

***Living Force* Writer's Guidelines**

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So, you want to write for the RPGA's *Living Force* campaign? Great! We're always looking for people with ideas for scenarios, interactives, and general plot suggestions. But before you sit down at the keyboard and unleash your imagination, read through this handy set of guidelines that you'll need to follow in order to start writing for the campaign.

Introduction

From the outset, we need to make one thing clear. Writing for *Living Force* is not exactly like writing for other *Living* campaigns. We're working in one of the most popular, famous galaxies ever created, and we need to work closely with Lucasfilm Ltd. (hereafter, LFL) in order to make sure that what we're doing is acceptable. Thus, when we set deadlines, we *mean* them. At every stage, we need to be sending information to LFL so that they can review and provide commentary. If we don't have the lead time we require to get the materials through LFL, then your event can't be approved. On the flip side, this is kind of a cool benefit, since not only will you be writing *Star Wars* material, but you'll also have someone at LFL reading it! So put on your game face, because it's time to show what you've got.

We're going to break this document down into two general sections. In the first, we'll describe the process—key deadlines, what you need to submit at each point, what we'll do with the information, etc. In the second, we'll go over some things that you ought to avoid doing—things that will send up little red flags to us and to LFL.

What Do We Want?

Well, first and foremost, we want scenarios. These can either be standalone adventures, or they can be trilogies. A lot of what we do in *Living Force* (*LF*, as opposed to LFL) is trilogy-based to retain the episodic feel of the original movies. So we encourage you to think in terms of thematically linked trilogies in which (a) one adventure leads naturally to the next, but (b) it isn't completely off-setting to start with the second, or even the third, event in the trilogy. Currently, we plan on releasing three to four trilogies per year and only two to five standalone scenarios, so if you're thinking trilogy instead of single event, you may have an advantage.

The other major thing we're interested in is transportable interactives. By this, we mean interactives with a general theme (e.g., "An Evening at the Cantina") that can be set against an *LF* backdrop but aren't tied to any specific scenarios. Thus, when conventions want to order an *LF* interactive, they can request one of the "packages" we've got available. We'll discuss specific requirements for scenarios and interactives below.

First Contact

In terms of resources available to you, the prospective author, we have personnel who can be contacted via email. These include Morrie Mullins, the North American Campaign Developer (email him at lfplots@rpga.net), and Sean Connor, the European Campaign Coordinator (email him at seanc@wizards.com). You can also contact us at PO Box 61, Maidenhead, BERKSHIRE, SL6 1FX, customer services 0345 125599. Note

that there's only one *LF* campaign; we simply have different folks responsible to serve as contacts depending on where in the world you're located.

One of the first resources you, the author, will need, is a copy of the scenario template. This is available from Morrie Mullins upon request, and will be made available for download from rpga.net.

Important note: Any new submission idea likely won't see play for at least one to two years. For example, less than three months into the first year of the campaign, we had an outline submitted for year two, complete with scenario titles and short descriptions. Thus, we're interested not only in new submissions, but also in finding authors to whom we can make assignments based on short event descriptions. There's just as much creativity involved in writing assigned scenarios as there is in writing scenarios that are wholly self-generated, and a much lower probability of rejection!

The Process: Assigned Scenarios

If you show an interest in writing for us, we'll ask that you submit a sample of your work. This is true either for Assigned or New scenarios. We want to see what your writing is like before we ask you to write for *LF*. If you've written for the RPGA before, it's fine to submit a published event. Otherwise, provide something of at least 2,000 words, which allows us a glimpse of your style, as well as your grasp of mechanics, grammar, and so forth.

Once we've seen a sample of your writing, we can proceed to the next step. We'll likely contact you about whether you're interested in taking on a writing assignment. If so, we can schedule an online meeting to discuss the specifics of the scenario or trilogy to be written. We'll provide you with the information that has already been supplied to LFL (this will basically be the information described in the Box in Step 1, below), and then you'll proceed through the process. Steps 2 and beyond are the same for assigned scenarios and new scenario ideas, so we won't repeat them here.

The Process: New Scenario Ideas

Step 1: Submission of an Idea

When you have an idea for a scenario or interactive, the first thing to do is send us the idea. What we basically want is a "treatment" of what you want to do. Key information to include in the treatment:

- Title of the proposed event
- A short (one-paragraph) description of the event, in the format of a standard *Star Wars* movie opening crawl.
- A description of the goals of the event, broken out in bullet points.
- A description of the primary conflicts of the event, broken out in bullet points.
- A description of how closure is attained in the event.

Here's a very brief example, intended to give you an idea of the proper format. Note that this isn't an actual proposal—we discourage doing things like actively "borrowing" from classic science fiction for plots (as has been done in this example).

<p style="text-align: center;">A Dark Morning Proposal for a One-Round <i>Living Force</i> Event</p>

The heroes of Cularin have found themselves once again faced with a daunting task. Ulbasca, a moon whose face has never seen so much as a long shadow, is moving through a portion of its orbit that astronomers say it only hits once every 10,000 years. One day early next week, the face of the moon will be engulfed in darkness for the first time, and rumor has it that certain criminal elements are planning on putting that occurrence to good use . . .

Goals of the event:

- Introduce the players to Ulbasca.
- Set up key NPCs on the moon.
- Search for “the Syndicate.”

Primary conflicts of the event:

- Psychological unrest at the first night to come to Ulbasca since it was colonized.
- Clashes with various criminal elements on the moon.

Closure attained by:

Removing the threat of rioting by shutting down the criminal conspiracy and staying on as part of the “peace-keeping” force throughout the first “night” on Ulbasca.

In the “goals,” “conflicts,” and “closure” sections, be very specific. Don’t exceed *one page* with the initial treatment. We’ll review the treatment and respond with a “go-ahead” or “no-go” message within a week. If you get a no-go, we’ll provide specific reasons why we don’t think it’s advisable to move ahead with the event at this time, as well as providing whatever suggestions we may have to make it more acceptable.

If you get the go-ahead to start writing, the next step is providing a detailed outline of the scenario.

Step 2: A Detailed Outline

When we say “a detailed outline,” what we actually want is the Gamemaster Overview and the encounter summaries from the front of the event. So, sit down and put the details of your idea on paper (or pixels), one encounter at a time. You don’t need to include things like stat blocks and so forth yet; just tell us what’s going to happen at each stage in the process. You’ll submit this detailed outline to us, and within a week, you’ll receive feedback.

One thing to emphasize: Be professional in your presentation of the information. Make sure the outline is as clean and polished as you can get it before you submit it. As with anyone who’s reviewing material for future publication, the less grammar and spelling we have to deal with, the happier we are. And when we send it back to you with comments, polish it some more. Once we accept your outline, the next place it goes is to LFL for approval, and if you can’t provide a professional-looking document to LFL, there’s no way you should expect it to get approved.

For interactives, the detailed outline will be somewhat different. You’ll provide an overall description (one to three pages) of the plot of the interactive (remember, all *LF* interactives have plots and are set up as opportunities for live-action roleplaying) and a description of the major NPCs. These NPC descriptions should include personality descriptions, what the NPC knows, whether there are particular rumors

they're interested in starting, what the NPC's motivation is, and so forth. If you have multiple locales for different portions of the interactive (using the "Evening at the Cantina" example, events may take place at the bar, in different booths, on the dance floor, etc.), detail which NPCs can be found where, what they're doing (arm-wrestling, playing sabacc, etc.), and so forth. Most interactives will also have two or three key NPCs who may have specific information (read: box-text speeches) that have to be given at certain points, or they may have events that need to occur at specific points in time. (For example: "At the three-hour mark, a representative of the Cartel rushes into the Cantina, lobbs a thermal detonator behind the bar, and runs away. Run the "Thermal Detonator" portion of the interactive for the next 10 minutes.")

So, for interactives, detailed outlines should include:

1. Overall plot summary
2. A timeline for key events in the interactive
3. A list of NPCs
4. NPC traits (personality, knowledge, motivations)
5. Box-text speeches, referenced in the "key events" portion
6. Other critical information, based on the specifics of the interactive

Step 3: Paperwork

Once we've deemed your detailed outline acceptable, it has to go to LFL. In order to send it to them, we need you to fill out standard LFL disclosure forms, which are available from the campaign developers and other staff members as zip files. These must be filled out and faxed to Robert Wiese at 425-687-8287 so that the entire package can be sent to LFL by RPGA HQ.

Step 4: The Scenario or Interactive Itself

Once we get the go-ahead from LFL for you to write the event, we'll contact you. If LFL has specific issues with the proposal, we'll work with you to address them.

Then, get to writing!

Now, we recognize that it's unlikely that you're going to spend the time to pull everything together for the submission and not want to start writing immediately. Heck, we can't stop you from writing the whole thing, and then contacting us with the initial query about the scenario! But if you do this, you do so at your own risk, since there's no guarantee that you'll not have to rewrite substantial portions of what you've already done, or that we'll even be able to use what you've written. It's much safer to contact us first. If you're okay with risking it, cool. But officially, what we've outlined here is how it has to get done.

Tiering

In terms of tiering events, you're looking at 3-level tier blocks. So events need to be flexible and designed to accommodate characters of levels 1-3, 4-6, and 7-9. Eventually, we'll get higher than that, but no single event will ever be written to span more than three tiering groups. It seriously hampers the suspension of disbelief when a first-tier party is fighting a 2nd-level dark Jedi Guardian, and the same NPC crops up for a fifth-tier party as a 14th-level dark Jedi Guardian who makes Darth Maul look like a poseur.

Experience

Experience point awards are defined in the standard *LF* module template. Modules that are core plot modules allot 600 XP for completing the primary objective and 400 XP for roleplaying. Non-core plot modules allot 350 XP for completing the primary objective and 300 XP for roleplaying.

Rewards

Monetary and other rewards from the scenario should be commensurate with the risk incurred by the heroes. In general, don't give out more than 1,000 credits/tier per hero, and don't go out of your way to get the number that high. If there's not a reason to give them credits, *don't*.

Authors sometimes succumb to the temptation of including gambling opportunities. This is fine. However, no NPC or combination of NPCs in *LF* will ever cover a bet greater than 2,000 credits (and that's total, for the party), and the PCs will never get odds better than 3:1 from an NPC (although, by all means, let them bet with each other however they want). We're operating within a somewhat limited economy here, and all the bookies in Tolea Biqua would go broke from one event where heroes were allowed to bet on themselves with 100:1 odds.

Rewards that require certificates generally come in the form of favors that grant circumstance bonuses. "Item"-type rewards will be very closely scrutinized, as we would prefer to keep this campaign about roleplaying—not certificates. Most of the gear the heroes would likely want is available out of the core rulebook, but sometimes, there are interesting "flavor" items that you'd like to include. Trophies, like a burned-out lightsaber from a dark Jedi, are interesting and add flavor and depth without providing a game mechanic benefit. We strongly encourage you to think about how to design items that enhance roleplaying without going far beyond what the core rules allow. (For example, an all-weather cloak given to the heroes by Renna, with the logo of her transport service hand-stitched onto the back of the cloak.)

First-run Rewards

First-run rewards will provide slightly better benefits than standard-issue rewards, but they shouldn't be far out of line, power-wise, with standard rewards. Bonuses might be slightly better, and so forth.

Step 5: Submission and Playtesting

Once you've written the event, submit it to the *LF* campaign chair, Jae Walker (lfadmin@rpga.net), and the plots personnel, Morrie Mullins (lfplots@rpga.net) and Sean Connor (seanc@wizards.com). We're responsible for playtesting.

Playtesting is very rigorously defined in *LF*. We have several groups of playtesters who *are not allowed* to play in the regular campaign. You may run into them or their PCs at interactives, but that's about it. They've been recruited onto the campaign staff in an official playtest capacity and have given up the right to play in the main campaign as a result.

We'll playtest your event and get back to you with feedback within two months. This allows multiple groups of playtesters to go through the event and for feedback to be gathered and condensed into a format that's useful to you, the author.

Note: If the event you're writing has a scheduled release date, you *must* have the full scenario submitted for playtesting six months prior to the date of release. Thus, if you have a scenario scheduled to premiere in August, that scenario must be submitted

to the email addresses above by January 1. Because of the time involved here, and the fact that the final module will also have to go through LFL, we *can't* be flexible on this.

Step 6: Revision

Based on the comments you receive from playtests, you'll have two weeks to revise the event and resubmit it to us. At this point, make certain that the event is as clean and polished as you can get it. We'll attempt to send you back a copy to revise with mechanical/grammatical errors already addressed. However, this does not absolve you of the responsibility for sending us something of professional quality. Remember, this revision is the final product that goes to LFL.

Step 7: Waiting

Congratulations! You've made it through the process. Now we wait to make sure LFL doesn't have any major problems with the final product, and we go from there.

What Not To Do

Based on our experiences thus far with LFL, we can offer you a few tips on what you should *avoid* doing when writing for *LF*.

1. For the time being, all scenarios must be set within the Cularin system. No jaunts to Coruscant, Tatooine, Alderaan, Naboo, etc. We like to call this the "Coruscant or any world with two of the same vowel in a row" rule.
2. No characters from the movies may "make appearances" in campaign scenarios.
3. *No Sith.*
4. The following species are not permitted in this time period: Ewoks, Mon Calamari, Weequay, Gamorreans, and Neimoidians. There are currently no Hutts in the system. Other species may also be disallowed, at LFL's discretion.
5. *Star Wars* has species, not races.
6. Jedi have Enclaves, but no Temples.
7. When used in the context of "Jedi [foo]," the following words should be capitalized: Padawan, Master, Knight.
8. While we may refer to events from *Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace*, we can't directly utilize any plot elements or technologies from the movie. No Trade Federation Battle Droids, Droidekas, etc.
9. No Mandalorians. As a general rule, we can't use things we *think* are going to be in the second or third movies until the second or third movies come out. Even if we have seen the mock-ups for the toys . . .
10. There is no "Republic Military." Consult us if you want to use a military force, as the Cularin system has no standing military either.

11. No ripping off other science fiction materials. (Note: This is a reiteration of what we said earlier, but it's worth mentioning again. Please, no Vulcans!)

A Final Note

Remember, this is *Star Wars*! Think grand! Think heroic! Think good versus evil! When you're writing *LF*, go for that *Star Wars* feel, and have fun!