

INTRODUCTION

In *Squid, Inc.*, you play a lowly guppy looking to become the big fish in the company. As employees become available, you need to use their Clout or get them working for you. Once you have employees placed inside the company, position them carefully, move them up the corporate ladder, but watch out for the frenzy of those trying to step over you on the way to the top.

Play your Clout right and you can become the Big Fish.

COMPONENTS



80 Player pieces (20 of each style)



70 Clout tokens



1 Workplace



48 Employee tiles



42 Employee cards



4 Mailrooms

OBJECTIVE

Strategically position your Employees in the company and assemble the most Clout.

SETUP

Each player takes a Mailroom board and a set of player tokens in one color.

Shuffle the deck of Employees and deal out two Employees to each player. If a Security Guard is dealt, give the player a new Employee and shuffle the Security Guard back into the deck. Players should add these Employees to their Mailrooms by placing them onto their Mailroom boards. They are waiting for you to put them into the Workplace *(on the board)*.

Place the top three Employees from the deck on the board spaces labeled **+1, +0, -1.** This is the **Unemployed Line**.

Place the remainder of the deck facedown on the space provided.

Place all of the Clout tokens off to the side.

Place all the Employee tiles off to the side. *(If you want, you can separate the tiles into like sea creature stacks.)*

The first player will be the player with the highest combined Clout Value in their Mailroom. If there is a tie, choose randomly among the tied players.





SAMPLE SETUP (4 PLAYER)



THE EMPLOYEES

Each Employee's card has three properties:

- **Name** - the name or title of the Employee.
- **Clout Value** - the amount of Clout the Employee either generates or needs to perform its ability in the Workplace.
- **Ability** - the ability that Employee can perform by using its Clout.

Employees with unique abilities will have unique names *(like Phinny or Esther)*. Others will have generic names *(like Middle Manager or Restructuring Agent)*. You will never see more than one of any unique Employee in play at one time. You may see multiples of generic Employees.



GAMEPLAY

Each turn has 3 steps: Choose an Employee, Bring Employees into the Workplace, and Activate Abilities. Once a player has gone through these steps, the next player in turn order goes.

CHOOSE AN EMPLOYEE

On your turn, you will choose a card from the *Unemployed Line*. Once you have done this, slide the remaining Employees in the line up *(toward the +1)* as necessary.



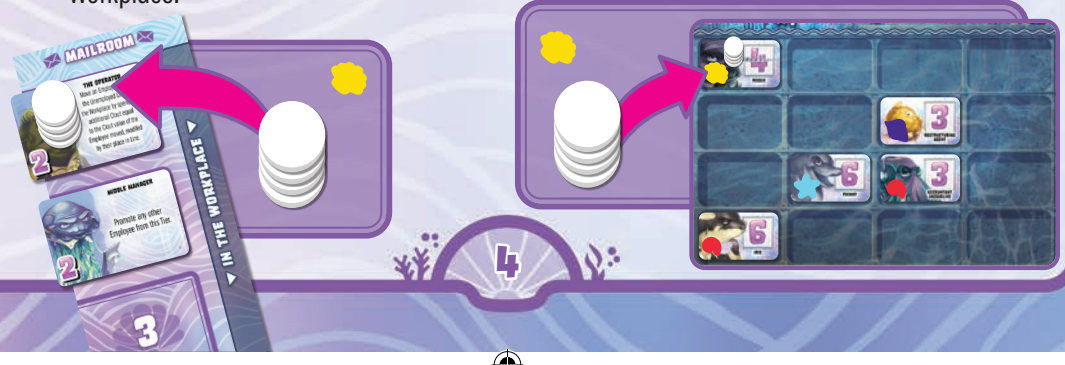
Draw the next Employee from the deck and place it in the +1 space. If you draw a Security Guard, place a Security Guard tile in any space on the highest Tier available and then discard the Security Guard card *(place its card faceup on top of the Dismissed pile on the board)*. Draw another Employee to add to the Unemployed Line.

If the deck is empty, the players must use up the Employees in the *Unemployed Line*. Once the Unemployed Line is empty, reshuffle the deck, refill the line, and continue play.



With your chosen Employee, you may do one of two things:

1. If you have room, you may place the Employee card into your Mailroom.
   - Take its corresponding tile and place it with the card.
   - You may **not** have **more than three** Employees in your Mailroom.
2. You may Dismiss the Employee and use its Clout. Its Clout is determined by the number on the card and the modifier from its space in the Unemployed Line *(if you take Lumbergh, Clout Value 3, from the +1 space, you will get 4 Clout)*. Take the appropriate number of Clout tokens and place them on your Employees according to any ONE of the following guidelines:
   - Place all of the Clout on any **one** of your Employees in your Mailroom.
   - Place all of the Clout on any **one** of your Employees in the Workplace *(on the board)*.
   - Divide the Clout between any **one** Employee in your Mailroom and any **one** Employee in the Workplace.



BRING EMPLOYEES INTO THE WORKPLACE

After placing Clout tokens, if any Employees from your Mailroom have a number of tokens that equal or exceed their printed Clout Value, you **must** bring them into the Workplace. Remove exactly that number of Clout from those Employees. Leave any excess Clout where they are.

Move the Employee **card** to the right of your Mailroom. Take its corresponding **tile** and place it on **any empty space in the bottom (x1) Tier** of the board. Place your player token on it to denote your control of that Employee.



If there are no empty spaces, you may Dismiss *(remove)* any other Employee of lesser Clout Value *(printed Clout number)* from the x1 Tier. This is called a Bump. If there are no empty spaces or you can't Bump another Employee, your Employee is Dismissed.



When an Employee is Dismissed, it is removed from the board, its card is placed on top of the Dismissed pile, and any Clout that was on the card is lost.

ACTIVATE ABILITIES

After bringing all of your eligible Employees into play, you may activate the abilities of your Employees in the Worplace *(exception: Employees that were just placed in the Workplace from the Mailroom this turn may not activate their abilities, even if they have enough Clout to do so)*.

An Employee may only activate its ability if there is enough Clout to match or exceed its Clout Value.

The number of Clout the Employee must spend to trigger its ability is equal to its Clout Value. Remove exactly this number of Clout from the tile and leave any remaining tokens where they are. Resolve the text on the card.

You may activate your Employees' abilities in any order you choose, however, an Employee may only activate its ability once during your turn, even if it has enough Clout for more.

- **Promote –** A Promoted Employee moves up to the next Tier on the board. When an Employee is Promoted, the player responsible for the promotion chooses the Employee's new space. If an Employee is Promoted to a Tier with no empty spaces, it may Bump another Employee of lesser Clout Value from that Tier. That Employee is Demoted to the next lowest Tier.

Promote

When Reggie is Promoted, he can move to either empty space in the next higher Tier.



- **Demote –** A Demoted Employee moves down to the previous Tier on the board. When an Employee is Demoted, the player responsible for the demotion chooses the Employee's new space. If an Employee is Demoted from the lowest Tier, that Employee is Dismissed. If an Employee is Demoted to a Tier with no empty spaces, it may Bump another Employee of lesser Clout Value from that Tier. That Employee is Demoted to the next lowest Tier. If there are no Employees of lesser Clout Value, continue to Demote the Employee until a space is found or it is Dismissed.

Demote & Bump

The Headhunter is Promoted but the next Tier is full, so it has to Bump another Employee of lesser Clout Value, who now gets Demoted.



- **Dismiss –** A Dismissed Employee is removed from the board, its Clout tokens are discarded to the supply, and its card is placed in the Dismissed pile.

Float

The Restructuring Agent floats Miss Mummer, who floats the Placement Agent off the Tier, dismissing the Agent.



- **Bump –** A Bump is the result of Promotion and Demotion as described above. When an Employee Bumps another, it must occupy the Bumped Employee's old space. Multiple Bumps can happen as a result of a Promotion or other effect.

- **Float –** To Float another Employee means to push **away** that Employee in any orthogonal direction and move into its space. If there is another Employee in that space, it is also floated to the next space, etc... If an Employee is floated off the Tier as a result of this, then that Employee is Demoted. If this was the bottom Tier, that Employee is Dismissed.

- **Adjacent -** Employees that reference adjacency only refer to the spaces above, below, and to the sides. Diagonals do not count. Employees in different Tiers are not adjacent to each other.

SECURITY GUARDS

Whenever an Employee is Dismissed from the Workplace or a Security Guard card is drawn, a Security Guard tile comes into play. The player responsible for the Dismissal or that drew the Security Guard card takes a Security Guard tile and places it on any space on the highest available Tier.

- Security Guards are worth no Clout.
- Security Guards have no controller. They work for the company.
- Security Guards are Employees and may be targeted by abilities.
- Security Guards may not be moved to a Mailroom.
- Security Guards may not be Dismissed unless the board is full. If a Security Guard is bumped off the lowest Tier, it comes back in on the highest available Tier.
- When you Promote or Demote a Security Guard, move it to the next available space.
- Security Guards never bump other Employees.

ENDGAME

When the last space on the board is filled, you move into the endgame. Once the endgame is triggered, it cannot be undone. Continue playing until the deck AND the Unemployed Line are empty. Then tally up the Clout for each player as described below. Whoever has the most Clout has become the Big Fish and wins the game.

Note: If the last Employee played to the Workplace was the last card in the Unemployed Line, reshuffle the deck and continue until the newly shuffled deck and Unemployed Line are empty.

SCORING

Each Employee is worth an amount of Clout equal to its Clout Value. As the Employees ascend the corporate ladder, their Clout Values increase. While Employees on the bottom Tier are worth their printed Clout Value, at the higher Tiers they are worth 3 times their Clout Value, then 5 times, and then at the very top, 7 times their Clout Value. **Any Clout tokens on Employees in the Workplace are worth one Clout each regardless of the Tier.**



Scoring Example

Yellow will score as follows: For the bottom Tier, the total is 8. Second Tier is 0. Third Tier is 0. Top Tier is 28. In addition, Yellow has 7 Clout.

Yellow's total score is: 43!

Purple will score as follows: For the bottom Tier, the total is 14. Second Tier is 18. Third Tier is 25. In addition, Purple has 17 Clout.

Purple's total score is: 74!

If players are tied, the tiebreaker goes to the player with the most employees in the workplace, followed by the player with the most employees in their mailroom. If still tied, players share the victory.

ABILITY CLARIFICATIONS

Accountant Jacqueline
The same Tier refers to Jaqueline's board level. Only Employees you control get the extra Clout.

Bella the Temp
Remove Bella from the board and discard her card. Any Employee from your Mailroom may take her space, regardless of its Clout Value. Clout on Bella is lost, but Clout on her replacement remains.

Cardi the Temp
Any Employee from the Unemployed Line may take her space, regardless of its Clout Value. Slide the remaining Employees up the line and draw a new card.

Director of Hiring
Discard any one card from the Unemployed Line. Shift the others as necessary and draw a new card.

Esther
You can swap any Employee that you control on the board with any Employee in someone else's Mailroom. The Clout on both Employees remains.

Headhunter
Your Mailroom must have room for the new Employee. Shift the remaining Employees on the Unemployed Line as necessary and draw a new card.

HR Agent
In order to Promote the HR Agent, there must be an Employee on the next Tier to Demote. This is a Bump.

Iris
The Employee can be any Employee controlled by any other player. That Employee is Dismissed.

Phinny
Phinny must be able to go up 2 Tiers exactly. Phinny cannot use her ability if she is on the x5 Tier.

Poacher
You may choose any adjacent Employee controlled by any player.

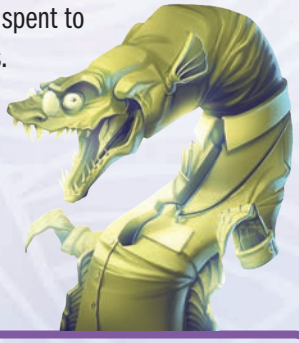
Professor Parodist
You may choose any Employee in any player's Mailroom.

Reggie
You may choose 2 Employees belonging to the same opponent or 2 belonging to 2 different opponents.

The Operator
The Clout spent must include the 2 Clout to activate The Operator's ability.

Union Leader Jillian
Jillian can remove Clout from any Employee on any Tier controlled by any player.

Walinda (and Deedra and Sam)
No Clout needs to be spent to activate their abilities. Deedra and Sam's abilities should be used during the appropriate steps in the gameplay.





CREDITS

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