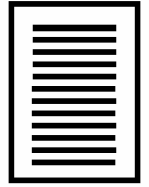


Life Pursuits And Experience



Characters can designate specific areas of interest in their lives and improve them over time.

A **Life Pursuit** is a skill emphasis by a character: a statement that a specific skill has priority for that character. It may be the character's job, his hobby, or some other area of importance. A **Certificate** is a formal statement that a character can succeed at specific tasks. Together, these two concepts allow a character to improve his store of skills through Experience.

LIFE PURSUITS

Life Pursuits provide specific advantages in use of the related skills, and in acquiring experience.

Life Pursuit Defined

A Life Pursuit is a brief statement about a specific job or hobby or interest. It is defined with a Title, a Primary Skill, a Required Characteristic, a C+S, and (optional) Secondary Skills.

Life Pursuit

Descriptive Title
Characteristic. Skill. C+S=12.
Commentary.

Title. The Title of the Life Pursuit is stated as a job title or occupation. A few words of description may be included.

Primary Skill. The Primary Skill is the most appropriate skill, knowledge, or talent for the Life Pursuit.

Required Characteristic. A Required Characteristic is the characteristic most applicable to the use of the Primary Skill.

Secondary Skills. One or more Secondary Skills may be stated (but are not required).
For example,

Life Pursuit
Neurosurgeon Doctor in interstellar service.
Medical. Dexterity. C+S=12.

Life Pursuit
Competitive Weight Lifter.
Athlete. Strength. C+S=12.

A character with Medical and Dexterity can have this Life Pursuit if the sum of Medical and Dexterity is at least 12.

Required C+S

The required C+S for a character's first Life Pursuit is 12; enough to succeed at an Average task 100% of the time. The required C+S increases +1 in each additional Life Pursuit. A character's tenth Life Pursuit requires C+S= 21.

Only the Primary Skill value is used in C+S. Other skills can be stated but are not included in the calculation.

How Many Life Pursuits? A Life Pursuit expresses an important interest or ability for a character. While it is possible to have dozens of Life Pursuits, they do not then express important interests. Most characters should have 3 or 4 Life Pursuits.

For Reference. A player may ask about a particular Life Pursuit ("What's involved in being a Concert Pianist?"). The Game Master records a Life Pursuit and marks it "For Reference." Players can then decide if they want to use that Life Pursuit.

Life Pursuit (For Reference)
Concert Pianist
Dexterity. Music. C+S=12.
Primary Instrument = Piano.

A Hobby. An otherwise unqualified character may make one Life Pursuit his hobby even if he does not have the required C+S. It is labeled Hobby.

Life Pursuit (Hobby)
Concert Pianist
Dexterity. Music. C+S=12.
Primary Instrument = Piano.

Shifting Priorities

A Character can shuffle the priorities of his Life Pursuits from time to time.

The Value Of A Life Pursuit

Life Pursuits show the areas that a character cares about in his life. When a Life Pursuit skill is used, the character is allowed Mod +1.

The Experience Rules can only increase a skill, talent, or knowledge which has been designated a Life Pursuit.

CERTIFICATES

A **Certificate** is a formal statement that a character can succeed at specific tasks. Expressed in the format Certificate of <Skill>, it shows that the character has successfully passed an examination (in game time, under the direction of the Referee) in the Skill.

Certificates are the basis for employment decisions (many occupations state a Certificate requirement).

Certificates reflect documented competency in specific skills, talents, or knowledges. They are often requirements for employment.

Taking The Test

A character can take a certificate test by showing up at an appropriate testing center, paying the fee, and succeeding at the test task.

Testing Centers. Most large cities have testing centers (although there is rarely a centralized testing location). The

Trade skills are tested at Labor halls, the Sciences are tested at Universities, Military skills are tested at Army (or Mercenary) bases.

The Tests. The standard tests for Certificates specify the Skill being tested and its associated Characteristic (specified by the Referee).

Certificate Types

There are four types of certification:

Qualified. A **Qualified** individual has met the minimum requirements of a skill. He must show the ability to succeed at an Easy task. When a job or vocation states a skill-related job title, a character must generally be Qualified in order to be hired.

A character with a Qualified Certificate is a Novice.

To Show Skill for Qualified Certificate (Absolute 1 hr)
Easy (1D) < Characteristic + Skill

Competent. A **Competent** individual is qualified to perform many tasks within a skill. He must show the ability to succeed at a Difficult task.

To Show Skill for Competent Certificate (Absolute 1 hr)
Difficult (3D) < Characteristic + Skill

Experienced. An **Experienced** individual is qualified to perform most tasks within a skill. He must show the ability to succeed at a Formidable task.

To Show Skill for Experienced Certificate (Absolute 1 hr)
Formidable (4D) < Characteristic + Skill

Master. A **Master** individual is qualified to perform virtually all tasks within a skill. He must show the ability to succeed at a Staggering task.

To Show Skill for Experienced Certificate (Absolute 1 hr)
Staggering (5D) < Characteristic + Skill

Cautious. Since the "test" is probably time-limited, a character may not declare it Cautious.

Cramming. A character may study prior to the test (the goal is Easy Flux as a Mod). Thus, if a character has a C+S within 5 of the required value can benefit from cramming the night before the test.

To cram for a test
Difficult (3D) < Characteristic + Skill
Study materials required.
Success allows Easy Flux Mod on Certificate Test

Repeating Tests. Each subsequent test-taking requires a Mod -1 (the first retake = Mod -1; the second retake requires Mod -2). This process discourages characters from taking tests for which they are not qualified.

The Value Of A Certificate

Employment in standard career job descriptions requires an appropriate Certificate.

For example, in the hiring process, a prospective employer does NOT inquire, "What is your skill level in Astrogation?" Instead, he asks to see the character's Astrogation Certificate and evaluates it (Qualified, Competent, Experienced, or Master) and whether the potential employee on that basis.

For example, a player-character may be hiring an Astrogator for his Free Trader. The referee generates (or selects from a suitable list) a series of job candidates the player evaluates them. The reasonable procedure is to compare their Astrogation Certificates.

The potential problem is the unqualified fluke. A character can conceivably perform especially well on a high level test and qualify for Experienced or even Master with a relatively low skill level.

Record Certificates with the name of the skill and the proper label (for example, Astrogator- Qualified).

EXPERIENCE

Characters continue to improve their abilities throughout their lives. The Experience process is the mechanism for this improvement.

Assumptions. The expected standard is that a character will gain one skill a year through experience. Time is tracked for each character, and the character has a birthday.

The Process

In the course of play, after each session, the referee reviews the events and notes for each player the Life Pursuit Skill best used during the session. This may reflect some negotiation as the referee and players discuss what they feel was the best use for each player. This information is recorded.

Every year, on the character's birthday, the character reminisces about his activities over the past 365 days and reviews the Best Used skills. From this reminiscence and review, one skill will become obvious or prominent. The character receives an increase of +1 level in that prominent skill.

Alternatives. Substitute the last day of the calendar year for the character's birthday and review for all characters at one time.

Negative Experience

The passage of time reduces some aspects of a character's store of knowledge. At the same time that Experience is determined, apply the following negative Experience.

Every 4th year, reduce the character's World knowledges by -1.