

Mission Design Document Specifications

Scenario

Your mission takes place in a futuristic city where robotic security systems are commonplace. The player's goal is to reach an objective that is deep within a facility protected by one such security system.

Gameplay takes place from a third-person perspective in a similar fashion to that of Watchdogs 2 and/or Splinter Cell. Use these games as references in terms of navigation and the overall potential gameplay space of a systemic open world setting.

Keep in mind

- Return on investment
 - *Reuse of space*: It's important to remember that open world games benefit from multiple approaches *throughout* a gameplay space.
 - *Intentional Redundancy*: Games in early development are highly iterative by nature, make sure to include fallback locations for your main objective.
- Multiple playstyles
 - *Stealth*: Can players who want to silently take out enemies find safe locations to do so?
 - *Aggressor*: If a player decides to tackle the mission head-on, will they be completely overwhelmed?
 - *Pacifist*: Will it be possible to navigate the layout completely undetected?

Setup

Choose a thematic location based on a futuristic city that best suits a goal within a secured multi-approach location. Create a meaningful goal for the player that makes sense given the provided gameplay ingredients. The player's task is to infiltrate and achieve this goal.

Example Goals

- Steal the documents inside YouBee Software HQ.
- Deliver the metal file to the prisoner and escape the high security prison.
- Obtain the intel from your contact in the enemy's super-secret lab.

The Goal

- Must involve the player infiltrating, then escaping the location.

- Must fit realistically within the chosen thematic space.
- Should be placed strategically within the location.
- Can have multiple objectives that push the player towards, proceeds or requires navigation to said goal.

Objectives

You must design a mission scenario for the goal using objectives to break up the narrative into discrete sections of gameplay.

Example of Objectives

- Locate the Object(s)
- Hack the Computer
- Reach the Location
- Neutralize AI Target

Keep in mind a multi-objective goal and the potential for new gameplay feature(s) to be developed later by game design.

Any additional tasks (required for the main tasks or completely optional) are to be introduced at your discretion. The following "Questions to ask yourself" might help in creating additional tasks.

Questions to ask yourself

1. *Where is the extraction point?*
 - a. It can be a part of the goal location but must be rationally designed. (Example: a helipad on a rooftop.)
2. *Under what conditions does the mission end?*
 - a. List success condition(s).
 - b. List failure condition(s).
3. *What is the layout of the location where the goal is held and the surrounding environment?*
 - a. Is the approach to the goal open ended or linear?
 - b. What does the surrounding terrain look like? Are there any interesting natural terrain features? Are there unique landmarks nearby?
4. *Is it possible to use stealth and avoidance to get to the goal and not alert any guards?*
 - a. If so, how does that work in the layout?
 - b. Does the extract/escape phase change in some way if the player has remained undetected up until that point? Does it change when the player is detected by the guards?
5. *What does the escape phase entail?*
 - a. What units does the player face?
 - b. What are the gameplay affordances along the route to the extraction point?
 - c. Do new enemies spawn in/arrive at the area? From where? How many times? What is their objective?
 - d. How many routes are there to the extraction point?
 - e. Are there multiple extraction points?

The decisions you make in answering these questions should resonate nicely with each other – or to say it plainly, all the answers to these questions should have consequences reflected in the world, as well as being logically consistent. Nothing exists “*just because*.” If you think there’s a danger that an intention might not be obvious to us, don’t hesitate to spell it out.

In all cases, be as thorough as possible in preparing your answers. We’ll be looking for robust solutions that can accommodate most players – you don’t need to handle EVERY edge case, but you should try to address the most egregious, and the most obvious.

Our primary concern is with design, so there’s not a ton of recognition for the visual appearance of things. The important exception to this is readability – when you decide (and describe) how something looks, it should be easy for the player to understand. Don’t hesitate to include a reference image.

Your Mission Design Document (MDD)

- All following items must be packaged into one (1) .PDF format file:
 - **Mission section:** A written description of your mission. No longer than 300 words.
 - **Maps section:** 2D Maps
 1. **Overview map:** Create an overview map that draws a clear picture of the overall layout.
 - Highlight the location where the goal is held and surrounding terrain, buildings, roads and approaches the player might use to access the location.
 - If applicable, keep individual interior detail views for each important structure on a separate map.
 - Include as a floor plan and/or cross-sectional diagrams. (if they will help communicate your intentions, please include them.)
 - For structures with more than one (1) floor, provide a detailed view with individual floor plan views and show important connections like staircases.
 - Include key gameplay ingredients in this map (e.g. ladders, doors, interactive elements).
 - Save AI patrols and objectives for the walkthroughs map.
 2. **Reference images map:** Real-world reference images annotated to the overview. See example in the maps package.
 3. **Walkthroughs map:** Provide three (3) (*stealth, aggressor, pacifist*) walkthrough maps that use bullet points to describe the gameplay beats. *See an example in the maps package.*
 - Describe each major beat, from start to finish, by placing yourself in the player’s shoes.
 - Reference and or annotate your included 2D maps.
 - Each playstyle should be no longer than one (1) page each. Consider hosting and hyperlinking to any annotated 2D map images to save on space.

- Include AI paths and gameplay objects (e.g. cameras). The only annotation on this map should be focused on these details. Remove any details you feel might make the gameplay intentions less clear.

The above 3 maps must not include 3D maps, isometric views, etc.

Tips for the MDD Phase

- Keep your mission and map sections brief and concise but aim to be compelling; this is your “elevator pitch”.
- Always consider all the gameplay approaches available to the player. Try to implement a strong “golden path” for each style of play. As a caveat, don't forget to include alternate paths in your layout. The ‘360 approach’ is one of the pillars of Ubisoft open worlds – we’ll be looking for it!
- As mentioned above, it is not necessary to use all the available gameplay ingredients. Often, focusing on 1 or 2 key gameplay mechanics in a layout is ideal.
- Specific design metrics (such as floor height, door width, etc.) are not necessary at this phase; but it is strongly suggested to consider 3D and world scale during the 2D map phase.
- In your walkthrough maps, focus on the pacing of the mission as you see it; promote the peaks and valleys of tension for each playstyle.
- Keep your walkthrough concise with numbered bullet points outlining the gameplay beats for each playstyle, supported by annotations in your 2D map.
- Your entire design should be purposeful. We should be able to discern your design intentions. If you think you need to clarify why you did something, you probably do.
- Your MDD should be written in a clear, succinct manner. This is the standard to which we hold our design pitches. Clarity and precision are critical.
- If you plan on making any custom content, account for them in your MDD.

Supplemental Materials to Help with MDD Creation

To assist the creation of your MDD we have included a Master Feature List (MFL) and examples 2D map. The sample maps serve as an example of how to include the Map Icons from the MFL. Feel free to structure your own maps differently but remember that clarity is crucial.

NOTES

- Including one (1) new gameplay ingredient is valid, but it must be documented and clearly explained.
- It is *not* required that you use every feature from the MFL.
- These rules are consistent with our pitching process here at Ubisoft Toronto.

Questions?

Email us at NEXT@Ubisoft.com. Note: Email is not monitored 24/7 but we will do our best to respond within 48 hours.