

STRATA

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Introduction

STRATA is a simulation game designed to give the average North America the experience of relating to people within a Latin American society. Each participant will play a role unknown to him or herself. Therefore, the various stages of the game are designed to introduce the player to the expectations of the role.

Stage I: Getting established on a level of status-respect in relation to someone else.

Stage II: Influencing someone of lower status directly or someone of higher status through an intermediary or go-between.

Stage III: Adjustment of level of status-respect at end of three sequences of play.

Note: Within Latin American society, Stage I is accomplished gradually over a period of 2-3 years for a newcomer, or over a period of several generations for nationals. Stage III is in continual operation and must be readjusted whenever anyone in the society rises or falls in status.

The three sequences of rise and fall in status-rank and influence are designed to provide the player experience. Hopefully, by the third round, the player will begin to work comfortably within the system and find natural and non-disruptive ways to accomplish his or her purposes.

The basic system of status-rank consists of these elements:

1. Every group of closely associating relatives is on a separate rank level of status-respect. Everyone else is, therefore, seen as above them or below them in rank.
2. Everyone in the society wishes to associate with those above him or her in rank, whereas higher status people don't want to associate with those of lower rank.
3. Influence can only go down, i.e., higher status influences lower status throughout the system.
4. To influence someone higher than yourself in rank, you must find an intermediary who is obligated to you in some way. Note: Latin Americans do this by having high status godparents sponsor babies at birth or stand up with the parties at marriage. Godparents are thus seen as family.

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Instructions to Leader

1. Be sure all materials are complete:
 - a. Introduction page—one each
 - b. Instruction sheet—one each
 - c. Score sheet—one each for each round played
 - d. Example sheet—one each
 - e. Rise, Fall and, Influence slips—see below

Note: Hand out the sheets one at a time and explain the information on the sheet in a simple, direct way.

2. Score sheets should be marked for Teams A and B for organizing the “influence” periods. There should be equal members in each team playing otherwise some will be disadvantaged during the “influence” period.
3. Mark score sheets for Rank (#1 is high). Mix the papers before distributing so that no one will know the rank of his or her neighbor.
4. Run through the first sequence slowly until people get familiar with the procedure.
5. Take Rise, Fall, and Influence slips one at a time and place them in a central location so that players can select their own slip themselves.
6. At the end of the “three year” period have everyone line up by rank and amount of available funds. Then re-rank, i.e., re-rank the entire group giving a different rank to each player.
7. Divide the total number of players into three groups to allow for assignment of employment and salary (see Instruction Sheet).
8. Lead the group through one sequence using Fulano de Tal (Spanish equivalent of Mr. Jones). For example,

Sequence One:

Starting Rank—3	Receive Wages—\$5000
Rise—New Rank—2	Funds Gained/Lost—0
Fall—New Rank—8	Funds Gained/Lost—0
Rise—New Rank—5	Funds Gained/Lost—minus \$1000
Fall—New Rank—6	Funds Gained/Lost—plus \$500
Rank at the end of the year—6	Available Funds—\$4500

Influence: Indicate Success—gift of \$100,000 to church

Note: In working through the example, select Rise, Fall, and Influence slips at random until Fulano de Tal’s first year is complete.

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Instruction Sheet

1. **Employment.** The *Upper Third* are eligible for a “managerial role” or a business ownership with a gross income of more than \$2000 per year. The *Middle Third* are eligible for “blue collar” work or a business ownership with a gross income of \$2000 per year or less. The *Lower Third* are eligible for “menial task” employment only.
2. **Salary.**
Upper Third receive a \$5000 per year salary.
Middle Third receive a \$2000 per year salary.

Lower Third receive a \$500 per year salary.

3. **Influence.** The person being influenced must yield to influence if the one influencing is above him or her in rank. Once you have started to influence someone, you must remain with him or her until you have exhausted the direct as well as the intermediary means of influence. Then you are to return to your seat, or enter the intermediary pool. If influence is successful without intermediary, both are to go to the intermediary pool. If influence is only successful with an intermediary, and if there are others still seeking a proper intermediary, all parties involved are to go the intermediary pool.

Note: If flip chart or white board or other medium is available, have each person indicate the influence he or she effected.

4. **Information.** You may give direct information regarding your rank, income, or employment, or you may talk about what you do and let the questioner derive rank from your conversation. For example:

What do you do? I work for General Electric.

How long have you been with General Electric? About five years.

Do you have people working with you? Yes.

Do you supervise their work? Yes.

5. Everyone rising or dropping in rank assumes obligations and restrictions of that rank.
6. If a player is forced to yield to influence but lacks sufficient funds to meet the demand, he or she is to distribute all personal funds and it is assumed that he or she will get the remainder from family members so as not to go further into debt.

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Score Sheet

GROUP _____

Sequence One: Begin Year One

Rise and Fall in Status	Rank	Wages/Funds	Amounts
Starting Rank		Receive Wages	
Rise—New Rank		Funds gained or lost	
Fall—New Rank		Funds gained or lost	
Rise—New Rank		Funds gained or lost	
Fall—New Rank		Funds gained or lost	
Rank at end of first year		Available funds	

Influence (Group A acts first, then Group B)

Indicate success: _____ Failure: _____

Sequence Two: Begin Year Two

Rise and Fall in Status	Rank	Wages/Funds	Amounts
Starting Rank		Receive Wages	
Rise—New Rank		Funds gained or lost	
Fall—New Rank		Funds gained or lost	
Rise—New Rank		Funds gained or lost	
Fall—New Rank		Funds gained or lost	
Rank at end of first year		Available funds	

Influence (Group A acts first, then Group B)

Indicate success: _____ Failure: _____

Sequence Three: Begin Year Three

Rise and Fall in Status	Rank	Wages/Funds	Amounts
Starting Rank		Receive Wages	
Rise—New Rank		Funds gained or lost	
Fall—New Rank		Funds gained or lost	
Rise—New Rank		Funds gained or lost	
Fall—New Rank		Funds gained or lost	
Rank at end of first year		Available funds	

Influence (Group A acts first, then Group B)

Indicate success: _____ Failure: _____

Final Tabulation:

Available Funds _____ Final Rank _____

Influence Success (list each success)

Adjusted Rank _____

Rise Sequences

Marry one rank above you and assume that rank, *but* pay \$500 for the privilege of marrying up. Deal falls through if unable to pay.

Marry two ranks above you and assume that rank, *but* pay \$1000 for the privilege of marrying up. Deal falls through if unable to pay.

Marry three ranks above you and assume that rank, *but* pay \$1500 for the privilege of marrying up. Deal falls through if unable to pay.

Marry four ranks above you and assume that rank, *but* pay \$2000 for the privilege of marrying up. Deal falls through if unable to pay.

Marry five ranks above you and assume that rank, *but* pay \$2500 for the privilege of marrying up. Deal falls through if unable to pay.

Invited to be sponsors at the baptism of a child whose parents are two ranks below you. Maintain your rank but contribute \$200.

Invited to be sponsors at the baptism of a child whose parents are two ranks below you. Maintain your rank but contribute \$100.

Elected president of the nation. Rise ten ranks.

Elected senator. Rise seven ranks.

Elected governor. Rise five ranks.

Elected representative. Rise two ranks.

You have won a lottery of \$100,000. Rise two ranks by keeping \$20,000 for investment and distribute the remainder to relatives.

Relatives won a lottery of \$10,000. Receive your share of \$2000 and rise one rank, because you have invested the money well.

Relatives won a lottery of \$100,000. Receive your share of \$10,000 and rise one rank, because you have invested the money well.

Just completed high school education. Rise one rank.

Just completed college education. Rise two ranks.

Fall Sequences

All three of your children marry a rank below your status-rank. Receive \$500 for each child but lose one rank.

Both children marry two ranks below your own. Receive \$1000 for each but lose two ranks.

Both children marry three ranks below your own. Receive \$1500 for each but lose three ranks.

Shoes are dirty. Lose one rank.

Car continually dirty. Lose two ranks.

House shabby in nice neighborhood. Lose three ranks.

Spend too much time with people of lower rank. Lose one rank.

Thrown into jail overnight. Lose three ranks and \$500.

Thrown into jail for five years. Lose five ranks and \$2000.

Daughter falls in love and insists on marrying boy six ranks below your own. Drop two ranks but receive \$2000.

Wife still does laundry. Drop one rank. Ignore if in lower third rank.

Only one house girl. Drop two ranks. Ignore if in lower two-thirds rank.

Only two house girls. Drop two ranks. Ignore if in lower two-thirds rank.

Brother banished from country. Drop two ranks.

Brother fails to achieve political office. Drop one rank.

Unable to arrange for sponsor from higher rank. Drop one rank.

Father fails in attempt at re-election. Resume your original rank.

Business losses cause you to drop three ranks.

Business goes bankrupt. Drop five ranks.

Joined the Protestant church. Drop two ranks.

Parents linked with a cattle scandal. Drop two ranks.

Parents of wife linked with a farm scandal. Drop one rank.

Must earn money. Only job available is driving a bus. Drop to highest rank in lower third.

Influence

Try to get a job above the rank of your present job.

Try to get a \$500 donation.

Try to get a \$1000 donation for charity.

Try to get a \$1500 donation for the church.

Try to get a \$2000 donation for a political campaign.

Try to get a \$10,000 donation.

Try to get a \$100,000 donation for the church.

Invite someone to church.

Invite someone to church a second time.

Invite someone to be a sponsor of your child at baptism with a donation of \$200.

Invite someone to be a sponsor of your marriage, with donation of \$5000 house.

Try to sell a piece of property for \$5000.

Try to sell a piece of property for \$10,000.

Try to sell a piece of property for \$100,000.

Try to gain a political sponsor.