interact socially, getting to know each other better. Neither asks anything of the other.

Query

“Tell Me About X.”

Query is information gathering. Query is devoted to obtaining information or the performance of discretionary duties. Information may be a goal in itself, or it may be helpful in understanding the Target.

Persuade

“I Request You Do X”

Persuade is a convincing activity. Its goal is to make the object decide to do something (or to decide to not do something). Persuade is devoted to obtaining decisions which the Target is free to make.

Command

“I Require You Do X”

Command is order-giving. Its goal is a specific action (or inaction) by the Target. It depends on external social structures or social dominance to bring about obedience. Individuals may be persuaded to do things, but they rarely obey commands without a social structure to back them up. Authority figures (for example, police officers) and organizational superiors (for example, higher rank in a company or military unit) can give commands.

STRATEGIES

Players implement their Purpose with a Strategy. The Player selects a strategy and determines its value.

Casual [Our Interaction Has No Long-Term Effects]. The encounter is unstructured and unconcerned with ultimate goals.

Enjoyment [Let’s Enjoy Ourselves]. The encounter is based on recreation and the pleasure of personal interaction.

Discussion [Let’s Exchange Information]. The encounter is focused on conversation about some topic of mutual interest.

Active Listening [I Enjoy Listening To You]. The Actor listens and encourages participation by the Target.

Appeals To [Do X Because of Y]. The Actor focuses on a tactic to focus the interaction.

Force-of-Will [Do X Because Of My Strength]. The Actor strongly presents information based on Tactic.

Charming [My Positive Emotions Influence You]. The Actor presents positive social cues in the conversation.

Angry [My Negative Emotions Influence You]. The Actor dominates the conversation with negative social cues.

TACTICS

Actors add strength their Strategies with Tactics. The Player selects a Tactic and determines its value.

Common Interests [We Share The Same Interests]. The participants have knowledge of the same subjects.

Common Enemies [We Share The Same Adversaries]. The participants have interests opposed by the same adversaries.

Logic [Logic Requires You Do X]. Actor indicates that Logic supports compliance.

Authority [My Authority Requires That You Do X]. The Actor is empowered by an outside source to expect assistance.

Morality [Morality Requires You Do X]. Actor indicates that the Target’s Morality supports compliance.

Culture [Culture Requires You Do X]. Actor indicates that the Target’s culture support compliance.

Emotion [Emotion And Sympathy Require You Do X]. Actor supports the Strategy in emotional terms.

Debt [You Owe Me]. Actor indicates that compliance will cancel a debt between Target and Actor.

Payment [I Will Give You Money]. Actor offers money in return for compliance.

Begging [Charity Requires That You Do X]. Actor assumes an inferior position by requesting assistance.

Politeness [I Include Appropriate Courtesy]. Actor makes use of courtesy to supplement Strategy.

Flattery [I Tell You Positive Compliments]. Actor makes use of flattery to supplement Strategy.

Referral [I Am Vouched For By Another]. A third party has provided details about Actor’s character.

Familiarity [I Am Known To You]. Actor is a friend or acquaintance of Target.

Insult [I Reinforce My Appeal With Dominating Negative Words]. The use of insults punctuates the appeal.

Pain [I Will Hurt You If You Do Not Do X]. Actor indicates he will provide negative consequences.



Captain Lagash Visits the Lone Star

Captain Eitan Lagash of the **Wilderness Traveller** and his First Officer **Aia Resteff** have arrived at Glisten Belt Starport on their way rimward. After offloading their cargo and handling various details, they visit the Lone Star. They are interested in general information about the worlds they may visit, and are always open to discussing a charter to a patron.

1. Aia Bungles The Encounter

They enter and look around. There is an Aslan male in the corner and they identify him as a likely patron. Aia approaches him: "We're looking for a patron to hire us."

She wants to persuade him to charter the **Wilderness Traveller**.

RESOLVING A PERSONAL

Purpose	Persuade	3 D
Strategy	Appeals To	3
Tactic	Logic	X 2
Laws		
Mod1		
Mod2		
Target No. =		6

She has to roll 6 or less on 3D. She rolls 10 and fails. The Aslan laughs at her.

4. Lagash Asks Some Questions

Lagash steers the conversation toward information gathering. He asks about the worlds rimward of Glisten.

RESOLVING A PERSONAL

Purpose	Query	2 D
Strategy	Appeals To	4
Tactic	Familiarity	X 2
Laws	Similarity	+1
Mod1		
Mod2	Cameraderie-2	+2
Target No. =		11

He has to roll a 11 or less on 2D; he rolls 7 and succeeds.

Ank tells him several stories about trade on worlds to rimward.

2. The Captain Approaches A Patron

Captain Lagash watches the crowd for a while, and finally sees a likely prospect: a prosperous looking gentleman. He walks over and introduces himself.

"Excuse me. Hi. I'm Lagash on the *Wilderness Traveller*. We're heading rimward into the Hierate, which is new territory for us. Can I buy you a beverage and talk for a few minutes?"

RESOLVING A PERSONAL

Purpose	Carouse	1 D
Strategy	Discussion	3
Tactic	Culture	X 2
Laws	Similarity	+1
Mod1		
Mod2		
Target No. =		7

He has to roll 7 or less on 1D. He rolls 3. The two seem to get along well.

He learns that, they are both Star Marine veterans and the prospect's name is Ank Jonston.

Success awards Captain Lagash Cameraderie-1.

5. Lagash Asks for Referral Chip

Jonston knows merchants in the rimward territories. Having a referral from Jonstone would be a great help.

Lagash escalates to Persuade and asks Jonston for a referral chip.

RESOLVING A PERSONAL

Purpose	Persuade	3 D
Strategy	Charming	5
Tactic	Flattery	X 2
Laws	Similarity	+1
Mod1		
Mod2	Cameraderie-2	+2
Target No. =		13

He has to roll a 13 or less on 3D. He rolls 15 and fails. Maybe he was too aggressive, or didn't explain himself well enough.

Or maybe Ank doesn't like giving referrals.

3. The Captain Continues

The two talk for a while. He introduces Aia to Ank. Everyone has a good time.

RESOLVING A PERSONAL

Purpose	Carouse	1 D
Strategy	Active Listen	4
Tactic	Culture	X 2
Laws	Similarity	+1
Mod1	Strategy Again	-1
Mod2	Cameraderie-1	+1
Target No. =		9

He has to roll a 9 or less on 1D, and success is automatic.

He learns Jonston imports premium Aslan textiles.

Captain Lagash adds Cameraderie-1 for a total of Cameraderie-2.

6. Lagash Asks Again

Lagash is undeterred: he continues to talk about trade and how helpful such a referral chip would be. He asks Ank to Please Reconsider.

RESOLVING A PERSONAL

Purpose	Persuade	3 D
Strategy	Charming	5
Tactic	Flattery	X 2
Laws	Similarity	+1
Mod1		
Mod2	Cameraderie-2	+2
Target No. =		13

He has to roll a 13 or less on 3D. He rolls 6 and Ank codes the Captain a chip. They spend the rest of the evening telling travel stories.

OR
He rolls 16. Jonston again says no. Lagash and Aia excuse themselves and return to their ship.