



Constraints & Expectations: Why They're Vital for GMs

Full video link: https://youtu.be/B8dyRC5_sjc

As we continue our journey through The Practical Guide to Becoming a Great GM, we are going to be looking at the key principles of a great GM.

The most important thing to remember is to have fun – BUT – that is not always helpful or constructive.

The key principles that every GM should have are: constraints and expectations.

Constraints are limitations of choice – YOUR choice.

Why are constraints so important?

- No limits = no options. You need constraints within which to work.
- They are a narrowing of focus.

Constraints require us to understand a number of things; however, to begin with, we can fall back on a few solid things that we know for a fact:

- The rules system - TTRPGs have rules – those come with a lot of constraints.
- GM styles = constraints. Some are good, some are bad. Learn which is which.
- Your chosen world space/setting = constraints. Be creative but use the constraints to your advantage.

Once we have those constraints, we need to be able to apply them to our adventures.

- Constraints are everywhere – anything on your world can give you constraints – use them.

Expectations – what do you and your players expect?

- Drawing on what you and your players expect and then using that.
- Let those expectations guide you – you never know what might come out.
- Constraints and expectations can be seen as the yin and yang of each other. Expectations give us a lot of options and constraints reduce those options down so that you can make choices for your adventure based on actual parameters, instead of coming up with something that has endless options and getting lost in the process.
- Reduce your options so that you can make your choice from a limited number rather than having an infinity of choice.



Notes:

