

Appendix:

Influence

1st Edition

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The Influencer

In the nation of Argos, it's often not what you know, but who you know. Nepotism and corruption are rampant within the inner workings of the government and its corporate components, and your reputation serves as a currency of sorts that can make or break your career. Ironically, this dynamic is mirrored in the criminal underbelly of society as well, where there often aren't obvious "ins" to that world unless you're already connected to it in some way. It's not impossible to break into these exclusive circles, but it takes a lot of charisma, networking, and distinguishing yourself with risky and high-profile plays. But if you can manage to get your foot into the door, the world of reputation and influence is a powerful weapon to bring to bear.

As with all systems at Sins of a Nation, our goal is to empower players to *be the character they want to be*, even if that character has little in common with the person they are out-of-game. Our combat system is designed to support both those who aspire to become great fighters or soldiers but may lack boffer skills, as well as to provide a rich and engaging experience for players who already excel in combat.

Similarly, the Influence system enhances social gameplay by enabling players to step into roles like deal-maker, diplomat, or power broker, even if they lack the knack for it out-of-game, while also enriching the experience for those who do possess these skills. We do this by spending *Influence Tokens*.

Generating Influence

Influence Tokens (IT) are a representation of your character's ability to lend assistance, use your reputation to grease some wheels or otherwise influence the game. They are represented in-game via poker chips. You can gain Influence Tokens by:

- Abilities purchased via the Cognizance and/or Authority headers that generate IT every event
- Certain social classes that generate a small amount of IT every event
- Bartering with NPCs or other players in exchange for goods or services
- Rewards for some missions that might earn you clout or infamy with a specific NPC or faction

Influence is a metaphorical currency, which means that it can't be looted or otherwise stolen or taken from you against your will. If you receive IT as "loot", it is because the action of defeating that specific opponent earned you some infamy, not because you physically took it from them.

During the player check-in at the start of each event, you will receive any Influence Tokens that your character generates. At the end of the final event each year (typically E4), the tokens will be "cashed out" and you start acquiring new points the following year. Influence Tokens do have a rough monetary value that will be used to make this conversion, so excess IT at the end of the year is never completely wasted, but you won't be able to keep a horde of it from one year to the next—use it or lose it!

Using Influence

During an event, if you have Influence Tokens to spare, you can expect to participate in a networking session on Saturday afternoon (typically around 4PM in the Mess Hall) that will enable you to use your Influence to make plays on the Influence Board. The Influence Board is a map with nodes representing influence opportunities across the different regions of the Unitary Republic of Anagos. Players unlock access to and connect nodes by spending IT. Once you have unlocked a Major Node, which typically represents a city or other societal hub, you then gain the ability to invest into either Resource or Faction Sub-Nodes:

Resource Sub Nodes

While the government has supplied some resources to the Practical Emergence Initiative, the camp is under fairly strict security and many things are scarce or non-existent, from crafting components to drugs to other luxuries. If a player can establish a connection with an outside Major Node where such things are produced, they can invest into that market and generate an available resource from that node

each event. However, to use that resource, the player will also have to invest in a route to get it delivered to the camp, legally or (mostly) otherwise. A route can be established by investing in a series of Minor Nodes that connect the originating Major Node to the Camp, and each of those nodes will have a rating from Secure (green) to Unsecure (red) at the start of each event. Generally, resources that are routed to the camp can be expected to arrive the following event via mail; however, if any of the Minor Nodes on the used route are Unsecure, there is a chance that the resources will be lost. In the rare event that a Major Node has an Unsecure rating, you may not be able to generate a resource from its Sub-Node at all.

Faction Sub Nodes

Each Major Node will typically have a handful of outside factions associated with it, such as public offices, corporations, religious institutions, or criminal organizations. Each Faction Node will have a rating indicating how favorable (green) or unfavorable (red) that faction is toward the players as of the start of each event. A player with a foothold in a given node can invest in shifting the opinions of those factions to more favorably align with the players' interests—this might entail improving public opinion about the emergent as a whole, de-escalating conflicts with hostile factions, or establishing a sympathetic relationship with certain parties that might reduce the difficulty of some plot-related mods or timeblock actions. Rarely will this single-handedly solve a problem, as the Influencer is not meant to be an *alternative* solution to plots, but rather a *supplemental* one—involving an influencer in a wider effort is a sure way to tip the scales in your favor.

Board Actions

At the beginning of each event*, you will gain access to a form that you can fill out on your phone or on a staff tablet, letting the Influence Broker know what actions you will be taking from the following List. You may submit these actions at any point up until actions are tallied during the Networking Session, and will have a grace period at the beginning of the session where actions may still be submitted.

Invest in Node

A player may spend an amount of influence to invest in any node. The cost of this action depends on the node type; Minor Nodes cost 1 IT, Major Nodes cost 3, and Sub-Nodes (Resource or Faction) cost 1. Note that you must invest in the associated Major Node before investing in any of its Sub-Nodes. Players should expect to track their investments independently of the Influence Broker, so make sure to note down any investments you make.

Influence Node

A player who has invested in a Sub-Node may spend IT to temporarily influence it. For Resource Nodes, this means increasing the Node's output; you may generate one more resource than normal from that node for this event. For Faction Nodes, this means improving their favorability rating, the effects of which may persist or not depending on counter-actions or other environmental factors. Both versions of the Influence Node action can be taken multiple times upon the same node during the same event, but

the cost for doing so will increase by 1 each time; if the first action cost 1 IT, the second will cost 2, the third will cost 3, and so on. Environmental factors may also impact the base cost of the action; for example, if the local economy is suffering or if there are plot factors influencing a faction against you, the base cost might go up to 2 or more. Such environmental modifiers will be noted on the Board at the beginning of the event*.

Secure Node

A Major or Minor node can have a rating from Secure (Green) to Unsecure (Red); this rating will dictate how safe a Node is to move goods through, and in rare instances, whether a resource can be generated from it at all. A player can invest IT into Securing a Node, the cost of which is equal to the cost to Invest in the node (1 for Minor Nodes, 3 for Major Nodes). Unlike with Investments, which are done on the individual basis, Securing a Node affects everyone interacting with that Node, and as such, the cost can be shared. If a node is fully Unsecured, you may need to spend more than once to bring the node all the way up to Secured, and the cost to do so will increase by 1 each time.

Move Resource

A player may spend IT to move resources from their point of origin to the camp. Doing so costs a number of IT equal to the number of Major and Minor nodes between the two points, but no additional cost per resource moved in this “batch”. Note that to move goods, each node on the desired route must be invested in by the player moving the goods. However, a player may generate goods and then “trade” them to another player who is invested in the same node, who may then move the goods along their invested route. When moving in batches, be aware that a complication due to unsecured routes will result in the loss of all goods in that batch. Resources that are generated but not moved persist until the end of the year as with Influence Tokens; players should expect to track any such resources independently of the Influence Broker.

Conceal Action

When taking an action on the Board, you always have the option to conceal that action by spending additional IT. There is no set cost to conceal an action, but rather the number of additional IT spent determines the threshold that another actor would need to exceed in order to reveal the action (see “Intrigue and Anonymity” below).

Intrigue and Anonymity

After all Actions have been collected, the Influence Broker will act out the results of all actions on the board, including actions of both players and NPC factions. Markers will be placed on the board to indicate goods in transit and changes in Node ratings. The Influence Broker will not automatically inform the table of who has made which actions; however, a player may at any time ask who has performed a specific action. If no Influence has been spent to conceal the action, this information will be freely given; otherwise, the player will need to anti up an amount of influence to attempt to Reveal the action. The player will not be informed what the threshold is, and if they come short of the threshold, the actor will

remain anonymous. Other players may choose to add Influence to this Reveal action if they wish. If the Reveal action is successful, the player(s) will be privately informed of the actor in question. Similarly, at any point a player can attempt to Reveal all actions taken by a specific player, NPC, or NPC Faction; the minimum cost for this is 1 IT. If that actor has any concealed actions, the player will need to anti an amount of Influence to reveal as much of that information as they can using the same threshold system.

***A quick note on Event 1**

as the players' information on the outside world will be very limited on arrival, this will be the one event where information provided at event start may not become available until the first Networking Session; this session will also serve to tutorialize the system.

Other Uses for Influence

When not at the Networking Session, Influence can still be put to use, though its effects might be less codified or consistent. You may present an NPC with one or more Influence Tokens in order to attempt to bribe them into giving you a better deal, cooperating with you, or even calling off an attack; however, results are never guaranteed. Similarly, when submitting a Timeblock action between events, you may spend one or more IT to attempt to improve the outcome of that action. There is no hard and fast rule on how this will impact your results, but staff will always do its best to honor the use of IT or refund it if there is no meaningful application.

Influence and Social Class

Some circumstances in life seem to beget influence with little effort. Rich socialites tend to have connections through family and money that they didn't earn, and a clean corporate employment record can open a lot of doors. That said, influential people exist in all walks of life, and while it might be harder for a street kid to build these kinds of connections, they can often leverage them in different ways that might have their own advantages. The following section outlines unique benefits that each Social Class can utilize within the Influence System (note that any restrictions or compounding action costs reset each event):

Official

Good Recommendation: Players with the Official background automatically generate 1 IT at the beginning of each event.

Surveillance: Players with the Official background treat the anti as 1 IT higher when spending to Reveal an action.

Affluent

Silver Spoon: Players with the Affluent background automatically generate 1 IT at the beginning of each event.

Stock Portfolio: Players with the Affluent background may slightly improve the cash-in rate of any Influence Tokens they possess at the end of the year.

Urbanite

Wrong Neighborhood: Players with the Urbanite background pay 1 less IT when using the Secure Node action (minimum 1IT).

A Face in the Crowd: Players with the Urbanite background count all actions as Concealed (Threshold 1). The player must pay full cost if they wish to increase the Threshold of concealment on an action beyond 1 (Threshold 2 would cost 2IT, etc).

Agrarian

Community First: Players with the Agrarian background pay 1 less IT when using the Invest in Node action (minimum 1IT).

Homemade: Players with the Agrarian background may generate 1 additional component resource from an invested node per event without spending IT (once per node).

Drifter

Home on the Road: Players with the Drifter background pay 1 less IT when using the Move Resource action (minimum 1IT).

Scavenger: Players with the Drifter background can generate one component of their choice from an invested Major Node that would not normally generate it, equal in tier to any component the node would normally generate (once per node).

Criminal

Drug Dealer: Players with the Criminal background may generate 1 additional addiction item resource from an invested node per event without spending IT (once per node).

Snitches Get Stitches: Players with the Criminal background treat the threshold as 1 IT higher when spending to Conceal an action.