



SANCTIONED TOURNAMENT GUIDE

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While sometimes a straightforward game, OverPower is also a game that can take a lifetime to master. Before and during play, it is not uncommon for players, new and experienced, to make some mistakes. In order to ensure fun and fair competitions, as well as standardize outcomes, the following is a tournament guide for general ethics and how games should be judged / managed / ruled.

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GENERAL ETHICS / ETIQUETTE

OverPower should be a very accessible game to new players while remaining fair and competitive for new and existing players. General etiquette is that games should be friendly with a general focus on fun, especially during Swiss / group play. However, games should be played and ruled fairly, regardless of experience level.

Procedures that are discussed below in this guide will be available to address issues with renegeing and other misplays (unintentional and otherwise). It is important to note that within OverPower as a collectible / living card game, it is definitely fair game to find and exploit game mechanics within the game (e.g. never thought of mechanical combinations). However, it is important to never intentionally break or “game” any *tournament* rules about how players **conduct themselves** both within and outside the game (more on this later).

Ideally small missteps, particularly by new players, should be met with acceptance and teaching, rather than negativity or scorn. However, tournaments are competitive and have real stakes. Therefore, all players at any moment during a game or tournament should abide by the following rules, and the following enforcement efforts / penalties are available to all players and judges:

TOURNAMENT RULES PRIOR TO START OF THE GAME

Deck Building:

Deck building is a critical part of OverPower and all collectible / living card games. You always want your deck to run well, etc. And good decks are usually built to avoid unnecessary duplication (unless desired).

That said, there’s a few basic rules for decks during tournaments:

- Decks must be tournament legal to start a tournament (below deck-building points, at minimum deck building size, obeying one-per-deck rules, no unusable cards in the deck, etc.) and throughout the entire tournament.
- If an illegal deck build is detected by an opponent, report it to the judges who can inspect the deck. If irregularities are found, punishment is at the discretion of the judge, but can include forfeited battles / games or even forfeiture of entire tournaments depending on severity of issue. Judges will take into account the level of the competition (e.g. Saturday night in-store play v. major events v. pro tour) as well as level of player experience when issuing a penalty for deck building issues.
- Decks cannot be changed by players during a tournament except with permission of judges / tournament organizers.
- If your deck is accidentally missing critical cards, report this to judges so they can make a determination. If it’s an obvious / definitely missing card (e.g. OPD’s such as any hero avoid, any hero Grim Reaper, any character’s Draw 3 or victory condition type OPD, etc.) at the judges discretion, this should be allowed to be added between games (never added during a game; the de facto penalty is that said critical card was absent from the player’s deck for that period of time). If it is something non-obvious (e.g. an additional teammate avoid, a 4 make additional attack etc.), additions or subtractions generally should not be allowed.
- Note: The most likely/common cause of a missing card is a card left behind at a previous match’s table, or lost in a previous opponent’s deck during clean-up.
- Changing of home bases, characters, mission sets, etc. during a tournament is never allowed. Your registered deck must be used for the entirety of the tournament.
- Never make a change to your deck without asking judges. Most changes will not be allowed. Any change made without permission is grounds for disqualification.

Shuffling:

There should be no “engineering” of decks. While it is understandable that all players want their decks to run well, avoid duplication, etc., randomness and duplication are a part of the game, and of all games of chance. Attempts to circumvent this will not be tolerated.

- While it is understandable, after a long game, to spread out power cards from the power pack into your draw pile, all decks must be sufficiently shuffled and randomized before gameplay. This goes beyond quick riffle shuffle(s).
- **To this end, all players MUST pile shuffle (3 to 8 piles, number of piles chosen by the opposing player) in front of an opponent before a match. If you haven't seen your opponent shuffle, you are required to request the required full pile shuffle of the opponent's deck (by the opponent) in your presence before any game.** Players caught trying to intentionally spread out cards before a game without a FULL re-randomization afterwards will be penalized by judges using the escalating penalty scale.
- In addition, if any card or event allows either player to look at any deck, no efforts may be made during the viewing to change the order of the deck. Sort through the deck card by card WITHOUT changing the order. Then after the card is processed, the deck must be fully randomized with a pile shuffle.
 - The effect of viewing your draw pile is never to view duplication and then change the order of the deck to avoid it.
- As a practical matter of logistics, it is up to players to enforce their opponent's randomization of the deck, and report any infraction to judges.

TO JUDGES: Partial deck registration / validation (Heroes, Location Cards, Mission sets) before the tournament is required for higher stakes events. Pro tour events will have full deck registration. Players should not be allowed to make non-obvious changes to decks. It is the responsibilities of players AND judges to validate deck legality, especially to help new players. It is also the responsibility of players to enforce match to match randomization of their opponents' decks.

Tardiness to Matches / Forfeits:

Between matches, players will often excuse themselves to use the restroom, eat or snack, have a drink, or catch up with other players before matches - Particularly before/after lunch break or other major announced breaks in a tournament.

However, players must make every effort to be on time for the start of a match. Ideally a minute or two tardy can be understood/handled between the 2 players.

In the event of severe tardiness / lateness, the following penalties apply:

- For every 5 minutes a player is late, a judge moves 1 mission from their reserve missions piles to the defeated pile AND 1 mission from the opponent's reserve missions pile to their completed pile.
 - This is continually done until the match starts, or a player forfeits/loses the match
- **Intentionally forfeiting is not allowed.** If a player is suspected of intentionally forfeiting a game to affect seeding, or even just to “take a rest”, judges can vacate up to 2 prior wins of the player depending on the impact of the infraction
 - Tardiness to matches or “accidental” forfeiture of matches will be tracked during tournaments and during each season by judges and the NAOL, and prior recorded tardiness will be taken into account when applying escalating penalties.

- As a reminder, players often take time off work, spend 100's of dollars, and travel many hours to play an event, expecting the standard amount of play. Intentionally denying a player a match or a full effort in the name of tanking to affect seeding, or forfeiting to rest, is frowned upon, and prior wins can be vacated.
- Competitive balance is also a concern in seeding and resolving the playoff bubble
- **Players who wish to win a championship should expect to play all scheduled rounds of Swiss / group play, plus any playoff matches**

Throwing Matches:

Any players who are detected in any way (overheard by multiple witnesses, seen in chat/email, etc.) colluding to throw or forfeit matches to affect seeding (e.g. 'win trading') can be subject to forfeiture of matches or disqualification from the entire tournament. This is a serious accusation and should involve some level of proof. Punishment of infractions are ultimately up to the judge(s).

In general, your 100% effort is expected for a full slate (usually 7) of Swiss/group-play matches.

Pre-Match Ethics Summary:

Players should not try to game anything before the game to gain an unfair advantage. That includes engineering decks, intentional tardiness / forfeits, changes to deck-builds, and any kind of collusion to affect outcomes, including collusion not mentioned here.

The only thing that can decide a match of Overpower is playing a match of Overpower. ANYTHING else being used to decide a winner other than playing the match is not allowed.

TO JUDGES: Ensure that players have every chance to get their money's worth for attending the event. That includes a full slate of matches with full effort, and a fair tie-break on the playoff bubble.

RESOLUTION OF MIS-PLAYS ("RENEGING") DURING MATCHES

Misplays, small and large, may occur during the course of playing OverPower. In general, it is best if the 2 players use good ethics and discretion to resolve smaller issues between the players without a judge's help. Generally, the environment between players OverPower should be a friendly, "no fault" environment - meaning mistakes do happen, and may be resolved with or without penalty, but the play environment should not become personal or abusive.

Abusive language towards other players / judges can result in penalties or disqualification. **A judge's, or panel of judges', "final rulings" are final after being checked for properly using best known rules tools.** Players must follow reasonable instruction / ruling of judges. A judge does not have to abide by any prior agreement between the players. Once a judge is called over for a "final ruling", that ruling will be enforced. Thus, for most small misplay issues, resolution without judges or a "final ruling" is ideal for maintaining reasonable speed / ease / flow of gameplay.

At the judge's discretion, time may be added on to a head-to-head match after a lengthy / extensive ruling. Extra time will be tracked using the tournament spreadsheet.

Misplays Type and Resolutions / Penalties

The following is a non-exhaustive list of misplay types. Generally, the ideal for most misplays is to rewind the game state without the help of a judge. In the cases where information given during or after a misplay would affect outcomes, or just any time either player desires it, a judge can be called over for a "final ruling" which can involve instruction / penalties guided by this document.

Dealing Cards / Drawing Cards / Touching Draw Pile Before and During Battle:

Whether it is the initial cards drawn to create a hand (8); cards drawn and put in hand due to opponent venturing additional missions; cards drawn and put in hand during the battle; or cards drawn to view and select one or more cards - cards drawn should always be counted 1 by 1 and put down from top of draw pile to the table such that an opponent can count along with your draw(s).

Cards should never be drawn straight from draw pile (or any pile) into hand. Cards should never be drawn in “wads” or “bunches”. Cards should be drawn 1 by 1 to the table, then put into hand.

If a card is played during the game which allows you to view your deck while you have a hand, your hand should be viewed once before looking at your draw pile, then kept clearly separated from the deck (e.g. left face down on the table). Your hand should never be handled at the same time as your draw pile.

Attempts to draw cards improperly should be reported and judges should use the escalating penalty scale and spreadsheet to issue warnings / penalties as needed. Repeated, intentional attempts to draw cards improperly may be met with battle or game forfeiture, or even forfeiture of a tournament.

TO JUDGES: Most mishandling of draws is unintentional, but use the escalating penalty scale and tournament spreadsheet to track reported infractions, and ensure that there is not any recurring pattern of improper or illegal draws.

Penalties for Playing Out of Order (before it can be undone, and after):

Like all turn-based collectible card games, in OverPower there is usually a player with priority. If a player acts out of turn (when it is NOT their priority), typically the resolution is to rewind the game state to before the infraction, and the de facto penalty is the information gained about the offending player’s hand / strategy.

However, in the event a player’s out-of-turn play has/may-have had a serious effect, a judge can be called over for a “final ruling”. Both players explain the misplay to the judge. The affected player explains to the judge why he/she/they feels the misplay has a serious strategic effect. The judge chooses whether the gamestate can be and is rewind or not. Penalties can be enforced on the offending player (or in some cases, both players) if they have a prior warning from a judge from any prior game in the tournament. A judge may add minutes to the players’ match if needed.

In general, small misplays out of turn can and should be handled by players.

TO JUDGES: Playing out of order / without priority is most critical/offensive when it comes to playing events in proper order, and who has priority to start a battle. Avoid enforcing unnecessary penalties; remember it is the responsibility of BOTH players to maintain the timing of the game and the proper current gamestate. However, if necessary utilize the escalating penalty scale later in this document for players with a prior warning.

Penalties for Placement Mistakes:

Before the battle, players take turns placing cards face up that may carry over battle to battle. There’s a range of placement errors that may occur. This includes illegally placing duplicate cards, illegally placing 2 cards of the same type on a character, illegally placing 1 character’s special on another character, illegally placing unusable cards in general, etc.

Both players have a responsibility for enforcing proper legal placement by them and by their opponent. As usual, it is best if 2 players can resolve minor errors without calling a judge, by rewinding game state, fixing misplaced cards, and discarding appropriate cards BEFORE cards are ventured, if agreed to by both players.

Some minor errors can be solved without calling a judge, by rewinding game state, resolving misplacements retroactively, and if necessary and agreed by both players - discarding offending cards as a self-enforced penalty (e.g. players may/should rewind gamestate with no penalty for a misplacement during battle, but may self-enforce a penalty or call a judge for a “final ruling” for a misplacement from the prior battle).

In the event players can't agree to a resolution, a judge can be called over for a “final ruling”. Both players explain the misplay to the judge. The judge makes a ruling on the ability to / fairness of rewinding gamestate, discarding improperly placed cards, and any additional penalty.

TO JUDGES: Both players have a responsibility to enforce gamestate and detect errors. As such, ideally misplacements can be resolved without further penalty than discarding one of the offending cards to appropriate discard piles. Issue a warning for both players for not detecting the misplay IF the mis-placement is visually present to both players on the board. If somehow the placement misplay would only be apparent to the offending player, issue only him/her/them a warning. In the event the offending player has a prior warning or the offense is egregious, use the discretion in applying the escalating penalty scale laid out later in this document.

Penalties for Duplication / Unusable Mistakes:

Part of the game is detecting duplicates of cards and discarding them to appropriate discard piles. Another part is similarly detecting unusable cards each battle and either legally placing them to a placement slot OR discarding to appropriate discard piles.

This is a critical part of the game as the opponent does basic math / reading of the board to detect advantage / disadvantage and make proper decisions when venturing missions and choosing whether or not to fight the battle, or concede.

Both players are responsible for enforcing the rules of the game and maintaining and enforcing the current game state, including the effect of events, artifacts, aspects, special cards, and inherent abilities on gameplay, and then properly discarding duplicate or unusable cards to the appropriate discard piles.

In the event players can not resolve an issue themselves, or a duplication/unusable misplay/error is detected AFTER a player has ventured cards, or the mistake is viewed as egregious by either player, a judge may be called over for a “final ruling”.

If such an error is detected, regardless of a prior warning, the affected player will always be given the option of increasing or decreasing their ventured cards by the number of errors detected plus 1 additional. If the error was detected BEFORE the battle begins, the other player will receive the normal additional cards for additionally ventured cards. If it's detected DURING the battle, additional cards related to any increase in ventured missions are not given.

In the event the offending player has a prior warning this tournament, or the mistake is egregious, the judge may concede the battle for the offending player on top of the increased ventured card penalty.

If such an error is detected at the end of the battle during the reveal of remaining cards in hand, the offending player automatically loses the battle and an additional venture penalty enforced 1 mission for each proven duplicate/unusable card.

Any larger pattern of duplication/unusable card management by a player detected by judge(s) can result in total match forfeiture or tournament disqualification.

TO JUDGES: Use discretion in applying penalties. Issue a warning for both players for not detecting the issue if it was visually obvious to both; OR a warning only to the offending player if the error was based on cards in hand. Generally, the option of the affected player venturing more or less is enough for small / unintentional infractions caught early. If caught during the battle and additional missions are ventured, extra cards are not given. For larger infractions or infractions involving a player with a prior warning, enforcing ventured mission penalties and the concession of the battle is usually enough. For a player with a repeated pattern of this during the current tournament or with warning(s) from prior tournaments, match forfeiture or more may be necessary. Do not take such actions lightly or without consulting other judges or the tournament organizer.

Penalties for Playing Unplayable Cards:

As a collectible / living card game, in OverPower the rules of the current gamestate are constantly being modified by Events, Artifacts, aspect cards, and special cards, as well as inherent abilities. Usability of cards can also be affected by a character being KO'd, the loss of cards that complete actions (power cards for teamworks, special cards for allies, etc.) The accidental play of unusable cards is an unfortunate, but not uncommon, occurrence.

As always, it is up to BOTH players to properly enforce the rules of the current gamestate.

In the event a player plays an unusable card, as usual it is best if the 2 players can resolve minor errors without calling a judge by rewinding game state, discarding unplayable cards, offering a change to missions ventured, etc.

In the event the players can't resolve the misplay themselves, or in the event the error is egregious, etc. AND it is detected before the end of the battle is processed and the next hands are both drawn, either player may call over judge(s) for a "final ruling".

Both players explain the infraction to the judge(s). The judge should issue a warning to both players if the misplay should have been detected by both players, or to just the offending player if the misplay was in their hand (particularly if misplay was concealed in hand or until the end of battle post-concession hand reveal).

Judge(s) may rewind gamestate as they see fit; may allow the affected player to venture more or less missions (number of errors, +1) without granting draw(s) to the offending player; may force the offending player to venture 1 more or less missions; may concede the battle on behalf of the offending player; or in extreme circumstances, the offending player forfeits the match. A combination of these may be used.

TO JUDGES: Issue penalties carefully and in light of prior warnings for both players. Never take conceding a battle or forfeiting a match lightly or without feedback from other judge(s) / tournament organizer(s). Consider the impact of the unusable card played on the affected player in terms of how the battle was played (e.g. if they played/revealed a personal avoid on defense), but consider their culpability in not detecting any obvious play of unusable cards. Also, make sure the penalty discourages players from intentionally playing unusable cards and testing their opponent's vigilance.

CRITICAL: After a battle is complete and new hands are drawn, judges should VERY rarely rewind the gamestate. After a match result is recorded / reported and decks are cleaned up, etc., a match cannot be replayed or gamestate rewound. At that point most misplays are done and cannot be undone. A player could be issued a warning. If there is still somehow evidence of a misplay after-the-fact, a warning may be issued. Very rarely should larger penalties be enforced, and only if all judges and the tournament host are in agreement, and for the good of the game (fairness, equity, etc.)

Procedure for Calling Time/ Asking for a Judge to Force Action During a Match

In OverPower, Swiss play / group play usually consists of timed matches (~40 to ~45 minutes) whereby, if a match is not complete at end of the game clock, to determine a winner the current mission status is counted, followed by the other game tiebreakers.

This has been a challenge in the past, but ethically it should be understood that we do not grind clock / intentionally run time by delaying decisions. The time limits are a necessary part of an efficient Swiss / group play, but the goal is not to have matches unnecessarily timeout, particularly without 1 player being given a fair chance to play.

As such there are procedures for calling for a time check and for judges to force action/decision by your opponent.

At any time during a match, if a player feels the opponent is taking too long to think, they can call a judge to ask for action from their opponent. The opponent has a chance to explain their thoughts in a private sidebar with the judge(s). If a valid decision is being debated, the judges may grant the opponent 1 more minute to consider action before forcing a decision. If it is not a valid / logical choice or is a false / pretend choice (e.g. pondering a fake choice of whether to defend an attack that you actually have no defense for), the judge should force immediate action AND issue a warning to an offending player. Time may be added to the match. If a player has an existing time-based warning, the offending player may have the battle forfeited and receive an additional penalty of 1 mission moved to a lower pile IF egregious.

In the last 10 minutes of a match, if a player with ANY prior time based warning is found by a judge to be improperly grinding clock, the judge should LIBERALLY use their discretion applying the escalating penalty scale.

Timed matches are a part of the game, but gaming the clock by not taking action is not an acceptable strategy.

TO JUDGES: Most of the time, clock issues can be resolved by simply forcing the offending party to take their action and issuing a warning. If after that warning, the offending player is caught trying to grind a clock on a non-decision or even non-critical decision, a decisive penalty (concession of battle and/or an additional mission penalty) should be applied.

Even if a player is agonizing over a valid challenging decision, in the final 5 minutes of play before final hand, a decision should be forced within 1 minute of calling a judge; Time for judges to make a ruling should be added to the clock for those 2 players.

These procedures should largely be unnecessary for untimed or longer-timed playoff matches (1hr time limit or untimed) as these matches resolve before such issues.

Revealing Remaining Cards in Hand at the End of Battle:

BY RULE, players MUST reveal their remaining hand to the opponent before discarding to appropriate discard piles. This should be done by, immediately after the battle, spreading out the cards from hand onto table—before discarding to appropriate discard piles. If a player avoids this without covering errors in play, this should trigger a warning. If they do it and it deceptively attempts to cover a misplay, this should trigger a warning and a battle forfeiture. If the battle was already lost by this player, additional mission and/or other penalties should be carefully considered by judges.

Since OverPower, like many CCG's, is a game that relies on self-policing current game state and issues like duplication or usability, revealing the remaining hand post match is one of the most important ways OverPower attempts to prevent cheating and protect the integrity of the game.

TO JUDGES: Use the escalating penalty scale and tournament spreadsheet to track any reported infractions of not revealing cards. If an attempt to not reveal cards was covering a duplication / misplay / renege, liberally use the escalating penalty scale to penalize via forfeiture of battle, additional missions ventured, etc.

Penalties for Illegally Manipulating Venture Total or Missions Ventured:

Any effort to misrepresent missions ventured or venture total, or to illegally move missions will not be tolerated. Any issues should be reported to judges, who will issue a warning if necessary. If the offending player has existing warning(s), this should be taken into account when using the escalating penalty scale.

Penalties for Talking About Another Players Game:

Talking about a game that is being played, or offering opinions or advice about a match being played within earshot of live players, etc. is illegal and frowned upon. If you observe a match, remain silent. If you wish to discuss what you've seen, LEAVE THE ROOM. If a player in a match hears spectators offering advice / opinion(s), they can report this to the judge(s) who can give the offending party a warning. If this is a continuing behavior pattern, judge(s) should take that into account when applying the escalating penalty scale.

TO JUDGES: If what was said was egregious enough, the judges may unanimously decide to issue an escalating penalty that may include a future match forfeiture for the player who was not silent.

One Player per Hand / Deck:

Just like in poker, OverPower in head to head formats (non-team formats) is considered a 1 player per hand / deck game. Players in a match should not communicate or ask questions or advice of other players. Rules questions are allowed, but players may only use judges for any questions or concerns. Judge(s) should NEVER offer advice on gameplay, but rather give rulings.

During games, players can report more than a single player de facto playing a game (e.g. showing one's hand during a match to another player), or a player giving opinion(s) on a game, to judges.

TO JUDGES: For such infractions, judges should issue a warning to both offending parties. If the live player has a prior warning or a pattern of giving or seeking counsel during games, judge(s) should consider using the escalating penalty scale, starting at forced concession of a battle.

How Judges will Conduct Rulings / Judgment

Quick rulings about card interactions, etc. can be informally issued by judge(s) using their own game knowledge / experience and/or in verbal consultation with other judges. HOWEVER, if a player disagrees or otherwise asks for a **"final ruling"** on a card interaction, etc., the judge must use the best existing tool(s) currently available (printed OverPower rulebook; OverPower.ca meta lookup tool; current errata list; printed book of known errata meta; etc.) rather than memory or opinion.

If a player believes a judge hasn't used such a tool for a "final ruling", they can ask what tool was used or challenge the ruling with another judge or a tournament organizer. If a judge is found to issue a "final ruling" without using a best available tool, they will receive a warning. After a warning, another improper ruling will result in a judge being disqualified as a judge if there are available alternate judges.

Again - judges may often be asked to and able to quickly weigh in on a basic rule without using a tool and this is acceptable, and will not result in a warning. If a player asks for a **"final ruling"**, the ruling must go beyond opinion / experience. If a game issue is in a "gray area" beyond current best known meta/errata rulings AFTER using a tool (i.e. a new mechanic or deck synergy is being used where there is no ruling) Judge(s) should mechanically apply the current battle / game mechanic and rulings and understanding of the game to the best of their ability, but this is ONLY in the case the best known available tool(s) are unavailable or offers no/insufficient information about the card interaction in question.

Judges should always consult with each other before issuing a final ruling.

Time may be added to match(es) to offset time taken to issue a **"final ruling"**

POST-MATCH ETHICS

Players should never collude.

Players can talk about opposing decks when between matches, but should never openly weigh in on strategy during on-going matches UNLESS they both 1) are not involved 2) leave the room.

Players should be friendly and show good sportsmanship after a matchup. Abusive or aggressive behavior will not be tolerated.

Players should never touch other players' decks or other property. If a player has left cards out on table from a prior game/gamestate and hasn't cleaned up, DO NOT TOUCH. Same goes for jackets / boxes, other property. Do not move other players' cards, or shuffle other players' decks. If necessary, move your own property and any match to another available table.

Before a match, when a pile shuffle is required, the opposing player shuffles their own deck. Do not touch that deck. Players MUST comply with pile shuffling requests. The only time you should touch an opponent's deck is to cut their deck after the opponent has shuffled in front of you.

Issues should always be referred to judges / the tournament organizer before they result in hurt feelings / aggression.

ESCALATING PENALTY SCALE

Judges managing a game can use following penalties for enforcing order, especially if the gamestate can't be rewound without giving an advantage to a player. Carefully weigh the impact of the misplay as well as prior warnings tracked on the tournament spreadsheet.

1. Warning to player; Misplayed/misplaced/unusable/duplicate, etc. cards discarded
2. If Duplicate, judge can choose both cards to be discarded
3. Affected Player given option to decrease or increase ventured missions by # of errors +1; ***if before battle starts***, opposing player can still get additional draws if applicable
4. Affected Player given option to decrease or increase ventured missions by # of errors +1; ***if after battle starts***, opposing player does NOT get additional draws related to more missions ventured
5. Judge concedes battle on behalf of offending player after enforcing penalty #3 or #4
6. Judge concedes battle on behalf of offending player; after enforcing penalty #3 or #4, issues 1 additional mission penalty/bonus for 1 or both players
7. Game forfeiture
8. Tournament disqualification

Overall, have fun! Play fair. Be ethical! And remember, **#OverPowerLIVES** now and forever!
 Lets **#PlayOverPower** together, get better at the game, make new friends, and have a great time!

COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, CONCERNS? EMAIL: FEEDBACK@BMG.ASSOCIATES