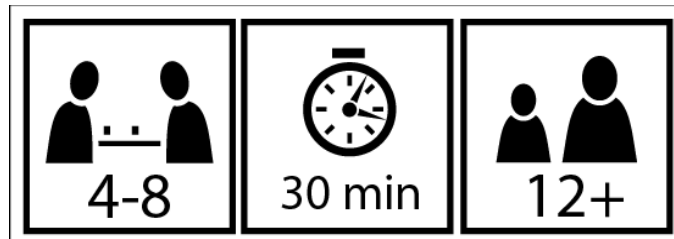
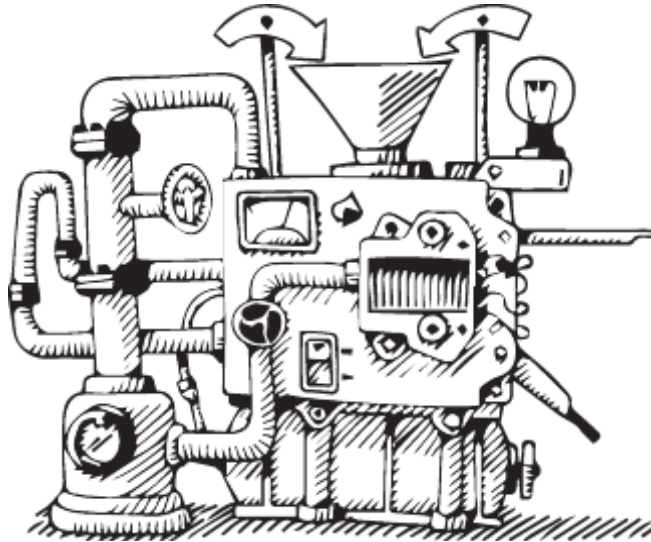


The machine

March 24th, 2019



An intense social game of purposeful laziness, deceit and brown-nosing

Concept:

The factory workers are building a machine that is supposed to replace them. The manager needs it to finish on time, the workers need it to fail – or brownnose their way to become the manager's favorite.

Basic concept

The factory workers are building a machine that is supposed to replace them.

One of the players will take the role of the *manager*. He has five days to build the machine. If he fails, he will be fired. However, if the machine is built on time, all the workers will be fired, except one.

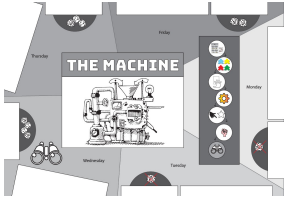



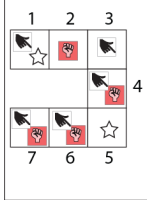
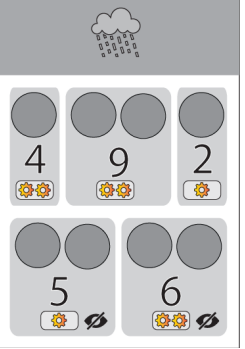
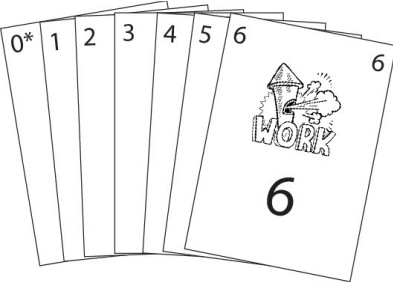

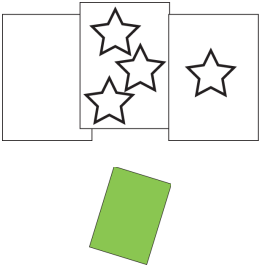
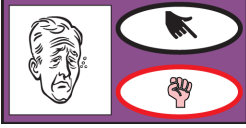



As a **worker** you have to walk a very thin line: If you are too lazy, the manager may give you warnings, which put you in risk of being fired. If you are too compliant, the labor union may punish you – and their punishments are pretty harsh. And if the machine is built, you are most likely fired, unless you have been good at brown-nosing and received the best recommendation cards during the game.

As a **manager**, you are playing a worker-placement game, where the meeples are actual players who won't always do as they are told.

For both workers and manager, the goal of the game is to keep your job. If you haven't been fired by the end of the game, you've *won*. If you have been fired, you've *lost*. More than one player can win the game. How you secure your job is entirely up to you.

Contents

<p>1 board</p> 	<p>5 progress tracks</p>  <p>6 players</p>	<p>1 progress marker</p> 
<p>7 meeples of different colors</p>  <p>+ 3 interns (white)</p>	<p>5 aftermath cards</p> 	<p>5 task cards</p> 
<p>7x8 = 56 work cards</p> 	<p>36 warnings/'bad standing' (18 of each color)</p> 	<p>30 recommendation cards</p> 
<p>8 player boards (cardboard)</p> 	<p>10 fate cards (5 black and 5 red - more in the final game)</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>On the news of being fired, you throw yourself into the machine, hoping that your family will get a compensation. They don't.</p> </div>	<p>4 regular 6-sided dice</p> 

Setup

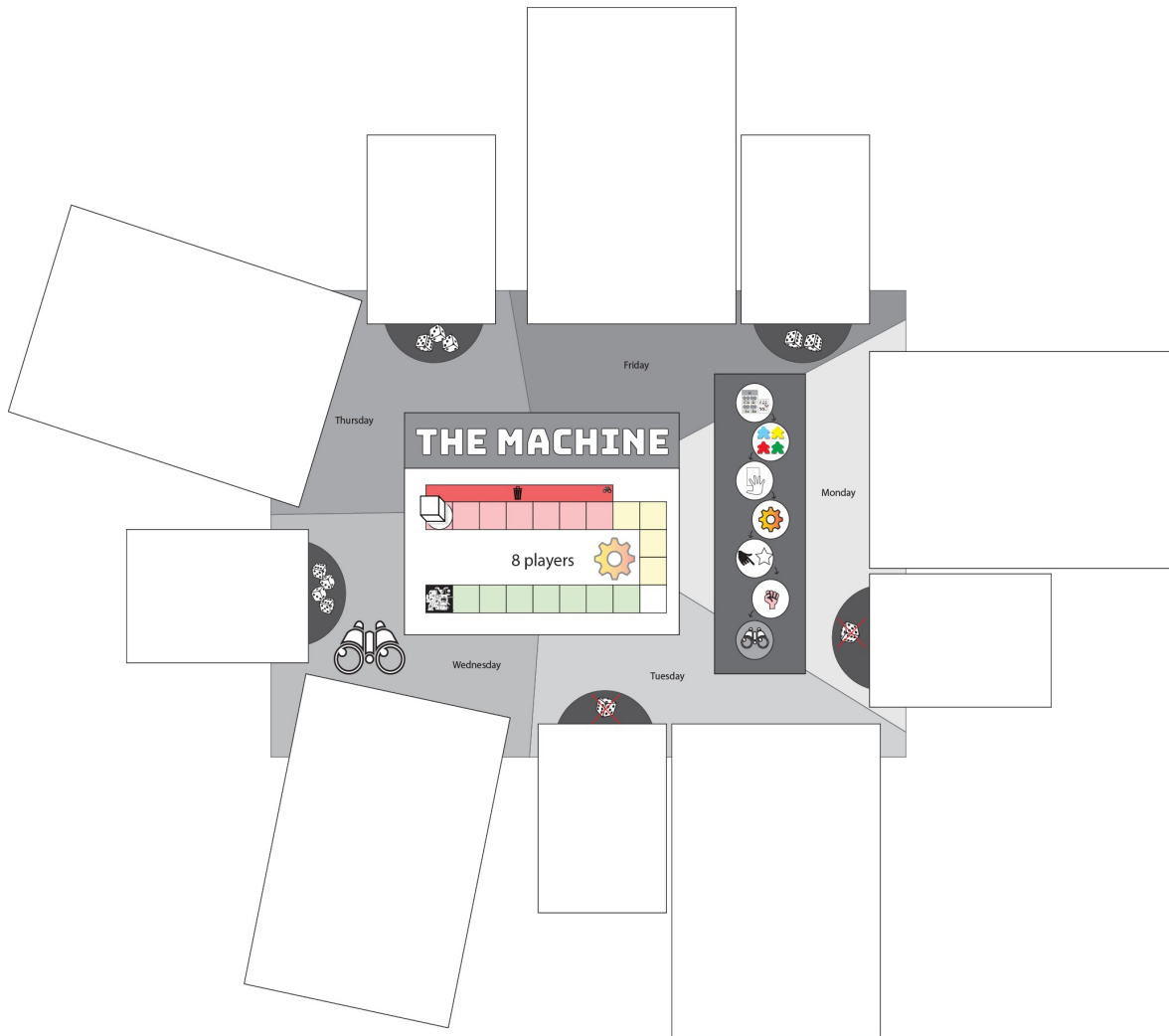
Choose a player to be manager.



Place the board on the table.

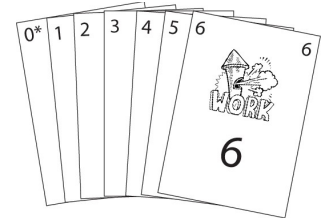
Find the *progress track* matching the player count and place it on the board. Place the *progress marker* (📄) on the circled space on the *progress track*. The goal for the manager is to make the *progress marker* to reach the last space (🔧) on the progress track before the five days are over.

Shuffle the five *task cards* and the five *aftermath cards* place them face down on the board.



Working cards

Give 7 *work cards* to each player except the manager, one of each number: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.



Each player shuffles their cards and sends one random card to their right neighbor and one random card to their left neighbor (skip the manager). This means that the manager knows approximately which cards each player has, but not exactly.

Player boards

Give the manager the *grey* player board. All the workers choose one player board each. The main purpose of the boards is to show the players' colors. But they are also used for showing how many *warnings* and *bad standing* each player has gotten. The top are for the black *warnings* from the manager. The bottom are for the red *bad standing* from the union.



The manager also takes one meeple for each worker – corresponding to the colors on their player boards (the workers **are** the meeples).

The game

The game consists of 5 days. Each day is split into these phases:

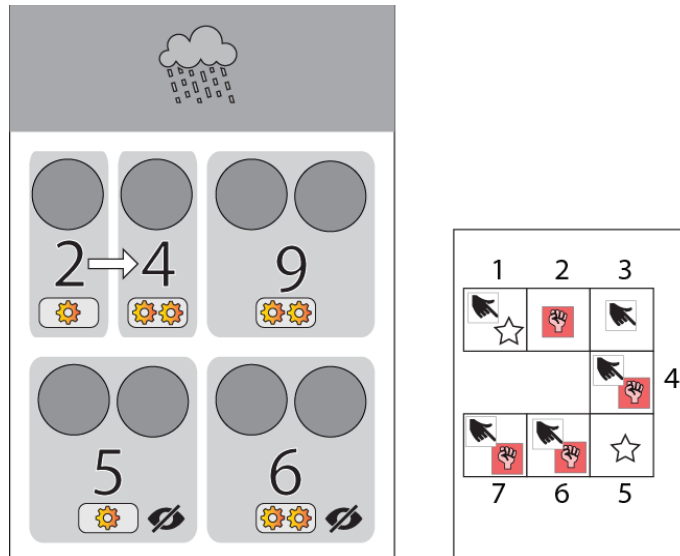
1. **Draw task and aftermath cards.** These cards decide the tasks for the day and what will happen afterwards.
2. **Manager places workers.** The manager places the available workers on the tasks he wants them to perform.
3. **Workers play work cards.** Each worker secretly plays one of his *work cards*.
4. **Execution.** The workers reveal their work cards and perform (or fail) the tasks they were assigned.
5. **Warnings and recommendations.** Depending on the aftermath card, the manager may give one or more warnings to lazy workers, and give recommendations for the wellperforming workers to upper management.
6. **Union meeting.** The workers who didn't work that day hold a union meeting where they can give bad standing tokens to the remaining players.
7. **Inspection.** At the end of day 3 (wednesday) only, the upper management will evaluate the managers work until now - which might lead him to get extra help (if he's a little behind) or get fired (if he's a lot behind).





Phase 1: Draw task and aftermath cards

Turn the next task card and aftermath card over (starting with day 1). They might look like this:



Place *warning* tokens (●) *bad standing* tokens (◊) and *recommendation cards* (■) on the aftermath card like this: Start with space 1 (upper left) and continue until you reach the space corresponding to the amount of workers currently left in the game (so players who have been eliminated from the game does not count). For each 🖱 place a warning token (●), for each 🖱 place a *bad standing* token (◊) and for each ☆ place a *recommendation card* (■).

For example if there are currently 4 workers, there will be 3 *warning tokens* (●) and 2 *bad standing tokens* (◊) and 1 *recommendation card* (■) on the card above. These can be dealt out later on the day (phase 5 and 6).

Weather

The weather icon on the task card has different effects.

Rain (☁️) just means that it is an ordinary day.

Had it been sunshine (☀️), it would be a “day of forgiveness”. This means that the player with most *warnings from the manager* (●) will lose one *warning*, and the player with the most *bad standing from the union* (◊), will lose one *bad standing*. In case of ties, nothing happens.

For example: Peter has 3 warnings from the manager, and Sophie has 2. Peter loses one. If both Peter and Sophie had 3 warnings, none of them would lose any.

If it is lightning storm (⚡️), the manager is in a bad mood and must give all his warnings at the end of the day (phase 5).

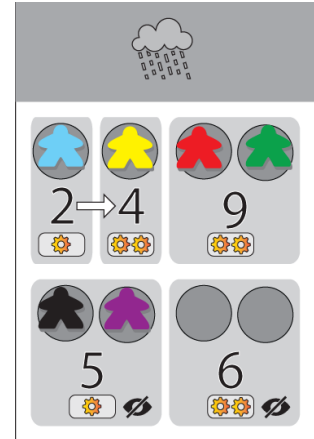


Phase 2: Manager places workers

The manager now takes all the workers (meeples), and places them upon the board. He can place one worker on each working station (grey circles). If a box has more than one grey circle, he must place workers on all the spaces (or none).

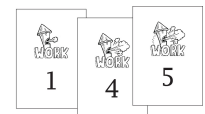
If two boxes are connected by an arrow (\Rightarrow), one of the tasks depend on the other, so you cannot place a worker on the right task, unless there's a worker on the left (in the example, the '4' task depends on the '2' task).

(Note: Although the image above doesn't show it, the meeples should be placed standing up).



Phase 3: Workers play work cards

Each worker now chooses one *work card* from their hand and places it face down in front of themselves.





Phase 4: Execution

On turn, the workers reveal their played *working cards* and resolve the effect. Start with the top-left worker and continue right (in reading direction) and then the second row.

Single tasks


If a player is standing alone on a task, he just needs to have played a working card with a number **equal to or above** the number on the task to succeed. So for example the task to the right can be succeeded with a 4, 5 or 6.

If he succeeds the task, the progress marker () is moved an amount of spaces on the progress track equal to the number of cogs () on the task (two in the example to the right).



If the worker has played a working card with less than the number of the task (0* included), he has failed and the progress marker does not move. Lay the worker meeple down on the side to show that he has failed.

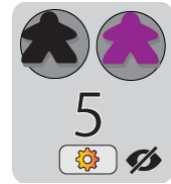
Tasks with more than one worker

On the tasks with more than one worker all the numbers on the working cards of the workers are combined (for example 3+5). If they are equal to or above the number on the task, the workers have succeeded and the progress marker is moved an amount of spaces on the progress track equal to the number of cogs () on the task. If not, all the worker meeples on the task are layed down on the side to show that they have failed.



If just one of the players involved has played a zero (0*), the task has automatically failed, no matter what cards the other workers played.

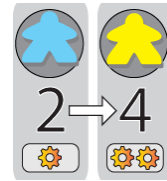
If there is a "crossed-eye" icon (👁️) on the task, before revealing the cards, collect them together and shuffle them, so the manager does not know who played what card.



If there is no "crossed-eye" icon, the manager can see which worker contributes what to the task.

Tasks depending on other tasks

If task B depends on task A (⇒) and task A fails, the working card for task B is never shown (the manager will never know if he would have done a good job or not). The worker meeples for both tasks are layed on the side.



Finishing the machine

If the progress marker (📄) reaches the last space on the track (🏠) the machine is finished, and the game ends (see the end of game section).



Phase 5: Warnings and recommendations

The workday is over, and it is time to evaluate the workers' efforts.

Warnings

First the manager may deal out any or all of the warnings (🔴) on the aftermath card. He may distribute them however he wants (so he may give them all to one player).

When a worker receives one or more warnings, he rolls an amount of dice shown on the 'week board' for that day. For example on day 3, he will role 4 dice (🎲🎲🎲🎲). In order not to be fired, at least one of the dice must be above his total amount of warnings (received throughout the game). If none of them are, he is fired. He has lost the game, and his meeple is removed (so the manager has one less meeple). He now draws a black fate card to determine his fate (this is pure flavor).

After you are fired, you can no longer afford your wife's medication. She passes away. You begin drinking, and your body is found frozen on a bench on Christmas eve.

Merry Christmas


If for example a worker has 3 warnings, a roll of 1,5,2,3 would keep him safe (the 5 saved him), but a roll of 1,3,3,2 would mean that he was fired.

A 6 always counts a high enough – so rolling a 6 will prevent you from being fired, no matter how many warnings you have.

Notice that on the first two days no dice are rolled (🎲).

Why would the manager ever give warnings, when he risks losing workers?

If the manager never gives any warnings, the workers will most likely stop doing anything he says and will all be useless to him. By giving warnings, he'll command respect and get stuff done, although he might lose a worker or two in the process.

If it is a *thunder* day , the manager must give all of his warnings. On other days, he may choose not to.

Recommendations

Next, the manager may deal out any or all of the available recommendation cards. These are recommendations of certain workers that he gives to upper management, and they will influence who keeps his job, if the machine is built. He can only give recommendation cards to workers who fulfilled their task and at most one card to each worker.

Each recommendation card has a number of stars on it. The manager can look at the cards before dealing them out face down to workers.


The workers may see their own recommendation cards, but must not show them to anyone.

Recommendation cards only become relevant if the machine is completed. More about this later.





Phase 6: Union meeting

After the manager has given his warnings, it is time for the union meeting. Only workers who failed today's tasks will participate in the meeting (the ones who has their meeples lying down).

The union can give out the *bad standing* tokens () on the aftermath card. They can distribute the tokens almost any way they want, but only if they can all agree. The only rule is, that no player can receive more than three bad standing tokens at once. They can chose not to give out all tokens. They will probably want to give most tokens to the players who did the most important tasks.

The workers who are not present at the meeting cannot talk until the meeting is over (they are not there!). The same goes for the manager.

Example: Peter, Sophie and Elliot failed their tasks on that day. There are three bad standing tokens to be distributed. Jones fulfilled a very easy task (a 1) that just gave one cog () , while Michael fulfilled a difficult task (a 5) that gave two cogs (). They therefore agree to give two bad standing tokens to Michael and one to Jones.

If an agreement can't be reached within a reasonable time (set a timer if necessary), move on without giving any *bad standing*.

Bad standing works just like *warnings*, but is counted separately: You roll dice and compare them only to your *bad standing* tokens. If you roll no dice above your total amount of *bad standing*, you've gotten in trouble with the union, and you are out of the game. Remove your meeple and draw a red fate card to see what happened to you.


It's very unfortunate
that your house burned
down ... with you in it.

Wonder who put that
lock on the outside?

In case of no attendees

If no workers are attending the union meeting (because everybody worked), the *bad standing* tokens are dealt out in order – first row one from left to right, then row two from left to right until there are none left (if there are more bad standing tokens than players, repeat).

Replacement workers

When a worker is lost due to *bad standing* with the union (as opposed to being fired), the manager gains a replacement worker (a white meeple). This is just an intern, and they can't work very hard, but on the other hand, they are predictable. Interns always work as if they played a '2'. They cannot be placed on secret spaces () - those tasks are too complicated (but they can cooperate on a non-secret task that requires several workers).




Replacement workers does not count as players when deciding the amount of warnings/bad standing for the day.

When a worker is fired (due to *warnings*), the manager does not get a replacement.



Phase 7: Inspection

On day 3 the upper management will inspect the production and check if the progress is ahead of or behind schedule. Check the *progress track*.

If the *progress marker* () is currently at a yellow space, the production is slightly behind schedule. Upper management decides to make a slightly less ambitious plan for the machine, so move the progress marker forward the amount of spaces shown (for example 2).



If the progress marker is currently at a green space, the production is ahead of schedule. Upper management decides that since everything is going so well, they might make a slightly more ambitious machine. Move the progress marker backwards the amount of spaces shown (for example 1).



If the *progress marker* is currently at a red space, the machine is so much behind schedule that the plans are immediately dropped and the manager is fired (which means the game is over).

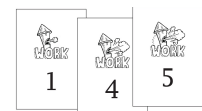


End of round

At the end of the round – and not before – the manager gathers all the worker meeples (it is important to be able to see who did what, when giving out *warnings*, *recommendations* and *bad standing*).



All the played *working cards* are discarded.



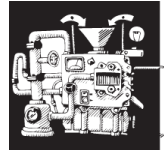
Continue to the next day.

End of game

The game can end in four ways.

1. The machine is completed

If the machine is completed (the progress marker reaches the last space), the rest of the day is skipped (no warnings, union meetings or recommendations). Instead all workers who are still in the game, reveal their *recommendation cards*. The one with most stars on his cards combined keeps his job (he'll be the one surveying the machine and pushing the start button each morning). The rest are fired (each worker draws a black *fate card*) and the game is over.



In case of a tie, the one with least *warnings* keeps his job. If they are still tied, none of them keeps their job, and an intern will get the job instead 😊.

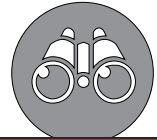
2. The machine is not finished, and time is up.

If, after the fifth day, the machine is still not finished, the manager is fired and the game is over.



3. Manager fired due to inspection.

As previously explained, the manager can be fired during day 3-inspection if he is too far behind on schedule and the game then ends.



4. Impossible task

If, on the 5th day, after revealing the task card, it is clear that the manager cannot finish the machine even if all workers work perfectly, the manager is immediately fired and the game ends.



When the game ends, all players who have not been fired, have won the game. It might be the manager and his favorite or it might be the workers who didn't upset the manager (or union) too much.

Is it better to be a few people winning than many? That's totally up to each player to decide. Unlike many other "semi-coop" games, this game works fine even though players have different opinions about this, as long as they all agree that being amongst the winners is better than being amongst the losers 😊.

Communication

Players are ever allowed to mention any numbers. So they cannot say "I will play a 5". But they are allowed to say things like "I will work hard" or "I can succeed that task."

Optional rule: Ghosts

If you wish, you can play with an optional rule that says, that any player who's eliminated from the game becomes a haunting ghost. He can say anything he wants, acting as a nagging conscience or trying to get revenge. Only rule is that he must keep his voice low.