

your guts, they *still* might refuse. Maybe they suspect you're hiding something, or maybe their first instinct is to turn you down out of sheer spite. In this case, you'd still have to make a roll using the appropriate skill, in this case Social (Persuasion).

Complications (Optional)

While this chapter gives pretty solid rules on most *successful* skill rolls, the GM has considerable latitude in deciding what your *failed* skill rolls mean. The most straightforward interpretation is that you simply didn't succeed in whatever you were doing. But it can also mean you basically *succeed* at what you were trying to do, but in a way that has a drawback or creates a new problem. This is called a **complication**. How often complications occur, and their exact nature, is entirely up to the GM.

Example: You're trying to pick a lock, and fail your roll. The GM could interpret this straightforwardly – you just fail to open it – or have a complication occur – perhaps you succeed, but it takes so long or makes so much noise that the patrol you were trying to hide from finds you just as the door swings open.

Example: You're trying to bluff your way past a nosey guard, acting like you belong there and telling him there's danger elsewhere that he should be attending to. A failed roll might mean he doesn't believe you. Or it might mean your bluff works *too* well. He believes you belong here all right; in fact, given that you're so important and the situation so dangerous, obviously he should serve as your escort! Now you have to rid yourself of the guard's unwanted "help," preferably before his colleagues arrive and in a way that won't arouse suspicions. No one said an adventurer's life was going to be easy!

This option can keep the game moving in cases where dead-end failures could grind it to a halt. It can also just be more *fun* to interpret bad rolls as complications rather than failures. However, there are times when the straightforward interpretation really is best. For one thing, if the players can *never* fail, at some point this will make the game less, rather than more, interesting.

The Two-Roll Rule

Sometimes the whole party must complete a task (swim across an underground river, for example), though only some of them actually have the skills for it. Even a very competent party is unlikely to have *everyone* succeed at anything non-trivial. This sometimes makes for fun improvisation, but at other times it's just a pain in the butt.

At other times, it might seem like everyone, independently, could at least *attempt* a task (like spotting a stealthy enemy). This has the opposite problem; allowing everyone to roll when only one person needs to succeed doesn't work well, making many tasks far too easy.

In these two types of situations, the GM can have *exactly two* PCs (out of a group of three or more) make skill rolls. Typically, these should be the two

best suited to the task at hand, although if someone has gone out of their way to declare that they're doing something related to that task, that character should be involved in these rolls, regardless of their relevant skill or lack thereof. (In this case, the GM may decide to cut them a break in the form of bonus dice (see below) if what they announced was a particularly good idea.)

- ▶ If *both* rolls succeed, the entire party succeeds, with the more skilled characters aiding or covering for the less skilled ones as needed.
- ▶ If *neither* roll succeeds, no one in the party succeeds.
- ▶ If only one roll succeeds, then that character succeeds but no-one else does.
 - Alternatively, this might be a good time for a complication (see above), giving the character that succeeded some kind of advantage in dealing with whatever the GM comes up with.

When only one character succeeds, that character may be able to leverage her success into something that lets the others succeed too, or at least have an easier time. As a simple example, if only one character succeeds at climbing a cliff face, she can drop a rope behind her to give the others a second, easier shot at making the climb. (This is also a good example of a change in circumstances that makes redoing a failed roll possible.)

Not all situations are handled well by the two-roll rule. The more detailed rules in the specialty descriptions should be used when the details matter, like in combat, where *how long* it takes a particular character to succeed might matter. When the details don't matter, use the more abstract rules in this section.

If you discover that it makes a significant difference to the party's chance of success whether you use the two-roll rule or a more detailed procedure from later in this chapter, use whichever method gives you a better chance of success. (And let us know by responding to the latest blog post at philosorap-torgames.com, because that's the sort of thing we would want to look at and possibly revise.)

Working as a Team

Sometimes two or more characters could work *together* to accomplish something. For this to be effective, each must be trained in the relevant specialty. Untrained assistants might save you time, but they don't make tasks easier. The character with the most dice in that specialty (or one of those tied for the most dice) rolls, with one additional die per additional character assisting in the task.

Certain skills can't be used as a team (for example, multiple characters "cooperating" on Stealth or Piloting just get in each other's way). The GM is free to impose other restrictions, such as limiting how many characters can work together. Three is a good maximum for Smithing and similar specialties.

Using Skills Casually

When you use a skill you are trained in, if you're not in combat or a similar high-pressure situation, you have the option of using that skill casually.