

Making Sure Everyone Gets a Turn: How to Be Heard in Your Game

written by A J | September 11, 2023

I've encountered this issue many times: "I'm in a group, and we face a problem where one player isn't getting heard. We use messenger for chat, and they rarely get a chance to speak because everyone else is talking. Does anyone have any ideas or ways to fix this and make the chat fairer for everyone involved? (from Facebook)"

Playing games with your friends is a blast, isn't it? However, there are times when chatting online can be challenging. Picture this: you're in a virtual game with your pals, eager to share your thoughts, but everyone keeps talking over each other. That's not so enjoyable, is it?

But fret not!

In this blog post, we'll delve into some straightforward solutions to address this issue. We'll ensure that when you're gaming online, everyone at your table has an opportunity to express themselves and enjoy the experience.

Strategies for Making Sure Players Are Heard

It's fantastic that you're proactively working to tackle this problem and guarantee that everyone in your group can participate equally and be heard. Here are some strategies you can explore to create a more equitable chat environment:

1. **Establish Conversational Norms:** Work with your Dungeon Master (DM) and the group to establish clear conversational norms or ground rules. This can include guidelines for listening actively, not interrupting, and giving everyone a chance to speak. Make sure these norms are agreed upon and visible during your sessions.
2. **Use a Caller:** Every team needs a spokesperson, and that's exactly what the Caller is. This player speaks for the entire Party, conveying their thoughts and plans to the DM. When the DM asks "What will the Party do next?" the players discuss their ideas and come to an agreement. Then, the Caller relays that information to the DM. They're not the leader of the Party, but rather the one who keeps the communication flowing.
3. **Rotation for Speaking:** Implement a rotation system where each player has a designated time or order for speaking. This ensures that everyone gets a turn to contribute without being interrupted. The DM can facilitate this by going around the table or calling on players in a set order.
4. **Use a Chat Bot:** Consider using a chat bot or a dedicated channel for out-of-character discussions. Players can use this channel to indicate when they want to speak or ask a question. The DM can then manage the queue and call on players in turn.
5. **Raise Hands:** Players can use a specific emoji or command to "raise their

hand” in the chat when they want to speak. The DM can keep an eye on this and call on players accordingly.

6. **Time-Boxed Turns:** Allocate a fixed amount of time for each player’s turn in discussions or decision-making. This encourages players to be concise and ensures that everyone gets a chance.
7. **Encourage Active Listening:** Encourage players to actively listen and acknowledge others’ contributions. This can be done through in-character reactions or messages like “I agree with what [player] just said...”
8. **Private Messages:** Players can use private messages to communicate with the DM or other players when they have something to say or ask that doesn’t need to be shared with the whole group.
9. **Scheduled Breaks:** Consider scheduling short breaks during your sessions. This allows players to catch up on chat messages and formulate their responses.
10. **Feedback and Check-Ins:** Regularly check in with your group to gather feedback on the chat dynamics. Are there players who consistently feel unheard? Use this feedback to refine your approach and make ongoing improvements.
11. **Alternate Communication Channels:** In addition to chat, consider using voice or video calls for certain discussions or critical moments in the game. This can help break up the text-based communication and provide additional opportunities for interaction.

Remember that the goal is to create an inclusive and enjoyable gaming experience for everyone. Be open to feedback, iterate on your strategies as needed, and continue working collaboratively with your DM and fellow players to address this issue effectively.

What do you think?

Post your thoughts, wishes and feedback in the reply section below.