

The Campfire

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A freeform larp about rumors and insecurity for 3-6 players

Preface

You are a group of office workers who have been sent on a company mandated team building retreat to the woods. While it may not have been your first choice for a weekend adventure, it is a paid 'vacation'

You all have finished setting up all of your tents and it is well past dark, with nothing much better to do you all are free to gossip about work happenings without judgment. Or at least that of the higher ups. At the campfire social circles are clashing and it is important you don't ruin your reputation here, you never know what small comment could impact your next promotion.

Set Up

The Campfire is designed to be played either in person or over video call software, in either case you need few materials in total. You will need:

Playing In Person

- A dark room (or the spooky outdoors at night)
- A flashlight for each player
- A designated space for "The tents"
- A writing utensil

Playing Online

- A video call software that can:
 - Mute/Unmute
 - Show/Hide Video

Safety Measures

While playing *The Campfire* it is important that all the PLAYERS are comfortable. It is okay if your character is uncomfortable, but this experience should be fun for all people involved. The two main safety methods that *The Campfire* employs is **Hearing Something** and **Heading to The Tent**

Hearing Something

If a situation arises where you are uncomfortable with what was just said and want that to be redacted you can **Hear Something** in the woods. If any player says the words "Did you guys hear something in the woods?" Or something to that effect, stop what was being said and continue play, changing what was said previously. As an additional note, *The Campfire* is not a

game about being scared in the woods, don't mention hearing noises in the woods unless you are using this action, this will prevent confusion or people ignoring a genuine concern.

Checking In

The Campfire deals with people talking negatively about one another and it is important that this is a fun controlled situation and not something that actually hurts you. If at any point there is a situation where someone is getting too rude or personal but you don't feel it needs to be redacted, make eye contact with that player and give a thumbs down.

Heading to the Tent

If you ever need a break from the game for any reason but are fine with play continuing without you for the time being you can **Head to the Tent**, leaving the room/call. Play continues and the player may return at any time. During play assume you have everything you need with you, characters do not need to head back to the tent to get things. Reserve this for players who need a break.

The Company

Before continuing and deciding what characters each player wants to take on the role of, take a few minutes to establish what your company is like to the people who work in it

Potential questions to answer:

- What does your company do?
- How big is your company?
- What is your company's name?
- What do the employees call it?

Open and Closed

At any given moment a character is either **Open** or **Closed**. At all times there must be at least two characters who are **Open**. When you are **Open** you are free to speak your mind and share things with the group, however you leave yourself open to scrutiny and your own **Insecurities**. Being open is represented either by shining your flashlight up towards your face, or by having BOTH your video and microphone on.

When you are **Closed** you are observing the conversation, trying to find out what you can about others and possibly subjecting them to your judgment and **Actions**. Being closed is represented by either turning off your flashlight or muting yourself AND turning off your video.

The Rumor

There are always things making their way through the office about who has done what, but right now there is **The Rumor**; something big that was shared through an anonymous email. Each character has some way that they can introduce facts about **The Rumor**. Its exact nature

is up to the players to decide, but no matter what it is it will have an impact on the social life of the company and could potentially affect your careers.

Players should take a few minutes to decide some ground rules about **The Rumor**. Decide what the starting point for this rumor is. Regardless of what it is, each player will be involved in some way

Conversation Mechanics

Throughout play you also have specific **Actions** and **Features** you can use. **Features** can always be used when a condition is met while **Actions** may be used at any time, but only once. Actions that affect **The Rumor** and the overall story happening are assumed to be true, unless another **Action** interrupts them. A character using an action should make it clear they are using an action by pointing at themselves or the target of their action with their thumb.

Every character is susceptible to others comments in various ways, these are known as their **Insecurities**. Various factors can trigger your own insecurities, and when these conditions are met you must do the related act.

The Characters

Within any social setting there are various stereotypes people can fall into, coincidentally you fall perfectly into one of these. While you may or may not have many friends at the office you would prefer to spend time with, management was at least aware enough to put everyone into groups with people they would have to interact with on a semi-regular basis. You may not all be from the same department but work together in some capacity.

Players should choose one of the following characters to play before looking at their sheet.

- The Bully
- The Geek
- The Gossip
- The Stickler
- The Friend
- The Clown

After choosing their characters each player should take a moment to fill out any blank space on their character sheet. Don't take more than 5 minutes to complete this step, fill things out quickly and if some spaces are blank that's okay! Fill them out as you play.

The Campfire – Starting Play

Introductions

Dreadfully awkward as they are, the company insists everyone must introduce themselves at a minimum over the retreat. In a circle, go around, introduce yourself; tell everyone your name, pronouns, and department you work in. Additionally you must give out at least 1 piece of other information on your sheet. During this time everyone is considered **Open**

The Discussion

When out camping there are often various things people will be doing away from the main group, be it gathering firewood or going for a short walk. To represent this, once discussion begins one player (as denoted on their sheet in **Delegations**) will leave the room/call and come back 2 minutes later. During this time discussion should focus on the things that player has done and the rumors surrounding them specifically. DO NOT talk about players who have “gone to the tent”. Once the player returns, they will send out another player and repeat the process. Whenever a player returns to the discussion, each player **Opens**

While outside of the discussion, take some time to think about what your character is really doing, have they learned anything? Are they trying to hear what people are saying about them? If they are, how are you going to listen in without the others noticing?

Ending Play

Play can end after each character has addressed **The Rumor** at least one time and each character has left the room at least once. If the conversation peters out after that point, any character may suggest that “It’s getting pretty late”, if the group agrees the characters go to sleep and play as the characters stop. Describe the aftermath of the conversation at the campfire when you **Return to The Office**

Returning To The Office

After the talk around the campfire the rest of the retreat goes (relatively) smoothly, though the things that were said are likely not to be forgotten. Go around the circle and each character explains one thing they told other employees about what was said during the retreat. The rest of the group decides how this affects others, if it does at all. After everyone has a chance to spread their information, the current state of **The Rumor** spreads around the office, players decide how that affects the office as a whole and what the aftermath is.

The Bully- Push Them Around

Name:

Well Known Facts:

- You have an in with the CEO
- You aren't particularly qualified for your position
- You often lash out at others

Pronouns:

Secrets:

Department:

- You actually look forward to the retreat because people will actually hang out with you
- You think you could have stopped the events **The Rumor** from happening
- This is the first job you've had real power in

Years of Employment:

Insecurities:

- Whenever someone uses a word with 4 or more syllables or a word you don't know you must **Close**
- You must defend yourself if you are spoken poorly of
- You won't talk about the future

Features

- **"What did you say about me?":** If someone talks about you while you are **Closed**, you may **Open**
- **Executive Privilege:** When you **Return to the Office** you may negate 1 negative effect of **The Rumor** for yourself or another character

Action

- Force another character to **Close**
- Force another character to **Close**
- Force another character to **Open**
- Implicate another character in **The Rumor**
- While **closed**, you can say up to 5 words
- Force another character to share a **Secret**

Things You Know:

- You know **The Friend** doesn't like someone, you're not sure who though

Delegation

- When you return from your task ask **The Stickler** if they can go find some drinks for everyone

The Geek - Teach Them Things

Name:

Well Known Facts:

- People in your department come to you to fix things
- Not many people at work share your hobbies
- You tend to correct people if they say something false

Pronouns:

Secrets:

Department:

- You take things from the IT desk for your personal use sometimes
- You set up the email that made **The Rumor** widespread
- You have been lied to too many times, people need to speak the truth

Years of Employment:

Insecurities:

- If someone directly insults you you must **Close**
- If someone says you're wrong about something you must argue with them
- If someone proves you wrong you must **Close**

Features

- **“Um, Actually”**: If a character says something that is false you may **Open** and correct them.
- **Technically..**: If you are **Closed** and a character introduces something to **The Rumor** you may add a technicality to the rumor and become **Closed** again

Actions:

- Open**
- Open or Close**
- Make any claim a fact
- Make a claim about **The Rumor** a fact
- Make a claim about **The Rumor** a fact
- Force another character to share a **Secret**

Things You Know:

- You know **The Bully** can exploit their connection to the CEO

Delegation

- When you return from your task ask **The Stickler** if they can go figure out what the rules on noise levels are in the park

The Gossip - Find Their Secrets

Name:

Well Known Facts:

- If someone tells you a secret it's not a secret anymore
- You have an in with the marketing team
- You run through friends quickly

Pronouns:

Secrets:

Department:

- You talk badly of others because you assume everyone is talking bad about you
- You had no idea about **The Rumor** until the email and are mad about it
- You run the company gossip column

Years of Employment:

Insecurities:

- Whenever someone talks about new information you must **Open** to pay full attention
- You must say something any time a potential rumor is brought up
- If someone speaks badly of you, you must spread a rumor about them when able

Features

- **Always Listening:** When you are **Closed** you may whisper or have a direct message conversation to another **Closed** character
- **Social Network:** When you **Return to School** you may spread 2 of your own rumors instead of 1

Actions:

- Close**
- Close**
- Close**
- Swap two peoples roles in **The Rumor** as it is stated
- Make a statement about a character true
- Force another character to share a **Secret**

Things You Know:

- You know **The Stickler** isn't as responsible as they pretend to be

Delegation

- When you return from your task ask **The Geek** to find the radio from the car and see if they can get it working

The Stickler - Make Them Responsible

Name:

Well Known Facts:

- You are a (relatively) new hire
- You follow (or appear to) the rules to the letter
- You wear heavy amounts of cologne/perfume

Pronouns:

Secrets:

Department:

- Sometimes you take 10 extra minutes for your lunch break but clock in as if you didn't
- The company is the only place you feel you belong
- You helped spur on the events of **The Rumor**, intentionally or not

Years of Employment:

Insecurities:

- If someone admits to breaking a company rule you must **Open** and remind them of proper company procedure
- You must defend the company
- If you talk uninterrupted for a full minute, you must **Close**

Features

- **Company Policy:** You may cross off one of your **Actions** whenever a character is forced to do something, if you do, both of those players must do it.
- **"You Go Ahead":** Whenever you **Close** you may force another character to **Open**

Actions:

- Open**
- Open**
- Force another character to **Close**
- Establish a rule within the company
- Force another character to share a **Secret**
- Force another character to share a **Secret**

Things You Know:

- **The Gossip** wants to ruin you

Delegation

- When you are asked to go get drinks, inform them that it is against company policy to have alcohol here. Ask **The Clown** to get snacks instead
- When you return from your task continue talking for a few minutes and then begin to encourage people to head to bed

The Friend - Open Their Hearts

Name:

Well Known Facts:

- You're very nice, even to mean people
- There are a lot of things you don't know, but you try harder than anyone
- You think everyone is your friend

Pronouns:

Secrets:

Department:

- There is someone at this retreat you hate
- You think that your work at the company isn't important to anyone
- You were directly involved in **The Rumor**

Years of Employment:

Insecurities:

- Whenever someone talks bad about a friend you must **Open** and say something in their defense
- Whenever someone talks bad about you, you must **Close**
- If someone you are having a conversation with **Closes** you also must **Close**

Features

- **"Don't say that about them!":** Whenever someone else is forced to do something, you may become the subject of that act instead if applicable
- **Friends Help Each Other:** Any of your **Actions** That affect yourself you may affect someone else instead if they agree.

Actions:

- Open**
- Open or Close**
- Open or Close**
- Close**
- Implicate yourself in **The Rumor**
- Share one of your **Secrets**, then force everyone to share one of their **Secrets**

Things You Know:

- **The Clown** will go too far for attention

Delegation

- You will leave to gather firewood as soon as the discussion starts. When you return, ask **The Bully** if they can find some water in case the fire gets too big

The Clown - Distract Their Focus

Name:

Well Known Facts:

- You did something, it was BIG but no one is quite sure what it was
- The faculty don't like you
- You're the head of comedy sports club

Pronouns:

Secrets:

Department:

- The BIG thing you did was:
- You are extremely uncomfortable in serious situations
- You're worried **The Rumor** will be pinned on you

Years of Employment:

Insecurities:

- If no one laughs at your joke you must **Close**
- If anyone insults you, you must make a joke about it
- You must try to redirect the conversation if someone asks you a personal question

Features

- **Your Joke But Louder:** If you are **Closed** and someone tells a joke, you may **Open** and say the joke again, louder
- **"Well what I heard":** You may raise the stakes of any given part of **The Rumor** by crossing off one of your actions

Actions:

- Open**
- Open**
- Part of **The Rumor** was a misunderstanding, elaborate
- Part of **The Rumor** was a misunderstanding, elaborate
- Cancel another character's **Action**
- Force another character to share a **Well Known Fact**

Things You Know:

- **The Geek** knows who spread the rumor

Delegation

- When you return from your task ask **The Gossip** to go find some sticks for smores