A Guide to Strategy in SCD

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Hello everyone. I've been in this community for over a year, so I thought I should comprehensively distillate one of my scaling philosophies. This document will define strategy and how it can be cohesively scaled in the SCD community.

This will be coming from the view of someone who scales predominantly in the Proven Ability Scaling System, so I do possess a scaling perspective that diverges from a typical "Normal Scaler" but that shouldn't demerit the points I will be getting across as ultimately, they all originate from logic and wanting to assess the intelligence of characters as coherently as possible which I believe we all want to accomplish at the end of the day. If you're unfamiliar with how Proven Ability works, I suggest reading the highlighted document above to understand where I am coming from.

Let it be known from the start that I am not declaring that this should be the definitive way to scale strategy, but I do want to offer a different perspective for people who want to understand how to scale the tactical implementations of their favorite characters. So, let's begin.

WHAT IS STRATEGY?

Strategy is in short — the systematic arrangement of tactics that when actively executed, aim to accomplish or work towards a specific vision or goal in mind. Tactics, on the other hand, are single maneuvers or actions that aim to complete smaller steps or a smaller version of a goal that a strategy directs itself to accomplish. It's imperative to understand the intrinsic relationship between strategy and tactics; a good example of the relationship between them can be observed easily in intellectual affairs such as Chess where strategy is the systematic implementation of tactics chained jointly to achieve an advantage over an opponent.

Strategies are not inherently superior to tactics and vice versa. In many circumstances, forming a strategy can be unnecessary to gain advantages or control over a situation if there is a much more clever way to do it one fell swoop or if you simply lack the resources to mount a full-scale scheme. Simultaneously, merely spamming Tactics when forming a Strategy may have been a better way to go about things that may speak to the character's shortcomings in holistic tactical implementation.

This is all contextual at the end of the day, and it's our job as scalers to understand the limitations, potential missed chances, and adversity that characters undergo to scale their intelligence effectively. We shouldn't just go by the author's word because the author is ultimately fallible in the face of logic.

In SCD, we look towards the theoretical/rational definition of strategy and tactics to scale characters rather than business definitions that appear to merge strategy with planning (another topic altogether that I will make a guide on in the future), which can get rather misleading and inapplicable when scaling fictional characters.

So to summarize:

Tactics = outsmarting maneuvers that aim to gain an advantage over a situation with one action, or the action functions as a piece for the bigger picture — the strategy.

Strategy = the active implementation of multiple tactics systematically executed to work towards or achieve the underlying vision of a character.

HOW SHOULD WE SCALE STRATEGY?

When approaching the task of scaling strategy in fictional characters, we must first acknowledge the fundamental nature of strategic thinking itself. At its core, strategy is a product of active critical thinking, logical reasoning, and the ability to navigate potentially complex or novel situations. Simply looking at the result of a strategy or whether a strategy succeeded is no longer looking at the intelligence of a character via process — it is more akin to simply trusting what the author or writer of a fictional story says at face value, without trying to look deeper into it. Therefore, to truly understand and scale a character's strategic capabilities, we must look beyond mere outcomes and delve into the cognitive mechanisms that drive their decision-making.

The allure of results-based scaling, a methodology of scaling tactical implementations that the majority of the community uses, whether intentional or not, is undeniable. It's straightforward, easily quantifiable, and often aligns with our intuitive understanding of success which a strategy should be aiming for.

In real life, we typically use a results-based scaling methodology when examining the strategies and plans people (especially in history) have executed. This is because, in OUR reality, the results necessitate the process. Reality is not constrained by an author who wants to push the agenda of whether someone is intelligent via suiting the narrative to make them seem smart; in reality, we only have results and observable facts that are true and consistent for every living being, so strategists who can achieve multiple results as efficiently as possible by definition HAVE to be seen as smart and capable in outsmarting. So yes, this methodology is applicable, *in reality*.

However, this approach falls short of capturing the true essence of strategy IN FICTION.

In fiction, outcomes are often influenced by plot requirements, narrative tension, or even luck. Outcomes are not necessarily bent towards logic as they are in reality because an author’s agenda isn’t to be as objective as possible in their narrative (and that should never be the case when you’re trying to tell a story), but simultaneously, a strategy should never be dependent on these factors because strategy inherently revolves around LOGIC.

A strategy that succeeds due to fortunate circumstances, low intellectual adversity due to an opponent's incompetence, or the author/writer is outright willing a character to victory even if it ignores logic entirely should not be scaled highly just because a character succeeded even if they had many limitations. Conversely, a brilliantly executed Strategy that fails due to unforeseeable factors should not be demerited entirely. But if you were scaling with an emphasis on results or even if you weigh results as equally as process, you would likely scale the former situation higher than the latter in strategy because success is one of the *strongest* points in results-based scaling. I find that flawed.

This is because success in a story is ultimately measured by the author's vision, not by the actual intelligence of the characters; good writers can make the success of characters seem warranted by showing or implying actual processes in a character's schemes to make them deserving of their achievements. Less than favorable writers will leave readers questioning whether a character even deserved to win due to the lack of logical process in their schemes.

When scaling strategy, we should strive to focus more on the process of a character's tactical implementation rather than favoring or weighing evenly the results of the strategy as unbalanced as it initially sounds. This approach provides a more focused and logical understanding of how a character would operate in an outsmarting scenario which would be governed by logic, not by how their verse operates. This approach also aligns more closely with the philosophical underpinnings of strategic thinking. Consider the works of game theorists and decision scientists who emphasize the importance of rational choice in strategic scenarios: their focus is not on the outcome essentially, but on the logical consistency and optimality of the decision-making process given the available information.

Effectively, I'm asserting that strategy should be scaled by mostly its quality/process.

STRATEGY CATEGORIES & DEFINITIONS

So these are some suggestions for categories that can be used to scale Strategy that I use to scale predominantly. It's by no means required that scalers have to use all of these exact categories but I highly recommend implementing some of these categories in your full-scale comparisons; of course, you're free to add more or change/rename some, but these are the most important Strategy Categories:

No.1) **STRATEGY SUCCESS RATE/FORTITUDE**

Strategy Success Rate, also known as Strategy Fortitude, looks at a strategy holistically and asks one thing: is the strategy LIKELY to succeed?

A strategy is useless if its ability to logically accomplish what it sets out to do is very low. The success rate of a strategy is scaled by the holistic quality of tactics to ensure that it achieves whatever the character is aiming for. This category does not emphasize the limitations the character faces, it just focuses on the substance and combined fortitude of tactics the character included in their strategy to maximize its resilience and shielding. Note that Success Rate doesn't mean your Win/Loss Ratio on strategies or whether your strategy succeeded or not; it doesn't care about that.

Because of how critical this category is when evaluating strategy, this is the ONLY strategy category that is above all others in importance. Every other category afterward is not ranked in importance.

No.2) **STRATEGY COMPLEXITY**

Strategy Complexity measures the *quality* incorporation of additional layers, dimensionality, and overlaps of tactics within a strategy to make it harder to decipher and counter as it artificially increases the difficulty of tracing and analyzing the components within said scheme. Naturally, this holds amazing potential for the tactical implementation of deception and manipulation to make it harder to counter. Additionally, Complexity and Success Rate tend to correlate as a more complex strategy would naturally mean that a character is accounting for more possibilities and situations which would typically increase its fortitude, most of the time. This is an important category as well, though not on the same level as Success Rate as Complexity isn't necessarily needed for all situations, but Success Rate *absolutely* is.

Note that I said *quality* incorporation; a strategy that is so complex to that point that it actually slows down or hinders the tactical vision of a character is no longer complex — it's simply complicated. Strategies should always strive to be comfortably controllable, which leads us into our next category.

No.3) **STRATEGY BUILDING**

Strategy Building is another holistic category that measures a character's ability to construct a coherent scheme while navigating the constraints and limitations they face. This category evaluates how well a character can gain comfortable control over their strategic implementation despite potentially limited time, resources, or information. The essence of strong strategy building lies in the character's capacity to maximize their strategic grip on a situation, even when faced with significant obstacles. This involves not only crafting a scheme that addresses the immediate goals but also ensuring that the strategy remains manageable and adaptable.

This suggests that a character with high Strategy Building ability will understand exactly HOW and WHEN to be very complex, WHEN to shield themselves, WHEN to focus on being adaptable, and align themselves towards the correct vision with their strategy showcasing said ability. This is a very theoretical and decision-making-based category that is seen through strategies, and this also checks for variables that Success Rate may not initially pick up on.

No.4) **STRATEGY LOGISTICS**

Strategy Logistics is the most technical strategy category, as it covers everything revolving around execution, alignment, active and efficient resource management, etc. Logistics measures how well you're manipulating and orchestrating the field around you by bringing your strategic vision to life. Effectively, it checks for how well a character is executing their tactics, whether they're aligning them precisely, and if the possible contingencies or preparations they've set beforehand are being acted upon at the right time without any gaps in error. Additionally, it also checks for how well they're using their resources to advance their goals even in the face of possible limitations which are all taken into context.

No.5) **STRATEGY ADAPTABILITY**

Strategy Adaptability measures the character's ability to design a strategy that inherently allows for flexibility and adjustment in the face of unforeseen circumstances or unfavorable situations. This category evaluates how well a character anticipates potential changes in their strategic landscape and builds mechanisms for responsive adaptation. A highly adaptable strategy demonstrates foresight in resource allocation, contingency placement, and the creation of multiple pathways to achieve their desired result. It's not about the character's ability to adapt, but rather their capacity to create a strategy that is itself adaptable.

The key to high Strategy Adaptability lies in the character's ability to incorporate potential adjustments within the original strategic framework. This means that when faced with unexpected challenges, the character can seamlessly shift tactics or reallocate resources without fundamentally altering the core strategy. Such adaptability is achieved through careful planning beforehand and the strategic positioning of resources that can be repurposed as needed. A character excelling in this category shows a deep understanding of the fluidity of strategic environments and the importance of building resilience into their schemes from the outset.

Naturally, this pairs well with Complexity as more layers are likely to create outlets for Adaptability, but conversely, this can also be found through Building, as developing a strategy that can inherently switch gears due to the character somehow forming a scheme that can work in a plethora of ways without the use of many layers also implies great Building ability.

EXAMPLE ANALYSIS





In this section of the document, I will be analyzing one of Takuya Yagami's strategies as a demonstration of how I would go about scaling strategy with this methodology and the categories that relate to said methodology as accurately as possible.

We will be analyzing Takuya's Nanase Strategy that was executed in COTE Y2V3.

This is a lesser part of Takuya's UIE (Uninhabited Island Exam) Strategy, so it's important to give some context before starting:

- Takuya is tasked alongside Ichika Amasawa by the current Acting Director of ANHS, Tokinari Tsukishiro, to expel Kiyotaka Ayanokōji who is another White Room student known as the "masterpiece" of the 4th Generation.
- Takuya, since Y2V1, has planned to betray Tsukishiro and take down Ayanokōji with his ability, on his terms.
    - However, to make it seem like he is still on Tsukishiro's side, he has acted passively towards Ayanokōji for the majority of Y2V1 - Y2V2 and has instead meticulously built influence among the First Years, manipulated many to be his pawns for the future, and has set contingencies in place once the UIE has been announced.

This strategy starts on the 5th day of the UIE, so as of this point:

- He has fully manipulated Tsubaki Sakurako into becoming the apparent leader of the first years through meticulous indirect manipulation that he has done before the exam, with his actions on the fourth day being his final tactic to gain full control over her and the first years.

- He has positioned himself as Tsubaki's "tool," allowing him to influence her plans while remaining concealed.
- Takuya executed his Cliff Strategy on the night of 4th day of the exam:
  - He attacked two second-year students (Komiya and Kinoshita) in a way that only a White Room student could.
  - This was done to draw Ayanokōji's attention and test his deductive abilities.
  - The incident was designed to frame Ichika as a suspect. He chose Ichika for a greater purpose
  - It also served to initiate a "war" between first and second-year students.
  - Takuya has left subtle clues about his true identity for Ayanokōji's to potentially uncover.
- The purpose of the Cliff Strategy was to:
  - Test and evaluate Ayanokōji's deductive capabilities to see if he's truly the masterpiece the White Room says he is.
  - Identify Ayanokōji's allies.
  - Set contingencies for the future.
- In the Nanase Strategy, Takuya aims to:
  - Begin neutralizing Tsukishiro.
  - Place Ichika in a comprising position.
  - Further isolate Kushida.
  - Test Ayanokōji's decision-making ability.
  - Assess Ichika's allegiance.
  - Accumulate as much information as possible, even if it means to adapt his strategy.

THE EXECUTION

The Nanase Strategy lasts from the 5th - 7th day of the UIE. The strategy begins with Takuya meeting with Kushida in a deserted area, having previously given her a walkie-talkie on the cruise ship. In this meeting, Takuya makes a calculated "confession." He admits to being "coerced" into revealing information about Kushida's past to several first-year students — Tsubaki, Utomiya, Osamu, and Housen. He says this for two main reasons:

1. It further isolates Kushida, limiting her options and making her more dependent on Takuya.
2. It ensures Kushida's continued cooperation, as expelling students from other years becomes increasingly difficult.

Takuya tells her this on the 5th day despite meeting with Tsubaki on the 6th day, meaning that he had already predicted all of her actions and the contents of the conversation on the 6th day before it even started. Takuya uses this moment of weakness from Kushida to propose a plan to Kushida: to record a confrontation between Ayanokōji and Nanase Tsubasa. Takuya promises to

guide Kushida through a walkie-talkie and use GPS searches to inform her of Ayanokōji's location, eliminating the need for Kushida to use her own points.

This proposition is, in fact, a carefully crafted false narrative. It serves as a red herring, designed to mislead not only Kushida but anyone else who might uncover parts of the strategy if they try to talk to the only exterior source, Kushida.

The actual goal of Takuya's strategy is far more ambitious: to expose the secrets of the White Room. Takuya, at the top of the 5th Generation, understands the classified nature of the White Room. He anticipated that Nanase, knowing about the White Room and Ayanokōji, would discuss these details during the confrontation when he was given information on the location and date by Tsukishiro before the exam. Recording this conversation would have far-reaching consequences such as:

- Nanase being forced to drop out due to her exposed role as an agent and her attempted assault on Ayanokōji.
- Tsukishiro being blindsided, potentially facing criminal charges for his involvement in the White Room project and sanctioning assault between students.
- Ayanokōji's peaceful life is shattered.

However, Takuya anticipates that this second layer will likely be thwarted by Ichika's interference because he had already psychoanalyzed her prior as a girl who holds no loyalty towards the White Room AND him due to her continuous worship of Ayanokōji. This expectation is not a flaw in the plan, but rather an integral part of it, leading to the strategy's divergence into two crucial parts: dealing with Ichika and testing Ayanokōji's abilities.

Based on information he previously relayed to Ichika in Y2V2, Takuya anticipated that she would deduce aspects of his strategy.

- This anticipation leads to three expected outcomes that Takuya actively controlled:
  - a. Domestication of Kushida: Ichika's intervention will likely belittle Kushida's ego, making her acutely aware of her precarious situation and her need to rely on Takuya.
  - b. Neutralization of Kurachi and Kushida: This action not only paints Ichika as a more likely suspect for the Cliff Incident but also does not negate Takuya's deception within the Nanase Strategy.
  - c. Ichika's Self-Revelation: Believing she has thwarted Takuya's plan, Ichika is expected to reveal herself to Ayanokōji. This will cause Ayanokōji to reevaluate his thoughts about the White Room enforcer, while Ichika inadvertently serves as bait for Ayanokōji's allies (particularly Arisu), who lack the clues to connect the dots.

However, this has yet another hidden layer: gauging Ichika's loyalty. This setup allows Takuya to assess the extent of Ichika's interest in and loyalty to Ayanokōji. The amount of information about Takuya and his schemes that Ichika chooses to reveal to Ayanokōji and Nanase will

indicate her allegiances. This information is crucial for Takuya's plans, particularly his eventual confrontation with Ayanokōji.

Additionally, due to his psychoanalysis of Ichika, this is an impossible trap for Ichika to not fall for. If she interferes, Takuya will know that she interfered and *how* she did it, meaning that her life is now in his hands once the UIE concludes. If she doesn't interfere, well, Ayanokōji is screwed. No matter what option she chooses, she will fall right into Takuya's hands.

Ichika was never able to actually realize that her interfering was all part of Takuya's failsafe in case Kushida was never able to record Ayanokouji which would slow down his neutralization of Tsukishiro. From here, Takuya was able to fully test Ichika through this fabricated scenario, confirming that she is indeed Ayanokouji's ally, even if not completely, who would betray the White Room for his sake.

Takuya is not done, however, as he also adds another layer of dimensionality in this strategy aimed at gathering more information about Ayanokōji. He does this by sending not only Kushida for the initial layers but also Kurachi near Ayanokōji and Nanase's location (D3). As we know, he guides Kushida via walkie-talkie, timing their movements based on Ayanokōji and Nanase's expected confrontation.

- This setup presents Ayanokōji with a critical decision. Following either Kushida or Kurachi would lead to unfavorable outcomes: a. Following Kushida would reveal Takuya's strategy but provide no means to negate it, resulting in potential blackmail. b. Following Kurachi would lead to Utomiya rather than Takuya, resulting in absolute misdirection with no way to trace it back to the true schemer.
- The optimal decision, which Takuya anticipates Ayanokōji will make, is to consider the presence of both Kushida and Kurachi, connect the dots, and improvise while engaging with Nanase.
- Ichika's presence adds another layer to this test. Her interception of Kushida and Kurachi during the Ayanokōji-Nanase confrontation serves as a second test, challenging both Ayanokōji and Nanase to correctly deduce her involvement (or lack thereof) in the Cliff Incident.

There is also one more layer to this strategy: the inescapable Kurachi Trap.

- Takuya instructs Kurachi to approach Ayanokōji and Nanase's location while carrying a weapon. This is designed to ensure Ichika perceives him as a threat and intercepts him.
- This scenario leaves a series of clues for Ayanokōji to interpret such as footprint evidence, behavioral profiling, and weapon transferring.

This culminates in a final decision point for Ayanokōji — whether or not to check Kurachi's GPS location. This decision is fraught with implications as:

- Checking the GPS could potentially identify the "culprit" but would also reveal Ayanokōji's suspicions and actions.

- ❖ Not checking demonstrates a higher level of deductive reasoning, recognizing that the true culprit wouldn't place themselves in such an easily traceable position.

Takuya correctly anticipated that Ayanokōji would choose not to check the GPS, showcasing his superior deductive skills.

Perhaps the most clever aspect of Takuya's Nanase Strategy is its function as a failsafe. Even if the initial plan to record Ayanokōji and Nanase fails (which Takuya foresaw due to Ichika's interference), the strategy still yields valuable information such as:

1. Observing how Ayanokōji navigates the various tests and traps as Takuya gains crucial insights into his decision-making and deductive abilities.
2. Revealing the extent of Ichika's allegiance to Ayanokōji, allowing Takuya to assess how to deal with her in the future.
3. Takuya can also freely observe how Nanase handles the situation, confirming or refuting his predictions about her future actions.

All of this is accomplished without risking Takuya's exposure and creating multiple planning points in the future for this Cross Year War Strategy to begin execution in a few days.

HOW DOES THIS SCALE?

Here's how I would scale the strategy based on the categories:

#1) **STRATEGY BUILDING**

- ❖ Perfectly designed his strategy in a way that would allow comfortable control of every resource at his disposal despite having time, presence, and adversity in the form of multiple people who would seek to interfere with his goals (Tsukishiro, Ichika, Ryuuen, Nanase, etc) acting against his aims as limitations.
- ❖ The strategy is also constructed in such a clever way that unless you have information on the White Room, you are unable to properly interfere with it.
- ❖ Despite not being able to physically interfere with this strategy due to a variety of risks that would come with it, Takuya was still able to create a myriad of ways that would allow his goals to be realized in one way or another. Definition of overcoming limitations.

#2) **STRATEGY COMPLEXITY**

- ❖ Multi-dimensional scheming with countless layers of fabrication, concealment, and information control that seek to utterly misdirect anyone who seeks to understand the true purpose of the strategy.

- From Kushida to Kurachi to even Ichika, Takuya used everyone as a way to make it impossible to deduce the truth behind the Cliff Incident, and even in Ayanokōji's case who had the best chance of deducing the true culprit of the incident with all of the clues Takuya gave, Ayanokōji had to resort to using abduction rather than deduction due to the amount of limited information that Takuya divided into countless untraceable layers.

#3) **STRATEGY FORTITUDE/SUCCESS RATE**

- Due to the nature of strategy, Takuya was able to guarantee his success through the strong synergy of his tactical implementation, specifically through his implementation of hidden traps that would be unable to be avoided due to previous psychoanalyses and observations of his pawns and targets.
- Despite this, he even constructed a failsafe that would guarantee his success anyway, just in different areas that would be known ONLY to him.

#4) **STRATEGY ADAPTABILITY**

- Despite the high success rate already established in his schemes, Takuya designed his framework in such a way that if something went out of his foresight, he would either know immediately or very soon due to how connected his individual tactics are, allowing him to change and shift the strategy to still accomplish his goals, just in a different way.
- The nonlinear direction of the Nanase Strategy additionally helps in showing off how adaptable it is as well — the failsafe coming into mind.

#5) **STRATEGY LOGISTICS**

- Despite being ranked last, the logistics of the strategy are rather strong as well. Every move in Takuya's strategy, from deploying Kurachi to the exact moments Kushida is informed, to aligning this within his predictions and movements of characters in his foresight showcases impeccable alignment. Each step aligns correctly with the broader strategic vision, ensuring seamless execution without any gaps.
- He also shows efficient use of his resources and time, as not once was he in a position where Tsubaki suspected him afterward of orchestrating a scheme like this, and instead discreetly times everything to ensure maximum efficacy.

Building >= Complexity >= Fortitude > Adaptability >= Logistics

Hope you liked this document!

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