



House of Games Corporation Limited Box 316 Don Mills Ontario Canada

Originators of famous Ratrace / Ulcers! / Cuefusion / AstroBlitz and other quality family games.

Q Why is this game called ULCERS?

A ULCERS is a not-so-serious take off of serious business. ULCERS has all the excitement, the strategies, and nerve-wrecking decisions you'd have to face in setting up a business in real life. Yet it's only a game (Although there'll be times when you might easily forget this.)

Q How does it work?

A Each player starts with \$50,000 and a COMPANY. (These are the funny long cards with little squares on them.) The idea is to get a full staff of PERSONNEL for your company before anyone else.

Q What do you call a full staff of PERSONNEL?

A Two SECRETARIES, two SALESMEN, one SALES MANAGER, one VICE-PRESIDENT, and one PRESIDENT.

Q How many people can play?

A Two, three, or four players. Just be sure to adjust the number of EMPLOYEES in the PERSONNEL POOL to the number of players in the game. The PERSONNEL POOL is the space in the centre of the board that says "Place all personnel cards here". For two players, it should contain: 4 SECRETARIES, 4 SALESMEN, 2 SALES MANAGERS, 2 VICEPRESIDENTS, and 1 PRESIDENT. For three players 6 SECRETARIES, 6 SALESMEN, 3 SALES MANAGERS, 3 VICE-PRESIDENTS, and 2 PRESIDENTS. For four or more players: 7 SECRETARIES, 7 SALESMEN, 3 SALES MANAGERS, 3 VICE-PRESIDENTS, and 3 PRESIDENTS.

Q How do you start?

A Pick one player to look after the BANK. He gives each player a COMPANY card, \$50,000 (3x \$10,000 plus 4x\$5,000). Players each select a coloured marker which they place on the square marked NEW FISCAL YEAR. Roll the dice to see who goes first. Player rolling the highest number then rolls again and moves his marker clockwise by the number of squares shown on the dice.

Q Never mind the technicalities. How do I hire PERSONNEL?

A By landing on the squares marked SECRETARY, SALESMAN, SALES MANAGER, VICE-PRESIDENT, or PRESIDENT. Each time you land on one of these squares you may hire the EMPLOYEE from the PERSONNEL POOL. Land on a SECRETARY square, you may hire one SECRETARY. Land on a SALESMAN square, you may hire one SALESMAN. And so on. Should you land on any of these squares and find no corresponding EMPLOYEE in the PERSONNEL POOL, don't worry. There's a far more devious way of hiring staff. Read on.

Q How much do I pay for these people?

A This is where the game starts to swing. You may pay your EMPLOYEES any amount marked on your COMPANY CARD, from \$5,000 to \$200,000 This amount must be paid immediately to the BANK. There is just one restriction upon how much you must pay for your PERSONNEL NO EMPLOYEE CAN EARN LESS THAN AN EMPLOYEE OF LOWER RANK. That is, a PRESIDENT may earn the same as a VICE-PRESIDENT, and of course he may earn more, but UNDER NO CONDITIONS MAY HE EARN LESS. Similarly, a VICE-PRESIDENT may not earn less than a SALES MANAGER, and so on down the line. When you hire an EMPLOYEE place him (or her) in the square on your COMPANY CARD which corresponds with the amount you've paid.

Q What are those squares marked RAID?

A This is where the game gets dirty. When you land on a RAID square you may take any employee from any other player, simply by offering a RAISE. Suppose an opponent has a SALESMAN earning \$15,000. You may take that EMPLOYEE by moving him up to the next wage bracket, which is \$20,000. Pay this full amount to the BANK and put the SALESMAN in the \$20,000 square on your COMPANY CARD. You may raid only one opponent of one employee on each trip to a RAID square. If you don't wish to raid, you don't have to.

Q Can you stop a player from raiding?

A No. But you can make it difficult for him. Just keep a close eye on how much opponents are paying their EMPLOYEES For example, say two of them have SALES MANAGERS. One is earning \$15,000 and one is earning \$20,000. You'd be wise to pay your SALES MANAGER \$30000. In this way, when someone RAIDS they'll probably RAID one of the lower-priced SALES MANAGERS and leave yours alone.

Q Then you should pay all your EMPLOYEES as much as possible to prevent other players from RAIDING?

A Yes. But remember there are SALARY squares. When you land on these you must pay to the bank the full salaries of the EMPLOYEES named on these SQUARES. If you don't have the money to meet these salaries, you must go back to the square marked PAYROLL and take the detour through.

Q What's this PAYROLL square all about.

A The PAYROLL square means trouble. If you land here on a normal turn, or if you are sent back here for not meeting your obligations on a SALARY square, you must pay the total wages of every EMPLOYEE in your COMPANY to the BANK. If you don't have the money, you must take the detour through, and obey the instructions on each square you hit. Roll one dice and keep rolling in the same turn until you are through the detour and back out onto the outside circle. Any EMPLOYEES you lose are returned immediately to the PERSONNEL POOL. The same rules apply to the FACTORY STAFF ON STRIKE hazard on the opposite side of the board. You either pay or go through.

Q Why did you say "go back to the square marked PAYROLL"?

A Because if you went the other way you'd pass the NEW FISCAL YEAR square, and collect \$50,000 on your way. Any person who won't pay his employees hardly deserves this sort of Kindness.

Q What if I can't afford STRIKE VIOLENCE?

A Who can? But if you land on this square in either the Payroll detour or the STRIKE detour

you must pay \$10,000 or go back to the beginning of the detour and immediately start through again. This way you run the risk of losing even more of your PERSONNEL.

Q Tell me about the BUSINESS VENTURE?

A The object of ULCERS is not to see who can make the most money. But, let's face it, money will help you to hire EMPLOYEES and to keep them. The BUSINESS VENTURE gives you a quick fling at some easy cash. When you land on the BUSINESS VENTURE square, you may invest any multiple of \$10,000 (\$10,000, \$20,000, \$30,000, etc.) Place this money in front of you and roll one dice. Keep rolling in the same turn until you are through the detour and back out onto the outer circle. Your investment is affected by each square you land upon. So if a player rolled nothing but "ones" on the dice after investing \$10,000, his investment would double (to \$20,000), then triple (to \$60,000), then be Cut in half (to \$30,000), double again (to \$60,000) triple again (to \$180,000). then be cut in half again (to \$90,000), then be wiped out (to zero). By landing on only the good squares, it's possible to build a \$10,000 stake into \$360,000, although if you do this too often the other players may demand to have a look at your dice.

Q What does that SCANDAL square mean?

A It means you must pay \$25,000 to the BANK or fire your top-ranking male EMPLOYEE and a SECRETARY. Since this is a family game, we won't go into any more detail on this point.

Q After I've hired someone, can I give him a raise later on?

A Yes. You can promote as many EMPLOYEES as you wish during any regular turn before you roll the dice. To raise a \$5,000 EMPLOYEE to \$10,000 just pay the difference (\$5,000) to the BANK.

Q Can EMPLOYEES be sold or traded to other players?

A No

Q What happens if I lose all my money?

A Not too much. Just after you leave the BUSINESS VENTURE detour you'll pass the NEW FISCAL YEAR square and collect \$50,000 (\$100,000 if you're lucky enough to land right on the square). In ULCERS you may find yourself broke from time to time. This just means you can't hire

EMPLOYEES or RAID, and may lose some staff if you land on a SALARY SQUARE and have to go back to the PAYROLL detour.

Q What's that pile of cards next to the PERSONNEL POOL?

A These are ULCER cards. (What else did you think we'd call them?). Most of these cards may be kept until you wish to use them. They may also be sold or traded. If a card is not used immediately, it may be used **in place of a regular turn** later on in the game. The SPECIAL RAID cards allow you to raid players on your right or left. If only two people are playing, these cards allow you to raid your opponent (no matter where he may be sitting).

Q Is that TAXES square as deadly as it looks?

A Only if you've got the money. When you land here roll both dice and pay five times the number you roll. If you don't have this much pay whatever cash you have and be grateful. Even the government doesn't let you off this easy.

Q Who wins?

A The player who first accumulates a full staff (two SECRETARIES, two SALESMEN, one SALES MANAGER, one VICE-PRESIDENT, and one PRESIDENT) **and gets safely around to NEW FISCAL YEAR**. This last point is important, as it allows the other players one or two more chances to RAID what might otherwise be a sure winner. It also makes for a very exciting finish.