

1. **Player Loyalty-** ~~Player loyalty will KILL you.~~ **Extreme player loyalty can damage your team.** Unless you really, REALLY care about getting your guys to the hall of fame, or something like that, you should be open to trading literally anyone on your team at any time if the right offer comes up. For cornerstone players on cheap contracts for a long time, that reasonable deal is much higher than an aging backup player, ~~but you still need to be willing to trade that guy given enough in return.~~ **but given an overwhelming deal, you it could well be worth trading.** My suggestion is giving a dollar value to every aspect of the player. Offensive value, pitching value, defensive value, popularity, years of control, and then subtracting salary from it. There you have the approximate value of the player. So, if you're looking at a trade that you think isn't enough because you're including a key player, run that test and realize how good a deal it might be. (Remember, prospects with top potential are better than virtually anyone on deal with 1 year left. No matter how good, no matter how cheap. Dynasty building is all about affordable control.)
Reason for changes- Well, I exaggerated the extent to which player loyalty affects your team. I still think it is extremely damaging, but I myself stuck to a great first baseman when I had not one, not two, but three top tier first base prospects available to replace him and traded two of them away. One of them is all-star caliber for the Cubs, and the other is the best first baseman in baseball for the Phillies. I'm going to trade him to make room for the third one, who's basically identical to him. It was partially to keep on the dude's super friendly contract, but partially because he was my best hitter for so long and trading him was hard. I'll admit it, trading your stars is a tough decision to make.
2. **Trades-** Tying into that, make trades ALL THE TIME. If you want to maintain a top end team, you always need to be improving. A ton of small improvements eventually adds up to a deal as lopsided as say the Red Sox selling Babe Ruth. There will always be players other teams over/undervalue that you can exploit, so don't be afraid to. You should frequently shop your players, and frequently ask for players of interest on other teams (especially prospects). If you don't feel like putting your time into this, I would STRONGLY recommend going around and asking about the top potential prospects by your head scout. Some may come extremely cheap. Don't forget you'll make some bad trades, that's the nature of the game, you'll do that no matter how many trades you make. But if you're careful with your trades, the more the better. **Additionally, try to trade anyone you can before their contracts expire. A QO isn't nearly as valuable as a prospect return, and unless you're barely contending, losing a year or a few of a player shouldn't hurt too much.** **Reason for changes-** I should've included this in the original. It seems intuitive, but apparently isn't as common a strategy as I thought. If you don't like this, then sign players to longer contracts than you like and then trade them getting the value you originally intended and more.
3. **Scouting/Development Budgets-** Put the maximum amount of money into scouting and player development, ESPECIALLY player development. I cannot stress how critical player development is in building a dynasty. And even in non dynasties, you should still do it. Look at it this way. The difference between minimum and maximum player development budgets is the salary of a superstar, so let's say that's what you're giving up

to put in that much money. That high quality farm system will produce superstars at a much higher rate from your high potential prospects than the trash one. A single player is all it takes to make the difference, and you'll get far more than that. For the scouting budget, getting reliable ratings is even more key actually. The difference between minimum and maximum scouting is just an average star. Guess what? Sign the wrong guy to a contract, and you've already blown that, plus you use scouting for every single player. **Since the first version, I have helped many people doing everything right and still struggling. Why? They had a low scouting budget and didn't have an accurate read on players. It's impossible to play well without putting money into scouting. Reason for changes-** Pretty self explanatory here.

4. **Scouting Director-** Hire the best highly favour tools scout you can. **If there is an absolutely amazing scout who is neutral or favour tools, that is a better option than a merely good highly favour tools scout, however.** Your scout is actually the most important personnel you have, although I will put suggestions for each position. The highly favour tools works very well with an expensive farm system, as he is better at identifying ceilings for players, and your farm can help them reach them. The scout combined with the farm can give you plenty of superstars in a hurry. Additionally, try to stick with the same scouting director as long as you can once you get a really good one. Each time you change your scouting director, you change which players your organization values, and that can hurt your overall plan. **Reason for changes-** Simply put, accuracy is more important than a different look on players. And a neutral scout comes with some advantages. Highly favour tools scouts are still much better, but the difference isn't too large.
5. **Assistant GM-** ~~Once you get comfortable with the game, the assistant GM is next to worthless. Try hiring someone cheap with minimal experience here with similar views on players as you. If he turns out, great, you get a tiny amount of help cheap. If not, eh, doesn't matter. (Correct me if I'm wrong here, but the assistant GM doesn't seem to do anything you can't do yourself... and better.)~~ **There is no reason to even bother hiring one, as they are a waste of several hundreds of thousands of dollars. A small sum, but nonetheless. If a better fit at scouting director or bench coach comes up with your organization, it is fine to move them to assistant GM to ride out their contracts, but otherwise there is no reason to have an assistant GM. Reason for changes-** The assistant GM does nothing. If anything, he makes you doubt what you're thinking, a terrible thing to have. Hiring anyone to assistant GM is a waste of money, at best.
6. **Bench Coach/Manager-** Your managers at every level should favour development strongly. This goes hand in hand with the idea of high end player development. The only managers in your system that matter to any degree whatsoever are MLB, AAA, and AA. ~~You usually, but not always, want the best guy available for bench coach/manager (depending on game mode) for MLB, as they can have a slight effect on games won. For AAA, you usually want an okay guy with some experience but a chance to be better. For AA, it barely matters, but find someone with very little experience but good so far. (Reputation is a combination of skill and experience, and most "terrible" coaches are~~

~~only rated poorly for lack of experience, but you still want proven guys for MLB.)~~ **At the MLB level, make sure you have a bench coach who is fine at relationships and helpful in development. At every MiLB level, make sure to grab the guy with the best development influence available, totally ignoring their reputation. Hiring coaches is actually pretty simple, thanks to the filters available. Reason for changes- Simply put, I imported my game to OOTP 21. With the new filters, it's much faster and easier to find a coach that fits your organization's needs. The development marker is extremely useful for finding the best coaches.**

7. **Hitting Coach-** ~~For your MLB hitting coach, hire the best guy you can find. The skill hitting coaches specialize in doesn't matter too much, just get the best dude available.~~ For every level, including MLB if possible, hire hitting coaches that prefer to work with young players. For the minors, this is because any legit prospects you have will be... young... obviously... and will therefore benefit from a guy who prefers to work with young guys. Once again, however, pay attention to the development influence marker. And it is important to find a hitting coach with a style that fits your team if possible. For example, if your team is loaded with power guys, get a power coach if possible without harming overall development. ~~Trust me when I say it's worth going through every coach's profile to find the ones that will help your prospects the most. For the MLB, this is because most of your core will probably always be young, but it matters less at the highest level since there will be more balance in your meaningful talent. For all of your minor league hitting coaches, hire those inexperienced guys who work well with young players. You'll soon see their reputation balloon to that of major league guys.~~ **Reason for changes-** Once again, I switched to 21. Getting the right coach is much easier.
8. **Pitching Coach-** This is where it gets quite complex. You can do pitching coaches the same way as hitting coaches, but there is a whole extra layer of strategy here. While hitting coaches specialize in improving specific skills, pitching coaches specialize in improving specific types of pitchers. For example, a power pitcher coach improve the power pitcher type better all around, rather than just favouring pitch quality and velocity. So, you can hire the same pitcher preference type to every minor league level and then acquire as many of that type of pitcher as you possibly can. Top prospects who gets continued exposure to the ideal coaches for them tend to become superstars in a hurry. If you want, you can also hire that pitching coach type for your MLB level and stick almost exclusively with that type of pitcher in free agent signings as well. **Reason for changes-** Nothing new here. This is the exact same as it was. Even switching to 21 the tactics are essentially the same.
9. **NEW- Team Trainer-** Getting a good trainer is critical to maintaining your team. No matter how much depth you have, a poor trainer can chew through it all. Arm injuries are the most important to prevent/heal, followed by leg and then back and then other. Fatigue recovery is extremely important, and anyone with less than a "Great" is a no go as trainer. The less depth your organization has, or the more reliant on its stars, the more it needs an excellent trainer. **Reason for adding-** I thought the trainer thing would be intuitive, but it should be added anyways because it is so critical to have the right trainer.

10. **Personnel Contracts-** In almost every case, you want to hire your personnel to 5 year-contracts as cheap as you possibly can. This allows you to save a fair amount of money on signings and stick with the same guy for an extended period (which is beneficial.) While you should almost always keep your major league personnel around as long as possible, you almost never want to give extensions to your minor league personnel. This is because they will have either become too expensive to retain at the minor league level, or because they really weren't that good and it's better to move on to someone else. Now, I did say almost every case. ~~In the case of MLB pitching coaches, hitting coaches, and scouting directors, you want someone with a "Great" or better reputation. If you can't get someone that good, hire the best guys available to 1 year deals until someone becomes available with a "Great" or better reputation, they will act as the best possible alternative until you get your guy.~~ **In the case of MLB coaches, you want to make sure you get the right guy. In other words, someone with high development, or in your scout/trainer's case, someone who can do really well. If there isn't anyone really good, get the best possible person on a 1-2 year contract and hire the ideal guy as soon as you can.** **Reason for changes-** Reputation means nothing with the improved coaching ratings in 21. No reason to include it at all.
11. **Actually Building Your Team-** I know reading through the personnel stuff was boring (for those of you who actually did it) but it really does make a huge difference. Now onto the fun stuff. Firstly, you may hate to hear this, you almost always need to tear down your team, immediately. If you aren't making major moves as soon as you start a game, you're not doing it right. Your OOTP organizational plan is very different than the real life plan of the real life GM, always. Additionally, in order to get a strong footing from the beginning, I strongly recommend that you go into a rebuild to start your dynasty. Trade away a ton of your talent at the MLB level and stockpile high potential prospects. Once you stockpile good young talent, you can usually maintain it forever, and tearing your team down is a great way to get it. Notice that trading away your top talent does not mean sucking. My worst record in my total teardown with a terrible OOTP team was year 1 with 79-83. The first 3 years, I was in full rebuild mode, and I MADE THE PLAYOFFS in one year. The next two years I started to build my young core, and once again, made the playoffs one of those years. **Make sure you have a plan first. You need to trade away basically all your MLB assets and make sure you get prospects that fit your build. Getting the right players is extremely important.** **Reason for changes-** I didn't feel like I stressed enough how important it is to get your plan immediately. You're switching from an MLB team to an OOTP team, and yes, those do have differences.
12. **Staying Decent During Rebuilds-** If you have a patient owner, it might just be a better idea to totally tank your team to pile up high end draft picks, **prospects, and young players (towards the end)** if you're doing a rebuild. However, if your owner is on you, or you just don't want to totally suck, you can sacrifice some talent to remain decent. Firstly, be extremely active in the Rule 5 draft. Pick the high potential players with decent current ratings to be long term tools while also helping your team immediately. Trade for young, undervalued, talented MLB players. In this game, I traded for Ronald Guzman and Anthony Santander and both became all-stars and long term building blocks with

me. Find those guys for you. **They can either be hitting their peak as you begin to compete, or you can flip them for more pieces as you go. Reason for changes-** Just adding more depth and explanation here.

13. **Inefficiencies in the Market-** ~~OOTP doesn't have many, but there are gaping holes. The very biggest one is international free agents, particularly high profile ones. Firstly, they will sign for significantly less than their state side equivalents. While there is more risk associated with them, the pay cut they take is crazy. You'll see stars sign for average money, and superstars sign for star money. Additionally, they are guaranteed to come without the dreaded QO tied to them. This means you won't have to drop a meaningful draft pick to get high end talent like you do for stateside guys. You should always, always, ALWAYS sign high profile international free agents. Even if they are blocked, another thing you can do is immediately trade them for prospects, sometimes super high profile ones. I signed a 5 star 22 year old shortstop for 25 million a year and flipped him immediately after signing to Tampa Bay for Wander Franco, Jelfry Marte, and Brendan McKay, retaining no money. Another inefficiency is the extreme reliance on OSA and poor scouts/budget splits by other teams. You can easily discover undervalued players with your head scout and turn them into superstars. I have a guy who's basically Babe Ruth. I got from the... heh... Red Sox for virtually nothing. As in normal baseball, there are inefficiencies all over. They will often lie in the trade tendencies of other GMs. A GM who doesn't favour prospects might be willing to sell his top-end ones for a piece to compete right now. Conversely, a GM who overfavours prospects might sell on a win-now piece too low, giving you a boost if you need it in a fringe competitive year. Ultimately, checking in on what a certain trade would cost you occasionally is rewarding, and diligence is the best way to find deals. Reason for changes-~~ Firstly, international free agents are a good source of talent, but turns out that in OOTP they aren't as much a bargain anymore. Additionally, not everyone plays with international free agents on, and it seems wacky to include them and not other leagues here just because I was too lazy to click a few buttons on this one particular save. Both will be included later. Finally, why on Earth did I forget to include TRADES? Or at least not give them enough attention. All in all, this point was the only one I had argued against and I totally agree, so I totally revamped it.
14. **Draft and International Free Agent Signings-** You always want to make sure you put the maximum amount of money into international free agent signings, and you want to have enough money in the draft to sign players at slot, plus a little more. Target high potential players with solid work ethic whenever possible. If you're taking older players, make sure their current overalls have developed accordingly for their age (or close to it at least). For the draft, in the lower rounds, target personality above all else. A bum with 2 star potential is a high probability bust, but a hard worker with the same potential could be a riser. For the international free agent signings, target individual super high talent guys over several lower talent guys. However, if two guys are similar but one would take your entire budget to sign, while the other would take half, sign the guy for half and get other players. **Note that EVERY SINGLE PROSPECTIVE PLAYER you add will be extremely risky and everyone is a potential bust. Don't be upset if you have 5**

consecutive first round picks totally flare out. It happens. Here is the descending risk- college draftees, high school draftees, older international signees, younger international signees. However, if a player is underdeveloped for their age, the scale flips. A well developed young international signee is significantly less risky than an underdeveloped college draftee. All things being equal, older players are better as high potential players. (as long as their overalls support them). For younger players, however, you WANT that risk with low potential players. The increased chance of busting also means an increased chance of flowering into a star. While that risk doesn't make sense with a player who's already super high end, there's no reason NOT to take it with lower end players. That's why you target young, high work ethic players in the draft. Reason for changes- Well... I screwed up forgetting about how college players are better... in the early first round picks. The reason for that is because I haven't had an early first round pick in... a long time. Someone I was helping did though, which jogged my memory. The rest is just explanation.

15. **Rule 5 Draft-** First and foremost, make sure you can protect any and all meaningful players eligible for the draft. **If you are unable to protect everyone, lower overall players (1.5 or lower for most players, 1 overall for catchers and decent potential starting pitchers) are usually fine left unprotected, so long as their potential is 3 or lower (the higher the potential, the lower the overall needs to be for them to be safe).** If leaving the safer guys unprotected still doesn't free enough spots, trade away the lowest potential players on your roster, starting with bad personality guys and relief pitchers (unless you're incredibly thin their). Then, trade any excess players at incredibly deep positions. Once you have all important players protected, ~~Then,~~ begin the draft. If you have spots open on your 40 man roster, take as many high potential players as you can. If you don't, but there is someone in the draft better than someone you have, trade the person you have away and claim the other guy. **Important to note, if your 40 man roster is full and you're trading players away to clear out spots, target prospects who are not on the 40 man roster and do not have rule 5 eligibility as your sole return from these trades. If there is a 40 man player too good to pass on, remember that you need to clear out another roster spot for him.** ~~Notice that young guys with high potential but low overalls are highly unlikely to be claimed as they will suffer at the major league level, so you can leave them unprotected in years where you have too many guys eligible to protect.~~ **Reason for changes-** Cleared up the flow of the paragraph and added an important warning in the trades.
16. **AI Trades Offers-** As I'm sure you all know, AI trades are always completely and utterly awful. HOWEVER, they do tell you who other teams are interested in, and if they are extremely into someone you don't love to much, discuss the trade and get as much as you can, then see if it's enough. Conversely, if they offer someone meaningful in any way for anyone less than a generational talent, this is highly unusual and they may be extremely undervalued by their team. Discuss the trade, take your guy out of it, and then see what you can do to complete it. If it's not too much, then you've found yourself a

bargain. **However, it is very, VERY rare to actually manage something like this. If you check every single trade, you might complete 1 or 2 good trades a year that you probably would've got something similar to anyways. If you don't want to check the AI trade offers, disable them or pay them no mind and it doesn't hurt you too much. Reason for changes-** After discovering this trick, I rode it out for several years and discovered myself by and large making trades similar to things I already would've done anyways. This helps a tiny bit, but not enough to come without an asterisk next to it.

17. **Squeezing Every Ounce Out of Trades-** In a trade offer, it never hurts to ask for more. You can always go back to the previous offer and it will still be accepted. So you should always ask for more players of interest on top of your current trade and see if you can get them. Additionally, this is a nice little trick I have, once you have a basically finished deal, you can start getting money back. Firstly, see if the other team has any long term deals included in the trade. If so, see how much you can get them to retain while still accepting the contract. Then, get them to throw in as much spending money as you can. This is a nice way to get extra cash, and it really adds up. I've had seasons with more than \$50 million spending money, just by having it thrown in at the end of a deal like this. **Notice, however, that other teams do not value spending money highly. I'd assume it's so that you can't do this and then at the end of the year buy a few superprospects. Do not offer other teams spending cash unless they can't afford the trade in their budget otherwise. Reason for changes-** A warning to get but not to give. Other teams don't value it, so don't waste it on them.
18. **Long Term Contracts in Trades-** Financial flexibility is *extremely* important in dynasty building. As such, you should never retain any amount of a long term contract unless you absolutely have to. And if you absolutely have to, then retain as little as possible. (The only time you should retain any is dumping an overpriced veteran's long term deal, or obtaining an insanely high talent player in an otherwise amazing deal.) Additionally, you should get your trade partners to retain as much of their player's long term contracts involved in a trade as you can. **Remember that retained money cannot be moved, so retaining anything longer than a 1-year contract hurts you long term, guaranteed. Reason for changes-** Another explanation on contract retention.
19. **Spare Money-** If you ever have spare money at the start of the season, you need to use it. Having extra money will make your owner a little happy, but not too much and if you have more than \$10 million extra dollars you are basically wasting it. So, how do you prevent this? My favourite way is handing out front-heavy deals to players. You can get high talent players for real cheap after year one, and in year one that extra salary doesn't hurt you. Additionally, you can trade for massive contracts with one year left, taking on a large amount of it in exchange for buying cheap on talent. If you are at the trade deadline with tons of money to spare, you should absolutely do this. There is literally nothing else to spend your money on at this point and the any talent is better than no talent. **Additionally, where possible, look ahead to future years and structure contracts so that they have singular, heavy deals in years where you have tons of free money to lower the strain on other years. Reason for changes-** Foresight is

really important. Prevents you getting into this position in the first place and frees up money when you need it more.

20. **Handling Minor League Call Ups**- Firstly, offer a long-term contract to all your top prospects as you call them up. This is the cheapest they are going to be for a long time, and especially for superstar talent guys, those years of control where you know how much you are paying are essential for dynasty building. When you bring a guy up, you need to make sure he gets plenty of at bats or innings, or his development could be stunted. So you should either bring him in as a starter, or give him a year in a utility role where he gets a good number of starts and make him a starter the next year. For me, I have exactly 3 utility players at a given time. Backup catcher, utility infielder, utility outfielder. The infielder and outfielder get 60+ starts every year, and plenty of pinch hit ABs too. **Never have so many backups that it takes playing time away from your important prospects. The only time you should have a non-prospect backup is if it's a cheap leadership player bringing essential stability to a sharding dugout. Getting your top prospects ABs is essential. Reason for changes**- Just a strategy to keep your guys in the lineup enough.
21. **Strategy**- I am a sabermetrician to my core. If I were GM of a real baseball team, I would build it accordingly, and if I were a manager, I would run it accordingly. However, OOTP rewards balance. You should let your fast, highly talented base stealers loose on the basepaths. You shouldn't aggressively run the bases with slow guys. And so on. Basically, you should always set individual player strategy. If you care that is. It doesn't make too much of a difference, but you can probably add 3-4 WAR with effectively decision making. **Reason for changes**- Until a major change comes to the game, strategy should remain basically the same.
22. **Managing Owner Tasks, Fan Interest, Clubhouse Morale, Etc.**- These things really don't matter too much, and you shouldn't have to pay much attention to them. If you're winning games, your owner will stay content and your fans will stay interested. You should try to complete owner tasks, but do not, EVER go out of your way to do them, especially if they require major organizational changes or commitments to complete (i.e. acquire an MVP or Cy Young winner, improve certain stat that is non-critical to your team's success, improve draft record, etc.) Unless you are at serious risk of being fired, owner goals are of relatively low importance. ~~If fan interest is dangerously low, try signing super popular veterans to minor league deals. But these usually do not require much attention.~~ **Fan interest is super important to getting more money. Cutting players mid-year doesn't lower your fan interest, so if you have a super popular declining veteran on a deal, you can cut them whenever to save money. Additionally, when you cut a player, you can pay their whole salary at once, allowing you to save money for the future. Signing super popular veterans who aren't good to cheap, one year deals is a great way to raise fan interest. Carry them on your roster until the season starts, then cut them. Trading for popular declining veterans mid-year on large contracts and getting prospects too helps you raise fan interest and build talent. This is a great strategy in years where you have tons of money. Cut them immediately and you won't be hurt. Maintaining fan**

interest at high levels not only increases your budget now, but could increase interest or market size, raising budget even more. You don't need to worry much at all about clubhouse morale. If you've built a good team, winning raises morale on its own. If you desperately need a captain, you can sign either a cheap reliever or bench player to fill the position. **One player should be all you need on even just a halfway decent team. Reason for changes-** I thought including morale would be a good idea. Additionally, I've done a 180 on my fan interest views. It's not too tough to raise them and it's great for your long term.

23. **Pitching-** ~~This will be the longest of these, but it is also the last.~~ Very important before starting- if a pitcher is incredibly terrible in one category, he is useless immediately. It doesn't matter how good he is in the other two, he just will not be able to get by (unless it's stuff, in which case, very, VERY rarely a pitcher can survive with top end movement and control). ~~Firstly, bullpens should be build almost entirely out of prior starting pitching prospect who couldn't develop a quality third pitch (or any third pitch).~~ Your bullpen should be littered with high stamina guys who have two elite pitches and good command and control. If you could get through a full playoff with just your bullpen, then you have a truly elite bullpen. I start with this because this elite bullpen build isn't just here to play off a strong rotation. If you have a bullpen this good, you don't need a strong rotation to win games, and you can run out incredibly low stamina starters (relatively, they still need 40+) without having to worry. ~~In this bullpen setup, you should have 2 long relievers, a "closer" (he probably won't get more than 25 saves actually), and stoppers instead of setup men. You should have your two highest stamina high end pitchers set to high leverage as their secondary role. Your closer should be your lowest stamina high end pitcher. He won't actually pitch very often, so he doesn't need to be the best.~~ **You should start your bullpen with 2 stoppers. They need to both have at least 40 stamina, and the more the better, especially for the higher end guys. Your better stopper should be set to eighth or later and lead usage option, while your other stopper should be set to 7th inning. The rest of your primary bullpen should be middle relievers, with a long relief secondary option if they have high stamina, but if you have a guy with more than 2 not great pitches, he's a long reliever.** Your stoppers will soak up innings like a sponge, stopping hitters dead in their tracks. You may have some stoppers throw over 100 innings and gain more WAR than some of your starters. This is the mark of a talented bullpen. Now, on to the rotation. Since you have this bullpen, stamina is of little consequence. ~~If your rotation is balanced, you can just run a normal order rotation. However, if your rotation is top heavy, it is best to run a highest rested. If you do run a highest rested rotation, your top guy should have good stamina and your number 2 guys should have decent stamina.~~ **You should run an "always start highest rested", 5 man rotation, unless you have 5 near identical starters. You don't really need to do anything too special with your rotation. When you're bringing up prospects, if they look ready to start, plug them right into the rotation. If they aren't ready or your rotation is currently full, put them in as long relievers (although I'd strongly recommend leaving them in AAA until they're 25 or 26 if one of those happens).** Another important thing- although it may not really show

up in a pitcher's ratings, more pitches makes a huge difference. It gives them more tools in certain situations, and allows them to throw deeper into starts more effectively, among other things. With the exception of the Knuckleball, no single pitch can carry a starter's arsenal. They need at least 3 good ones as a starter, ideally with at least 1 more pitch, and 2 as a reliever. ~~And with that, I finish my major points.~~ **Reason for changes-** I've totally reworked my bullpen. I dropped the closer altogether because he basically gets 20-30 low leverage innings if your stoppers are worth their salt, and a "use more often" middle reliever gets 40-60 reasonably high leverage innings so it makes more sense to use your closer-like guy in that role (if you have him). In terms of your middle/long relief guys, the rest of your bullpen setup doesn't really matter. Your starters likely pitch 5-6 innings on average, which gets you to your top middle reliever and then your 2 stoppers (if it's a high leverage game at that point), so other than those 3 guys no one really gets much leverage work and don't pitch more than 30-40 innings. It's important to have a solid bullpen, of course, in case of injury and to prevent the guys from making a blowout in your favour a high leverage game, but the setup doesn't matter.

24. **NEW- Handling Contracts-** I will start this with a very simple statement. You should be signing very few free agents. It doesn't matter if there's a superstar out there if the guy you have at his position just won a silver slugger. The criteria you should use to sign a high profile free agent are the following- 1. He plays or can play a position where I have not just no one good but a genuine hole. He's worth not just his WAR to me but then a bit more. 2. There is no definitive long term answer at his position or a position he can play. The best prospect is maybe an above average regular, and the positional depth isn't great. 3. There is money to spare, short and long term. The financial books are clear enough to handle him. 4. He isn't too old and doesn't want too many years. If you're signing a 32 year-old to a 10-year deal and he starts to decline, you've burnt your money. 5. He's actually asking for a reasonable price. If a guy who's 4 stars overall wants 50 million, don't sign him. 6. If he starts to turn downhill and/or you find a long term replacement for him who's either cheaper or better, you can trade him. In other words, make sure he won't decline and has a reasonable contract, that preferably gets cheaper as he gets older. Now, there are of course exceptions. If a generational player shows up and only wants 15 million or something for a long term deal, and is young, then grab him. But don't throw your money away. If you follow this guide, you should almost always have a competent player at every position through your farm system. Don't forget high end free agents often come with a QO attached, and while draft picks aren't overly valuable, it's still not something you want to throw away. Additionally, if you hand out an expensive contract and the player falls off the cliff, you could have a Miguel Cabrera or Chris Davis situation, and no one wants that. So, who do you sign to a contract? Well, if your team chemistry is having issues, it's fine to hire a captain personality backup catcher, low end reliever, or utility player to a cheap, usually and preferably 1-year deal to help out. It's also good to do the thing I suggested earlier about signing popular players. But a majority of the contracts you'll hand out should be to your prospects. When you call up a good prospect, also as I suggested earlier, you should give them a long term deal. Usually the worst case scenario is you end up trading them

for something small. For top-end prospects, you ESPECIALLY need to lock them up. They will get expensive fast and you can save a ton of money with a long term deal. If you have generational players at every starting position, and have them all on this type of long-term contract, your payroll would only be around what the Yankees real life payroll is. And while that's quite a sum, it's obviously doable if you get your market up enough, and we're talking a whole team of Mike Trout and Jacob deGrom like players. More likely you have 2-3 of those types and a whole bunch of high-end all star players, in which case you have a payroll around 150 million dollars, at its highest, which is affordable once you get your fan interest up a touch. **Reason for adding-** This is essential to success. Being able to have the right contracts is extremely important, and not having dead money puts you a step up.

25. **NEW- Handling Spring Training-** This one really isn't that important, but I thought I'd include it anyways. Running Spring Training in OOTP like in real life makes no sense. You should have only your roster locks and whoever is fighting for a position (i.e. who's development changes in Spring Training could affect their ability to make the roster), and maybe a few top prospects near MLB ready. All in all, without the prospects you should have 25-28 players, and with them only 25-30. Don't overfill your roster. Your guys don't need to ramp up like in real life, and roster fights are significantly different. Additionally, it doesn't affect development too much to not be at Spring Training and you don't need to "get a look" at your guys to start the year. **Reason for adding-** A little tip to save you time and energy.

26. **NEW- Lineup Construction-** Firstly, lineup construction usually accounts for a maximum of 2-5 wins a year, so this doesn't matter too much. And lineups are extremely unique for each team, so it would be impossible for me to give precise details for everything. Generally, however, lineup builds are similar and I can help your with yours. The top 2 guys in your lineup should have the highest OBP. The one with lower slugging/higher speed should bat first. The 2 people with the highest OPS in your lineup who are not your top 2 hitters should be 3rd and 4th, with the higher OBP 3rd and the higher SLG 4th. Your #5 hitter should be highest remaining OPS. Your #6 hitter should be the person with the highest slugging remaining. Now, the rest depends on who's left. If you have a speedy guy as one of the 2 leftovers, he bats 9th, regardless of his other skills (unless he's got no on base ability and some okay power, in which case he hits #7) and the other guy bats 7th. If you don't have a speedster, then of the last two the one with a higher OPS hits 7th and the other hits 8th. For reference, OBP should be based on their contact, discipline, and avoid k's skills, SLG should be based on everything except discipline (but with added emphasis on home run power and slightly more on gap power) and OPS is the two combined. If you have any specific lineup questions, I'd be happy to help. **Reason for adding-** Again, it's only worth 2-5 wins, but that's 2-5 wins. Who doesn't want a free bonus?

27. **NEW- Defense Building-** Generally, planning a defense is tough. If you don't want to go through the pains and sometimes angers (when even a single thing goes wrong) of planning a defense, you don't have to worry about it too much. If you do, here's what you need by position. Firstly, there are two general types of defense- groundball defenses,

and strikeout defenses. I will give suggestions for both. C- Usually the weakest hitting non pitcher on the team, it doesn't make sense to prioritize offense at catcher since usually the ceiling is a #5 hitter, which isn't that valuable. So while catcher defense isn't *too* important, you should still have it. In both types of defense, catcher ability (adding more K's and preventing BBs) is paramount. It will help out your staff tons. With the groundball defense, a strong catcher arm is good to have (more baserunners= more steal attempts), but it's less important on a K's defense. 1B- This is the position where terrible defense is acceptable, and average defense is gold-glove worthy. While you don't need to worry too much about defense here, infield error should be decent for both versions, especially groundball, and infield range is important for groundball too. 2B- For groundball, you want high infield error and really high infield range. You also want pretty high turn double plays. For K's defenses, infield error should be okay and infield range should be high, but turn DP and arm aren't too important. SS- For groundball, everything needs to be really high here except infield arm, which needs to be high. For K's, error needs to be high and range needs to be really high, while arm needs to be decent. 3B- For groundball, error needs to be okay, range needs to be high, and arm needs to be really high. For K's, range needs to be okay and arm needs to be high. OF- I will do specifics for each position, but as a general rule, all OFs need at least okay range. RF- For groundball, arm needs to be high. For K's, range and arm need to be high. CF- For groundball, range needs to be high. For K's, error needs to be high and range needs to be really high. LF- Nothing special for groundball, for K's error needs to be high. While you obviously don't need to follow those guidelines exactly, that is the ideal defense for each. And obviously, for the pitchers, the groundballers need high ground ball rates while for K's the pitchers need good stuff/velocity. (Little side note, but groundball pitchers ideally have decent defense themselves.) **Reason for adding-** A lot of people don't have a plan for their defense. Well, they do now. It's obviously not a priority to build it exactly right, but if you can manage it it's a boost.

28. **NEW- International Players-** Whether you have international leagues or established free agents or both, international players are an integral part of your game. Remember that established free agents are usually cheaper than their stateside equivalents, tend to be younger, and don't come with a QO. In other words, they tend to be better, and are usually worth signing. For leagues, it's worth periodically going through and seeing if there is anyone worth buying, high potential (to become prospects) or high overall (to join your team, usually cheaply). You can get plenty of an advantage through international players. **Reason for adding-** Moved my points from loopholing down to here, plus adding other league advice. The league advice should've been in my first version, so here it is now.