

Social mechanic cheat-sheet

(version 3.0, 2020/05/09 by Bonhummm)

Social mechanic in Earthdawn make use of two different aspects: Attitudes and Social Interactions.

All talents/skills/knacks/spells that have a 'social effect' will either affect the Attitude (example: First Impression) or Social Interactions (example: Impressive Display and Winning Smile). Thus, it's important to understand the difference between the two 'systems'.

1- ATTITUDES:

Attitudes represent how a particular NPC feels toward another character/NPC. There is 5 degrees of Attitude:

- **AWESTRUCK:** 'Player character is the most wonderful person in the world'. Might be seen as hero or madly in love. NPC are willing to make great sacrifice to please the character with no thought of the consequence, even risking their own life.
- **LOYAL:** Devoted ally or close friend. Tend to look out for the best interests of the character but expect loyalty to be returned. May take great risks on behalf of character, unlikely to betray.
- **FRIENDLY:** Enjoy company of character. Willing to do small favors as long as they are eventually returned.
- **NEUTRAL:** 'Live-and-let-live'. Won't go out of their way to help but might help with an obvious and immediate problem. Example: neighbors, merchants etc.
- **UNFRIENDLY:** 'Live-and-let-die'. Will take advantage without openly causing harm, have no qualms about deceiving character. Example: greedy merchants and suspicious guards.
- **ENEMY:** Personal vendetta. Will take any opportunity to harm character even if that involves disrupting their own life significantly.

2- SOCIAL INTERACTIONS:

The Player's Guide often use the term 'Social Interactions' when describing the effects of some talents, skills, knacks and spells. The term seems 'generic' because the mechanic is described in the GAMEMASTER GUIDE instead of the Player's Guide but 'Social Interactions' are a well-defined mechanic.

There are 5 types of Interaction Tests possible: Making an Impression, Deceit, Insight, Intimidation and Favors.

All interaction tests are done using the character's Charisma Step (plus any bonus incurred from talents like Winning Smile) against the target's Social Defense.

- **MAKING AN IMPRESSION:**

To make a good impression on an NPC.

- Can only be used on characters with an Attitude of Friendly, Neutral or Unfriendly.
- A successful test improves the target's Attitude by one degree (for example: from Neutral to Friendly).
- On a rule of one: REDUCE the Attitude by one degree.
- Effect of the impression usually less for a day but might wear off if hostile action is taken against the target or if the player's character interacts with the impressed target in a manner worse than the gamemaster character's adjusted attitude. See GM Guide p:145 for whole game mechanic.

- **DECEIT:**

To convince of character of something that isn't true. There are 3 different types of deception, with varying degree of difficulty:

- **Exaggeration:**

- Stretching the truth or changing the details of a story
- Any kind of change to the details while still maintaining the overall truth.
- On a successful test (1 success or more) the target believes the exaggeration.

- **Fabrication:**

- Outright lie.
- With ONE success, the target is inclined to believe the lie but the character needs to come up with other reasons for the story to be believed, which might require an additional Interaction test.
- With two or more successes, the target believe the lie to be the truth.

- **Half-truths:**

- Reveal part of the truth but withhold critical information.
- Example: Saying that you did not see anything at the scene of a crime while you had actually HEARD something.
- On a successful test (1 success or more) the target believes the half-truth.
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- **INSIGHT:**

To get a read on another character or try to determine if they are being deceived. There are 2 main uses for insight:

- **Basic Emotions:**

- Can detect surface feeling like anger, love, fear, hunger or nervousness.
- Test is done using the character's Charisma Step (plus any bonus incurred from talents like Winning Smile) against the target's Social Defense.

- **Detecting Deception:**

- Character must be able to observe the target as he speaks.
- If face is obscured (mask, helmet), requires an additional success.
- This is a contested Test. The character attempting to deceive must achieve more successes than the one attempting to detect the deception.
- If the target is attempting an outright fabrication, then the character detects the deception if they score at least the same number of successes, rather than needing more.
- Generally speaking, this use of insight will only be used by gamemaster characters that have a reason to suspect the target might not be honest, or when they have an Unfriendly or worse attitude towards the target character.

NOTE: Illusionists can use their half-magic 'to detect truth' instead of using insight (FASA Discord, 2019/12/14 by Earthdawn Josh)

- **INTIMIDATION:**

To force a target to take a course of action, whether through the threat of physical arm or other negative consequences. There are 2 main uses for intimidation.

- **Stopping an action:**

- If a character uses intimidation on a target that has a Neutral or better attitude towards them, their attitude shifts one degree worse.
- Order another character to NOT perform an action or to do nothing. (example: 'Don't touch that', 'leave her alone'.)
- On a single success, the target will follow the instruction for ONE round.
- On THREE or more success, the target will follow the instructions for as long as the character remains in sight.

- **Forcing an action:**
 - If a character uses intimidation on a target that has a Neutral or better attitude towards them, their attitude shifts one degree worse.
 - Order a character to perform a specific action. (example: enter a dangerous cave or give information).
 - TWO successes are required.
 - Target characters will stop performing the requested action as soon as they are out of the intimidator's sight.

- **FAVORS:**

Characters can request favors from NPCs. The mechanic behind the favor system is based on the target's attitude toward the character and the return (payback) of those favors. There is 2 types of favors:

 - **Small Favor:**
 - Examples: holding your place in line, buying around of drinks, or bringing food or water to your cell.
 - Will not endanger character, take more than 30 minutes or cost more than 5 silver, few hours' wages or 1% of cash on hand (whichever is largest).

 - **Large Favor:**
 - Examples: giving loans, giving a character a place to stay for a few days, delivering a package or message to a questionable neighborhood.
 - Will not requires more than 8 hours or time, a day's wages or 3% of total savings.
 - Loan will not exceed a week's earning of 15% of total savings.
 - May pose some risks although only Loyal or Awestruck character will agree to dangerous favor.

Favors and Attitude:

The likelihood of an NPC accepting to provide a favor to a character is based on the Attitude between the NPC and the character (see table below). Offering to provide a specific favor to the NPC in return allows the character to make an additional test and add the result to the previous test. If, in addition, the character offer to perform the offered favor first, he gets additional successes on the interaction test (+1 for small favor, +2 for large favor).

Favor Success Table (GM guide, page: 149)		
Target Attitude	Small Favor	Large Favor
Awestruck	Automatic	1 Success
Loyal	1 Success	2 Successes
Friendly	2 Successes	3 Successes
Neutral	3 Successes	4 Successes
Unfriendly	3 Successes	NA
Enemy	NA	NA

Returning Favors:

NPC will expect the character to repay a favor. The time they are willing to wait is also based on the Attitude between the NPC and the character (see table below). An NPC who has not been repaid within that timeframe will drop his attitude toward the character by one level.

Favor Payback Table (GM guide, page: 150)		
Target Attitude	Small Favor	Large Favor
Awestruck	Never	1 year
Loyal	1 year	1 month
Friendly	1 month	1 week
Neutral	1 week	1 day
Unfriendly	1 day	NA
Enemy	NA	NA