

## WEEK 11 DIPLOMACY

*“I am a member of the Imperial Senate on a diplomatic mission to Alderaan” – Princess Leia*

*“You're a part of the Rebel Alliance and a traitor. Take her away!” – Darth Vader*

The Jedi were trained in diplomacy as much as in Lightsaber combat. Violence was a last resort. Physical force was used proportionate to the threat and only as far as necessary. In all cases a Jedi would seek diplomacy as a way of achieving a mutually beneficial outcome, if possible. Skills in negotiation and communication were paramount.

The Republic was dependent on the Jedi being able to persuade allies and potential allies and build strong friendships. Adversaries could also be negotiated with. Jedi were often sent by the Republic Senate as diplomatic emissaries for this reason. Diplomacy was used to secure trade agreements, treaties, free hostages and avoid or resolve conflict. The Jedi recruited across the galaxy from all worlds and could easily bridge any cultural or linguistic divide by assigning the right team to engage in negotiations or provide a protocol Droid to provide impartial advice. A Jedi could also be excused if they used subterfuge, half-truths, or deceit in difficult or deadlocked negotiations. The “Jedi Mind Trick” was a tool to achieve a goal without resorting to violence. Sometimes being dishonest is justified if bloodshed is avoided and lives can be saved.

In many ways the Jedi resembled the professional diplomat of Earth, with one key difference. The Jedi only acted in the interests of the Republic and never for personal gain. Jedi were also warriors albeit “warriors for peace”. A Jedi who rushed blind into the fray with Lightsaber drawn was a liability. A Jedi who could not use diplomacy over force was not a Jedi.

This is not to say the Jedi were pacifists who objected to violence in all its forms. Violence when required was used without emotion or haste. A Lightsaber was never drawn in anger and never used in hate or as a tool of revenge or murder. The Lightsaber was a symbol of control, purity in strength and the cutting edge of diplomacy. At least that was the intent and purpose of the Jedi Code.

Diplomacy is learned behaviour, a skill and an art. Learned, because as children we observe our parents and peers and learn from their interactions. What is acceptable behaviour is adopted sometimes through trial and error and sometimes through guidance. The skill of diplomacy is using tact, reasoning, communication, and negotiation in a manner that recognizes one's opinions, beliefs, ideas and biases as well as those of others. Challenges are skilfully navigated towards arriving at a desired outcome. The art of diplomacy is more refined. It is the mark of a true Jedi because it demonstrates effortless use of the Jedi Code in dealing with others with the desire for achieving beneficial outcomes for all.

*Language is important.*

The words that you choose and the way they are spoken can either persuade and influence or disillusion and alienate people. Be mindful of your language. Without surrender, use tact in your delivery. Always be clear and avoid ambiguity or misleading statements. Be sensitive to cultural mores around communication. For example, in some cultures yelling and being animated in negotiations is acceptable, in others it is frowned upon severely.

*Patience is a virtue.*

Never rush into negotiations. Think things through before speaking or remain silent. If possible, have a plan on how to proceed with discussions.

*Compromise, but never on principles.*

Negotiations should never force you to compromise or betray your own principles regardless of the cost.

*Be assertive yet agreeable.*

Getting your way does not mean you need to force it. At the same time betraying weakness can quickly work against you. Hold on to your ground and only concede when it advantageous to do so. Treat others with the same dignity and respect you would want for yourself. Be firm but nice.

*Face to Face.*

Negotiation is best done person to person rather than remotely through email, messaging or phone. Much in communication is lost when facial expressions and body language is absent from negotiations.

*Listen and Learn.*

Active listening is essential to effective communication. Strive to listen, engage with questions to clarify and really try to understand what is being said. Show interest and avoid appearing absent or distracted. No one likes an incessant talker, but everyone likes a good listener. Best of all a listener will learn something new while a talker will only repeat what they already know.

*Empathy and understanding are the way.*

Selfish motivations and biases will cloud negotiations. While we hear the concerns, demands or grievances of another party we are filtering them through the lens of our own needs and biases. By understand where the other person is coming from and putting yourself in to their shoes, you can start to see the world and their issue through their eyes. With empathy comes arrival at a place of mutual understanding.

*Widen your horizons.*

Anyone who has worked as a Diplomat will reinforce the need to understand who sits at the negotiating table. There exist cultural, religious, historic, and linguistic differences between people and to bridge the gap it helps to understand them. Any smart Diplomat will study closely the culture of the country they are working in and make efforts to learn the rudiments of the language and otherwise seek the services of a local to act as advisor and interpreter.

*You don't have to like the guy, just work with him.*

Rapport and honesty are important but not crucial. World leaders will meet and agree on crucial issues of national and global importance. They may not like each other but for the sake of diplomacy will find rapport to arrive at successful negotiations. Honesty is a facet of trust which is requisite for agreements however an honest Diplomat will concede that the real world is more complicated than that. One must use their discretion. Every day we must negotiate with people whom we love, like and dislike including family, friends, work colleagues, clients and random people we meet in normal life. If you deal honestly and have rapport you are likely to run into less problems getting your way. While there is honesty and honour in most people there can also be dishonesty, trickery and deceit.

Diplomacy can appear to be a hard to acquire skill, but it need not be. The four golden rules to remember are listen actively, respond respectfully, make your case clear, apply your principles.

This week let us recognize three great Diplomats from the Star War universe who were as skilled as their Jedi counterparts in diplomacy. In the search for peace, they ultimately paid with their lives. The world could learn something from them. Satine Kryze, Padmé Amidala and Princess Leia Organa.



**DAY 72**

*“I presume you are acquainted with the collection of half-truths and hyperbole known as Obi-wan Kenobi?...” – Satine Kryze*

**Today I am Grateful for:**


**Morning Contemplation**


**Evening Reflection**




**DAY 74**

*“You call this a diplomatic solution?” – Anakin*  
*“No, I call it an aggressive negotiation” - Padmé Amidala*

Today I am Grateful for:


Morning Contemplation


Evening Reflection




**DAY 75**

*“War is intolerable. We have been deceived into thinking that we must be a part of it. I say the moment we committed to fighting, we already lost.” - Satine Kryze*

**Today I am Grateful for:**


**Morning Contemplation**


**Evening Reflection**


**DAY 76**

*“Just because I'm a pacifist doesn't mean I won't defend myself.”*  
- Satine Kryze

Today I am Grateful for:


Morning Contemplation


Evening Reflection


## DAY 77

*“What this war represents is a failure to listen. Now you're closer to the Chancellor than anyone, please, ask him to stop the fighting and let the diplomacy resume.” - Padmé Amidala*  
*“Don't ask me to do that.” - Anakin*

### Today I am Grateful for:


### Morning Contemplation


### Evening Reflection


## WEEK REVIEW

Reflect on your daily practices and personal goals for the week.  
How did you do? Where can you refocus your attention?

Meditation:


Physical Exercise:


Diplomacy:


Awareness:


Self-Discipline:
