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| **Tier** |  |
| **First-tier speakers have the following abilities:** | |
| **Effort: Your Effort is 1.** |  |
| **Genius: You have an Intellect Edge of 1, a Might Edge of 0, and a Speed Edge of 0.** | |
| **Cypher Use: You can bear two cyphers at a time.** | |
| **Weapons: You can use light weapons without penalty. You have an inability with medium and heavy weapons; your attacks with medium and heavy weapons are hindered.** | |
| **Starting Equipment: Appropriate clothing and a light weapon of your choice, plus two expensive items, two moderately priced items, and up to four inexpensive items.** | |
| **Special Abilities: Choose four of the abilities listed below. You can’t choose the same ability more than once unless its description says otherwise. The full description for each listed ability can be found in Abilities, which also has descriptions for flavor and focus abilities in a single vast catalog. (Some Speaker abilities, like Mind Reading or True Senses, imply a supernatural element. If this is inappropriate to the character or the setting, these abilities can be replaced with something from the stealth flavor, or the GM can slightly modify them so they are based in extraordinary talents and insight rather than the supernatural.)** | |
| **Anecdote** | Anecdote (2 Intellect points): You can lift the spirits of a group of creatures and help them bond together by entertaining them with an uplifting or pointed anecdote. For the next hour, those who pay attention to your story are trained in a task you choose that’s related to the anecdote, as long as it’s not an attack or defense task. Action to initiate, one minute to complete. |
| **Babel** | Babel: After hearing a language spoken for a few minutes, you can speak it and make yourself understood. If you continue to use the language to interact with native speakers, your skills improve rapidly, to the point where you might be mistaken for a native speaker after just a few hours of speaking the new language. Enabler. |
| **Demeanor of Command** | Demeanor of Command (2 Intellect points): You project confidence, knowledge, and charisma to all who see you for the next hour. Your demeanor is such that those who see you automatically understand that you are someone important, accomplished, and with authority. When you speak, strangers who are not already attacking give you at least a round to have your say. If speaking to a group that can understand you, you can attempt to have them produce their leader or ask that they take you to their leader. You gain a free level of Effort that can be applied to one persuasion task you attempt during this period. Action to initiate. |
| **Encouragement** | Encouragement (1 Intellect point): While you maintain this ability through ongoing inspiring oration, your allies within short range ease one of the following task types (your choice): defense tasks, attack tasks, or tasks related to any skill that you are trained or specialized in. Action. |
| **Enthrall** | Enthrall (1 Intellect point): While talking, you grab and keep another creature’s attention, even if the creature can’t understand you. For as long as you do nothing but speak (you can’t even move), the other creature takes no actions other than to defend itself, even over multiple rounds. If the creature is attacked, the effect ends. Action. |
| **Erase Memories** | Erase Memories (3 Intellect points): You reach into the mind of a creature within immediate range and make an Intellect roll. On a success, you erase up to the last five minutes of its memory. Action. |
| **Fast Talk** | Fast Talk (1 Intellect point): When speaking with an intelligent creature who can understand you and isn’t hostile, you convince that creature to take one reasonable action in the next round. A reasonable action must be agreed upon by the GM; it should not put the creature or its allies in obvious danger or be wildly out of character. Action. |
| **Inspire Aggression** | Inspire Aggression (2 Intellect points): Your words twist the mind of a character within short range who is able to understand you, unlocking their more primitive instincts. As a result, they gain an asset on their Might-based attack rolls for one minute. Action to initiate. |
| **Interaction Skills** | Interaction Skills: You are trained in two skills in which you are not already trained. Choose two of the following: deceiving, persuading, public speaking, seeing through deception, or intimidation. You can select this ability multiple times. Each time you select it, you must choose two different skills. Enabler. |
| **Practiced With Medium Weapons** | Practiced With Medium Weapons: You can use light and medium weapons without penalty. If you wield a heavy weapon, attacks with it are hindered. Enabler. |
| **Spin Identity** | Spin Identity (2+ Intellect points): You convince all intelligent creatures who can see, hear, and understand you that you are someone or something other than who you actually are. You don’t impersonate a specific individual known to the victim. Instead, you convince the victim that you are someone they do not know belonging to a certain category of people. “We’re from the government.” “I’m just a simple farmer from the next town over.” “Your commander sent me.” A disguise isn’t necessary, but a good disguise will almost certainly be an asset to the roll involved. If you attempt to convince more than one creature, the Intellect cost increases by 1 point per additional victim. Fooled creatures remain so for up to an hour, unless your actions or other circumstances reveal your true identity earlier. Action. |
| **Terrifying Presence** | Terrifying Presence (2+ Intellect points): You convince one intelligent target of level 3 or lower that you are its worst nightmare. The target must be within short range and be able to understand you. For as long as you do nothing but speak (you can’t even move), the target is paralyzed with fear, runs away, or takes some other action appropriate to the circumstances. In addition to the normal options for using Effort, you can choose to use Effort to increase the maximum level of the target. Thus, to terrorize a level 5 target (two levels above the normal limit), you must apply two levels of Effort. Action. |
| **Understanding** | Understanding (1 Intellect point): You observe or study a creature or object. Your next interaction with that creature or object gains one asset. Action. |
|  | hold it for one minute. If the typical person can march for four hours without stopping, you can do so for eight hours. In terms of harmful effects, if a poison paralyzes its victims for one minute, you are paralyzed for thirty seconds. The minimum duration is always one round. Enabler. |
| **SECOND-TIER SPEAKER** |  |
| **Choose two of the abilities listed below (or from a lower tier) to add to your repertoire. In addition, you can replace one of your lower-tier abilities with a different one from a lower tier.** | |
| **Basic Follower** | Basic Follower: You gain a level 2 follower. One of their modifications must be persuasion. You can take this ability multiple times, each time gaining another level 2 follower. Enabler. (When you use Basic Follower, the GM may require that you actually look for a suitable follower.) |
| **Calm Stranger** | Calm Stranger (2+ Intellect points): You can cause one intelligent creature to remain calm as you speak. The creature doesn’t need to speak your language, but it must be able to see you. It remains calm as long as you focus all your attention on it and it is not attacked or otherwise threatened. In addition to the normal options for using Effort, you can choose to use Effort to calm additional creatures allied with your initial target, one additional creature per level of Effort applied. Action. |
| **Disincentivize** | Disincentivize (1 Intellect point): You hinder all actions attempted by any number of targets within short range who can understand you. You choose which targets are affected. Affected targets’ actions are hindered for one round. Enabler. |
| **Gather Intelligence** | Gather Intelligence (2 Intellect points): When in a group of people (a caravan, a palace, a village, a city, etc.) you can ask around about any topic you choose and come away with useful information. You can ask a specific question, or you can simply obtain general facts. You also get a good idea of the general layout of the location involved, note the presence of all major sites, and perhaps even notice obscure details. For example, not only do you find out if anyone in the palace has seen the missing boy, but you also get a working knowledge of the layout of the palace itself, note all the entrances and which are used more often than others, and take notice that everyone seems to avoid the well in the eastern courtyard for some reason. Action to initiate, about an hour to complete. |
| **Impart Ideal** | Impart Ideal (3 Intellect points): After interacting for at least one minute with a creature who can hear and understand you, you can attempt to temporarily impart an ideal to it that you could not otherwise convince it to adopt. An ideal is different than a specific suggestion or command; an ideal is an overarching value such as “All life is sacred,” “My political party is the best,” “Children should be seen, not heard,” and so on. An ideal influences a creature’s behavior but doesn’t control it. The imparted ideal lasts as long as befits the situation, but usually at least a few hours. The ideal is jeopardized if someone friendly to the creature spends a minute or more bringing it back to its senses. Action. |
| **Inspiring Ease** | Inspiring Ease: Through stories, songs, art, or other forms of entertainment, you inspire your friends. After spending 24 hours with you, once per day each of your friends can ease a task. This benefit is ongoing while you remain in the friend’s company. It ends if you leave, but it resumes if you return to the friend’s company within 24 hours. If you leave the friend’s company for more than 24 hours, you must spend another 24 hours together to reactivate the benefit. Enabler. |
| **Interaction Skills** | Interaction Skills: You are trained in two skills in which you are not already trained. Choose two of the following: deceiving, persuading, public speaking, seeing through deception, or intimidation. You can select this ability multiple times. Each time you select it, you must choose two different skills. Enabler. |
| **Practiced in Armor** | Practiced in Armor: You can wear armor for long periods of time without tiring and can compensate for slowed reactions from wearing armor. You reduce the Speed cost for wearing armor by 1. You start the game with a type of armor of your choice. Enabler. |
| **Skill With Defense** | Skill With Defense: Choose one type of defense task in which you are not already trained: Might, Speed, or Intellect. You are trained in defense tasks of that type. Enabler. |
| **Speedy Recovery** | Speedy Recovery (3 Intellect points): Your words enhance the normal regenerative ability of a character within short range who is able to understand you. When they make a recovery roll, they must spend only half the normal amount of time required to do so (minimum one action). Action. |
| **Unexpected Betrayal** | Unexpected Betrayal: Within a round or two of successfully using Enthrall, Fast Talk, or a similar ability on a target within short range, the first attack you make on that target is eased by two steps. Once you use Unexpected Betrayal on a target, using your abilities or attempting simple persuasion on that target is permanently hindered by two steps. Enabler. |
|  | hold it for one minute. If the typical person can march for four hours without stopping, you can do so for eight hours. In terms of harmful effects, if a poison paralyzes its victims for one minute, you are paralyzed for thirty seconds. The minimum duration is always one round. Enabler. |
| **THIRD-TIER SPEAKER** |  |
| **Choose three of the abilities listed below (or from a lower tier) to add to your repertoire. In addition, you can replace one of your lower-tier abilities with a different one from a lower tier.** | |
| **Accelerate** | Accelerate (4+ Intellect points): Your words imbue the spirit of a character within immediate range who is able to understand you, accelerating them so they gain an asset on initiative tasks and Speed defense rolls for ten minutes. In addition to the normal options for using Effort, you can choose to use Effort to affect more targets; each level of Effort affects one additional target. You must speak to additional targets to accelerate them, one target per round. Action per target to initiate. |
| **Blend In** | Blend In (4 Intellect points): When you blend in, creatures still see you, but they attach no importance to your presence for about a minute. While blending in, you are specialized in stealth and Speed defense tasks. This effect ends if you do something to reveal your presence or position—attacking, using an ability, moving a large object, and so on. If this occurs, you can regain the remaining period of effect by taking an action to focus on seeming innocuous and as if you belong. Action to initiate or reinitiate. |
| **Discerning Mind** | Discerning Mind: You have +3 Armor against damaging attacks and damaging effects that target your mind and Intellect. Defense rolls you make against attacks that attempt to confuse, persuade, frighten, or otherwise influence you are eased. Enabler. |
| **Expert Cypher Use** | Expert Cypher Use: You can bear three cyphers at a time. Enabler. |
| **Expert Follower** | Expert Follower: You gain a level 3 follower. They are not restricted on their modifications. You can take this ability multiple times, each time gaining another level 3 follower. Alternatively, you could choose to advance a level 2 follower you already have to level 3 and then gain a new level 2 follower. Enabler. |
| **Grand Deception** | Grand Deception (3 Intellect points): You convince an intelligent creature that can understand you and isn’t hostile of something that is wildly and obviously untrue. Action. |
| **Lead by Inquiry** | Lead by Inquiry: You keep your allies on their toes with occasional questions, jokes, and even mock drills for those who care to join in. After spending 24 hours with you, your allies are treated as if trained in tasks related to perception. This benefit is ongoing while you remain in your allies’ company. It ends if you leave, but it resumes if you return to the allies’ company within 24 hours. If you leave the allies’ company for more than 24 hours, you must spend another 24 hours together to reactivate the benefit. Enabler. |
| **Mind Reading** | Mind Reading (2 Intellect points): You can read the surface thoughts of a creature within short range, even if the target doesn’t want you to. You must be able to see your target. Once you have established contact, you can read the target’s thoughts for up to one minute. If you also have the Mind Reading special ability from another source, you can use this ability at long range, and you don’t need to be able to see the target (but you do have to know that the target is within range). Action to initiate. |
| **Oratory** | Oratory (4 Intellect points): When speaking with a group of intelligent creatures that can understand you and aren’t hostile, you convince them to take one reasonable action in the next round. A reasonable action should not put the creatures or their allies in obvious danger or be wildly out of character. Action. |
| **Perfect Stranger** | Perfect Stranger (3 Intellect points): You alter your posture and way of speaking and make a small but real alteration to an outfit (such as putting on or taking off a hat, reversing a cloak, and so on). For the next hour (or as long as you keep up the alteration), even creatures that know you well don’t recognize you. All tasks related to hiding your true identity during this period gain one free level of Effort. Action to initiate. |
| **Quick Wits** | Quick Wits: When performing a task that would normally require spending points from your Intellect Pool, you can spend points from your Speed Pool instead. Enabler. |
| **Telling** | Telling (2 Intellect points): This ability provides an asset to any tasks for attempting to deceive, persuade, or intimidate. Each use lasts up to a minute; a new use (to switch tasks) replaces the previous use. Action to initiate. |
|  | hold it for one minute. If the typical person can march for four hours without stopping, you can do so for eight hours. In terms of harmful effects, if a poison paralyzes its victims for one minute, you are paralyzed for thirty seconds. The minimum duration is always one round. Enabler. |
| **FOURTH-TIER SPEAKER** |  |
| **Choose two of the abilities listed below (or from a lower tier) to add to your repertoire. In addition, you can replace one of your lower-tier abilities with a different one from a lower tier.** | |
| **Anticipate Attack** | Anticipate Attack (4 Intellect points): You can sense when and how creatures attacking you will make their attacks. Speed defense rolls are eased for one minute. Action. |
| **Confounding Banter** | Confounding Banter (4 Intellect points): You spew a stream of nonsense to distract a foe within immediate range. On a successful Intellect roll, your defense roll against the creature’s next attack before the end of the next round is eased. Action. |
| **Feint** | Feint (2 Speed points): If you use one action creating a misdirection or diversion, in the next round you can take advantage of your opponent’s lowered defenses. Make a melee attack roll against that opponent. You gain an asset on this attack. If your attack is successful, it inflicts 4 additional points of damage. Action. |
| **Heightened Skills** | Heightened Skills: You are trained in two tasks of your choosing (other than attacks or defense). If you choose a task you’re already trained in, you instead become specialized in that task. You can’t choose a task you’re already specialized in. Enabler. |
| **Psychosis** | Psychosis (4 Intellect points): Your words inflict a destructive psychosis in the mind of a target within long range that can understand you, dealing 6 points of Intellect damage (ignores Armor) per round. The psychosis can be dispersed if a target uses an action doing nothing but calming and centering itself. Action to initiate. |
| **Read the Signs** | Read the Signs (4 Intellect points): You examine an area and learn precise, useful details about the past (if any exist). You can ask the GM up to four questions about the immediate area; each requires its own roll. Action. |
| **Spur Effort** | Spur Effort (5 Intellect points): You select an ally within immediate range. If that character applies Effort to a task on their next turn, they can apply a free level of Effort on that task. Enabler. |
| **Strategize** | Strategize (6 Intellect points): Having an action plan in place before facing a challenge improves the odds of success, even if that plan is eventually changed or discarded once it’s put into play. If you and your allies spend at least ten minutes going over a plan of action, all of you gain one free level of Effort that can be applied to one task you attempt during the execution of that plan within the next 24 hours. The plan of action must be something concrete and executable in order to gain this benefit. Action to initiate, ten minutes to complete. |
| **Suggestion** | Suggestion (5+ Intellect points): You suggest an action to a creature within immediate range. If the action is something that the target might normally do anyway, it follows your suggestion. If the suggestion is something that is outside of the target’s nature or express duty (such as asking a guard to let an intruder pass), the suggestion fails. The creature must be level 2 or lower. The effect of your suggestion lasts for up to a minute. In addition to the normal options for using Effort, you can choose to use Effort to increase the maximum level of the target you can affect by 1. Thus, to affect a level 5 target (three levels above the normal limit), you must apply three levels of Effort.  When the effects of the ability end, the creature remembers following the suggestion but can be persuaded to believe that it chose to do so willingly. Action to initiate. |
|  | hold it for one minute. If the typical person can march for four hours without stopping, you can do so for eight hours. In terms of harmful effects, if a poison paralyzes its victims for one minute, you are paralyzed for thirty seconds. The minimum duration is always one round. Enabler. |
| **FIFTH-TIER SPEAKER** |  |
| **Choose three of the abilities listed below (or from a lower tier) to add to your repertoire. In addition, you can replace one of your lower-tier abilities with a different one from a lower tier.** | |
| **Adroit Cypher Use** | Adroit Cypher Use: You can bear four cyphers at a time. Enabler. |
| **Discipline of Watchfulness** | Discipline of Watchfulness (7 Intellect points): You keep your allies on their toes with occasional questions, jokes, and even mock drills for those who care to join in. After spending 24 hours with you, your allies can apply a free level of Effort to any initiative tasks they attempt. This benefit is ongoing while you remain in the allies’ company. It ends if you leave, but it resumes if you return to the allies’ company within 24 hours. If you leave the allies’ company for more than 24 hours, you must spend another 24 hours together to reactivate the benefit. You must spend the Intellect point cost each 24 hours you wish to keep the benefit active. Enabler. |
| **Experienced in Armor** | Experienced in Armor: The cost reduction from your Practiced in Armor ability improves. You now reduce the Speed cost by 2. Enabler. |
| **Flee** | Flee (6 Intellect points): All non-allies within short distance who can hear your dreadful, intimidating words flee from you at top speed for one minute. Action. |
| **Foul Aura** | Foul Aura (5+ Intellect points): Your words, gestures, and touch invest an object no larger than yourself with an aura of doom, fear, and doubt for one day. Creatures that can hear and understand you feel an urge to move at least a short distance away from the object. If a creature does not move away, all tasks, attacks, and defenses it attempts while within the aura are hindered. The duration of the aura is extended by one day per level of Effort applied. The aura is temporarily blocked while the object is covered or contained. Action to initiate. |
| **Knowing the Unknown** | Knowing the Unknown (6 Intellect points): By accessing the resources appropriate to your character, you can ask the GM one question and get a general answer. The GM assigns a level to the question, so the more obscure the answer, the more difficult the task. Generally, knowledge that you could find by looking somewhere other than your current location is level 1, and obscure knowledge of the past is level 7. Gaining knowledge of the future is impossible. Action. |
| **Regeneration** | Regeneration (6 Intellect points): You restore points to a target’s Might or Speed Pool in one of two ways: either the chosen Pool regains up to 6 points, or it is restored to a total value of 12. You make this decision when you initiate this ability. Points are regenerated at a rate of 1 point each round. You must remain within immediate range of the target the whole time, either touching them or conversing with them. In no case can this raise a Pool higher than its maximum. Action. |
| **Skill With Attacks** | Skill With Attacks: Choose one type of attack in which you are not already trained: light bashing, light bladed, light ranged, medium bashing, medium bladed, medium ranged, heavy bashing, heavy bladed, or heavy ranged. You are trained in attacks using that type of weapon. You can select this ability multiple times. Each time you select it, you must choose a different type of attack. Enabler. |
| **Stimulate** | Stimulate (6 Intellect points): Your words encourage a target you touch who can understand you. The next action it takes is eased by three steps. Action. |
|  | hold it for one minute. If the typical person can march for four hours without stopping, you can do so for eight hours. In terms of harmful effects, if a poison paralyzes its victims for one minute, you are paralyzed for thirty seconds. The minimum duration is always one round. Enabler. |
| **SIXTH-TIER SPEAKER** |  |
| **Choose two of the abilities listed below (or from a lower tier) to add to your repertoire. In addition, you can replace one of your lower-tier abilities with a different one from a lower tier.** | |
| **Assume Control** | Assume Control (6+ Intellect points): You control the actions of another creature you have interacted with or studied for at least a round. This effect lasts for ten minutes. The target must be level 2 or lower. Once you have assumed control, the target acts as if it wants to accomplish your desire to the best of its ability, freely using its own best judgment unless you use an action to give it a specific instruction on an issue-by-issue basis. In addition to the normal options for using Effort, you can choose to use Effort to increase the maximum level of the target. Thus, to attempt to command a level 5 target (three levels above the normal limit), you must apply three levels of Effort. When the effect ends, the target remembers everything that happened and reacts according to its nature and your relationship to it; assuming control might have soured that relationship if it was previously a positive one. Action to initiate. |
| **Battle Management** | Battle Management (4 Intellect points): As long as you use your action each round giving orders or advice, attack and defense actions taken by your allies within short range are eased. Action. |
| **Crowd Control** | Crowd Control (6+ Intellect points): You control the actions of up to five creatures in short range. This effect lasts for one minute. All targets must be level 2 or lower. Your control is limited to simple verbal commands like “Stop,” “Run away,” “Follow that guard,” “Look over there,” or “Get out of my way.” All affected creatures respond to the command unless you specifically command them otherwise. In addition to the normal options for using Effort, you can choose to use Effort to increase the maximum level of the targets or affect an additional five people. Thus, to control a group that has a level 4 target (two levels above the normal limit) or a group of fifteen people, you must apply two levels of Effort. When the Crowd Control ability ends, the creatures remember your commands but don’t remember being controlled—your commands seemed reasonable at the time. Action to initiate. |
| **Inspiring Success** | Inspiring Success (6 Intellect points): When you succeed on a roll to perform a task related to the stat that you choose upon selecting this ability, and you applied at least one level of Effort, you may choose another character within short range. That character has an asset on the next task they attempt using that stat on their next turn. Enabler. |
| **Recruit Deputy** | Recruit Deputy: You gain a level 4 follower. They are not restricted on their modifications. Alternatively, you can choose to advance a level 3 follower you already have to level 4 and then gain a new level 3 follower. Enabler. |
| **Shatter Mind** | Shatter Mind (7+ Intellect points): Your words reverberate destructively in the brain of an intelligent level 1 target within short range that can hear and understand you. They destroy tissue, memories, and personality, triggering a vegetative state. In addition to the normal options for using Effort, you can choose to use Effort to increase the maximum level of the target. Thus, to shatter the mind of a level 5 target (four levels above the normal limit), you must apply four levels of Effort. Action. (The vegetative state created by Shatter Mind can be healed by advanced magic or science, or by a condition remover cypher that cures psychosis.) |
| **True Senses** | True Senses: You can see in complete darkness up to 50 feet (15 m) as if it were dim light. You recognize holograms, disguises, optical illusions, sound mimicry, and other such tricks (for all senses) for what they are. Enabler. |
| **Word of Command** | Word of Command (6 Intellect points + level 6 cypher): You utter a word so powerful that to fully invest it, you sacrifice a cypher in your possession that is level 6 or higher. You issue the word to one creature within long range that you can see. The affected target must obey the command for several hours before it is free to act as it wishes. Targets that are attacked while under the effect of the command can defend themselves. Typical commands include “retreat,” “calm,” “come,” and “stay.” The GM decides how the target acts once a command is given. Action. |