

impersoNation: A Live Action Role-playing Game

Print this page and use it as a do-it-yourself game plan or contact impersoNation6@gmail.com to request a paid gamemaster (GM) party planner to orchestrate your event. Travel expenses may apply. Willrobot from Reddit says of party role-playing games, "The referee makes much more of a difference than the system. The ability to wrangle that many people, keep everyone feeling involved and active, and have some semblance of a plot happen is half experience, half chutzpah, and half pure insanity."

The Characters

Assign four players to be political candidates for the same office, such as senator or U.S. president. These will be republican, libertarian, democrat, and green. If your group is large, you could assign one or more to be independent candidates, such as a centrist. You can assign one as the incumbent who is also running. A higher number of candidates is better, except make sure you have at least one reporter and one policeman. Assigning them in advance of the party may be helpful for preparation. Invite them to dress their party's color.

Preliminary Card Drawings

If the GM did not pre-assign the candidates and other roles prior to the event, the GM will make assignments or have everyone draw a card for random assignment. There will be a candidate card for two to six of the players to draw, and other roles including lobbyists, aides, bodyguards, police, foreign dignitaries, news reporters. For each candidate, there will be a pair of cards with this instruction that two other players will receive: "You have convincing evidence of [write in the specific wrongdoing] by this party's candidate. One other player can corroborate this wrongdoing and has a card that matches yours. You can choose to not report the [scandal or crime] out of loyalty to the candidate. If you want to report, you need to figure out who can corroborate your claim and together approach an authority to present these notes, or the situation will remain unknown. Try talking about general suspicions. If the two who have matching evidence find each other, the police can be contacted or the reporter, but not both. The police make an arrest and interrogation, taking the candidate out of the running for 5 minutes. A reporter will interrupt the vote watch party to announce the news of wrongdoing."

The Settings

1. Press conference: The contestants might need a few minutes to gather their thoughts, while the crowd can discuss their political affiliations. Each contestant gets 5 minutes to describe their platform and political stance. Each contestant must then answer questions from the news reporter(s). The GM announces the end of the press conference and invites all to move to the watch party.
2. Vote watch party: CNN on TV (low volume), cocktails or mocktails, hors d'oeuvres. Pass out one voting ballot to each person and invite all to vote at any time. Everyone mingles. More questions may be asked casually of the candidates. Arrests may happen. Scandals and crimes may be reported by the news reporter stepping up in front of the TV screen. This lasts a pre-determined amount of time. The GM will announce when there is only 5 minutes left to vote, which may mean voting outside the booth. Write your name with your vote.
3. Vote count: the GM counts and announces the winner. The winners get from the other candidates and voters (a) \$5; (b) a 5-minute neckrub, footrub, or scalp massage; or (c) 5 minutes of attention while spouting their political views.

Rules

The cardinal rule of improvisational comedy: "yes and..." In other words, don't negate someone's story; just add to it or redirect it, even if it results in ridiculousness. The candidate who gets the most votes wins, and all their supporters, because they get hired on as staff.

Materials

Invitations, press conference pages for reporters, paper cut-out microphones, cocktails or mocktails, snacks, ballots having rank-ordered voting, optional "I voted" stickers, and an improvised private voting booth