Builder Tip Sheet for New Campaigns - Version 1.0

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Brought to you by the DM-Friendly Initiative (DMFI)

The following are some quick tips for builders who are looking to create a new campaign or multiplayer mod. They may save you time and effort later, or at least provide some food for thought for the type of experience you want to create.

NPC creation and population

- Consider using the included BESIE or another commoner spawner system for both outdoor areas and interiors (taverns, castles, etc.) where you want immersive background activity, but don't want to permanently clutter the area and spend a lot of time making and placing custom NPCs. It can be used in wilderness areas to create non-hostile animals, etc. as well.
- Mixing a few custom NPCs with the commoners can give an area both a unique feel and a sense of activity. For example, whether inns have "Noble Patrons" or "Thugs" in addition to commoners. You can also make different sets of commoner spawner lists to draw on and mix.
- When making custom NPCs, consider setting their properties in the "Advanced" tab to: Disarmable and Leaves Lootable Corpse (with a long delay time, say 10000). This gives a more realistic feel in-game to combat and death.
- Consider making a similar standard adjustment to custom NPCs' inventory items (making them droppable and pickpocketable).
- To create enemies of the PCs, but allow interaction with them prior to combat, it's helpful to create a new faction for them that is neutral to the PCs and friendly only to itself, rather than use an existing faction; this helps avoid unintended consequences. Also be sure to not check the "Global Effect" box for new factions, unless you want all faction members to telepathically know what happens in different areas.
- For an individual NPC, you can set its faction to "Neutral" (a custom faction included in the starter mod) in order to avoid interactions with it having any other faction consequences.
- Consider planning in advance where you want to organize custom NPCs in the palette. Some builders find that the "Special" categories are most helpful, others will use the default race categories to organize creatures, especially

for individuals who are not members of groups. You may want to use the "Special" categories for NPCs of a particular group/organization/category.

Scripting Considerations

The DMFI MP Starter Mod is set up with everything necessary to run a DM'd campaign, in terms of scripting, given the in-game functionality of the DMFI widgets and the ability of DMs to run all NPC conversations.

If you are looking to script a number of independent NPC actions, consider installing NPC Activities and using that for your requirements, as mentioned in the **Additional Resources** doc. In the long run (or even the short run) this may save time.

For multiplayer / no-DM scripting requirements, a key consideration is the need to set variable states and take actions that apply to the whole party, rather than only to a single PC (the usual scripting default). Below are a couple things that can help with this. If you want to do a heavily custom-scripted module, then it's recommended you delve further into the scripting tutorials mentioned in the Additional Resources doc.

- Setting general variables applicable to the party on the module using a neutral target such as GetModule() rather than on a PC; this assumes a single party, however.
- If you are using quest journals, setting a journal state by default updates the journal for the entire party, so party quest states can be tracked this way.
- Be sure to use functions that reward the entire party rather than just one PC. For example, RewardPartyXP and RewardPartyGP.

Resting considerations

- Consider making appropriate exterior areas (snow, desert, etc.) off-limits to rest (Area Properties – Advanced – No Rest) to simulate harsh conditions. There are some more script systems for controlling resting within areas, but thoughtful design and application of general area rest restrictions is easy and logical to implement. A cave interior located off of a desert area might be available for resting, for example. Or resting in a city streets exterior area may not be possible, while inside an inn it is.

- If using time-based or supply-based rest (SBR) systems, consider what you want for the availability of resting for the party. For time-based rest, the default DMFI MP Starter Mod settings will allow rest once every two hours of real time, which would mean once in a typical session without any external time adjustments. A DM in-game can manage this aspect by advancing time with the DMFI DM Wand.
- SBR is a highly tweakable system in terms of gold cost, item weight, and the in-game availability of the rest item. Naturally a DM in-game can also always create more items, should the need arise.