

DRAFT

Preparing For the Game

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Composition, Positioning, and Training of Analysis Sub-Team members

Analysis sub-teams typically are composed of analysts, observers, and data collectors. For smaller games, all three roles may be filled by analysts. There are larger-scale activities however, where members of the analysis team (typically data collectors and observers) will be augmentees who will join the study only as the game-playing phase is getting underway. In these cases, the augmentees may be unfamiliar with the game, with the analysis plan, with the data requirements from the DCMP, and with the tools that have been developed to assist in data collection and analysis. Thus, before game play begins, appropriate time and resources should be set aside for any training that may be required for those arriving to augment the analysis sub-team.

There are a number of critical positions that analysis team members fill during the game. Data collectors and observers may be positioned in each cell (Red, Blue, Green, White) to record decisions made and the information that led to those decisions. A game's White Cell typically controls the game, and intercedes when the game play requires a decision or additional information that will allow the game to proceed. Recording those decisions and their rationale often provides critical understanding of the game's events. Having analyst team observers in the different player cells (Red, Blue, and Green) is critical, especially if the game is closed, and there are closed-door planning sessions. Leaders of each cell must be comfortable that their observer is non-partisan, and will not reveal confidences in the execution of the observer's duties. In large games, observers that lurk in the break areas often come away with critical issues and information that cannot be gained elsewhere.

The analysis sub-team and any related observers or data collectors should conduct a rehearsal (or several rehearsals) before the game is played for real. This gives the analysis team a chance for a structured walk-through of how and when they will collect the necessary data. It allows them to develop or confirm a form of synchronization matrix to ensure that data collection is possible given that a game may have many "moving parts" and time and resources have to be appropriate to ensure that the right form of data collection can take place.

Preparing Players and other Participants

Players and other key participants should be provided with preparatory materials. As a minimum, players are typically provided a "read ahead" to familiarize them with the issues, objectives, scenarios, and player roles. For large games, a more detailed document, called a player handbook, may be produced. This should include both game-related material, e.g., the read-ahead items listed above, along with an administrative section that may cover travel arrangements, charging of various costs, availability of accommodations, phone numbers for contacts.

In most games with senior leaders acting as players, a "spin-up" session that brings players up to speed on the game preparation material should be scheduled for the first day of the game, as senior leaders often do not have the time to read materials provided ahead of time.

Dress Rehearsal

At least one “full dress rehearsal” should be conducted. This will constitute a last rehearsal for the analysis team as well as for players or surrogates for them. The idea of this rehearsal is not to deal in any detail with the mechanics of how the game works (the game design sub-team may have detailed rehearsals for this). This event is conducted to examine the “human factors” of the game and its facilities, e.g., can everyone see everything they need to, will comments from one participant be heard by all, will food and drink be conveniently located, break areas adequately marked, outside communication access, etc.