



## Your GM Style & Why it Matters | The 5 Common GM Styles

Full video link: <https://youtu.be/9yNuNPG5H-8>

Your GM style says a lot about you but what does it mean for your players and how should you (or not) change your style for them?

Our GM style is to a large degree fixed. It is important to note that there is no right and wrong when it comes to GM styles, there are some styles that may be better than others.

- Never change your styles for your players
  - There are players for every style – find the right players for you.
  - Alignment of play – it is critical that we are all expecting the same thing.

Let's look at the different GM styles:

- The rules interpreter
  - Rules and tables and rolls and randoms
  - This is someone who will follow the Rules As Written (RAW).
  - Their games generally focus on following the rules on the system used.
  - This is a reliable GM style – within the rules and pre-generated materials that are level appropriate.
  - This GM will also be impartial – they have no vested interest and no agenda.
  - This style can however lack a sense of cohesion or sense of bigger picture because everything is randomly rolled in the game.
  - Lack of logic – without GM intervention, the random can lead to odd outcomes.
  - Rules interpreters will see the PCs as stat blocks – backstory, motivation and goals are great but have little value.
- The Simulationist
  - Zero-GM adjustment to existing scenarios
  - This style is like the rules interpreter except that the simulationist has pre-generated everything.
  - Pre-planned scenarios – that the PCs may or may not overcome.
  - This can create an inflexible and somewhat cold environment as the PCs are irrelevant. The world will continue with or without the PCs inside of it.
- The Modular GM
  - Uses pre-written material exclusively.
  - The modular GM is someone who uses pre-made worlds and adventure and follows those adventures as closely as possible.
  - This GM is reliant on others and acts as a facilitator.
  - This is also a reliable GM – one that is not there to try to defeat or out-manuever the PCs but is there to present a well planned out and reliable narrative.



- Deviation is death – the moment the PCs stray from the material, the GM must bring them back or face failure.
- Can be seen as inflexible purely because they are running what is written and if it is not written, then its not going to happen.
- PCs are pawns – who must follow the ‘board’ or risk being pushed back.
- The Narrator
  - Grand plans and big story trumps rules.
  - The Rule of Cool (ROC) GMs – rules are meant to give us bigger story elements and can be changed to make the story cooler.
  - This can be problematic because if the GM can bend and break the rules – then why can’t the PCs?
  - PCs are superheroes – they should behave like demi-gods and do amazing things.
- The Author
  - Great worldbuilding, epic stories, all pre-planned.
  - Railroading can happen – the story is more important than the individual choices of the PCs.
  - The author will be directing the players to go down certain paths because they are expecting them to go there as it is the authors story – not the players’ story.
  - Players are tourists – they are allowed to watch and occasionally have an idea, but it must be within the tour plans.
- We are all a mix of the different GM styles – we usually use a few different styles.
- We should embrace all the different styles and their strengths and use them to make ourselves better as GMs.

What GM style are you and how can you embrace the strengths of each style to become a great GM?

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