FATE ™

ACCELERATED/CORE
CONVERSION GUIDE

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FOREWORD

So, you want to convert a game from *Fate Accelerated Edition* stats to *Fate Core System* stats. Or vice-versa. Great! I'm here to help.

But first, a little background.

There's been a perspective in some parts of the community, early on, that *Fate Accelerated Edition* is a different game (as in, a different system) from *Fate Core System*.

It's not. And really, understanding that the two books aren't actually that different is, well, *core* to understanding how to convert from one to the other.

What differs between the two implementations found in those respective books are the *defaults*. The engine driving them both is the same: *Fate Core.*

And at the end of the day, those two sets of defaults can (and do) interoperate pretty well as-is (in fact in some of our builds we use a bit of both). There's not that much "conversion" needed, at least as far as NPC stats go and so forth. You can throw a set of *Fate Core System* PCs at a group of *Fate Accelerated Edition* NPCs and still have a pretty good game going. Same if you flip that around.

Still, there's some charm to the idea that your PCs and NPCs hail from the same set of defaults, and there's something to be said for taking a build that's written for Core's defaults and using it to create Accelerated characters, or vice-versa. Plus, this might make it easier to mash a Core world together with an Accelerated world, and wouldn't that be wonderful?

So acknowledging that this guide might not be *necessary*, but that it might still be *helpful*, I'm going to take a stab at addressing those goals.

Let's get to it!

WHAT DIFFERENCE?

Let's first take a moment to review the basic differences between Core and Accelerated.

Skills

The default sets of skills and approaches found in each build differ in two ways: **quantity** and **question**.

Quantity

Core: There are 18 skills in Core. They get detailed writeups, looking into how each of the four actions might apply for that given skill. Players choose ten of these skills, and distribute them into slots totaling 20 points.

Accelerated: There are 6 approaches in Accelerated. We don't dig into them too deeply, leaving the names of the approaches to do most of the indicative work. Players distribute one +3, two +2's, and two +1's into the approaches.

Question

This is the part that tends to bake folks' noodles the most.

Core: Core's skills ask **what** you're trying to do, and provide specific answers based on your rated expertise in the applicable skill.

Accelerated: Accelerated's approaches ask **how** you're doing something. Since each skill covers a broadly defined method of action, character differentiation is less about expertise and more about temperament and role in the story.

What's Your Motivation Here?

So why'd we make these two points of distinction? It's about complexity and flexibility, really.

Core is focused on providing a reasonably satisfying level of complexity—not too much, not too little—for emulating the important elements of the story you're looking to tell. It's also more focused on providing characters that feel fairly balanced against each other in terms of competence, expertise, that sort of thing. As the flagship product in the line, it's also not looking to challenge perspectives on how to achieve those goals (aspects end up challenging folks coming in from other systems enough as it is).

Accelerated is focused on providing simplicity—low word count, a small number of choices, etc—with a maximum of flexibility. That latter goal motivated us to reach for an implementation that would support one of two cases in particular: characters that are very similar ("you're all wizards at a boarding school") or very different ("you're a team of superheroes with wildly divergent power levels"). There's a common thread between both of those cases—what differentiates the characters while still keeping them all equally involved in the story isn't what they can do, it's how they do it. Thus we achieve greatest flexibility at the sacrifice of meticulously detailing the particulars of each character's expertise the way you can with Core's defaults.

This difference in goals is important to keep in mind when you want to move from one perspective to another.

> ### SKILL CAP
> There's a third point of difference between skills and approaches: the skill cap. In Core it defaults to Great (+4), and in Accelerated it defaults to Good (+3). In actuality this is not as much a point of difference as it may first appear. In Core, the applicability of that Great-rated skill is not as broad as an Accelerated's Good-rated peak approach. As a result, when it comes down to it, these are fairly well balanced against each other.

Stunts

Core: Because Core is interested in providing a satisfying level of complexity, stunts are written up with several examples and a number of different styles for implementation. They all come down to a fairly simple perspective—providing about two shifts of value when used—but there are plenty of ways to get to that result.

Accelerated: Accelerated *is* Core, so the same basic idea is at work here. The stunts are simplified to a pair of fill-in-the-blanks templates to make this easy as possible, since Accelerated's goals are focused on simplicity and speed.

Bottom line

Stunts created in Accelerated could be dropped into Core and vice-versa, after making modifications respective to how the circumstances of application are defined (the points of attachment to skills or approaches) because at the end of the day their method of construction is identical—it's just laid more bare in gearhead-friendly Core, while elided behind convenient templates in Accelerated.

Stress

Core: Core defaults to two stress tracks (mental & physical) and allows for the potential to add more in your build-of-choice. Stress tracks are affected by some of your skill choices; high ratings in those key skills lengthen the track, and at very high levels may add one or more mild consequence slots to your character. End result — stress track length runs from 2 to 4 boxes plus a possible additional mild consequence.

Accelerated: Simplicity rules again in Accelerated. A single three-box stress track is given, and it isn't affected by your ratings. When there are exceptions, they're handled by way of stunt effects.

NPCs

Core: NPCs are largely statted up as full characters via the same rules as PCs (tho possibly with higher caps, more skill points, more stunt slots). Some builds may use additional means for less capable NPCs, mobs, etc.

Accelerated: NPCs are either statted up like PCs with the full set of approaches, or as simplified "Skilled At/Bad At" characters in the interests of, you guessed it, simplicity.

ASPECTS

You may have noticed aspects didn't come up in a discussion of the differences between Core and Accelerated. That's intentional; when making a conversion you can, very likely, simply leave your aspects unaltered. Go ahead and change them if you want; it's just not particularly important that you do.

That said, it's worth acknowledging that aspects occasionally do heavier lifting in Accelerated, because they tend to be where expertise gets defined (instead of in skills) thanks to the "Aspects are always true" principle (and the fact that an invoke is strong mechanical reinforcement of capability). That's not to say they don't have the same effect in Core—it's just a little less emphasized.

CONVERTING SKILLS

Now that we understand the differences between the two sets of defaults, we can use those differences to guide how we convert from one implementation to the other. Addressing the difference of quantities won't be too hard. Addressing the difference of questions is where we'll have to give some particular consideration.

Shared Conversion Challenges

Here's what we're working with:

- Under its example defaults, Core has 18 skills, which the players pick 10 of, placing into slots of a total 20 points of value. Accelerated has 6 approaches, which the players pick 5 of, giving ratings totaling 9 points of value.

- Core's skills ask "what can you do?" Accelerated's approaches ask "how do you do it?"

The main trick we need to figure out here is how to map from one set to the other, and rate things fairly, in a way that gets characters that at least seem somewhat similar. Tha's the common challenge here. What differs is which direction your conversion goes in.

The Lists

For reference, here are the default lists we're working with for each build.

Core's Skills	Accelerated's Approaches
Athletics	Careful
Burglary	Clever
Contacts	Flashy
Crafts	Forceful
Deceit	Quick
Drive	Sneaky
Empathy	
Fight	
Investigate	
Lore	
Notice	
Physique	
Provoke	
Rapport	
Resources	
Shoot	
Stealth	
Will	

From Core to Accelerated

To convert from Core's skills to Accelerated's approaches, we have to decide how the "how?" is hidden (as it were) inside the "what?" of the skills. For this we'll use a matrix as shown below.

Under each approach is a list of skills that potentially that approach. Write in the rating you have in each skill each time it is listed. If, for your specific character, a particular skill doesn't make sense under a given approach, cross it out. For example, your character might clearly be Forceful and not at all Flashy when using their Fight skills. So cross Fight out under Flashy.

CAREFUL	CLEVER	FLASHY
__Burglary	__Burglary	__Athletics
__Deceit	__Contacts	__Contacts
__Empathy	__Crafts	__Crafts
__Investigate	__Deceit	__Drive
__Lore	__Empathy	__Fight
__Notice	__Investigate	__Physique
__Shoot	__Lore	__Provoke
__Stealth	__Rapport	__Rapport
__Will	__Will	__Resources
__**TOTAL**	__**TOTAL**	__**TOTAL**

FORCEFUL	QUICK	SNEAKY
__Athletics	__Athletics	__Burglary
__Drive	__Crafts	__Contacts
__Fight	__Drive	__Deceit
__Notice	__Fight	__Empathy
__Physique	__Notice	__Investigate
__Provoke	__Physique	__Lore
__Resources	__Resources	__Provoke
__Shoot	__Shoot	__Rapport
__Will	__Stealth	__Stealth
__**TOTAL**	__**TOTAL**	__**TOTAL**

To build this matrix, we've assigned nine of each skill to each approach, making three assignments per skill. The mapping may not be perfect, but it should be "close enough."

Once you've written in the ratings of each skill, total them up for each approach and determine which one has the highest total. The highest total gets your +3 rating, the next two highest get +2, and the two after that get +1, with the lowest total getting +0. Use your High Concept as a thematic guide for deciding how to break any ties that need breaking.

If the process seems onerous, fret not; here's a spreadsheet that lets you take care of this quickly:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/puyol9ohmgwq3xg/Core%20Skills%20to%20Accelerated.xlsx?dl=0

Let's look at how Zird the Arcane, from *Fate Core*, shakes out.

CAREFUL	CLEVER	FLASHY
__Burglary	__Burglary	2 Athletics
__Deceit	1 Contacts	1 Contacts
__Empathy	3 Crafts	3 Crafts
2 Investigate	__Deceit	__Drive
4 Lore	__Empathy	1 Fight
1 Notice	2 Investigate	__Physique
__Shoot	4 Lore	__Provoke
__Stealth	3 Rapport	3 Rapport
2 Will	2 Will	1 Resources
9 TOTAL	15 TOTAL	11 TOTAL

FORCEFUL	QUICK	SNEAKY
2 Athletics	2 Athletics	__Burglary
__Drive	3 Crafts	1 Contacts
1 Fight	__Drive	__Deceit
1 Notice	1 Fight	__Empathy
__Physique	1 Notice	2 Investigate
__Provoke	__Physique	4 Lore
1 Resources	1 Resources	__Provoke
__Shoot	__Shoot	3 Rapport
2 Will	__Stealth	__Stealth
7 TOTAL	8 TOTAL	11 TOTAL

Based on these totals, Zird should have +3 Clever, +2 Flashy & Sneaky, +1 Careful & Quick, and +0 Forceful. Our **WIZARD FOR HIRE** leans more towards trickery than straightforward assault. Seems about right.
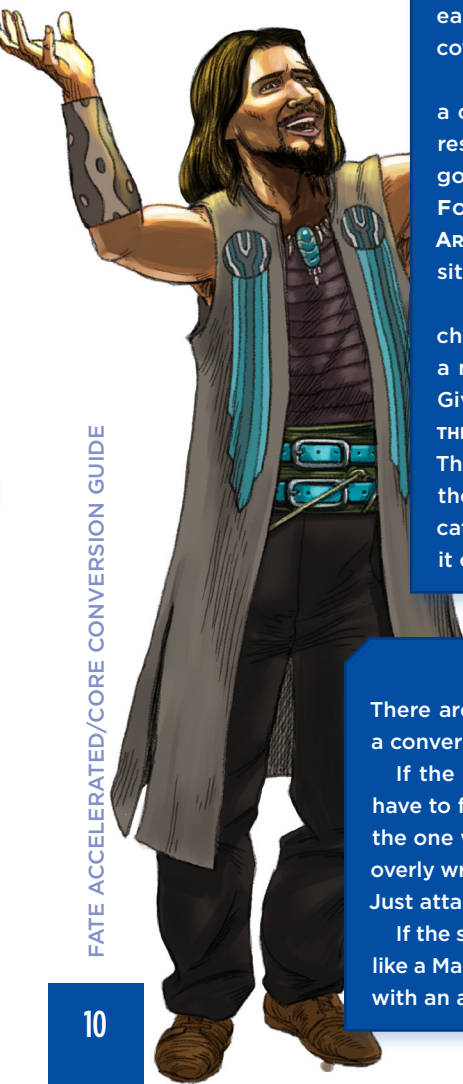
DOUBLE CHECK THOSE ASPECTS

Now that you've converted your Core skills to Accelerated approaches, it's a good time to double-check that your aspects reflect your previously-Core character's best capabilities. Look at your three top-rated skills, and check to see if you feel like your talents in those areas are well-represented in your list of aspects. If something seems to be missing, consider a judicious edit to account for it.

To continue using Zird as an example, his top three skills are Lore, Rapport, and Crafts.

It seems that Lore is well represented, not just by WIZARD FOR HIRE, but also by IF I HAVEN'T BEEN THERE, I'VE READ ABOUT IT. One could easily argue that his skill with Crafts is also covered by WIZARD FOR HIRE.

Rapport is more modestly represented—as a charismatic talker, Zird's NOT THE FACE! represents the care he takes of his best asset, his good looks, there, and both DOESN'T SUFFER FOOLS GLADLY and RIVALS IN THE COLLEGIA ARCANA suggest he'll get himself into a lot of situations he needs to talk his way out of.

But those are all pretty indirect as far as charming folks go, and don't clearly present a means for invoking to represent expertise. Given that, his player decides to change NOT THE FACE! into TOO CHARMING FOR HIS OWN GOOD. This keeps the "get into trouble" dimension of the original aspect, while adding a clear indication that Zird should be pretty strong when it comes to charming people.

NON-DEFAULT SKILLS?

There are a few ways to handle non-default skills in a conversion.

If the skill is just a different standard skill, you'll have to figure out how to fit it into the matrix. While the one we offer is fairly tightly balanced, you won't overly wreck anything by adding in or deleting entries. Just attach the new skill to three of the approaches.

If the skill represents a power or other permission—like a Magic skill, say—you may want to represent that with an aspect or a stunt instead.

From Accelerated to Core

If going from Core to Accelerated is something of a science, then going from Accelerated to Core is more of an art. In other words, there's more of an interpretive approach (pardon the pun) at work here.

Still, we can use the work we did with the matrix from that conversion here, if we flip it a bit, and look at the skills associated with each approach.

For each approach, look at the associated skills, and cross out ones that don't fall in line with your character concept. That might mean looking at your high concept aspect, sure, but other parts besides—hence the interpretive art element at play here.

CAREFUL	CLEVER	FLASHY
RATING:_____	RATING:_____	RATING:_____
Burglary	Burglary	Athletics
Deceit	Contacts	Contacts
Empathy	Crafts	Crafts
Investigate	Deceit	Drive
Lore	Empathy	Fight
Notice	Investigate	Physique
Shoot	Lore	Provoke
Stealth	Rapport	Rapport
Will	Will	Resources
FORCEFUL	**QUICK**	**SNEAKY**
RATING:_____	RATING:_____	RATING:_____
Athletics	Athletics	Burglary
Drive	Crafts	Contacts
Fight	Drive	Deceit
Notice	Fight	Empathy
Physique	Notice	Investigate
Provoke	Physique	Lore
Resources	Resources	Provoke
Shoot	Shoot	Rapport
Will	Stealth	Stealth

Once you've crossed things off, add up the approaches' ratings for each remaining skill, rank things in descending order, and fill out your slots with the skills that ranked in your top ten. There will be ties; use your best judgment—guided by character concept—to break those ties.

As before, we have a spreadsheet that can help you with this. Simply delete any skill/approach intersection that doesn't make sense as you use it.

https://www.dropbox.com/s/x7yioyy1u4a5in4/Accelerated%20Approaches%20to%20Core.xlsx?dl=0

For our example, we'll stick with our wizardly theme and convert Abigail Zhao from *Fate Accelerated Edition*.

CAREFUL	CLEVER	FLASHY
RATING: _0_	RATING: _2_	RATING: _1_
Burglary	Burglary	Athletics
Deceit	Contacts	Contacts
Empathy	Crafts	Crafts
Investigate	Deceit	~~Drive~~
Lore	Empathy	Fight
Notice	Investigate	~~Physique~~
Shoot	Lore	Provoke
Stealth	Rapport	Rapport
Will	Will	Resources

FORCEFUL	QUICK	SNEAKY
RATING: _2_	RATING: _1_	RATING: _3_
~~Athletics~~	Athletics	Burglary
~~Drive~~	Crafts	Contacts
Fight	~~Drive~~	Deceit
~~Notice~~	Fight	Empathy
Physique	Notice	~~Investigate~~
Provoke	~~Physique~~	Lore
~~Resources~~	Resources	~~Provoke~~
Shoot	Shoot	Rapport
Will	Stealth	Stealth

Based on this assessment, and with ten Core skill slots to fill, Abigail's top ten, in descending order, are as follows.

- Rapport (6 total)
- Burglary (5 total)
- Deceit (5 total)
- Empathy (5 total)
- Lore (5 total)
- Crafts (4 total)
- Fight (4 total)
- Notice (4 total)
- Stealth (4 total)
- Will (4 total)

Since this is really three sets — a clear apex, then 4 ties for second place, and 5 ties for third, we can choose to rearrange these however we like within their "bands", and apply to her Core skill slots. Since she's Sneaky as heck, the Stealth skill gets the bump up after the second place ones fill out 4 of the 5 slots at the Good and Fair levels.

> **Great (+4):** Rapport
> **Good (+3):** Deceit, Lore
> **Fair (+2):** Empathy, Burglary, Stealth
> **Average (+1):** Crafts, Fight, Notice, Will

Now that she's a Core character, Abigail's more detailed areas of skill suggest new avenues of story for her. We know from her Accelerated version that she's pretty sneaky and also a bit of a teacher's pet. Based on her Core skills, this is probably because she's not just good with her studies, she's good at charming people and lying just enough not to get caught (much). She's gonna make a lot of trouble for herself, that one!

CONVERTING STUNTS

Stunts usually hang off of skills (or approaches) in order to restrict their scope of operation. When you change the skills, you change that point of attachment for any associated stunts. As such, when converting, your stunts may stay mechanically similar, but they need to be revisited in order to make sure the skill or approach based restrictions are replaced with whatever makes sense in the new build you've moved to.

From Core to Accelerated

Converting stunts from Core to Accelerated can be tricky, mainly because Core shows you all the bells & whistles, while Accelerated is purposely simplified. That said, a lot of what's "tricky" is mainly found in learning what not to worry about. When it comes down to it, the best strategy here is to look at the *spirit* of the Core version of the stunt, and convert that spirit, rather than the exact effect, into Accelerated.

Let's look at the three stunt classes as defined in Core.

Add a New Action to a Skill

These types are possibly the most "orphaned" by a conversion. In Accelerated, all actions are available to all approaches, so there's no real application for a stunt that adds an action to an approach that previously didn't have access to that action.

This is where the "convert the spirit, not the effect" principle is particularly useful. Let's look at one of Core's example stunts of this type.

> **Backstab.** You can use Stealth to make physical attacks, provided your target isn't already aware of your presence.

"Use Stealth to make physical attacks" isn't much help in Accelerated; the Sneaky approach can already do that. "Provided your target isn't already aware of your presence," on the other hand, is a solid restriction and a good place to build an Accelerated replacement. Here, it probably makes sense to do an Accelerated style bonus-granting stunt, like so:

> **Backstab.** Because I'm an underhanded rogue, I gain +2 to Sneakily attack a target when they aren't already aware of my presence.

That's not the only way to do this, of course. You could instead decide that the spirit of this stunt is less about doing this trick repeatedly, so much as doing that one massive, deadly attack by striking from hiding when it's least expected. In that case, consider doing a once-per-session stunt of some sort that provides a significant benefit:

> **Backstab.** Because I am Death's silent hand, once per session, when I strike an unaware target from hiding, I may require that target to take the hit without the benefit of their stress track.

Add a Bonus to an Action

Unlike the first type of Core stunt, this has a direct analogue in Accelerated. As such it's best to focus simply on doing as little violence to the stunt's implementation as possible, and keep it as a simple bonus-granting stunt in its Accelerated incarnation.

Let's look at the first example stunt of this type from Core.

> **Arcane Expert.** Gain a +2 bonus to create an advantage using Lore, whenever the situation has specifically to do with the supernatural or occult.

We've lost the Lore element, so we're going to look to replace that with an approach here, probably Clever. Some rewording is needed, but the bones of this stunt are already solid. Here's one possible conversion:

> **Arcane Expert.** Because my knowledge of the occult runs deep, I get a +2 to Cleverly Create Advantages, whenever the situation has specifically to do with the supernatural or occult.

Create a Rules Exception

Rules exception stunts have been simplified in Accelerated to the "once per session" style, so that'll be the best path to pursue for converting Core stunts in this style. Much as with the first type of stunt, you'll have to lean heavily on the "spirit, not the effect" principle here simply because the range of possibilities is pretty broad.

That said, you may want to leave well enough alone in some cases—altering the language minimally and (gasp!) leaving the "once per session" cost factor out of it entirely, even if that means you have a stunt that's not strictly by the Accelerated book. There's no hard and fast rule here: you'll have to play it by ear.

Let's look at one particular conversion example and explore the ways we could convert it. Here's the Core stunt:

> **Ritualist.** Use Lore in place of another skill during a challenge, allowing you to use Lore twice in the same challenge.

Lore has to go, but the idea is sound. Sometimes a particular approach just doesn't make sense for a challenge; this stunt is about using ritual magic to make sure it *does* make sense. Then again, in Accelerated, justification for using one of your approaches is often pretty easy to come by, so you may want to question whether or not the effect granted by, say, replacing Lore with Sneaky or Careful or Clever is a real, solid, stunt-worthy benefit. If you can do it more often than once per session, maybe it is. If you can only do it once per session—that's a cost that demands a more potent result. Here are two options.

> **Ritualist I.** When facing a challenge, you may perform a magic ritual to roll Clever even if it wouldn't otherwise make sense to do so.
> **Ritualist II.** Once per session, when facing a challenge, you may perform a magic ritual to automatically succeed with style at any one component task of the challenge.

From Accelerated to Core

Converting from Accelerated to Core is likely the easier job, since as we noted previously, Accelerated stunts are a subset of Core's. Let's look at the two styles of stunts found in Accelerated.

Bonus-Granting Stunts

Accelerated's bonus-granting stunts work pretty well as-is, tho they require you to narrow in on a specific skill choice to replace the approach in the original.

So when you've got something like this:

> Because I **am a Smooth Talker**, I get a +2 when I **Sneakily create advantages** when **I'm in conversation with someone**.

It's a short route to this Core version:

> **Smooth Talker.** Given a minute of focused conversation with someone, you may gain +2 to create an advantage using Rapport.

That said, that version may feel a little unsatisfying. It loses the "sneaky" element of the original, and one could also argue that Rapport is all about having focused conversations with people already.

When you run into an "unsatisfying" situation such as this, fall back on the "translate the spirit, not the effect" principle, yet again. The spirit here, really, is all about being sneaky in a conversation without *seeming* sneaky to your target. So this may be more about using Deceit in a situation where Rapport might be more apt. In that case, you don't have a bonus-granting stunt, you have a skill-swapping stunt:

> **Smooth Talker.** Lies and truth are interchangeable for you. When engaged in focused conversation with someone, you may use Deceit to create advantages even when Rapport would be more appropriate.

Once-Per-Session Stunts

Accelerated's once-per-session stunts line up strongly with Core's rule exceptions. They simply standardize around the idea of the restriction/cost being "once per session." Most simply don't need conversion. They already work for Core's defaults.

> Because I **can Run Circles Around a Leopard**, once per game session I can **show up anywhere I want to, provided I could run there, no matter where I started**.

Yup. That's viable Core stunt too.

You may need to tweak the occasional one that references approaches, but those are few and far between.

CONVERTING STRESS

When you get to this point, converting stress tracks is practically an afterthought.

From Core to Accelerated

Core has two stress tracks, and they're not a consistent single length like Accelerated's single three box track. That said, this mostly doesn't matter.

The primary exception is if you've intentionally created a fairly tough character by maxing out their Will or Physique to get that fourth stress box with optional additional mild consequence.

When you think about it though, both of those things are pretty similar to the effect of a once-per-session Accelerated style stunt—so if that detail of your Core character is particularly important, use one of your Accelerated stunt slots to replace that effect, in spirit at least.

> Because I have **a heart of ice and nerves of steel**, once per session I can **ignore the stress from any one social or psychic attack**.

> Because I **take a licking and keep on kicking**, I have **one more stress box than usual**.

From Accelerated to Core

This already happens as a side-effect of your conversion from approaches to skills. Look at your post-conversion ratings in Will and Physique, and establish the length of your stress tracks accordingly. Done.
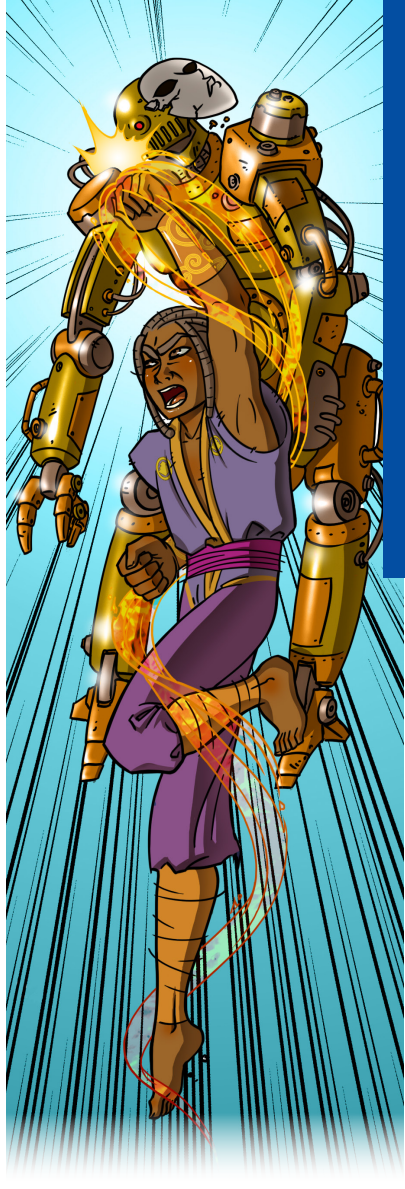
CONVERTING NPCS

When it comes right down to it, there is no strong pressure to convert NPCs. Yeah, they might be bringing approaches to a skill fight, or vice-versa, but it's not really going to wreck anything for you to just leave them as is, roll what you gotta roll, and stay focused on the players. That said we can cover a little ground on the topic if you feel you must convert!

From Core to Accelerated

Conversions from Core to Accelerated happen one of two ways.

If you have a detailed character with rated skills & such (supporting or main NPCs, to use the parlance), you can follow the same advice found earlier in this document to convert their skills into approaches.

If you have a less detailed character (usually a nameless NPC or NPC mob), set those stats aside and look at what the concept of the nameless NPC is, in broad strokes, and use those to construct a "Skilled At/Bad At" Accelerated-style "mook" stat-block.

From Accelerated to Core

This is an exact inverse of the above.

If you have a detailed character statted out with rated approaches and stunts, use the methods in the prior sections to convert the NPC to a Core-style NPC with skills & everything. Remember, you don't necessarily have to write out a full sheet in Core unless you're likely to need it, so focus on using the methods to quickly determine what the NPC's peak skills (top three slots) are, rate those, and leave the rest unwritten until you need to have the character roll something you haven't listed. (Tho again, remember, you could just leave your NPCs as is with their Accelerated-style approaches! We've even done this in some of our Fate Worlds of Adventure that are otherwise right in line with the Core defaults.)

If you have a less detailed character (a mook or mook mob), using Skilled At/Bad At, you're in good shape to make quick work of it. In most cases this is simply a Fair quality nameless NPC, a la Core. Look at the Skilled At list to determine which Core skill is the best fit, and rate that at Fair. Pick two more related ones and rate those at Average. If you like, pick the best thing from the Bad At list and make sure that's a Trouble-style aspect for the NPC, and you're done.