



SINCERE DIPLOMACY

At the very beginning, when still on the **title page**, make the following points, or variants of them:

1. 'Diplomacy' can be and indeed has been defined as 'the art of dealing with people in a sensitive and tactful way.'
2. Most people have some sense of how to be diplomatic, as well as some sense that they should be diplomatic in some circumstances. They at least know some polite turns of phrase to use. But very often I have the impression people are going through the motions, diplomacy-wise. I think of the positively nasty email replies I've received, beginning 'thank you very much for your email' and ending with 'kind regards'. Or of the debates in the British Parliament, where the MPs address each other as 'the Right Honourable Gentleman' and then say the most vicious things to each other. My sense is that they do not have a particularly strong understanding of why they should be diplomatic, and thus their diplomacy is not very deep or sincere.
3. It seems to me there are three main reasons why we should normally, in situations of disagreement, strive to be diplomatic. We'll explore all three of them throughout this workshop, but, in brief, they are: 1) that you are never certain to be right, and your own abilities to learn and make the right choices and improve as a person are also at stake in any case of disagreement; 2) that it's important to be able to take critical stances without destroying your relationships, with both individuals and communities, and without endangering yourself (in so far as that's possible); and 3) that you are a lot less likely to persuade anyone if they feel you are attacking them, or making them look or feel stupid, or not treating them with respect, or not genuinely willing to listen and change your position yourself.

Once you've made these points, move on to the next slide.

On the **second slide**, showing the title of the first exercise, maybe briefly note that the workshop is made up, essentially, of five exercises, and we'll start now with the first. Say also that each exercise will be preceded by some quotes to help cultivate the right mindset for the exercise. Read out the name of the first exercise. Move on to the next slide.

On the **third slide**, simply read out the Tim Minchin quote, emphasising the underlined part. Move on to the next slide.

On the **fourth slide**, read out the instructions listed on the left side, and check that the participants have understood them. Give the participants time to form pairs, or, to speed things up, sort them into pairs yourself - either randomly, or in a way you've worked out in advance. When they are in pairs, tell each pair to select an argument to have. Point out that they can choose from the listed arguments on the right side of the slide - they can also come up with their own argument to say though. It should ideally be on a question they do have different answers to though, at least slightly different. Leave this slide up, and give the pairs 10 minutes to do this exercise. Afterwards, if you have time, get the participants to share how the exercise was for them. Then move on to the next slide.



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On the **fifth slide**, simply read out the text - the number and name of the exercise.

On the **sixth slide**, read out the Tom Chatfield quote. On the **seventh slide**, read out the two quotes.

Progress through **slides eight to fourteen**, reading the long quote by David Brooks. Maybe announce at the start that this is a slightly longer quote.

On **slide fifteen**, read the instructions for exercise two - again, left side of the slide. Check everyone has understood. Inform them that they can remain in the pairs they were in for the previous exercise. Tell them they can continue with the argument they were having before, or they can pick another argument to have - and again there are suggestions for arguments on the right side of the slide. Before starting the exercise, switch to slide sixteen, and read out the four listed useful phrases for diplomatic argument - tell the participants to keep them in mind. Now give them 10 minutes to do this exercise, but interrupt after 5 minutes to tell them to switch roles. And again, invite the participants to share their experiences if you have time.

On **slide seventeen**, again just read the text. Likewise on the **eighteenth and nineteenth slides**.

On **slide twenty**, read the instructions, check everyone's understood, merge the pairs from the previous two activities with other pairs to form groups of three or four. Then read the passage that the exercise tasks the groups with translating. Leave it on this slide, and give the groups 10 minutes to, through internal discussion, come up with their translations. Thereafter, invite each group share their translation, and discuss how effective they are as diplomatic argument - that is, above all, how receptive to them we'd be, if we were their targets.

Onto **slide twenty-one**, simply read the text. Then **slide twenty-two**: note that this idea of the complaint sandwich is described in far more detail in Guy Winch's book *The Squeaky Wheel: Complaining the Right Way to Get Results, Improve Your Relationships, and Enhance Self-Esteem*, but can be summarised as follows - then read out the text contained in the diagonal diagram. Next slide.

On **slide twenty-three**, read the instructions on the left side, check everyone has understood, then give the example on the right side. Then switch back to slide twenty-two and leave it on that slide for the duration of the exercise - 5-10 minutes, depending on the time you have available. Afterwards, again if there's the time, invite those who wish to to share their complaint sandwiches and discuss them together with the other participants. Forward two slides.

On **slide twenty-four**, again simply read the text - the exercise number and title. Likewise for **slides twenty-five to twenty-nine** - the quotes.

On **slide thirty**, read the instructions on the left side, draw participants' attention to the suggested political villains on the right side of the slide, but tell them they can also come up with their own. Then tell them that they can return to the groups of three or four that they were in for exercise three. Stay on this slide for 10 minutes, while they do the exercise. Then, if time allows, discuss in plenary the participants' thoughts and feelings arising from this exercise.



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