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) ands 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 noted 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 Actors 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 Intutions. 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.