

Adventure Design

Creating An Adventure

In the In the previous chapter, you learned the basics about running a game. Most likely the first couple of adventures that you GM will be ones that you purchased. Eventually though you will end up creating your own. This can be because you have played all of the ones available, or simply that you think that you can do a better job making your own. The adventures that you create yourself will indeed be the best adventures. You will find them both rewarding and something to take pride in.

Picking a Setting

Regardless of what type in adventure you were running you will always need to pick distorted location.

The

Designing Your First Adventure

Creating an adventure in FS is quite different than creating one in other role-playing games. Rather than creating a strict plotline for the characters to follow, create a story that the characters just happen to be involved in. If and when the characters interact with this story is up to them. The

When beginning there should always be the casting of at least three groups of individuals. You should always have friends of the party, neutrals, and opponents. However in each of these groups there should be many shades of gray, and within the group they need not be allies. Typically it is good to have at least two types of opponents, numerous neutral NPC groups, and at least one local friendly group. Remember just come up with some lose ideas for each of these groups we can work out the details later.

Friendly groups might include a clan, mega-corporation, the Empire, a family, a school or master, or even a gang. This will give the party something to fall back on for required resources and a safe haven. These groups can also serve to develop plot oriented adventures, either by being ordered or as a repercussion of their involvement to the group.

Having several other friendly parties to the group is often very helpful. They may be either the trainers of the party, former employers, contract brokers or a contact with friendly organization mentioned before.

Friendly groups typically will stand behind the party through thick or thin. They can be used to either bail out party or order them into the adventure. These are the people that the party generally will want to make happy.

The more neutral NPCs or NPC groups the better. Where as opponents are eventually defeated, and true friendly groups rarely change, the neutral NPCs will often be around for many adventures. They include casual

contacts on the street, in other groups, colony leaders, planetary leaders, captains of the ship, and everyone else who is simply doing business with the party.

The more developed these characters are the better. They are the ones that can be used to get information, favors, temporary plot divergences, and any other purpose out of. Undoubtedly they will be your favorite characters to interact with the party with. They should be numerous and very diverse.

Due to the fact that they are neutral and can prove either faithful to the party or betray them, many plot devices can hinge on the part of neutrals. Typically the party will want to maintain the relationship with neutrals because they can become either friendly or opponents. They should be viewed as such and therefore a potential resource. Any of these can either have allegiances or have made enemies with any of the party's friends or foes.

Opponents are the core competition in the adventure. There will typically be at least one major enemy and possible a few others. The groups of enemies need not be allied and can even compete with each other. Typically their goals will directly compete with those of the party. They may be seeking to kill the party or simply trying to obtain the same goals first.

They should have elaborate goals and methods for achieving them. They do not need to be overwhelming, and the closer matched they are to the party the better. Multiple groups of opposing forces allows a rich set of alternatives.

When you first start designing the adventure, you should at least narrow down the basic friendly and opposing group. Additional groups and the neutral are often easier to fill in after the next step.

Elements of an Adventure

The following format will aid you in preparing an adventure in the style that other Future Shadows adventure are composed. After this section a break down on adventure design will be presented.

Adventure Name

All Adventures should be named something that relates to the central story line, but that does not reveal too much of the story line.

Affiliation

Most early adventures should be designed assuming that the characters are affiliated with either a Mega-Corporation, the Empire, the Clans, or some other significant group.

Mission Preview

A short overview of the central plotline should be presented here for quick reference to major plot points. Game-play Recommendations
Information regarding level of characters, number of player characters, and important skill selections, should be recorded here.

Mission Outline for the GM

A chart of the events that occur in the plot or a flow chart for the more complicated plot twists.

Location Descriptions

In most adventures, the characters will spend a significant amount of time at central locations, or an integral portion of the plot revolves around some location. This section provides for a centralized spot to look for these descriptions that can be revealed to the characters without giving away excess information. Example of locations to place in here, are party space ships, towns, taverns, guild halls, plot objectives, and enemy hideouts/installations.

Short yet colorful description of a location that is either generic to the mission, such as the planets or systems in the adventure. Locations such as bars clubs, enemy bases, starports, safe-havens, or basically anything in that may be inquired about by the player's, and the events that can occur there.

Mission Briefing for the Player's

This is typically a background description for the characters and party in general and the events that have brought them together and perhaps already galvanized them as a group. This should include why the characters know each other and how they have come to this

Player Start

Introduction to be read the players. This should include the players backgrounds, how they know each other, and their starting locations.

Event #1

Description of an event or situation that affects the party in some way. This is where they will either need to make decisions or defeat plot obstacles. Many events will be detailed in this section.

Mission Wrap-up

This section should include the various outcomes of the situations that have unfolded during the mission. This should include a narrative, and what the characters are allowed to keep from the possessions gained, and other details.

Experience Rewards

This section should detail the experience that is given out to players in accordance to the objectives set up in the campaign and other details.

Experience Awards

Beginning GMs often award experience rather liberally. This is a habit you should break quickly. Typically it is good to award 1 experience point per solid hour of adventuring. On top of this add 2 points for major successes, and 1 point for minor successes. Good role-playing should be rewarded with a point or two, as well as with sticking to an alignment. Award each character their experience separately telling them why they are getting what they got, taking time to honorably mention each of the reasons. This will inspire competition between the players, and will make for better gaming. Each character should never get more than 15 experience points or so per adventure.

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