



Q&A

Q & A

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About the Hero Factory & Makuhero City

Q: What is the Hero Factory?

A: The Hero Factory is a fin-shaped, high-tech facility that creates robotic Heroes who are sent out on Missions to various planets.

Q: Where is it located?

A: The Hero Factory is located on a planetoid in an unnamed gaseous nebula, somewhere in another galaxy.

Q: Is the single building the only part of Hero Factory?

A: The distinctive fin towers high above the planetoid, but the foundation is placed in a lake and extends deep into the bedrock.

Q: What surrounds the Hero Factory?

A: "Makuhero City" – a huge metropolis – has grown up around the large Hero Factory facility.

Q: What type of businesses are in Makuhero City?

A: The city is the equivalent of a modern human city, and contains businesses and activities that are readily recognizable: restaurants, dry cleaners, taxi cabs, video game arcades, libraries, car dealerships, office plazas, and so on.

Q: What tech level is Makuhero City?

A: The city resembles a present day Manhattan mixed with Dubai giving it a kind of 'old school modernity look' mixed with high tech (if you can think it, we can build it).

Q: How many people work at the Factory?

A: Thousands of robots work at the factory. There are hundreds of Heroes in various stages of training or being refitted at any given time.

Q: How did the Hero Factory come into being?

A: The reclusive Mr. Makuhero founded the Hero Factory eons ago, based around his revolutionary discoveries of supercharging Hero Quaza Cores. Its fame and successes have grown until the mere shape of the factory is synonymous with justice.

Q: How long ago was the Hero Factory created?

Q: Eons ago. The Hero Factory came to the planet from another galaxy and has operated through millennia (in the beginning, of course, as a much smaller enterprise.)



About the Hero Factory & Makuhero City

Q: Who runs Hero Factory?

A: The founder, Mr. Makuhero, holds ultimate authority. He has many section chiefs, who manage various portions of the huge operation.

Q: Who is Mr. Makuhero?

A: Mr. Makuhero is a descendant from the ancient robotic people known as the shadow-bots living underground on a distant planet. After having ascended into the light and having met with another people, the light-bots, he was given a core made out of Quaza, a material that he himself brought from the deep. This took place Millennia ago and marked the beginning of the Hero Factory. Eventually, the factory was built into an interplanetary vessel that left the planet. It settled on a planetoid where Makuhero City slowly started forming around the factory. Nearly thousand years later, Mr. Makuhero (having gained unsurpassed longevity from the combination of a shadow-bot body and a light-bot produced hero core) is in charge of the hero factory striving to restore peace to the world.

Q: What is Mr. Makuhero's ultimate goal and purpose of being?

A: To make things absolutely clear: Mr. Makuhero is NOT in it for the money. His scope is of a greater, collective nature.

He is an ancient being that understands the power of the Quaza. Therefore, his biggest fear is that the Quaza is retrieved by a villain to be used for personal gain. In order to prevent this from happening, Mr. Makuhero seeks to divide the Quaza into tiny pieces (the hero cores.) In the big perspective, the heroes therefore act as protectors on two levels. First, they protect fellow beings from harm all over the galaxies. But just as important, they protect their individual piece of Quaza from being captured.

In short, you could say that Mr. Makuhero's vision is to democratize power (the Quaza) instead of – as a tyrant would do – to pool it in one place and use it for personal gain.

Q: How do potential customers contact the Hero Factory?

A: The Hero Factory is actively engaged in marketing its services on all known planets and inhabited areas of the galaxy. Customers can use their local phone system; send email; visit the local equivalent of a web site; or even use smoke signals.

Q: Does the Hero Factory have "traditional" advertising and sales reps on different planets?

A: Yes, sometimes in the form of retired Heroes, other times as more covert word-of-mouth, on-the-street type of characters.

Q: Who's the most famous Hero ever?

A: Arguably the most famous Hero is Preston Stormer, whose nerves of steel and willingness to put himself between civilians and danger, escalated him to become leader of Team Alpha in record time.



About the Hero Factory & Makuhero City

Q: How many planets or locations can the Hero Factory reach?

A: Dozens. Hundreds. Thousands. There are hundreds of inhabited planets of all different types and social structures, and uncounted thousands of other inhabited places tucked away in niches throughout the galaxy. The Hero Factory has access to every single one.

Q: Are there any competitors to the Hero Factory?

A: The Hero Factory is unique and no other 'agency' like this exists.

Q: Is the Hero Factory the only law enforcement agency in the universe?

A: Not even close. Every major planet has its own police, army, navy, private security outfits, and so on, depending on their technology level. They take care of the run-of-the-mill problems, but often don't have the strength or resources that the Hero Factory boasts.

Q: Is there always a "villain" to fight on a Mission?

A: No. There are all sorts of reasons to call in a Hero Team. Rescues and assistance during natural disasters like volcanoes, earthquakes, or flooding; violent political revolution; rescuing accident victims; and of course, defeating a "bad guy".

Q: How is it decided to create new Heroes?

A: The decision is based on detailed analyses and forecasts of the galactic situation, but ultimately the call is Mr. Makuhero's. However, as his goal is to 'democratize' the Quaza, he is interested in getting as many heroes out there as possible.

Q: Is there a set number of Heroes or Hero Teams at any given time?

A: The number of Heroes is related to the amount of resources available, the need for Hero Teams at any given time, whether teams are injured or otherwise incapacitated, etc.

Q: How do clients pay for the Hero Teams they commission?

A: The missions are performed free of charge. Making a difference is payment enough for Mr. Makuhero.

Q: Where do the heroes' and the factory workers' salaries come from?

A: The heroes as well as the factory workers are paid from the surplus that the HF merchandise industry produces.



About the Heroes

Q: What makes a Hero different from anyone else?

A: They are custom-built at the Hero Factory to be tough and agile. Each fully-trained Hero has a Quaza Hero Core that has been supercharged. It imbues the Hero with extraordinary strength and clarity of purpose.

Q: How are Heroes organized?

A: Heroes typically go on missions as a Team. The most common number of Heroes on a Team is three, but there are some two-person Teams, some four-person Teams, and even a few six-person Teams. For a very few missions, single Heroes are dispatched when resources are tight and the risk is acceptable.

Q: Are there different classes of Hero?

A: Each Hero has a unique specialty and strength. Some are problem-solvers, some prefer to bust a door down and deal with problems in a physical manner. In a given Hero Team, there will always be a Team Leader who has absolute authority while in the field. Finally, there are Rookies, who are Heroes-In-Training and don't yet have a supercharged Hero Core. Rookies must pass stringent tests to graduate to a full-fledged Hero.

Q: What goes into making a Hero?

A: Skeletal bodies are constructed in the Factory, and individual ultra-strong cladding is added that supports different skills and equipment. These Rookies are then put through a rigorous training regimen until they are deemed ready for supercharging.

Q: How does a Hero (or regular robot) acquire their personality?

A: This is like asking: How does Lightning McQueen or WALL-E acquire their personality? Or wanting to know how the animals of the fables master human speech. The robots are human being analogies placed in a fantastic setting.

Q: How long are Rookie Heroes trained before becoming full-fledged Heroes?

A: According to normal procedures it takes three consecutive and successful missions carried out in the Training Environments (spheres) before a rookie has his core supercharged. In times of crisis, however, you might imagine a rookie being supercharged after very preliminary training to get him in the field as fast as possible.

Q: Do Rookies ever "wash out" of training?

A: Nope. Every rookie is destined to be a hero. Or as the Hero Factory credo goes: We build heroes! Compare a hero to a box of LEGO, every box of bricks produced is destined to become a 'hero' in a boy's room somewhere. Some get to live many fantastic adventures while others collect dust. But they are all destined to become heroes.



About the Heroes

Q: What's the final stage of a Rookie becoming a Hero?

A: A Rookie is brought into the Hero Factory's heavily guarded Supercharging Facility and exposed to massive energy. Their Hero Core becomes supercharged, and their formerly grey metallic bodies are imbued with a distinctive color. The color indicates some of the new Hero's personality: red for fiery tempers, white for icy cool intellects, and so on.

Q: Are Heroes specialized for each Mission?

A: Yes. Heroes have a core set of skills and equipment always available, but they do prepare for each individual Mission. Depending on the Mission, they might just get a briefing and some new gadgets, or they could undergo a full refit with everything stripped down to their skeleton and built back up. Special gear includes hostile environment protection; heavy armour for combat; high-tech add-ons for stealth Missions; social camouflage to diminish their Heroic aspects; or special weapons or tools deemed necessary to fulfill the given Mission.

Q: Do Heroes retain their basic skills and personalities between Missions and refits?

A: Yes. Although refits and gadgets enhance their personalities, each Hero remains basically him- or herself from one Mission to the next.

Q: How long do Heroes live?

A: Even though not being organic by our definition of the word, robots like humans abide to the laws of aging. Their skeletons and structure grow and age like the bodies of humans. Their skin wrinkle, the circuits get blocked, their cores and their brains functions slow down. Theoretically of course, you could change everything, but then again, you could also theoretically change quite a few parts of a human being and they would still age and eventually die.

Q: How long do Heroes continue to go on Missions?

A: For as long as they can physically, and can handle it mentally. Some Heroes grow to love the feeling of saving people, others become disheartened at the amount of nastiness in the universe and prefer to act in support roles like training.

Q: Do Heroes ever retire?

A: A few do, but most prefer to continue for as long as they are able. But like humans, robots age. At a certain point, the heroes are no longer fit to carry out missions. They then receive a pension and are decommissioned.



About the Heroes

Q: What happens to Heroes who no longer go on Missions?

A: Most stay with the Hero Factory in support roles: training, research, operations, or marketing are some of the more popular roles for retired Heroes. Retiring honorably is looked upon with respect. A few decide to leave the Hero Factory altogether, and they are given a modest pension.

Another popular choice for decommissioned heroes is to join the entertainment industry either as actors, stuntmen, anchormen etc. others go into sports or even politics.

Q: What is a Hero Core?

A: The Hero Core is the heart of each Hero. All robots have a common core, which contains the intangible essence of who they are. Hero Cores consists of metal and microchips like the cores of common robots, but in addition they have been reinforced by Quaza cut from the chunk of Quaza rock stored in a top security vault inside the Hero Factory. It is the Quaza that enables the cores to withstand the tremendous outlet of energy connected with the Supercharging process.

Q: What is Supercharging?

A: Supercharging is a process that brings forth the true essence of a hero. It is where heroes discover who they truly are. Floating in a specialized tank, a hero's core is channeled with tremendous energy. This discloses what he holds inside and transforms him into a real hero. The supercharging marks the final step from rookie to hero.

Q: What happens when a Hero Core is ruptured?

A: If a hero's core is ruptured he would die (just like a common robot would die if its core was ruptured.) In fact a hero can be killed like everybody else – though this takes a serious beating. Normally, he can be reassembled and brought back into action.

Q: Does a Hero Core provide super powers?

A: Not in the classic comic book sense. The Hero Core does allow a Hero to perform great feats, but it's an enhancement of their own abilities, not a new set of abilities. Gadgets and retrofits go the rest of the way to making Heroes super-special.

Q: How does a Hero get his/her color?

A: During the final stages of being supercharged, the metal of the Hero's body takes on a hue that matches the Hero's personality.

Q: Does each Hero have a face? Or just a helmet?

A: By definition, a helmet is something you wear. Just as human beings, robots (heroes and common robots alike) are 'born' with faces with which they are able to express emotions. And just like human beings they sometimes wear helmets if the situation demands it.



About the Heroes

Q: Can Heroes communicate electronically (without voice or sound)? Do they need radios like humans would?

A: Heroes (and common robots) have the same physical restrictions as humans – they need gadgets like radios to communicate long-distance. Heroes (and common robots) are very much like humans, but in a metallic body.

Q: How often does a Hero get upgraded?

A: They receive new gadgets for each Mission. More rarely, they receive permanent skeletal or infrastructure upgrades. The latter is like upgrading from XP to Vista, and is about as painful.

Q: What do Heroes do between Missions? Where do they live? Do they “turn off” or do something else?

A: Mostly they train, either for the next Mission, or as general fitness or they go on sleep mode to prevent their systems from overheating or short circuiting. They have quarters in the Hero Factory where they rest and get together socially. Some few have apartments or houses in Makuhero City. Like cops, they tend to hang out together when off duty, and not mingle with “civilians”.

Q: Can each robot or Hero have a “backup” copy somewhere, or are they each unique?

A: Each is unique. In extreme circumstances, a Hero Core can be completely removed from a robotic body and placed into a new body, and the personality usually survives the transfer. But the essence of each Hero (or common robot) cannot be copied or backed up outside of the Hero Core. Also, duplication of a core is strictly regulated and is only allowed in limited circumstances.



About the Missions

Q: What is standard mission procedure?

A: The goal of the Hero Factory is to solve problems leaving as little trace as possible, and if feasible helping threatened individuals help themselves (i.e. effectively transferring the slogan 'We build Heroes' to the ones they are out to protect.)

All missions begin with an analysis carried out at the factory on how to solve the mission. After a successful mission, just before going back, the heroes activate a highly specialized gadget called an 'Event Scrambler.' This scrambles the memory of all present parties (except the heroes who have a protection device installed) so that no one will clearly remember what happened. The ones exposed to the scrambler will make up their own stories and explanations. "As I recall it, it was me who solved the problem?"

Q: Are Heroes specially built for each Mission?

A: Due to training costs and time involved, there are a given number of available Heroes available for Missions at any one time. They are briefed and customized for each Mission, but it's very rare for a Hero to be built especially for a particular Mission.

Q: How are Heroes and Hero Teams chosen for a given Mission?

A: The Main Control Room of the Hero Factory maintains a roster of Heroes: those on a Mission, those just returned, Rookies, and the pool of available Heroes. Personalities and Teams in the available pool are matched to the incoming Mission. Team Leaders are given the option to veto participation in a Mission, but by the very nature of being a Hero, that almost never happens.

Q: How do Heroes get to and from each Mission?

A: For relatively close-in locations, each Hero uses an individual Hero Pod to get from Hero Factory to the Mission. Longer distances are covered by Pod Carriers, which act like aircraft carriers for Hero Pods. Once in a great while, the client will supply transportation, but the Hero Factory prefers to use its own transport when possible. Pods are used for the return trip as well, unless they have been damaged or destroyed during the Mission. In that case, a transport is supplied.

Q: To get to their Missions, does the Hero Factory have Faster Than Light (FTL) travel?

A: Yes, although the exact mechanism is not defined.

Q: Do the Missions involve time travel?

A: No. Time is contiguous in the Hero Factory universe. However, some planets or locations are at different social stages, so one may be Medieval, another might be Victorian, another might be ancient Egyptian (or equivalent), one might be extremely futuristic, and so on.

About the Missions

Q: How long is each Mission, on average?

A: Each Mission varies in duration. Some last a few minutes or hours, some last months. But on average, a given Mission won't take more than a few days or weeks.

Q: What are the different types of Missions?

A: The missions are categorized by 'Code', 'Environment' and 'Type'. Combining the categories gives you a mission code, e.g. you might end up with a 'Code Blue Ice world Rescue Mission' a 'Code Red Deep Jungle Capture Mission' and so on.

Q: Are all Hero missions successful? If not, what's the success ratio?

A: A few Missions end in either a stalemate (mission not accomplished) or outright failure (hostage not rescued, for example). But the success rate is very high, only about 7 percent of Missions are not successful.

Q: How many Missions are going on at once, on average?

A: The Hero Factory is a busy place. There are always numerous missions going on simultaneously.

Q: How are Heroes fitted out for a particular mission?

A: Each Mission is reviewed by a team of specialists who work with the Research department to provide appropriate gadgets for Heroes on a Mission. All Teams receive a Mission briefing, and standard gadgets issued. If they need heavy gear, they are retrofitted in the Factory, and if there's time, they will do some training with their new gear. Most often, however, the Teams are picked because of their familiarity with the required equipment, so they can go straight to the Mission.

Q: What type of gadgets and equipment are available to Heroes?

A: Anything that the Hero Factory can dream up. There are standard issue anti-gravity boots, for example, as well as grappling pistols, communicators, weapons, armor, sensors, and so on.

Q: How many different locations are available for Missions? Are they very different from each other?

A: The galaxy is vast, and opportunities for unique Missions abound. While planets tend to fall into somewhat standardized social and technological patterns, there is an almost infinite variety of terrain and circumstances available, making each Mission unique.



About the Universe

Q: To what extent are the Hero Factory and its activities known throughout the universe?

A: The Hero Factory is like Santa's factory, and the heroes are a little like Santa himself. Many think of the HF as nothing but a hoax and would probably never dial 1-800 unless all other means of help were exhausted. Other more believing souls rest assured that not only does the Hero Factory exist, but also that heroes will come to their aid if they call for help. In other words, even though highly effective and able to go anywhere, the Hero Factory is not universally perceived as the cure for everything. The vast majority of the universe hasn't even heard of the factory and even among those who have you will find skeptics. Add to this that the heroes sometimes use Event Scramblers, and it becomes evident that far from everybody knows of the Hero Factory.

Q: Is the Hero Factory in our universe and our time?

A: No and sort of. The Hero Factory is not in our universe, but the Factory and surrounding Makuhero City are technologically and socially equivalent to early 21st century human civilization. Most of the locations will have readily recognizable visual keys that the BIONICLE audience will relate to, like restaurants, vehicles, etc.

Q: Is the Hero Factory universe governed by science, magic, or both?

A: Very definitely science. Any unexplained technology (like FTL travel, Quaza rock, Hero Core) will be treated as examples of Clarke's Third Law: Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.

Q: What connection does the Hero Factory universe have with Mata Nui's universe?

A: None. SHOULD any connection exist this will reveal itself as the story goes along but it is not planned as a 'thing to happen'. It is vital that Hero Factory is something new and different from BIONICLE.

Q: Are the inhabitants fully mechanical, or partially mechanical / partially biological?

A: All Heroes and other people are fully mechanical. There are no biological processes present in the sentient inhabitants of this universe.

Q: Will they ever encounter sentient biological beings (like humans)?

A: Never say never, but the intent is to remain fully robotic.

Q: If everyone's a robot, where do the emotions come from?

A: Each robot has a distinctive personality and traits. These are stored as ineffable and unique patterns within their cores or Hero Cores. They all feel emotion and behave like humans would in similar circumstances, their metallic bodies notwithstanding. Like the animals of fables and fairytales, the robots of Hero Factory speak, feel and think like human beings.



About the Universe

Q: Do all intelligent robots follow a common bipedal structure? Or are there intelligent robots out there in many different body shapes and sizes?

A: Most robots follow the basic bipedal (one head, one torso, two arms, two legs) template, but there is a wide variety within this constraint. Some specialized robots do not follow this template, especially warped villains.

Q: How many “villains” are there in the universe?

A: Many more than the number of Heroes. And there are more popping up all the time. But the Hero Factory is efficient, keeping the overall number of bad guys at a manageable number.

Q: How many “supervillains” are there in the universe? Is there any one particular bad guy, or just a bunch of baddies?

A: There are a number of Super Bad Guys. Some are infamous and widely sought, others prefer to lurk in the shadows and pull strings from afar. They typically take a full Hero Team to defeat, sometimes more than one Team. Given the size of the universe, the majority of villains and ‘supervillains’ is not known by the Hero Factory, just as the Hero Factory is not known by the majority of the bad guys. Also, it is NOT by default the wish of every galactic bad guy to destroy the Hero Factory.

Q: Is there a villain organization, like the opposite of Hero Factory?

A: Not that we know of right now. But the universe is big.

Q: What gives each robot (regular people and Heroes alike) the ability to think and feel?

Robots simply have feelings like human beings. It should be accepted as part of the world’s axiology exactly like it should be accepted that the mermaids, raindrops and Christmas trees of H. C. Andersen’s fairy tales have feelings.

Q: What is Quaza rock?

A: A rare and mysterious energy source with the potential for great good or great evil. The largest known chunk is at the heart of the Hero Factory and a vital component in the making of hero cores.

Q: Where did the robot societies come from?

A: Exactly like human societies they evolved from primitive tribal structures into modern societies.

Q: Are all robots or sentient life forms in the universe descended from a “common” source, or did they come into being by different methods?

A: Only the God of robots knows.



About the Universe

Q: Where do “regular” people (robots) come from?

A: They are bred by robot parents. Exactly how this spawning process works is TBD.

Q: Do the robots (regular and Heroes) breathe air?

A: Robots function just fine without air.

Q: Can robots survive unprotected underwater? In vacuum?

A: While a vacuum wouldn't pose a problem, robots will probably short circuit if underwater for too long.

Q: Do Heroes and regular robots eat? Go to the bathroom? Sleep? Cry? Laugh? And other “human” things?

A: Yes. They are as “human” as you can be while wearing a metal skin.

Q: What do robots eat?

A: On the native planet, the robots lived on oil. However, after millennia on the ‘new’ planet the robots’ digestive system has adapted to organic food, and now they feed on a combination of oil and organic food.

Q: Why are there male and female robots?

A: Because reproduction takes a male and a female! The only exception to this is that the special robots known as heroes are built from scratch. This however requires a Quaza Core and since the amount of Quaza is limited this could not go on forever.

Q: What's the lifespan of an average robot?

A: A robot's lifespan is roughly the same as a human being's. The metal and the circuits age as does the tissue and circuits of humans. This process makes robots grow from babies to old noisy robots with rusty skin and bad smell. Like humans, robots do die of old age.

Q: What's the lifespan of an average Hero?

A: Roughly the same as a common robot's. The only difference is that since heroes ‘skip’ childhood, they naturally look older than their actual age.

Q: Are there organic plants in the HF universe?

A: Yes, and over time the robots’ digestive system has adapted to organic food.



About the Universe

Q: Do the same natural forces / rules of the universe apply to the Hero Factory universe?

A: Yes, with the caveat that some laws (like the speed of light and gravity) can be circumvented through superior technology.

Q: Do Heroes and common robots follow the same behavior patterns as Earth-based life? For example, work five days, take two off, sleep, have hobbies, etc.?

A: Yes, robotic society (at least on Makuhero City) closely follows human society patterns.

