

Basics (TLDR):

The number 1 job of the tank(s) in the group is to keep threat towards the bosses and mobs in a fight. This means that the tank should maintain aggro on the boss, and keep the boss in the location, and facing the direction, that is needed. The other roles of a tank are:

1. To take damage instead of DPS - which is done merely by holding aggro on the boss in most fights.
2. Mitigate their damage taken (DTPS) - this allows them to survive hits that would kill anyone else, and the healers to keep up with the damage dealt by the boss.
3. Hold the aggro of various adds and mobs - though depending on the fight this will either be the second tank's job (off-tank) or a DPS concern.

The 3 tank classes are Shadow/Assassin (Kinetic Combat/Darkness), Vanguard/Powertech (Shield Specialist/Shield Tech), and Guardian/Juggernaut (Defense/Immortal). Every one of these 3 classes have a buff that activates their shield (tanks must always have a shield in their offhand), the KC Shadow uses combat form, the defense guardian Suro form and the SS Vanguard uses ion cell. DPS should never be in a tank form and tanks should never be in a DPS form!

A good idea for ops groups is to take two different tank classes, to get the most benefit from the buffs of the tanks that affect group members. Main and off Tanks need to be aware of the bosses, adds and aware of what is happening to the group and when healers are beginning overworked.

Common mistakes made by new tanks:

1. I see many new tanks open with taunt. You should never do this as that only weakens your main job of keeping threat because once that 7 seconds are up the mob(s) will go attack someone else in the group. Instead, tanks should open with their charge power to close the gap between them and the mobs/boss. If you don't have the power to close the gap yet, then you will have to run up to the enemy.
2. Second mistake that happens more than I want to think about is people using their DCD's (defensive cooldowns) before the fight even begins. Unless you a Shadow using Kinetic Ward or a vanguard activating your shoulder cannon, no dcd should be used before the fight, this also goes for DPS, there is no point for a sentinel to use saberward if they aren't being attacked.

Side Note: There are a few powers that can be used before a fight and still be useful for the fight, one such power is the force bubble that sages can cast on players. You are probably asking "True, what other powers can I use before a fight?" I'll say "If it only lasts a few seconds, only use it when you NEED to!"

3. Third mistake that I see: tanks guarding the healer in PvE content, (only in PVP should the tank always guard the healer). The way the guard works is that if the guarded player is within 10 meters the player will get a buff that lowers threat and damage by a certain amount, as such 90% of the time you will be out of the 10-meter range if it is on a healer. DPS players also gain more threat than healers if they are doing their rotation properly. The priority goes like this
Melee-dps> Range dps> Healer>. Granted go with what the OPS lead requires but Guard almost always goes in that order.

Zaro's note on guards: the range on them only affects damage redirection in PvP. In PvE, no matter the distance between the Guarder and Guardee, the damage reduction and threat reduction apply.

We don't guard healers because they generate threat at a 1:.45 EHPS: Threat ratio, and then that is split among all enemies present. So, healers need to have insane healing to ever pull anything other than fresh adds - which still often only require one good AoE from a tank to pick up.

4. When it comes to using your defensive cooldowns, don't be reluctant to do so. They can do a great deal to help reduce the damage you take

Gearing:

Gearing a tank is more complicated than DPS and Healers, in part because they are less-limited to tank gear.

- Tanks should not equip items that give you alacrity, critical, or accuracy.*
- Always have a full tank set bonus.
- Most augments should be shield and absorb. Overall, the ideal balance is 5 points in shield for every 3 in absorb (Ballpark ~ 1000 more points in shield than absorb), which is a much larger spread than any other class; this is because Sin tanks have bonuses to shield chance, whereas PTs gain massive absorb bonuses/damage reduction.
- While tanks need defense, they don't use any implants/relics/augments that give it - the defense from tank gear is already high enough, especially with PTs passives and DCDs.

- Many tanks that are fully augmented (236 is recommended, but fill empty slots with 228s) will swap their armor mods with Lethality (Lethality B> Lethality A>Lethality) from DPS sets in order to boost power and endurance in exchange for defense.

Side Note: Currently, if looking for a purely “tanky” build, Lethal B’s are substantially better than unlettered-Lethals; a 246 Lethal B provides noticeably more endurance than a 258 unlettered-Lethal. However, unlettered-Lethals do provide more Mastery and Power, so choosing between an unlettered-Lethal 258 and Lethal B 246 is up to preference. 258 Lethal Bs do exist but are exceedingly difficult to obtain.

- As for relics, go with shield and absorb relics as a default. If you are well geared, some tanks swap in DPS relics for many fights and defense relics for specific ones (e.g. Nefra).

Side Note: An increase in defense rating from 2k to 3k provides a... roughly 4% greater chance to defend a hit, and because of that tanks switch them to lethality just to boost group DPS a bit (can be vital in NiM OPS, as more damage==more threat).

- Always keep medpacs and blue adrenals on hand, but often a red stim can be used instead of a blue for the extra DPS.

Side note: It’s a matter of preference. Red give mastery and power, but sometimes the extra endurance from a blue stim can be a lifesaver. The blue adrenal is one of your few defensives, so always keep it on hand. However, I do know some tanks who open with a red adrenal to increase their initial threat generation.

Taunts

One of the most noticeable differences in an experienced, skilled tank and one that isn’t as skilled is how you use your taunts. Don’t use your taunt in your opener! Your opening rotation is about building aggro. Taunts force the boss to target you for 6 seconds, but it won’t matter if you don’t build threat quickly to maintain it. Under normal circumstances, you will want to taunt around 10-15 seconds into the pull once your heavy threat abilities are on cooldown.

One of the most common things I hear from new or inexperienced tanks is that it’s the DPS’s fault when they lose aggro. You need to get out of this mindset. As a tank, your **job** is to hold aggro. With a Guardian, you have so many tools in your toolbelt if you know how to use them you will maintain aggro (or pull it back the moment the mob turns on someone else).

Remember to taunt **whenever** you lose aggro. This is why it is critical that you have Target of Target enabled as a tank - it allows you to see when the boss swaps to someone else.

Refer to the following guides for class-specific details:

Guardian/Jugg:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1C6euBIxHWiqx_DuGReu8bHhcqB7Uky2Y4eZ6vC_luC/M/edit?usp=sharing

Vanguard/Powertech:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1POh_5XnG5uoybCfx1OCOq7Jl8atEFJ8hFZM7tI3c2FO/edit?usp=sharing

Kinetic Combat/Virulence: (Jump to the appropriate section)

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1WEp40MTkVe788gS-mxkdgYc-X7uM7kn6mIIGVs39JYY/edit?usp=sharing>