



SESSION TITLE

“Writing For Less Common Departments”

LOCATION

Room Two

HOSTED BY

[PF] Doug (Pegasus Fleet)

TIME

4pm GMT

(all times presented in CST [UTC-6])

[PF] Doug, 10:00:49 AM

Greetings, @everyone ! Welcome to "Writing for Less Common Departments". My name is Doug and I will be your facilitator for the next hour.

[SB118] CSO Lt. German Galven, 10:00:59 AM

Hey!

Chistery, 10:01:01 AM

Hey!

[PF] Doug, 10:01:07 AM

A little bit about my background: I've been involved with simming in one way or another for going on 12 years now. Started, as most of us probably did, with a single character aboard a relatively small sim. Since then, I've been a player, a commanding officer, and a community staff member.

I am currently a member of Pegasus Fleet write aboard a Stardock-class station, lead a Norway-class starship, and serve as the Director of Resources.

Today, we are going to explore some of the less familiar departments involved in our simming experience. We'll spend about 30-40 minutes on that and then we'll have about 10-20 minutes of open Q&A.

Chistery, 10:01:35 AM

Awesome

Draxx, 10:01:42 AM

Sounds good

[SB118] CSO Lt. German Galven, 10:01:45 AM

Kind of like intelligence and diplomatic officers?



Chistery, 10:02:31 AM

That would apply for both my ST sims (XO) and my SG sim (CO)

[PF] Doug, 10:02:32 AM

I want to be respectful of everyone's time, so we will wrap things up at about 10 'til so that you all have a chance to stretch, use the bathroom, grab a snack, etc. before the next session starts.

Logan Hunter, 10:02:46 AM

Will this also include civilians"

[SB118] CSO Lt. German Galven, 10:02:53 AM

takes a quick shower

Draxx, 10:03:03 AM

And diplomatic embassies?

[BF] aio, 10:03:04 AM

When we sort out the logs of the individual panels, having a message like that makes it easier to find where panels start and finish. 😊

[PF] Doug, 10:03:27 AM

We will try to address specific examples as time allows.

Now, if we were actually together in a room, I might have you turn to your neighbor and introduce yourself to one another. Obviously, that's not possible. :-P

I may regret this later, given how many folks we have with us, but let's try having everyone who's here tell us:

- your name (or the name you go by)
- where you're currently simming
- what your favorite department to write for is.

Example: I'm Doug, currently a member of Pegasus Fleet, and my favorite department to write for is...hmm...Strategic Operations.

Fluffy Killer, 10:04:13 AM

I wrote a civilian CEO on Starbase 109 in Theta Fleet. It's not entirely difficult if you put in some character development and develop your own story arcs. I did so and won writer of the month several times

Wolf626, 10:04:51 AM

Wolf626
SARP
Military Police

[BF] RachH, 10:04:53 AM

I'm RachH, currently a member of Bravo Fleet, and my favourite department is medical.

Draxx, 10:04:55 AM

Liam, uss nogura, counselling and medical

[SB118] CSO Lt. German Galven, 10:05:00 AM(edited)

Dane, StarBase118, I'm the Chief Science Officer and as well as a Co-Facilitator for our Podcast Team

Yuna [PF], 10:05:25 AM

Yuna, executive officer, SB 832, PF.
Security.

Beautiful Night, 10:05:27 AM

I'm Notty, I currently CO DS5 in Theta Fleet, and play other characters on other ships. I don't really have a favorite department. My longest running PC is a civilian though.

[BF/PF] ConfusedFire, 10:05:28 AM

Confusedfire aka Patrick. On a few sims, but primarily the CO of the USS Onnar and Vidal Fleet Yards in Bravo Fleet also the CEO on Thurgood Marshall and Medea, CMO on Tuiq and the XO on the Emar in Pegasus Fleet

[16th] Admiral Teagarden, 10:05:45 AM

I'm William. I am in the 16th Fleet. I play a myriad of characters including an Admiral, a civilian researcher, an engineer

Chistery, 10:05:47 AM(edited)

I often go by Chistery (the flying monkey from Wicked) because that's my avatar. I'm XO of USS Valiant and USS Revenant, CO of Stargate New Dawn, and Senior Chief Corpsman on two BF sims. I also have NPCs playing roles as Chief of the Boat and Intelligence Chief Warrant Officer. On New Dawn, I also play the SG-1 Team Leader (so I can keep the story moving) and when we need them, I fill in other team member roles (while we're getting going or when we need back up).

[MFU]Col. Ellie Ijaan, 10:05:59 AM

I am Giangie, write on MFU, Obsedian Fleet Bravofleet and Task Force Phoenix,y favorite departments are medical/ Counseling and intelligence

[TFC] Not Shane, Kid, 10:06:03 AM

I'm Wayward Horizons, and I'm involved with the new Frontier Coalition group, and I haven't really thought about my favorite departments, but engineering is definitely a candidate.

[BF] Kai1701E, 10:06:13 AM

Kai, BF, CO of the USS Nogura (BF version) and Great Assembly of Ashalla (Bajoran Political Sim). It is the political scene where I am having most fun of late.

Fluffy Killer, 10:06:19 AM

--Allison
--Theta Fleet (CO of the USS Valiant; Chief Engineer on the USS Revenant)
--Don't really have a favorite--least favorite is Intel, though

[BF] TheeFlamehead, 10:06:48 AM(edited)

TheeFlamehead, Bravo Fleet, and currently, I prefer counselors and characters with pronounced flaws

Logan Hunter, 10:06:48 AM

Ed (all Bravo Fleet), Two CAGs, One Chief Strategic Operations Officer and One First Officer, I generally write combat related characters (helps me sometimes process my PTSD)

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 10:06:51 AM

I'm BJ part of STF. I've had a few positions including captain.

PD, 10:06:51 AM

I'm PD. I primarily write medical and counselling and will easily admit a fear of writing outside of these 😊

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 10:07:09 AM

I tried Intel once. It wasn't easy.

[OF]Harrington, 10:07:13 AM

Jakers, (Character name Harrington) CO of the Nogura (OF Version) ..favorite Departments Medical and Counseling

Draxx, 10:07:32 AM

[OF]Harrington hi boss waves

Chythar Skyfire, 10:07:39 AM

I'm Zephyr, writing for the character Chythar Skyfire, USS Montreal, UFOP: Starbase 118. My favorite department: don't have one. Podcast team member, artist, and previous podcast team facilitator.

Chistery, 10:07:50 AM

As the teams fill up, I'll just be playing CO and SG-1 CO and the stray Base NPC.

Logan Hunter, 10:07:54 AM

Favorite Departments are probably Command and Strat Ops

Yuna [PF], 10:08:10 AM

Intel is irritating if your CO doesn't give you anything to work with, and you're left writing by the seat of your pants, and then they get annoyed at you for messing up the plot

[PF] Doug, 10:08:17 AM

One more minute for everyone @here to introduce yourself.

Chistery, 10:08:31 AM(edited)

I enjoy XO, Intel, some NCO positions.

Marty, 10:08:48 AM

Marty, I avoid medical, and sciences as I am not sure as to how to incorporate technobabble into things.

Chistery, 10:08:53 AM

And sunsets and long walks on the beach

Fluffy Killer, 10:09:01 AM

Yeah, Dave is the Unofficial XO of Theta Fleet, LOL

Logan Hunter, 10:09:13 AM

I am also a fan of writing Civilian Dependents (usually Primary Characters younger siblings or children)

Chistery, 10:09:15 AM(edited)

Lol. Thanks boss.

[PF] Doug, 10:09:25 AM

Okay...thanks everyone!

We saw a few different departments come up in that little exercise – Civilians, Military Police, Medical, Counseling, Science, Strategic Operations, Security, Engineering, Intelligence, Bajoran Politics, Starfighters, Command. I'm sure each and every one we named has some good stories behind it.

If we want to really look at what it means to write for “less common departments”, we need to understand what that means first. The easiest thing to do might be to look at what are the “common” departments.

I tend to think of “common” departments as those we saw portrayed throughout the television series and films. (You can also think about who you might see represented on a typical starship bridge.)

October, 10:09:54 AM

I'm October, current CoS for UCIP and the CO of the infamous USS Vindicator.

[PF] Doug, 10:10:07 AM

The most common departments we see fairly regularly throughout are Command (Captain & XO), Flight Operations (Helm), Security, Tactical, Operations, Engineering, Science, and Medical.

Because we've seen them so often, we have a better sense of what they do, how they're run, and why they're important. Better yet, we have more than one example of people serving in those departments to base our character and story ideas off of.

So where does that leave us with “less common” departments?

If “common” departments are those we've seen a lot of on screen, then “less common” departments would be those we haven't seen as much of (if at all). We know it takes a lot of people to keep a starship, starbase, or installation running and that a one-hour episode doesn't have time to show everything that's happening. Unfortunately, this leaves us in the sometimes difficult position of having to write for positions and departments we don't really know much about.

As we were gathering, I heard some people already start to mention a few departments of interest, so our next question for everyone @here is this:

What has been the most challenging department for you to write or lead in your simming? Why?

Draxx, 10:11:26 AM

Diplomatic

Logan Hunter, 10:11:31 AM

I sometime like to write for the COB/CMC if its usually relegated to an NPC or PNPC position

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 10:11:49 AM

I find Intel hard because of how little Canon there is.

Fluffy Killer, 10:11:58 AM

Intel. Probably because I suck at writing as an operative.

October, 10:11:58 AM

Helm. You need to know your stuff and normally it's NPC dictated

[OF] Sepandiyar, 10:12:03 AM

Marines. Because no canon and hot button topic for trek purists.

Chistery, 10:12:05 AM

sometime Flight Control can be challenging, Counseling, and often NCO roles because other players aren't sure how to treat a Senior NCO

Yuna [PF], 10:12:15 AM

Intel. Hands down. It's a department that requires COs to keep you in the loop for what you need to know, leaving you ???

[NDF] Cael Maz, 10:12:16 AM

Intel and Medical. I have had to turn these over to others or off fully.

Draxx, 10:12:16 AM

It was difficult to balance being starfleet and held to those rules when everyone else in the embassies wasn't

[BF] RachH, 10:12:18 AM

Intel, Marines, and Flight Control.

[OF] Harrington, 10:12:26 AM

I would agree with Flight Control

[SA] Wes of Star Army, 10:12:28 AM

I feel like science and medical are challenging because their work comes in waves instead of steadily, and they don't necessarily get bridge time.

Marty, 10:12:43 AM

Medical and Sciences

Chythar Skyfire, 10:12:51 AM

Medical, because I don't know anything about anatomical stuff or medical lingo.

Trem, 10:12:53 AM

I'd have to agree with science and medical, but also anthropology and diplomacy at times .

[BF] JonM, 10:12:56 AM

I've struggled to enjoy writing flight control because I feel like I dunno what to write for conn to make it interesting instead of just "course laid in" lol

[PF] Ironjawa, 10:12:57 AM

Flight control because most flying takes place off screen

Fluffy Killer, 10:12:58 AM

I find Marines and Security easiest to write due to my real life background of serving 8 years in the US Marines

Teix, 10:13:00 AM

Counselor is hard.

[BF/PF] ConfusedFire, 10:13:03 AM

Flight Control and Medical are my two difficult ones.

[SA] Wes of Star Army, 10:13:07 AM

Anyone else have playable cooks in their RP (sim)?

Marty, 10:13:15 AM

though flight control would depend on the ship or base type

Teix, 10:13:17 AM

Helm is difficult for many.

Draxx, 10:13:19 AM

Counselor is hard, agree @Teix

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 10:13:23 AM

I've seen one cook.

Yuna [PF], 10:13:23 AM

I've written cooks. XD

[MFU]Col. Ellie Ijaan, 10:13:29 AM

Engineering, but I believe you can learn anything and I proved that. Playing an engineer now

[OF] Becca, 10:13:31 AM

@[SA] Wes of Star Army yep

[NDF] Cael Maz, 10:13:32 AM

Mine does @[SA] Wes of Star Army

Teix, 10:13:42 AM

I find that a good writer can play anything.

Yuna [PF], 10:13:47 AM

Rachel King once served bug poop. She was questionable.

Logan Hunter, 10:13:49 AM

I enjoy interacting with Counselors. I like my characters to have definitive issues to always have to work out.

[PF] Doug, 10:13:52 AM

One more minute to share: What has been the most challenging department?

[SA] Wes of Star Army, 10:14:01 AM



Trem, 10:14:01 AM

Love intel based RP, espionage, tactical information gathering so much fun. But it really can be hard at times

Logan Hunter, 10:14:15 AM

Civilian Dependent

Chistery, 10:14:20 AM

@Fluffy Killer is a badass as Security or Marines. Truly scary. Really really scary.

Draxx, 10:14:22 AM

Again diplomacy

[BF] JonM, 10:14:23 AM

I love science, medical, diplo and counseling because I find they're very conducive to delving deep

Logan Hunter, 10:14:28 AM

Hard but if done right is very rewarding

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 10:14:38 AM

Jag officer.

Teix, 10:14:41 AM

The hardest is Command. You have to try to incorporate everyone.

Yuna [PF], 10:14:51 AM

@Capt_G_Shepherd STF I love that one!

[PF] Doug, 10:14:53 AM

As we can see from what was just shared, there are a lot of different departments that people struggle with (even those we think of as “common”). Some of our greatest challenges are when we aren’t as familiar with the context or the material. Canon isn’t always helpful because it either gives us nothing to work with or it gives us examples that make things even more confusing (either because they’re inconsistent within the story or they outright contradict most real-world examples).

Teix, 10:15:04 AM

And maintain progress and keep everything moving.

[PF] Doug, 10:15:07 AM

I’ve tended to experience this most often with departments like Strategic Operations, Intelligence, Diplomatic, Starfighters, and the Marine Detachment (among others). Every once in a while, you get someone who seems to know what they’re doing, but most of us don’t have a clue.

It’s even more challenging for those of us who are commanding officers because we have to make sure there are opportunities for people in these departments to be part of the story and we have to help them find meaningful ways of contributing.

(Which several folks have mentioned already...)

[SA] Wes of Star Army, 10:15:22 AM

Sometimes players run into trouble playing occupations that take a lot of rael-world knowledge or skill to play believably. Like if you're a diplomat but you're not good with working with people in real life, that could be an obstacle.

[PF] Doug, 10:15:44 AM

Absolutely! So what can we do about it?

[PF] Doug, 10:15:58 AM

One way people sometimes deal with the challenge of “less common” departments is by not allowing them on their sims. While this may seem harsh or close-minded, there are situations when not having a particular department makes sense.

[BF/PF] ConfusedFire, 10:16:02 AM

On the Onnar my players and I try to get around that by being more character driven than plot or department driven. Instead of X happening we try to write our characters as reacting to X over a length of time.

[OF] Sepandiyar, 10:16:04 AM

I wrote a whole wiki to support my marines. From training to job listings.

Draxx, 10:16:05 AM

My experience of diplomatic was everyone else seemed to want to vent frustrations on you

Logan Hunter, 10:16:26 AM

Adapt something from another Genre to the Trek Universe

[BF/PF] ConfusedFire, 10:16:33 AM

It doesn't always work though.

[SA] Wes of Star Army, 10:16:39 AM

Make a wiki with a guide on how to do the things. "How to be a first officer" or "How to maintain and repair a warp core"

Logan Hunter, 10:16:47 AM

Say, diplomatic officer

Yuna [PF], 10:16:54 AM(edited)

I generally avoid Marines following this logic. I have trouble exec'ing my sim because of this. Ngl. It isn't always a cure-all.

[OF]Harrington, 10:16:59 AM

I can understand the shutting the department down, we did that on the Nogura for Marines and StarFighters..

Chistery, 10:17:04 AM

yup. as I said I have a SFS on my sim, but plan for it to be NPC. I'm hoping to make use of the OSI detachment though.

Logan Hunter, 10:17:05 AM

research project could be watch a few episodod of Madam Secretary

(BF) Skoll, 10:17:11 AM

Something that is character driven rather than plot or department driven is certainly becoming more and more popular.

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 10:17:16 AM

We have some course for that. But none for diplomats or Intel.

Draxx, 10:17:27 AM

I struggle with marines understanding the chain of command tbh

[BF] JonM, 10:17:34 AM

I actually often don't fill my XO slot because I've found that ones harder to write for many

Yuna [PF], 10:17:38 AM

@Draxx TRUE

[PF] Doug, 10:17:38 AM

You all are hitting on an important first step to playing with any "less common" department: familiarizing yourself with it.

Teix, 10:17:39 AM

First, don't be afraid of not being a model character.

Look at Ezri.

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 10:17:59 AM

I'll agree with that.

[SA] Wes of Star Army, 10:18:00 AM

Intelligence runs a danger of being stuck parroting the GM if there's not enough freedom/agency given to the player to make up stuff.

[BF/PF] ConfusedFire, 10:18:11 AM

What do you do in instances where there's little information to go off of for those departments?

Teix, 10:18:12 AM

She was a counselor who wasn't actually that good of a counselor at first.

Chistery, 10:18:19 AM

@[BF] JonM lol. too bad im full up on sims. Like @Fluffy Killer said, im sort of the compleat XO.

[OF] Sepandiyar, 10:18:29 AM

But not being a model officer is different from being a misfit suddenly made a Fleet admiral

[PF] Doug, 10:18:29 AM

If you are a commanding officer, do your homework ahead of time. Research what's out there in canon (i.e. Memory Alpha) and quasi-canon (i.e. Memory Beta). Find out what your colleagues' experiences have been (i.e. what's worked or not worked for them) and look at what your community may have to say about it. I know of at least a couple communities that have some pretty good write-ups on the different departments with resources on how to play them well.

Most importantly, set expectations and communicate them to players. If you do decide to incorporate one or more of these departments into your sim, make sure people know why you're doing it and what you hope to accomplish by it. What do you think the department is? What do you think people should be doing with it?

Fluffy Killer, 10:18:32 AM

The chain of command for Marines is rather simple. All Marines fall under jurisdiction of the Marine CO, who then reports to the base or ship CO

Logan Hunter, 10:18:49 AM

Biggest mistake I see with Intel officers is they think they are all super spies...Intel is mostly about gathering information from sources (interrogation, signal intercept) and then performing analysis

Yuna [PF], 10:19:02 AM

^

(BF) Skoll, 10:19:03 AM

I think at the end of the day its down to what you want from those departments.

Teix, 10:19:19 AM

That's why I don't use Intel on my sims.

Yuna [PF], 10:19:25 AM

PLEASE stop sending us discount Bond/Croft Intel characters

Marty, 10:19:30 AM

Nova sites does come with a departmental description of all positions 😊

[PF] AlexM, 10:19:42 AM

I had an intel officer many years ago. She did do some undercover work, but mostly she was the information repository for the ship.

[BF] Kai1701E, 10:19:42 AM

I tend to merge Strategic Ops and Intel into one department, an advisory kind of department.

Logan Hunter, 10:19:45 AM

Well, I am a former US Army Interrogator

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 10:20:13 AM

Now that's interesting.

noxfox, 10:20:19 AM(edited)

what kind of interrogator?

Logan Hunter, 10:20:21 AM

I don't try and play my Intel officers (only did twice) to be James Bond types

Chistery, 10:20:25 AM

intel is difficult unless the Intel officer has a good working relationship with the CO. a lot of the "Intel" has to come from the CO OOC, or they at least have to give the CIO a direction to go in, so everyone is pulling in the same direction.

[BF/PF] ConfusedFire, 10:20:32 AM

I tend to merge Strat Ops and intel into one position and place it within the command department

[OF] Sepandiyar, 10:20:42 AM

Same

Logan Hunter, 10:20:42 AM

Interrogator is a Human Intelligence Collector

[BF/PF] ConfusedFire, 10:20:44 AM

When I need the position

[PF] Doug, 10:20:49 AM

Wow! You all have some very good experiences with this (and wisdom to share).

Yuna [PF], 10:20:50 AM

@[BF/PF] ConfusedFire o.o that's a clever idea

Logan Hunter, 10:20:53 AM

we interview sources

Chistery, 10:20:56 AM

Some of my intel characters are the "Bond" or "Burn Notice" type, others are more Overt Intel.

[SA] Wes of Star Army, 10:20:58 AM(edited)

I suppose if you're a really good intel officer you're asking a ton of questions. When the away team comes back you're asking "what were the aliens wearing, did they have any markings on them, what did they seem to be trying to accomplish, did you get the leader's name and photo. Did you detect any strange radiation?" etc.

Logan Hunter, 10:21:11 AM

brb

Chistery, 10:21:14 AM

it depends on the sim

Draxx, 10:21:34 AM

More overt intel! I like the interview idea

Teix, 10:21:36 AM

If COs would streamline their rosters, a lot of this could be alleviated. Strategic Ops isn't needed on most sims. Same with Intel, Diplomatic, and Marines.

Beautiful Night, 10:21:45 AM

How do people handle overlaps? Like Marines and Security or Intel and security? I've got a semi system in place, but want to know if there are better ideas for it?

Yuna [PF], 10:21:51 AM

Omg that's a brilliant JP idea

[PF] Doug, 10:21:54 AM

Alright...hang on...let's pause there a sec...

@Teix Made a good point about not every sim needing every department or position.

(BF) Skoll, 10:22:13 AM

Marine and security can merge together during non marine missions.

Yuna [PF], 10:22:25 AM

And I'm going to start instituting it for Intel on the sim I'm on. "DEBRIEFING AWAY TEAMS/MISSION CREWS"

Chistery, 10:22:28 AM

Yeah, I usually do, too. I only play the Burn Notice type guy on the sim I XO because I obviously can control the character, because he's my NPC

[BF/PF] ConfusedFire, 10:22:46 AM

I agree with @Teix about not needing every department or position

[PF] Doug, 10:22:52 AM

Whistles loudly to get attention

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 10:22:57 AM

Me too.

[OF] Sepandiyar, 10:23:04 AM

Marines backup security on board. Security backs up marines off ship.

(BF) Skoll, 10:23:14 AM

Playing a marine who is doing exactly that... also playing a marine with a like for explosives so hey two of my three star trek characters are marines at the moment. Thus always looking to get a bite of the action not really bothered how I get it either

Fluffy Killer, 10:23:15 AM

I've always used the procedure that Security is more for ship, diplomatic escort and Marines for full combat Special Ops missions. To me Stat Ops and Intel are the same thing

[OF] Sepandiyar, 10:23:18 AM

@doug has the floor

Draxx, 10:23:22 AM

So who outranks who @[OF] Sepandiyar

Yuna [PF], 10:23:25 AM

HEY! LOOK! LISTEN! The host is trying to move on

Teix, 10:23:29 AM

If it makes sense for your sim, go for it. But trying to have 15 departments on every ship just because it's built into Nova, or because we 'can' doesn't always work.

Logan Hunter, 10:23:31 AM

back

[SB118] CSO Lt. German Galven, 10:23:38 AM

Sometimes a couple of our ships will have a combined position. Like HCO. Helm. communication, and operations all put togethewr

[PF] Doug, 10:23:45 AM

This is some great stuff everyone. I'd like to take a moment to address some of it. 😊

Thanks!

Now @Teix made a great point about not every sim needs every position or every department, which connects well with what people have been saying about not always knowing what to write about (or not having enough to write about).

A Defiant-class doesn't have the room for starfighters nor a Nova-class the space for a battalion of Starfleet Marines.

[16th] Admiral Teagarden, 10:25:44 AM

@Fluffy Killer an episode of DS9 supports the Strat Ops and Intell component

Logan Hunter, 10:25:52 AM

Yet I see a lot still carry them on the manifest billets

Yuna [PF], 10:26:17 AM (edited)

@Logan Hunter that's Nova defaults. The CO may not know how to remove them.

[PF] Doug, 10:26:27 AM

I saw a few of you suggesting that certain positions can be combined. There are canon examples of this with Strat Ops & Intel (Worf) or Counseling & Diplomacy (Troi).

Chistery, 10:26:37 AM

@Fluffy Killer I see strat ops more as planning large missions, logistics, etc. But that might just be me.

Logan Hunter, 10:26:46 AM

Yes but you tailor the manifest to your individual ship and style needs

[BF] greenfelt22, 10:26:51 AM

I think that's a disadvantage to inexperienced GMs who use Nova. They just stick defaults because they're afraid to break their site.

(BF) Skoll, 10:26:54 AM

You are talking about a starbase with what a thousand people on it... a starbase or military installation is different to a starship. Marines on a Nova which is a science vessel would be ridiculous. Even if it was a covert operation ship pretending to be something it wasn't

Chistery, 10:26:54 AM

of course

Logan Hunter, 10:27:00 AM

I am XO on an Akira-class vessel

which is considered a light carrier by some

Teix, 10:27:19 AM

Strategic Ops is one of the positions that I find the most over used.

Yuna [PF], 10:27:24 AM

Bolded previous comment's important part because it was lost on target.

[BF/PF] ConfusedFire, 10:27:35 AM

I think the hardest thing for me as a CO is Vidal Fleet Yards because there's nothing in the shows for it and, it's a fleet yard so engineering is the primary department. I had to create some new positions to help it along, but there's so little information for me to actually give them accurate descriptions.

[PF] Doug, 10:27:39 AM

@(BF) Skoll : An excellent point, to which I would say check out @[PF] AlexM 's panel later on the difference between starships and starbases for simming.

[BF/PF] ConfusedFire, 10:27:54 AM

So is there a place that would help with descriptions of the positions we create?

Logan Hunter, 10:27:57 AM

CO and I decided to axe the Starfighter Contingent because we wanted to focus more on exploration and limited combat capability

Yuna [PF], 10:28:00 AM

Bbiab

Marty, 10:28:27 AM

Google search the position title and see what other sims put?

(BF) Skoll, 10:28:44 AM

I did try to put together a fighter simulation in bf so I am not adverse to playing around with unusual departments

[OF] Sepandiyar, 10:28:46 AM

Ray to find real world equivalents and amend

[BF/PF] ConfusedFire, 10:29:02 AM

There aren't many fleet yard simms though

[PF] Doug, 10:29:13 AM

@[BF/PF] ConfusedFire : Excellent question. I would start with Memory Alpha or Memory Beta. From there, do as @Marty suggests and see what other sims or communities are saying. We can also look at real-world examples in our modern militaries and other organizations for ideas.

Teix, 10:29:15 AM

The nature of the position is to help coordinate and manage large-scale operations. It's a position that made sense on DS9 because of the Klingons and then the Dominion, as well as DS9's status as the local Starfleet command center. But there isn't likely to be one on every ship in Starfleet.

[SA] Wes of Star Army, 10:29:28 AM

I find myself wanting to run my units in my RP like real units in the military, in terms of how they conduct business.

[BF/PF] ConfusedFire, 10:29:31 AM

Thanks for the suggestions 😊

Logan Hunter, 10:29:38 AM (edited)

One of the other departments we axed was diplomatic...as the CO and I decided to use temp Civilian NPC Ambassadors for those types of missions

Yuna [PF], 10:29:54 AM

This is a good point. I'm working on a scrap yard turned Star base SIM, and I haven't even thought it might need special positions. A+ homebrew content suggestion.

(BF) Skoll, 10:30:01 AM

There is a logic for that though. fleet yards construct ships so it takes an inventive co to find ways to make that work in interesting ways and still supply the writing opportunities that we all crave

Marty, 10:30:37 AM

but now we have this awesome event as a resource, maybe CO's can share their manifests in a dedicated channel for inspiration for others?

Yuna [PF], 10:30:41 AM

Okay for real bbiab

Teix, 10:31:07 AM

Now, if your sim is a starbase/station, or it's a flag ship, or otherwise involved in major strategic engagements, then sure, have a Strategic Ops Officer.

[BF/PF] ConfusedFire, 10:31:07 AM

I think the hardest part is trying to get all the other departments involved and, basing episodes (missions) around the concept without going hardcore engineering

(BF) Skoll, 10:31:11 AM

Loving the Starfleet rangers game I am in at the moment, unique works for us.

[PF] Doug, 10:31:13 AM

[Download DepartmentsDivisions_DRAFT.pdf](#)

Marty, 10:31:35 AM

sneaky @[PF] Doug hehehe

[PF] Doug, 10:31:52 AM

So here's a little draft I've been working on for a couple years now. It's not perfect and doesn't apply to all situations, but I've found it helpful as a working resource for manifest shaping.

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 10:31:55 AM

I find that in these positions it helps to have a well thought out character.

Logan Hunter, 10:32:17 AM

One thing about the manifest on the ship I XO for is that I completely revamped it from standard Nova. I researched naval ratings (actual enlisted job descriptions) and adapted them for every department on our ship.

Marty, 10:32:23 AM

Thank you @[PF] Doug

Chistery, 10:32:29 AM

Yeah, Diplomats is still there I think on my SG sim, but I'm limiting that to US Foreign Service Officers from the State Department if I even accept any apps. I like to try and be a little unique by accepting unique characters, but then I have to make sure I use them

Teix, 10:32:29 AM(edited)

Similarly, if your sim concept isn't set up around frequent diplomatic content, there's not a good reason for a Diplomatic department.

[16th] Admiral Teagarden, 10:32:54 AM

Are we allowed to use this @[PF] Doug

Chistery, 10:33:00 AM

Dips is I think there on Revenant, but I think I'm going to ask the CO to take it down. It doesn't fit our mission profile.

[NDF] Cael Maz, 10:33:30 AM

In one of my sims, we converted the whole Diplomatic department to act as a governor role for what became a colony. Works well I think.

[PF] Doug, 10:33:53 AM

Regarding the resource I just dropped: You're welcome to borrow this as a guide or to use it outright to help your sims or your own character development.

Teix, 10:34:26 AM

Bottom line, in my mind, is that COs should tailor their rosters to fit the sim concept.

[PF] Doug, 10:34:32 AM

It is important to remember that not all of these departments are going to show up on every sim. Depending on the size of the sim, some of the subdivisions may or may not exist independently.

Chistery, 10:34:32 AM

Agreed

Marty, 10:34:33 AM

In my experience with Diplomats I see them more as facilitators for tending to Ambassadors to a sector command base, or a ship assigned to a region. They'd also assist COs in ship to ship communications

Fluffy Killer, 10:34:51 AM

I remember about a year ago --forgot the sim name but looking through the manifest, they had a fighter department on an Intrepid. I was like really? I hate sims that don't use realistic manifests and items

Marty, 10:35:20 AM(edited)

if they OP'd their shuttles maybe

Chistery, 10:35:28 AM

@Fluffy Killer yep

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 10:35:33 AM

Our sin design our own ships.

[BF] greenfelt22, 10:35:34 AM

Great PDF! Thanks for sharing!

[OF] Sepandiyar, 10:35:35 AM

Such as Fleet admiral at 22 running ascensions

Chythar Skyfire, 10:35:36 AM

I am going to be assuming the role of mission specialist shortly, which will be a different kettle of chips from the medical department I've been simming for 6+ years on the same character.

[PF] Doug, 10:35:49 AM

We have about 15 minutes before we wrap up. Now is a good time for Q&A (which we've sort of moved into already)

[BF] aio, 10:35:51 AM

Yeh, I just read it, very nice work.

[PF] Doug, 10:36:22 AM

Anyone have a question about a specific department, departmental resources, or the resource I shared earlier?

Teix, 10:36:45 AM

re: the PDF. It's pretty similar to how I build out ship manifests.

[BF/PF] ConfusedFire, 10:37:18 AM

I think my biggest questions have been answered thanks for the intriguing panel.

Teix, 10:38:31 AM

I'm uncertain if link sharing is okay, but a manifest I built for @[BF] greenfelt22 is publicly accessible on the Black Hawk's wiki.

[16th] Admiral Teagarden, 10:38:41 AM

Will a transcript be available

[OF]Harrington, 10:38:47 AM

my questions would related to the Helm Role.. it seems to be a struggle. How do other Commanding Officers keep this position involved in their overall mission

Chistery, 10:38:47 AM

@Fluffy Killer will tell you that I go over apps with a fine tooth comb and any character that is a Mary Sue, a Buckaroo Banzai, or an illegitimate love child of those two, I advise her to reject, not that she needs my advice on something like that.

Fluffy Killer, 10:38:48 AM

It's the similar to how I do manifests. I make them based on the ship's mission and capabilities. Also I take into account that many departments have their own admin personnel--especially Marines and fighter departments

[OF] Sepandiyar, 10:38:52 AM

Yes.

[BF] TheeFlamehead, 10:39:07 AM

@[16th] Admiral Teagarden Yes.

Chythar Skyfire, 10:39:18 AM

Just a quick one, @[PF] Doug: if you have something like, say mission specialist, how does that differ from intelligence?

[BF] greenfelt22, 10:39:21 AM

Link sharing will be okay. And transcripts will be available by Monday.

[BF] Kai1701E, 10:39:42 AM

I have a political sim, where we have many unusual departments. As its based on Bajor, how might I ensure the Vedek Assembly players remain involved?

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 10:39:50 AM

Good question. I'm currently playing one.

[OF] Sepandiyar, 10:40:04 AM

Post with them.

Yuna [PF], 10:40:16 AM

[OF]Harrington either I have someone NPC it, or I leave it off, and use a "generic secondary character anyone can write in that context"

[PF] Doug, 10:40:19 AM

[OF]Harrington : Flight Operations can be a very challenging department to write for. It can be helpful to see them as one way characters can be building experience for future leadership and command. You can also have them connect with engineering to do some cross training work.

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 10:40:28 AM

I find they kinda float. I'm also the second officer.

[NDF] Cael Maz, 10:40:29 AM

I fully agree that every sim should adjust their manifest according to what the plan for the sim is. But also never be afraid to adapt and change as needed. I have learned the hard way that it's faster to black out a manifest option then reenter all the data.

Chistery, 10:40:32 AM

if anyone is considering an SG sim in the future, you're welcome to look at the Character Creation Guide on my site wiki and my team breakdown on the same.

[OF] Sepandiyar, 10:40:35 AM

le: don't jus leave folks t9 their own.

Fluffy Killer, 10:40:48 AM

Blow up a monastery.

But in reality yes, post with them to add a religious angle to the plot

[SB118] CSO Lt. German Galven, 10:41:18 AM

I find Engineering the most difficult, but I'm mechanically incompetent IRL so

(BF) Skoll, 10:41:27 AM

Bajor is steeped in Religious hysteria... love it but it kind of is and I love the sim concept in question

[PF] Doug, 10:41:29 AM

@Chythar Skyfire : Depends. A mission specialist (or mission advisor) is often seen as a temporary position assigned to a ship for a particular mission or purpose. Think of Tom Paris brought on Voyager to help them track the Maquis he was familiar with.

[16th] Admiral Teagarden, 10:41:50 AM(edited)

That is my recommendation too. The religion angle could be fascinating to explore (I played a Ships Chaplain once) especially in the political. One thing we have done in our current political game is touch upon this as the Vedek Assembly wants the Representative to the Federation to be from their order.

[PF] Doug, 10:41:53 AM

...or a special scientist with particular skills in whatever the ship has been assigned to study.

Chistery, 10:41:54 AM

but carefully. religion is a sensitive subject. Maybe aim more towards spirituality or moral or ethical questions.

[BF/PF] ConfusedFire, 10:41:55 AM(edited)

@[PF] Doug is your draft copy of positions for both starbases and ships or just ships?

[PF] AlexM, 10:42:00 AM

Just do what real engineers do, @[SB118] CSO Lt. German Galven, and make it up as you go.

Fluffy Killer, 10:42:06 AM

Engineering is mostly technobabble--make it up lol

[SB118] CSO Lt. German Galven, 10:42:07 AM

Imao true

Yuna [PF], 10:42:09 AM

@[PF] Doug just a reminder, you've got about 18 minutes left

Teix, 10:42:14 AM

Here's the link to Black Hawk's Command Positions. It has links to the other departments also.

I build these for all of my sims because I'm one of those organizational types.

https://www.usblackhawk.com/lcars/index.php?title=Command_Positions

[SB118] CSO Lt. German Galven, 10:42:49 AM

As the Science duty post, I find it the most fun because I can just make that up as I go while including real science as well

[PF] Doug, 10:42:54 AM

@[BF/PF] ConfusedFire : It can be used for any ship, any starbase, any installation. You just have to adjust for size and context.

For example, a starbase is likely to lump Operations and Engineering together into one "Station Operations" department.

[BF/PF] ConfusedFire, 10:43:24 AM

Okay

Teix, 10:43:46 AM

[OF]Harrington, how to treat helm depends on the writer. A good writer can find ways to get involved.

Yuna [PF], 10:43:47 AM

Or to have an operations department for base maintenance leaving engineering to repair docked ships

[SB118] CSO Lt. German Galven, 10:44:04 AM

with temporal mechanics and Quantum physics, there's plenty of resources out there to play off of

Teix, 10:44:35 AM

Also, consider that Helm is essentially an early career step within the Command Department.

[SB118] CSO Lt. German Galven, 10:44:56 AM

That's true. As well as operations

Teix, 10:45:00 AM

Give a helmsman smaller command opportunities, leading away teams, etc.

[BF] Kai1701E, 10:45:27 AM

As we saw with Worf, Geordi and others, people move frequently between departments too

Logan Hunter, 10:45:33 AM

Peace Out folks, I have to pick up my son in 5 hours and I have work tonight. Been interesting been fun.

[16th] Admiral Teagarden, 10:45:37 AM

That is a great idea

[PF] Doug, 10:45:43 AM

@[BF] Kai1701E : I like that you're branching out into other ways of structuring your sim (and from what we've heard today, you're not the only one). Including something like a religious liaison would be very reasonable and important.

Teix, 10:45:45 AM

It also depends on the character. If the character has some interest in another department, have them work with those departments some.

Beautiful Night, 10:45:45 AM

I've got a fairly broad definition on DS5, in that Anything that deals with external issues comes under Strat OPs - so Intel, Marines, Fighters should I want them, diplomacy. and anything that deals with internal issues is station ops, - security, engineering/operations, medical go there.

[16th] Admiral Teagarden, 10:45:50 AM(edited)

We explored cross training characters

[BF] Kai1701E, 10:46:10 AM

Thanks @[PF] Doug

[PF] James Stewart, 10:46:34 AM

thats what i have been trying to do

[SB118] CSO Lt. German Galven, 10:46:38 AM

Regarding religions, I find it better to make up one that's kind of like all of them combined, but more peaceful

[PF] Doug, 10:46:43 AM

[OF]Harrington Re: Flight Operations - in the "real world", navigators pretty much are the ones commanding the bridge when the captain isn't there because they know how to direct the operations of the ship to get them where they need to go.

Fluffy Killer, 10:47:27 AM

I personally don't like manifests that lists officers in more than one role. On a ship such as the previous Valiant (my simm), the XO was also Helm but that was due to ship size. Now the XO role will be dedicated...until Dave decides to hijack the ship, LOL

[PF] Doug, 10:47:29 AM

Just a head's up - 3 minutes until I let you all out for a break before the next session

[BF/PF] ConfusedFire, 10:47:43 AM

There are certainly a lot of elements involved during flight operations because the ship has to be angled correctly in regards to wind direction and speed among other things

Marty, 10:47:44 AM

Traffic Control at a major starbase is Flight Control/Operations responsibility

Yuna [PF], 10:47:44 AM

Instituting CFO as second officer would also branch them in to the chain of command, and give them a wider reach of post options. That's a fantastic idea

[SB118] CSO Lt. German Galven, 10:47:52 AM

10 minute break! PArty!

Teix, 10:48:21 AM

Flight Control can/should be working with Engineering and Astrometrics.

Draxx, 10:48:37 AM

@[PF] Doug thanks for hosting. This has been useful and interesting

[OF]Harrington, 10:48:58 AM

@[PF] Doug thank you very much, this was a great panel... got many ideas for my own game

Yuna [PF], 10:48:59 AM

I'm enjoying this a lot. Thank you, @[PF] Doug ! Super helpful!!!❤️

[PF] Doug, 10:48:59 AM

@Fluffy Killer : XO is a good example of a position that doesn't actually double up very well, as it sounds like you've experienced. They usually have a lot of work to do making sure everything runs smoothly as far as the ship's administration. Would be difficult for them to do all that and perform another entire duty field at the same time.

Chistery, 10:48:59 AM

@Fluffy Killer Oiy!

Draxx, 10:49:03 AM

And thanks to everyone else!

[SB118] CSO Lt. German Galven, 10:49:08 AM

What do you guys think of a separate department only regarding Xenobiology?

[16th] Admiral Teagarden, 10:49:13 AM

This was great

[PF] Doug, 10:49:18 AM

One more minute before break

Wolf626, 10:49:21 AM

The Kirk Department!

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 10:49:24 AM

Thanks.

Marty, 10:49:30 AM

lol [OF] Wolf626

Teix, 10:49:34 AM

@[SB118] CSO Lt. German Galven, if it makes sense for the sim, why not?

Chistery, 10:49:38 AM

@[PF] Doug I think that did work out well, but that was because it was a Defiant

[PF] Doug, 10:49:39 AM

Thank you all for coming and participating. So many good thoughts and ideas. I'm looking forward to reading the transcript later.

[SB118] CSO Lt. German Galven, 10:49:45 AM

it just came to my mind lol

Chistery, 10:50:00 AM

We're switching to a Luna and obviously XO should be separate on that.

Yuna [PF], 10:50:17 AM

Are the transcripts going up on the website? That'd be brilliant.

Fluffy Killer, 10:50:31 AM

@[PF] Doug The Valiant was previously a Defiant Class Simm but just recently it was changed to a Luna Class Simm

[BF] aio, 10:50:32 AM

Transcripts will hopefully be up on Monday @[Yuna [PF]

Teix, 10:50:35 AM

As far as I'm concerned, the only 'wrong way' to build a manifest is the not tailor it to the sim and sim concept.

Yuna [PF], 10:50:44 AM

@[BF] aio EPIC! TY!

[OF] du Lac, 10:50:54 AM

@[PF] Doug 10 minutes

use it if you need it 😊

[BF] Kai1701E, 10:51:30 AM

I entirely agree with @Teix You have to tailor it to your needs, the needs of the sim and the needs of your mission

And it should be fluid, always changing and developing

[SB118] CSO Lt. German Galven, 10:52:08 AM

I've made NPCs that are in other departments that helps me build myself around them

[BF/PF] ConfusedFire, 10:52:09 AM

@Teix can you DM me the link you shared?

[PF] Doug, 10:52:27 AM

That's the bell. You're all on break until the next session starts.

If you want to keep swapping ideas, that's great.

If anyone has questions about the resource I shared earlier, send me a PM or an email and I'll be happy to go over it.

[BF/PF] ConfusedFire, 10:52:35 AM

nvm found it

Teix, 10:52:48 AM

Having a big science department on a combat focused sim can work if that's part of the concept. Like a science ship that finds itself stuck in the middle of a war.

Teix, 10:53:26 AM

But if it doesn't work with the concept, don't feel the need to force it.

Fluffy Killer, 10:55:22 AM

Well, the kids are holding the dog hostage until they get lunch so better go. Will drop back in later

[BF] TheeFlamehead, 10:55:38 AM

Everyone, please make sure to thank @[PF] Doug for an excellent panel!

Marty, 10:55:51 AM

Thankies @[PF] Doug

Yuna [PF], 10:56:00 AM

LOUD APPLAUSE

Fluffy Killer, 10:56:09 AM

Thanks for the discussion @[PF] Doug

Chistery, 10:56:13 AM

@Fluffy Killer hope to see you later boss!

Fluffy Killer, 10:56:28 AM

You will

[16th] Admiral Teagarden, 10:59:00 AM

Thanks @[PF] Doug