

100 Random Goals For Your NPCs

Engaging and interesting NPCs help your campaign setting come alive. Maybe the players help the NPCs achieve their goals; maybe they thwart them. Sometimes an NPC's goal might just be something they work towards while the players are off doing something else. The important thing is that every NPC has something that they *want*. Like real people, they have goals and aspirations, and they pursue those goals and aspirations, sometimes to success, sometimes to inevitable failure.

I've put together a list of 100 random goals you can use for your NPCs. You can use the table to flesh out your existing NPCs (particularly the ones you had to improv because the players went in a direction you didn't expect), or to invent new ones on the fly.

To use it, just roll a d100 and find the corresponding number.

100 Random NPC Goals

Result	Goal
001	The NPC wants to return to their homeland or place of origin.
002	The NPC wants to escape their current situation.
003	The NPC wants to obtain romantic love.
004	The NPC wants to obtain fame and adoration.
005	The NPC wants to atone for a past crime.
006	The NPC wants to find a lost relative or friend.

Result	Goal
007	The NPC wants to obtain a particular item (a gemstone to make into a wedding ring; a magical sword; a book of secret spells; etc.).
008	The NPC wants to be the first at something (first to discover a rumored land; first to break a record; etc).
009	The NPC wants revenge on a rival or hated foe.
010	The NPC wants to build and expand a business.
011	The NPC wants to found a religion.
012	The NPC wants to found a secular organization or brotherhood.
013	The NPC wants to find a cure for a disease, curse, or ailment.
014	The NPC wants to write or create a masterpiece book, song, or piece of art.
015	The NPC wants to complete or add to a collection.
016	The NPC wants to free an enslaved people.
017	The NPC wants to make a lot of money.
018	The NPC wants to sabotage a rival group or organization.
019	The NPC wants to establish peace between rival/warring factions or governments.
020	The NPC wants a family.
021	The NPC just wants someone to take over for a while so they can rest.
022	The NPC wants to fix a broken but necessary piece of equipment, machinery, or other apparatus.
023	The NPC wants to prove that they have surpassed their old master.
024	The NPC wants to learn more about a relative who died or vanished before they were born.

Result	Goal
025	The NPC wants to learn a new skill or trade.
026	The NPC wants to end their own life or existence (this goal may not be appropriate for all groups; talk to your players first and reroll if necessary).
027	The NPC wants to see a fantastical creature in person (a unicorn, a dragon, etc.).
028	The NPC wants to spread their religion to the uninitiated (possibly even by force).
029	The NPC wants to avoid a prophesied outcome.
030	The NPC wants to have children (or some other heir to carry on their legacy).
031	The NPC wants to make a new friend.
032	The NPC wants to shirk their duties and responsibilities.
033	The NPC wants to break up a relationship or drive a wedge between two people (not necessarily a romantic relationship).
034	The NPC wants relief from a chronic malady, wound, or illness that they suffer from.
035	The NPC wants to make their family (or a respected mentor) proud.
036	The NPC wants to regain something that was lost (wealth, fame, an item, the family property).
037	The NPC wants to put a stop to criminal activity.
038	The NPC wants to mend a rift between two people (reunite with an estranged father; help two rival blacksmiths work together; etc.).
039	The NPC wants to solve an ongoing mystery.
040	The NPC wants to protect a friend or family member from something.

Result	Goal
041	The NPC wants to reinvent themselves as a new identity.
042	The NPC wants to foster trade between two groups (tribes, countries, cities, etc.)
043	The NPC wants to reestablish a forgotten holiday or cultural custom.
044	The NPC wants to make people laugh.
045	The NPC wants to prove their power.
046	The NPC wants to prove a theory.
047	The NPC wants to destroy a rival or hated foe.
048	The NPC wants their kingdom or country to expand.
049	The NPC wants to prove a rumor about them is wrong.
050	The NPC wants to win a game or competition.
051	The NPC wants to travel to a thus-far unreachable place (space; time travel; a different dimension; etc.).
052	The NPC wants to prove something they believe in exists.
053	The NPC wants to destroy or kill a class of people or creatures.
054	The NPC wants to preserve nature at all costs.
055	The NPC wants to decipher a puzzle or something written in a code or ancient language.
056	The NPC wants to repay a debt (not necessarily financial in nature).
057	The NPC wants to join an elite group or organization.
058	The NPC wants to stay anonymous and not be noticed.
059	The NPC wants to change a law or local custom.
060	The NPC wants to overcome their fear of something.
061	The NPC wants to be more beautiful or attractive.

Result	Goal
062	The NPC wants to redeem a villain.
063	The NPC wants to break a bad habit.
064	The NPC wants to remedy something about their personality (an inability to trust people; an explosive temper; always refusing to admit when they're wrong; etc.)
065	The NPC wants to profess their love to someone they admire.
066	The NPC wants to be taken seriously by someone who doesn't give them due credit.
067	The NPC wants to fix an inaccuracy in the culture's accepted knowledge (prove that the world isn't flat; that there is a passage that connects two continents; etc.).
068	The NPC wants to dominate or control another person or group.
069	The NPC wants to finish someone else's unfinished work.
070	The NPC wants to avenge a slain or defeated ally.
071	The NPC wants to unbalance an ongoing stalemate.
072	The NPC wants to surprise someone with a gift.
073	The NPC wants to play a prank on someone (harmful? or malicious?).
074	The NPC wants to restore their home to its former glory (home could take the form of dwelling, town, country, etc.).
075	The NPC wants to achieve divinity, enlightenment, or godhood.
076	The NPC wants to fulfill a prophesy they believe to be about themselves (but is it really?).
077	The NPC wants to break someone out of prison.

Result	Goal
078	The NPC wants to prove their innocence.
079	The NPC wants to be inspired or motivated by someone or something.
080	The NPC wants to do something that is 100% absolutely impossible to do.
081	The NPC wants to win a bet.
082	The NPC wants to cheat at a competition or clash.
083	The NPC wants to bind an entity to their power (a demon lord bound by runes; a rival merchant bound by contract; etc.).
084	The NPC wants to learn a new language -- maybe even one that isn't spoken anymore.
085	The NPC wants to catch an elusive quarry (a burglar that leaves no trace; a massive mythical fish; etc.).
086	The NPC wants to keep their family or organization from splitting up due to infighting.
087	The NPC wants to overcome an addiction.
088	The NPC wants to be left alone to engage in self-destructive acts (excessive drinking, gambling, etc.).
089	The NPC wants to follow the route or path of someone who came before them (a prior expedition; a pilgrim following a messiah's path to the holy city; etc.).
090	The NPC wants to teach their skills or methods to others.
091	The NPC wants to be remembered.
092	The NPC wants to build something (a house, a castle, a colony, etc.).
093	The NPC wants to show support for a cause or person.
094	The NPC wants to understand a confusing person or culture.
095	The NPC wants to serve a lord, leader, or god.

Result	Goal
096	The NPC wants to decide between two or more choices.
097	The NPC wants to harass or intimidate another person or group.
098	The NPC wants to honor or pay homage to someone they respect who has fallen or died.
099	The NPC wants to condition a person or group to respond in a certain way to certain stimuli.
100	The NPC wants to separate two things (opposing relics; feuding brothers; warring tribes; etc.).

For more complex NPCs, you might even roll 2-3 times.

Leave a comment!

Was this table useful in your game? Let me know how you used it in the comments or add your own ideas for NPC goals and motivations!