



MEMO

RE: Special contractors—hiring/termination procedures and potential concerns

It may be necessary to outsource work to consultants should our security forces or military ties prove either insufficient or undesirable for certain undertakings. The following is a confidential brief on these special contractors.

Please do not distribute. - CB

sorensen/crane

HUMAN MERCENARY

Johner: "I'm not the mechanic here, Ironsides! I mostly just hurt people!"

Nature: Carousing, Escaping and Demanding or Griping

Note: If Demanding, answer the Civilian question #3. If Griping, answer Marine question #3.

Raw abilities: Distribute 8 points. Will cannot be higher than Health. Natural Order is 3.

Skills: Soldier 3, Broker 2, Criminal 2, Gunner 2, Operator 2, Scavenger 2

Social Skill: Choose Manipulator 2 or Persuader 2

Special Traits: Survivor—you've learned to trust yourself and not much else in this universe, and that's hardened you to pain and suffering...both your own and that of others. It's every man for himself. Are you a loner or just a coward?

Select a background: Choose one trait and one wise. If you served in the USCMC prior to becoming a freelancer, how were you discharged? You may replace a background trait with Honorable or Dishonorable.

Note your character's name, gender and age (21+) on your record form.

Choose one main weapon:

- Submachine gun (torso/worn 1; hand/carried 1) +1D to Maneuver. Magazine 00
- Assault rifle (torso/worn 1; hand/carried 2) +1D to any action for duration of conflict. Magazine 00000
- Sawed-off shotgun (torso/worn 1; hand/carried 2) +1s, -1D Attack. Magazine 00
- Sniper rifle (torso/worn 1; hand/carried 2) +1s Feint, +2D Maneuver. Count A-A as vs. Magazine 000
- Pistol (belt/worn 1; hand/carried 1) Counts as armed. Against Hit count A-A as vs. Magazine 00

Choose one backup weapon:

- Pistol (belt/worn 1; hand/carried 1) Counts as armed. Against Hit count A-A as vs. Magazine 00
- Sword (torso or belt/worn 1; hand/carried 1) Counts as armed. Against Hit count A-A as vs.
- Grenades (8) (bandolier/worn 1) Select any 8 grenades from the USCMC Field Operations Manual.

Equip armor and helmet:

- M2 Flak vest (torso/worn 1)
- HM10 Ballistic helmet (head/worn 1)

Choose one gear loadout:

- If you served in the USCMC, you have the Marine rifleman loadout, minus weapons and armor (see the USCMC Field Operations Manual).
- If you never served in the USCMC, take the civilian survival loadout (see the ECA Handbook).

Starting Resources and Payday

Your starting Resources is defined by your character type. Payday allows the character to mark a passed or failed Resources test at certain milestones in your character's career.

Mercenary: Resources 0. Half up front; You get a passed Resources test for being hired and another for completing a mission. You mark a failed Resources test at each level for hard living and bad habits. Your contract may offer additional incentives.

HUMAN EMPATH

Dan Smithson: "Something bad happened here..."

Nature: Escaping, Demanding and Sensing

Note: Answer Civilian questions #2 and #3 and the single Empath question.

Raw abilities: Distribute 8 points. Health cannot be higher than Will. Natural Order is 2.

Skills: Distribute 15 points. Civilians may not take Armorer, Soldier or Gunner. Skills may not be greater than 4 or less than 2.

Special Traits: Sensitive—you're attuned to the emotions of those around you, able to detect subtle cues other cannot. But this sensitivity may overwhelm you if you're not careful in volatile situations.

Select a background: Choose one trait and one wise. Are you an adult or a juvenile? If you're a juvenile, you may replace a background trait with Young. Based on your character's age, select either the basic or juvenile loadout (see the ECA Handbook).

Note your character's name, gender and age on your record form.

Human Empath Nature Question

When your mind brushes against another's and all their innermost thoughts are laid bare, do their secrets influence your opinion of them or do you try and remain objective and judge them according to their behavior?

- If you always trust your feelings and act upon them, no matter the cost, increase your Nature by 1.
- If you isolate your emotions and judge situations based on objective facts, take the Thoughtful trait.

Circles Questions

Circles can be used to find help and information. Relationships can be introduced whenever appropriate. Answer the Circles questions from the ECA Handbook to generate relationships and a Circles rating. You cannot take a friend, parents, mentor and an enemy. You can only choose to have three of the four at best.

Starting Resources and Payday

Your starting Resources is defined by your character type. Payday allows the character to mark a passed or failed Resources test at certain milestones in your character's career.

Adult: Resources 1. Payday occurs at each level—mark a passed or failed Resources test. Your contract may offer additional incentives.

Juvenile: Resources 0. You don't get a payday, though your handlers might give you an allowance.

HUMAN MERCENARY LEVEL BENEFITS

Level 1

Mercenary: You GOT to get paid. May use all weapons, armor and helmets. Start with any Type I cybernetic. Natural Order 3.

Level 2

Perimeter Secured: +1 to Camp rolls.

Sleep Tight: You can sleep anywhere and through anything; +1D to recover from exhausted.

Level 3

Murder: Never unarmed. Knife counts as pistol. Sword grant +1s to Attack.

Cyborg: Gain any Type I cybernetic implant.

Level 4

Stubborn: You're always the last out of a fight.

Listen to Me: You're able to talk people down, giving them a free test to recover from angry or afraid. This benefit may only be used once per camp phase and must abide by standard recovery rules.

Level 5

Thousand-Yard Stare: Never be made angry. May not recover from exhaustion.

Cyborg: Gain any Type II cybernetic implant.

Level 6

Fearless: Never made afraid. May not recover from angry.

Greed: If angry and possessing knowledge of something valuable, the merc may invoke Greed. Greed gives the mercenary a free action to acquire the item by any means necessary. Only characters with an appropriate Instinct may help. If the item in question is acquired, you may test to recover from angry next camp or base phase—no check is required.

Level 7

Tough as Nails: Ignore the effects of either injured or sick for the duration of a mission.

Cyborg: Gain any Type II cybernetic implant.

Level 8

Master-of-Arms: Double weapon bonus for one weapon of your choice.

I'm Getting Too Old for This Shit: You may choose to reroll your result on the conflict results table. You must abide by this second roll, even if it's worse than the first roll.

Level 9

Reluctant Villain: Your rating cap increases to 7 in both Manipulator and one other skill.

Unlikely Hero: Change a Nature descriptor to Rescuing, Defending or Peace Making.

Cyborg: Gain any Type I or Type II cybernetic implant.

Level 10

Predator: Natural Order +1 when fighting alongside mercs or Marines, +2 when alone.

Lose the Arm: Total body prosthesis. You're more machine than human now. Gain any two cybernetic implants. In addition, your armored shell allows you to ignore 1 point of disposition loss when you're taking a combat action.

HUMAN EMPATH LEVEL BENEFITS

Level 1

Empath: May use knives. Start with any Type I PSI power. May wear helmets but cannot use PSI talents when wearing a helmet. Natural Order 2.

Level 2

Survival Instinct: If afraid, gain +1D when hiding or escaping from danger.

Violent: If angry, you may attack unarmed at no penalty.

Level 3

Not Hungry: You suffer no penalties from being hungry or thirsty. You must still eat and drink or suffer worsening conditions from the Grind.

PSI: Gain any Type I PSI talent.

Level 4

Fight or Flight: Before a fight starts, roll 1d6 to determine your reaction. On 1-3, flee; you cannot participate—do not roll on the conflict results table. On 4-6, fight; your help grants +2D.

Listen to Me: You're able to talk people down, giving them a free test to recover from angry or afraid. This benefit may only be used once per camp phase and must abide by standard recovery rules.

Level 5

Meds: Your meds (1 slot) give you a free test to recover from angry or afraid while in camp.

PSI: Gain any Type II PSI talent.

Level 6

Therapist: Change one Nature descriptor to Soothing. Your Nature may be used to help angry or afraid characters recover or to convince or calm people.

Scanner: Change one Nature descriptor to Scanning. Your Nature may be used when reading surface thoughts of living beings or when manipulating or interrogating others.

Level 7

Rapid Metabolism: Gain a free test to recover from sick or injured whenever you recover from hungry and thirsty. You require 2 units of food or water (or 1 of each) to recover from hungry and thirsty.

PSI: Gain any Type II PSI talent.

Level 8

Manic: When making tests toward completing your Goal, ignore the penalties you'd normally suffer for being hungry and thirsty or exhausted.

Depressive: Ignore the effects of the angry condition if you are afraid or exhausted.

Level 9

Esper: Your rating cap increases to 7 in Will and a Will-related skill of your choice.

Freak: Your Nature score's cap is increased to 8. Choose Health or Will: it's now capped at 5.

PSI: Choose any PSI talent of either Type I or Type II.

Level 10

Genius: Choose a core class skill; you score successes on rolls of 3-6 using that skill.

About to Explode: Natural Order is increased by +1 when angry or afraid. Natural Order is increased by +2 when both angry *and* afraid.

CYBERNETIC IMPLANTS

Mercenaries are hungry for any edge over the competition and cybernetic implants offer a neat exchange: resources for utility. The Cyborg benefit allows the merc to finance the costly procedure and locate a facility where the surgery will be performed.

Type I Cybernetics

Type I cybernetics require minor surgery and minimal healing time. This totally legal procedure can be performed almost anywhere (robots do most of the work). At level 1, the mercenary has one legal cybernetic implant and needs not worry about complications.

- **Smartlink:** +1s to Operator and Pilot when interfacing with drones/vehicles.
- **Targeting Reticle:** +1s to Soldier and Gunner when using smart firearms.
- **Neural Link:** Provided you have authorization, computer use doesn't take a turn.
- **Nanite Antibodies:** Cannot become Sick from a failed test; +1D to recover from sick.
- **Retinal/cochlear implants:** +1D to Scout and when searching; can't be ambushed.

Type II Cybernetics

Type II cybernetics are more extreme; entire biological systems are replaced or altered, causing unpleasant side effects. Surgery is performed at black market clinics in questionable areas. Recovery takes hours and leaves the patient with the injured condition.

- **Exoskeleton:** Natural Order +1; gain +1D for carrying heavy loads; do not suffer fatigue.
Side effect: Bulky; -1s to Maneuver actions, -1s to Scout tests when stealth is required.
- **Amygdala Implant:** You can no longer be made angry or afraid.
Side effect: Flat affect; you can no longer use carousing or griping or the Greed benefit.
- **Eyeshine:** Reduce factors for dim light and darkness by 1.
Side effect: Light sensitive; must wear polarized lenses or suffer a light factor during daylight or in brightly lit environments.
- **Adrenal Boosts:** Safely recover from the exhausted condition for free once per mission.
Side effect: Become angry when this benefit is used; become injured if this benefit is used more than once per mission.
- **Analgesic Implants:** Ignore the penalty for being injured, though your injured condition remains until you recover or are healed.
Side effect: Tests to recover or be healed from the injured condition are at -1s.

PSI TALENTS

PSI represents an empath's psychic abilities. Using a PSI talent does not advance the Grind but each time a talent is used, add +1 to the character's fatigue—increasing the recovery factor for the exhausted condition. Recovering from exhausted removes all fatigue.

Type I PSI Talents

Type I PSI talents are passive, subtle—no pyrotechnics or gross violations. The empath's Will ability is used for most tests.

- **Empathy:** Make a Will test, obstacle equal to the target's Will or Nature. Success means you can feel what the target feels (a condition, a deception, a mental illness, a PSI talent).
- **Machine Empathy:** You can communicate with any neural network; computer use doesn't use a turn, provided you have authorization. Your PSI abilities now work on synthetics; the ob is +1 higher if a test is required.
- **Telepathy:** You can send and receive thoughts. Conversations with non-empaths are limited to short sentences. No test needed.

- **Probe Thoughts:** Make a Will test against the target's Will or Nature. Success means the empath uncovers some information.
Probe Factors: learn a belief or fact, learn a goal or secret, learn an instinct or erased memory
- **Precognition:** Anticipates the responses or behavior of someone before they act. If a character uses an Instinct, you may opt to act before they do. You cannot be ambushed. You gain +1 disposition in all conflicts.
- **Remote Viewing:** You can make Scout tests to gather intelligence about a location. Requires a Will test. Any empath at that location, will be alerted to your presence and can counter-scan you with Probe Thoughts or Remote Viewing. You may do the same to them.
Location Factors (start at 2): during base phase, during camp phase, during mission phase

Type II PSI Talents

Type II PSI talents are destructive. They are fueled by the empath's emotional state or Nature.

- **Alter Memory:** Requires a Nature test against the target's Will. Success means you can modify a piece of information in the target's conscious mind.
Modify Factors: Change a Goal, change an Instinct, change a Belief
Delete Factors: Delete a Goal, delete an Instinct, delete a Belief
- **Telekinesis:** Make a Nature test to move an object with your mind. If angry, gain +1D. You are never unarmed in a physical conflict.
Mass Factors: requires 1 hand, requires 2 hands, requires 2+ people, requires powered equipment
- **Levitation:** Test Nature to suspend gravity, allowing you to ascend or descend in a slow, controlled manner. If successful, you don't need to test when falling or climbing. In addition, adds +2D to Maneuver and +1s to Feint in combat.
Time Factors: One turn, one phase
Vector Factors: slow descent, slow ascent, three-dimensional movement
- **Pyrokinesis:** You can burn objects with the power of your rage. Requires a Nature test to use outside of conflicts. If the empath is angry during a conflict, pyrokinesis may be armed as a weapon (-1D Attack/+2s Attack. +1s Maneuver). If used to disarm a person's weapon, the munitions could ignite. Roll 1d6. On a 4-6, the resulting explosion inflicts +1 point of disposition loss to the target.
Combustion Factors: Inflammables (fuel, cloth, paper), munitions, wood or flesh (causing injured condition), steel or glass
- **Mind Control:** You can turn an enemy into an ally or bend an ally's will to your own. This power causes a versus test between the target's Will and the empath's Nature. The empath suffers -1s if attempting to Mind Control another empath or a anyone higher on the Natural Order. The empath needs to be close enough to see his victim's eyes. Success makes the victim an ally for the duration of the effect, with all the benefits that entails. Record the margin of success when the PSI power is used. At the beginning of each subsequent phase, the victim rolls its Will, +1D if the target is an empath or is higher Natural Order. The obstacle is equal to the margin of success of the Mind Control. Success frees the victim. If the obstacle is 0, the effect ends at the end of the phase in which it was used. Against an ally, that persons -1s to any test against the empath.

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