

Lights! Camera! ACTION!

- a look at action gainers for the Corp -

Actions make Netrunner different from other CCGs. Almost every other one allows for an unlimited number of actions as long as you have cards to use in hand or in play. While cards affect what actions you can do in Netrunner, even if you have twenty cards in hand and thirty cards in play, you still only have those three or four actions to work with.

Fast advancement is popular in part due to the limited nature of actions. Barring special effects, the Corp cannot install and advance an agenda enough to score it in one turn. Leaving an agenda in a fort is often dangerous, most Corps prefer to keep them in the relative safety of HQ or R&D. Fast advancement is the easiest way around this problem. Difficulty reduction also works well, bringing the agenda's difficulty down to two or less so it can be scored in one turn. Some Corps even take the route of making SDFs safe enough to hold an agenda for one or more turns.

One route is usually overlooked, that of gaining additional actions. Similar to difficulty reduction, this allows agendas to be scored out of hand. Additional actions can also be put to other uses such as drawing cards or gaining bits. So why aren't additional action plans used more often? Gaining extra actions is either difficult or expensive. There are currently eleven purple cards that grant extra actions: AI Board Member, Corporate Boon, Corporate Guard Temps, Edgerunner, Inc., Temps, Nevinyrral, Overtime Incentives, Pacifica Regional AI, Please Don't Choke Anyone, Project Venice, Remote Facility, and Subsidiary Branch. I'll take a look at all of them.

The Agendas:

Corporate Boon and Subsidiary Branch share the fact that their difficulty is prohibitive to their use. Since they are six difficulty, they cannot even be scored manually in two turns. They are almost impossible to use alone in a score out of hand plan since four need to be scored before its possible. The best bet here is probably to mix them up with some 3/2 or 3/1 agendas that you can score out of hand after scoring one of these. I'm heard murmurs of a semi-successful Corp that packed 6 Subsidiary Branches, 6 Project Babylon, and 6 Hostile Takeovers.

Please Don't Choke Anyone has too much going against it. The Runner gets first shot at preventing damage so you need to overload those Shields or pay for the Full Body Conversion before getting a shot at those action counters. It also forces the decision if the damage or extra action is better. Especially if I had included PCDA in my R&D, I feel that the extra action is often better unless the damage will kill the Runner. On top of the Runner preventing the damage first, its hard to actually deal damage to the Runner in the first place. Sure, he may decide to not break a brain damage sub on a Liche to have enough bits to steal an agenda from an SDF but I don't feel its worth giving up some AP to gain just one action. Being able to surprise the Runner with a damage routine he cannot break is hard to do after scoring the PDCA since he should be alert to that. Meat damage is usually not

dealt unless it kills the Runner. So that leaves ambushes. It could actually work fairly well too if it wasn't for Enterprise Shields. Maybe the best thing going for it is that it may make the Runner more cautious since some would be reluctant to give the Corp an action.

AI Board Member's extra action is helpful but unlikely to help with the install and score plan. Getting the 1 in 6 install, you can drop and score a 3 pointer in one turn. But that's not the best way to look at AI Board Member. It should be treated more like an Employee Empowerment. Half the time it lets you draw a card, which essentially mimics EE's first ability. Sure it may not always give the card, but you don't always want to be drawing cards and its other abilities should always be useful too.

The final agenda that grants actions is Project Venice. Unlike Corporate Boon or Subsidiary Branch, it is flexible. Just one or two need to be scored at high difficulty to allow the rest to be played out of hand. It requires either one advanced ten times or two advanced seven times each. That much advancement fits fairly well into a World Domination like plan. Looking at Frisco's WD deck would be a good starting point for a deck featuring this agenda. I've dabbled in this idea with ok results.

The Nodes:

Pacifica Regional AI doesn't work out well granting extra actions on its own but works well in combination with other cards. Otherwise it has to sit out advanced in an SDF like an agenda would. In that case it does have the benefit of not risking an agenda in the SDF. However, Vapor Ops is better suited to that purpose. PRAI really shines with either Team Restructuring or Chicago Branch. By playing PRAI and an agenda, each TR gives an action-free advancement to the agenda for just 1*. However, it takes too many TRs to score most agendas in one turn like that. Chicago Branch lets you add as many counters as you want as long as you have the bits. It ends up working out to $2 + (3 * \text{difficulty})$ bits to score one agenda with that combo. It compares well to the cost of fast advancement cards. With a large supply of bits, one could even score seven AP in one turn. Heck, it lets you score WD out of hand for just 38*, two bits cheaper than Frisco's method, and this way only takes 3 cards, not 5. Of course all three cards can be trashed or stolen. The trashability of the cards is balanced by the fact the Runner will have to run and trash them if you don't win since he cannot allow you to use them again. Additionally, both of these combos allow for infinite loops with AICFO.

Remote Facility is extremely fragile for its cost. At least it can be Edgerunnered out with a three pointer to score out of hand for nine bits which compares poorly to the six bits a Systematic Layoff would need but forces the Runner to run and trash it. If it is behind a decent amount of ICE, that can be a serious sum to the Runner. In any case, it is unlikely to stick around for long unless you sink it in a Roving Sub.

Nevinyrral is suicidal to leave rezzed in a fort. However, it is a great finishing card if you are playing with three difficulty agenda. You can just lay it out behind some ICE, and unless the Runner has complete control over HQ and R&D in which case you have pretty much lost anyway. It is especially fun if you play it out early. If the Runner runs on it, he knows he will have to dispose of it at some point in the late

Runner fans on it, he knows he will have to dispose of it at some point in the late game and probably doesn't want to waste the run by not trashing it, but five bits is a lot in that stage of the game. Almost any Corp that runs purely three pointers should run this but since it is only useful on the last turn, is often left out. I admit I am guilty of omitting it myself but I have played and pure three point plans in a while.

The Preps:

Edgerunner, Inc., Temps doesn't let you advance agendas with its extra actions. On the other hand, it has numerous uses that most players are already well aware. Its a staple card for me, I almost always include at least two in all my Corp decks. It can be used to play an agenda and a helper card to score the agenda out of hand. The applicable helper cards are Weapon Depot, Networked Center, Research Bunker, Washington DC City Grid, Chicago Branch, and Remote Facility. They all force Runner to run and trash it, and in the case of the regions, the trashing is expensive.

Corporate Guard Temps ends up costing three bits per action once the penalty is taken into account. At first glance, playing it one turn and scoring a three pointer the next seems good. I've tried that plan, but in practice it invites the Runner to All Hands. So I tried sometimes paying for multiple turns and hoped to draw an agenda, thus baiting the Runner into wasting an All Hands. It still didn't work out too well. Looking back at it, its no better than using Systematic Layoffs for that method ($5 * SL + 1 * advance$ vs. $3 * CGT + 3 * advance$). CGT even wastes an action just playing it, putting you further behind. One idea I have thrown around is to combine it with Data Fort Reclamations to help pay off the penalty. In this case you need two CGTs to pull off the out of hand score but since they were probably played for more than one extra action, you get a couple extra turns worth of five actions per turn.

Overtime Incentives is mostly an expensive Systematic Layoffs since you would be crazy to do anything with the extra actions except to advance agenda (maybe forgo if you were desperate enough, but four bits and one card to draw two cards is bad and four bits and one card to gain two bits is even worse). At least its only one bit more than using Systematic Layoffs so its not too bad, and it does has some other applications. With it, you can install and play thee fast advance cards in one turn, as for World Domination. You can also chain three of them to score a five pointer which you can't do with Layoffs. It can pull off the two card combos mentioned under Edgerunner but is fairly expensive for that.

Conclusions:

Most of the extra action cards are too inefficient for anything but friendly play. Edgerunner is an obvious standout in the bunch. AI Board Member and Project Venice have some potential if someone takes the time to undercover it. They offer a flexibility the other agendas don't have. Corporate Guard Temps is just on the edge of usability but the effort in learning just when to play it and for how long makes it difficult to use correctly. Overtime Incentives mostly fits in fast advancing World Domination or Political Overthrow out of hand. Pacifica is good for infinite

loops if nothing else. Nevinyrral is limited by only being useful to end the game.

Extra actions could be a big boon but are mostly unwieldy to acquire. It is a lot easier to mimic extra actions by being efficient with the actions you have. Accounts to get bits, Annual Reviews to get cards, and fast advancement to score agenda. At least the extra Edgerunner actions are the most efficient way to install cards. In part, this shows just how strong gaining extra actions are, otherwise the cost wouldn't be so high.