

Women at Warp Episode 163: Teamwork in Trek

Female Speaker: You're listening to a Roddenberry podcast.

[Women at Warp theme]

Sarah: Hi and welcome to Women at Warp: A Roddenberry *Star Trek* Podcast. Join us on our continuing mission to explore intersectional diversity in infinite combinations. My name is Sarah Goldie and thanks for tuning in. With me today are Grace Moore, Jarrah Hodge and special guest Gray Miller, Executive Director of Worldbuilders. Gray, can you tell our listeners a bit about yourself from Worldbuilders and your history with *Star Trek*?

Gray: Thank you, honored to be here. I am the executive director, as you said, I've been working here for a little over a year and it is the best job in the world and the best group in the world. Worldbuilders was started by author, Patrick Rothfuss, to take some of his well-gotten gains from his books, *Name of the Wind* and *Wise Man's Fear*, and turn it towards good. And now, Worldbuilders has turned into a fundraising and a bunch of geeks doing good for many different ways. Our ultimate goal is to have an inclusive community of geeks all enthusiastically creating sustainable change to make a better world. And we have a small staff that is spread out across the U.S. of course, during COVID times. And we also have Worldbuilders Market where we work with creators and make merchandise that cool and geeky and fun things to go out into the world. So, that's what I get to do.

And it relates to *Star Trek* because I was raised on *The Original Series* and I sort of skipped over the *TNG* and stuff. And now, I've just really been loving *Discovery* and *Picard* and *Lower Decks* and things like that. So, I kind of was at the beginning and at the end. I'll tell you, Worldbuilders, it's like we are a team of people all trying hard to go out and discover and create new things and make a better world along the way. And it feels to me like *Star Trek*. Like, we use Notion database, and I have a ready room in there online where I look at all my stuff that I have to do for the day.

Sarah: So, we're so glad you can be here with us today. And thanks for having Women at Warp participate in the Worldbuilders fundraiser this year or was that last year?

Gray: It was last year, but it was wonderful. And if you'd like to come this year, we'd love to have you.

Sarah: And how did it do this year or how did it do last year?

Gray: It went really, really well. We raised over a million dollars for Heifer International. Our end-of-year fundraiser is always for Heifer International. And just to give you an idea, like our average donation was between \$30 to \$50 and we raised a million, over a million total which gives you an idea of how wonderful the geek community is, coming together and wanting to help out with that.

Sarah: That is amazing. Well, looking forward to the next one. So, before we get into our main topic. We have a little bit of housekeeping to do first. Our show is made possible by our patrons on Patreon. If you'd like to become a patron, you can do so for as little as a dollar per month and get awesome rewards from thanks on social media to group watch-along commentaries to Patreon-exclusive merchandise. Visit www.patreon.com/womenatwarp.

And you can also support us by leaving a rating or review on Apple Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts.

And don't forget to check out our TeePublic store with Women at Warp and other *Trek* designs at [teepublic.com/stores/womenatwarp](https://www.teepublic.com/stores/womenatwarp). This episode is brought to you by Blood of the Void, a Klingon Live-play TTRPG campaign. More from them later.

So, our topic today, which was suggested by Gray as his Patreon selection, is teamwork in *Trek*. And Gray, can you tell us why you selected this topic?

Gray: Yeah, like I mentioned during the introduction, I, in my own head live out this kind of fantasy of the fact that we are trying to build the world that *Star Trek* could exist in. And that's literally what we are trying to do. And along the way, we get to enjoy a lot of geeky things. But in general, I always have leaned more towards *Trek* than, say, *Star Wars* because *Trek*, it's more of a group coming together to do something as opposed to an individual being the key.

But I also have to admit that I suggested the topic because I thought, "Hey, let's take a look at how *Trek* mirrors the great teamwork that I have at Worldbuilders." And I discovered at looking at the episodes that we were recommended that my memory-- it's kind of like the whole Kirk effect. Our memory of how what a rascal he was is a lot different than the reality. And my memory of how much teamwork was in *Trek* has not really matched the reality, at least in classic *Trek*.

Sarah: In what way did that vary from classic *Trek*?

Gray: I think one of the things that we found was a lot of the suggestions seemed to be rather than being an entire group of people working together, it was one or two. And also, oftentimes, it was an entire group of people and one person trying to make up for all of their mistakes or their mishaps or things like that, also which doesn't seem to be-- It made me really think more about what is the definition of teamwork. And I think that it made me realize, you have to have a group of people, all of whom are contributing in some way towards a common goal, as opposed to one person trying to save another or even a group of people trying to save another. I guess it just changes the way that is.

That being said, I did enjoy looking at some of the examples of teamwork, and I think that they do a better job than most, at least trying to give everyone a good role to play sometimes, [laughs] sometimes not. When we get into the episodes, I'll definitely have some opinions.

Jarrah: Yeah, I definitely agree. I feel like there is a lot about team leadership in *Star Trek*, but there's less than you would think about a group of more than two people carrying out a concrete objective or a task together. But there is a fair amount of implied teamwork through that, like you were saying, the shared purpose or the shared mission. And I think because *Star Trek* really emphasizes the shared mission of to boldly go where no one has gone before and the values of Starfleet, that it implies a lot of teamwork that we don't actually necessarily get to see executed in the show.

Gray: Yeah, Team Starfleet definitely seemed to be the only unifying theme, really.

Sarah: And, Grace, what does teamwork in *Star Trek* look like to you?

Grace: Well, when I first was starting to watch *Star Trek*, to make it personal, I had it explained to me as, "Oh, it's kind of like a workplace drama, but in space." So, that was the key idea I went into it with. And then again, you really see a lot of this, "Oh, but this guy is special, so we have to depend on him. This person is special." But I think one of the things I appreciated about it with any ensemble show, really, is that the idea of different people are special in different ways and that makes everyone an asset working together. And that's just

cool to see play out in any context, isn't it? That's my spacey, hippie-dippy definition of that. [laughter] But I really do just love seeing people get to be competent in their own way and help each other out through that.

Sarah: Well, not just competent. It seems like if you've made it to the Enterprise, you're someone who excels.

Grace: It's the overachiever kid class, which is why Wesley fits in so naturally there. [laughter]

Sarah: And it's not just that they're overachievers, but it's also, you get to see a lot of people who don't necessarily get to participate as much in our time because they have something that we would consider disability, like Geordi being blind. But in the future, he has his visor and he actually has a superpower.

Jarrah: Although everyone apparently still has to run a lot. [laughs]

Sarah: And Geordi gets to roll.

Jarrah: Yeah.

Grace: Geordi, he excels in rolling. Maybe he took a tumbling class as a kid and is just super proud of it. [laughs] I'm glad he gets to. It's just a lot of tumbling. Do you think that's on his Starfleet resume, "really good at tumbling"?

Gray: I'm sure it's on his review, full marks for rolling.

Jarrah: He probably had a game at the Academy where people would bet money to see if he could roll under a door before it shut.

Grace: At the Academy, that was his icebreaker trick. Like, "Hey, want to see me roll under a door?" [laughter]

Sarah: Always made it. [laughter]

Gray: I think, along with the fact that special abilities would actually become-- things that are often considered disabilities become more useful and valuable is also the idea that things that we sometimes in our culture will assume-- will imply or culture implies as less valuable don't seem to matter. And it's not in one of the episodes we talked about here, but there was a moment in one of the early *TNG* episodes where they're under attack from something or other and Riker looks to Tasha Yar and goes, "What are your recommendations?" And she says, "Do this, this, and this." He says, "All right, let's do it." And that's it. There was no, "Well, are you sure?" or, "You're new to this job. Do you really think maybe you should consult someone else?" There was nothing. It was just like, "You're there, you do your competence and you go."

And I think that if I was going to instill it into a teamwork lessons from *Trek*, it would be, always rely on the competence of your teammates, but don't assume that you are infallible. It's a combination of those two. And that always stuck out to me as-- like you were saying, unlike in real life, they seem to have gotten into a more understanding, mutually valuable situation.

Jarrah: There's definitely a balance, and we see it shift at different points in *Star Trek* history between giving orders versus empowering your team members. And that example with Yar, I think, is leaning more towards the empowerment. We see that a lot in *Voyager* particularly

too, where the leaders have a little bit more emotional intelligence. Less so in *Enterprise*, where a lot of times it does feel like Archer mostly just wants to be right. But yeah, I think that's an interesting point too, that even in this hierarchical structure, there's an ability to listen to people and allow for them to have opinions and expertise, even when you're ultimately the one responsible for giving the orders.

Grace: If I can backpedal just a little bit here, I also want to just add an asterisk here of we're not saying that someone's value is justified by how much they can bring to the table. Just to put that out there and to make sure that caveat is there.

Jarrah: Oh, yeah. So, one thing I wanted to bring up was I think that one of the ways that *Star Trek* has evolved over its history is by abandoning a bit of that idea of your team is only as strong as the weakest member, which is still something we hear trotted out as fact in many situations. And there's ideas of friendship should be transactional or teamwork should be transactional. Everyone has to bring something to the table. And I think that is not really how life works and that it doesn't allow for differing abilities and differing capacities and for recognition of things that might be contributions outside of a traditional framework.

But I think that *Star Trek* has started to shift there and maybe even going back as early as *TNG*, there's examples of that we don't abandon a crew member, we bring along Barclay, and Barclay's having a hard time. And in *Discovery*, you have, in the most recent season, it's okay to not be okay with Detmer, this idea that part of being a human is you're going to go through normal reactions to really, really hard times. And you're going to have illness and you're going to have injury and all of these things. We, as a team, means that we pitch in to bring you along with us at those times.

Gray: I got that really strongly in *Good Shepherd* that same thing, that was the entire purpose of it was to make sure that people that were graded as less than Starfleet capable or whatever and make sure they felt a part of the crew so that it was not leaving them behind.

Sarah: One leadership thing I learned from my dad that I absolutely love is that sometimes when someone on the team has an idea and you might not think it's the best idea, sometimes you go with that idea because it gives people ownership. It gives them confidence to come up with ideas in the future. And I do love going back to what you were saying about, like, Tasha Yar coming up with an idea and Riker being like, "Okay, let's go with it." I have to think that's also a part of his reasoning is, "You know what? We're going to give Tasha a moment," or, "We're going to give Worf a moment." Worf, who they say no to all the time anyways, but.

Gray: [laughs] And Rutherford.

Grace: Yeah, poor Rutherford.

Sarah: But it builds a stronger team.

Jarrah: Yeah. I mean, because people also need, I think, in a team to a degree, to feel like they are important. And feeling like you're dispensable means that counters that a bit. And I think *Star Trek* has obviously long explored this tension between the needs of the one and the needs of the many. And the way that I think that it's explored gets at that idea that every individual is important, but also the good of the whole is important. And that's, I think, a balance that you strive for in working with teams.

Gray: Absolutely. I thought they did that really well with *Discovery* too at the end, like, with all of the arguments about it being focused only one character which, frankly, I didn't have a

problem with that either. I would have enjoyed that series too. I thought that the way that the team of the ship came together and everyone got their particular segment or their particular role as well as a role within the larger Starfleet that they discovered in the future. Like I said, I'm also one of those weird people that likes *Picard*. Apparently, I'm very much in the minority there.

Grace: We accept all types here. Don't worry.

Gray: Okay, thank you. [Grace laughs] Appreciate that. I feel seen.

Sarah: I do love that even Emperor Georgiou has a place on the team in *Discovery*. And sometimes, her place is just cutting through all the bullshit and taking a shortcut to the end result.

Grace: Sometimes, you need that.

Sarah: [laughs] She's getting them to their objective.

Jarrah: Yeah. And one thought that occurred to me when I was watching these episodes, I was thinking about *Voyager* in particular, I think that's the one where they emphasize the crew as a family. And I was thinking about what's the difference between a team and a family because I think that there's definitely some overlap. I think *Voyager* is a little bit more like a family because they're more than the others, tied together by circumstance, by chance a little bit versus the other ones. Characters come and go at their own agency based on-- So, they're a part of the team as long as they're with that group, but also sharing in the mission. *Voyager* has that dynamic as well of the shared mission, but they also do blur that boundary into more of being a family. And a family doesn't necessarily have to have a shared mission. Just kind of you're all stuck together. [chuckles]

Gray: I always think it's funny when people say, "It's like a family. It's like that just assumes that is a happy word for a person." Because for a lot of people, that is, like, the scariest thing ever.

Grace: [chuckles] That's true. That's absolutely true.

Sarah: So, one thing, Gray, you mentioned earlier is that there's a lot of duo teamwork. There's a lot of that going back to Kirk and Spock. Can two people really be considered a team?

Gray: I have to say, I think they are. I'm not sure they're portrayed that way in *Trek* always. I think it's *Disaster* where it's like people tend to be paired up. Like, it's The Doctor and Geordi and Riker and Data and Picard and the children. And I think that those situations did seem to be teamwork in that both people were pulling their weight. But other situations, specifically the desert crossing comes to mind, did not seem to me to be teamwork at all. It was loyalty. It was hot beach volleyball. I mean, beach alien sports ball. [laughter]

Jarrah: Beach lacrosse.

Gray: Yeah, beach lacrosse. I mean, there was teamwork there. Maybe that's where the teamwork was in that game, but I didn't see it in the rest of the interactions. And I'm not sure, especially in a hierarchical situation, is it teamwork if one person is telling the other person what to do or that kind of situation? I don't know.

Jarrah: I sort of see *Disaster* like an example of a relay race where they've got all of these mini sub-teams of two that are basically handing off the baton. Like, they're all doing a key part of getting the team to the finish line, but the team is the whole crew.

Grace: Yeah. It's also a really good example of-- well, one of my favorite things I got to see when I was even briefly doing the management thing, different types of people have different types of dynamics when they work together. And you really do-- It's like sometimes when people are working together, you get a single cohesive person, but a different kind of person when they're working in tandem. And that's one of the cool things about *Disaster*. We get to really showcase how these different people work together and the situation they are when they are working together. I just thought that was neat. [Sarah laughs]

Gray: Yeah. I also like the fact that there's a level of trust. There is a part of it where we're going to light up those instrument panels and hope that somebody's actually down there looking at them. So, there's quite a few Hail Marys going on that exemplify kind of that whole trust in other people's competence.

Grace: Yeah, exactly. And I always think of Crusher and La Forge working together and just being like, "Oh, my gosh, they make a great dynamic together."

Gray: They really did. Yeah.

Grace: Why didn't we see more of that? [Gray laughs]

Jarrah: I have a question which just occurred to me was, do you think that it would be easier to build that trust in team relationships in a *Star Trek* like future because there's less of a built-in sense of competition and need to prove yourself for survival?

Grace: One would really hope. We do see a lot of this kind of, I'm going to say, forced sense of competition, it feels like with Starfleet. Like, "No, I'm going to try and get on the good squad," or, "No, I'm going to make command." And that always feels like something that's just forced in there and storytelling wise because I feel like it would be a lot more of kind of an egalitarian setting of everyone being like, "Oh, no, we're all just doing our best." Does anyone else feel that way?

Gray: Yes, they play with that in-- What is it, the second *Lower Decks*--?

Grace: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Gray: Where he's switching all of his jobs and everybody's like, "What, you don't want to be with us?"

Grace: And everyone's super supportive about it.

Gray: Yeah, yeah. That's exactly the way I think it would be.

Jarrah: Oh, that's so fun.

Gray: Yeah, I love that work.

Grace: But we've got this kind of macho idea of I need to be the best that keeps showing up throughout *Trek* and it always feels a little forced to me.

Gray: Mm-hmm.

Sarah: Well, I don't know. It's a society where instead of competing for money, people are competing for basically recognition.

Grace: It's true.

Sarah: So, it seems like there would still be competition and you have a prima donna in every culture.

Gray: Or just competing to try and see who can do like, "I want to do the most good."

Grace: I want to be the very best like no one ever was.

Gray: Right. [laughter]

Jarrah: I want to invent the best science that will definitely destroy your ship.

Grace: I'm going to medicine so hard.

Gray: I'm about to disprove this cosmological theorem.

Grace: You know, for fun.

Jarrah: I do think we also get a bit less of that in the newer *Treks*, starting, I would say, from *Deep Space Nine* with like Jake being like, "Yeah, I don't really want to be in Starfleet." That you get more recognition that-- if we were in a society that the pinnacle of meaning in life was to be the captain of a starship, like, that society would fall apart. So, we need to acknowledge that people are going to have different roles and that's cool.

Grace: Jake as a character is such a great benchmark of that also because he's a character who we get to see as an example outside of Starfleet being like, "No, my benchmark for success is going to be personal fulfillment. That is what I'm choosing." And to see that's a society where that can happen is awesome.

Jarrah: Mm-hmm.

Sarah: Or his grandpa running a restaurant.

Grace: Yeah. Though I guess if you run a restaurant, you really do have to deal with restaurant critics as a mark of your success.

Sarah: That's true.

Grace: Yeah.

Sarah: So, I want to get into some of our favorite episodes that are examples of teamwork. But first, a couple of words from our sponsor. If you're not already into the wonderful world of tabletop role-playing games, then as a *Star Trek* fan, you owe it to yourself to check out the many *Star Trek* stories that exist in TTRPG form. One of our favorites of the podcast is run by our very own cohost, Aliza Pearl. It's an all-Klingon live play game with an all-star cast of actors and writers. Aliza and her crew tell Klingon stories like you've never seen before. And honestly, how often do we get to see a Klingon setting led by a woman storyteller? Never. Except on *Blood of the Void*.

Check out this monthly game by catching up on the latest episode on YouTube or drop into the chat during their live show on the last Mondays of the month, 6:30 PM Pacific at

[twitch.tv/qtimes](https://www.twitch.tv/qtimes). Or go back to the very beginning of this lively campaign and watch it all the way through.

And if you'd like to stay here in the realm of podcasts, *Blood of the Void's* first three episodes are now available in podcast form, and you can find them wherever you get your podcasts.

So, Gray, let's talk about your favorite teamwork episode first.

Gray: Favorites-- I mean, they almost are like bookends. Like, my least favorite is probably the first one, and the most favorite is the last one. The final episode of *Lower Decks* is just-- There are so many. *Lower Decks* entirely is just a gem. But I think the overarching thing is I watched it again before this podcast, and I think that one thing that stuck out to me is that not only did it do this thing of saying these things that we have seen as faults before are now turning out to be the things that are the very things we need, storing contraband, making Badgey, things like that, but there is the arc of Rutherford.

There's a moment in there where he's about to charge the enemy ship, and he's like, "This is the most glorious day of my entire life," because he has finally reached his ultimate purpose. And I thought his ultimate purpose is different than everybody else's in there, or at least in the main characters. And it was highlighting that even though his purpose was different and never seemed to be fulfilled, when the right moment came, it was, and everyone celebrated and respected that. So, it was this combination of everybody from all levels of the decks, from command to lower decks, and getting in all of their different parts to work together to defeat an implacable enemy. And then at the very end, Team Starfleet comes in and helps them out even more.

And I guess also there's the fact that at the very, very end, that the team of lower decks actually breaks up. Some people go off to another ship. And that is another important teamwork lesson. Regardless of how much you like them, teams are ephemeral, and people go on to other places, and you have to wish them well. So, I just thought that one episode just epitomized everything that I was hoping to find in all the other episodes when I suggested this topic.

Sarah: I love how Mariner, like Emperor Georgiou, was on the surface, not at all a team player, but in the end, you need her on the team.

Grace: Yeah.

Gray: Yeah, very much.

Sarah: Grace and Jarrah, do you have any other thoughts on the *Lower Decks* episode?

Grace: So fun.

Jarrah: We're talking about the finale, fundamentally, I think one piece that I wanted to draw attention to from is-- I love the episode. I love *Lower Decks*. We're talking about the animated show and not the *TNG* episode, but I love that as well. But one of the pieces that this highlighted for me in *Star Trek* is we see a lot of examples of needing-- or maybe not needing, but characters who express their commitment to the team through self-sacrifice and being literally in *Star Trek*, there are many examples of just you are willing to die for your teammates or also order teammates to their death, which would be the area where this is like, "Okay, I'm glad this is TV and not real life."

Sarah: Yeah.

Jarrah: But I do-- I guess it's because it's TV and it's because it's drama, I don't know that we carry those expectations in that literal sense into teams today. But we do have a bit of a similar issue when-- and I know this isn't unique to not-for-profit culture, but in not-for-profit culture, there's a lot of discussion about martyrdom complexes where people are who have a shared sense of purpose, who work for good causes, are really encouraged to go above and beyond for the cause, even when what they're doing, like the hours they're working or the effort they're putting in would not be expected in other types of jobs. So, that kind of blurring the line of what is a job and what is a mission, *Star Trek*, I think, does play into some of those narratives. But I think that *Lower Decks* is really fun and shows a lot of different roles for how you can contribute to a team.

Grace: There's a great amount of getting to say, "Okay, let's let these different people be great in their own way by their own personal definition of what they do well." It's pretty cool.

Jarrah: And then. the Exocomp is just like, "Nah, I don't really want to die." [laughter]

Grace: Peanut hamper, you jerk.

Jarrah: Yeah.

Gray: Although I love the writers, they're like, "Oh, look, there's the magic piece that suddenly doesn't fit." Oh, it's wonderful.

Jarrah: I guess it also talks about that being open to creative thinking piece that you were bringing up earlier, Gray, is also reinforced in that *Lower Decks* episode about how-- I think one of the dangers of if teams are running pretty well and everyone thinks they have a shared understanding of the mission and you don't actually take time to check in on that, is you can just fall into patterns and not necessarily think about new or better ways of doing things or whether things still work when team members change. So, I like that *Lower Decks* starts to get into that. We need to think about, just because this is the way we've always been doing things doesn't mean it's the best way or the right way.

Gray: That kind of feels like the overarching theme of both that and *Discovery*, really.

Grace: Yeah.

Gray: But yeah, that definitely was my favorite in seeing it. I did also, I really enjoyed the various *DS9* pieces and *TNG*, I think, does have some good ones. I sort of enjoyed the *Good Shepherd* as a topic, but that was more because Janeway is one of my three leadership archetypes that I try aspire to. And it occurred to me, first of all, it's great that she goes the extra mile to try and help out three people that are not fitting in quite well, but there's also the sort of she's automatically smarter than any of them at everything. And I'm like, "Yeah, that's not the way it necessarily always works in a leadership position."

Grace: Right. But *Discovery* is the first series based around a single character constantly.

Gray: Yeah.

Jarrah: She's literally like, "You know who was a good leader? Jesus. I'm going to go do the same thing." [laughter]

Grace: Eat off my body.

Sarah: So, Grace, do you have a favorite episode you want to talk about?

Grace: I did. I definitely put one in that I found intriguing, which was *The Enemy*, and not just because it's *Enemy Mine* as a *Star Trek* episode. And that already is pretty fun to me.

Jarrah: Wait, what's *Enemy Mine*? Sorry, fill us in.

Grace: *Enemy Mine* is a movie that's the exact same plot as *The Enemy* of a human and an alien, stranded on a planet together and wanting to kill each other at first and then having to work together to get off this planet.

Jarrah: Sweet.

Grace: Yeah.

Sarah: Isn't that sort of the plot of *Good Omens*?

Grace: Little bit, yeah.

Sarah: Two enemies stranded on a planet?

Grace: Basically, except these guys don't become besties, I don't think. But basically, that's the gist of the episode. We've got Geordi as a human and a Romulan stranded together. And they're not only not friends, they are bitter enemies and all that. And they both come from very different worldviews and very different skillsets and they have to work together. And that's the dream of teamwork, isn't it? That we can overcome all differences in the name of a greater good and a cause.

Jarrah: Yeah. All you have to do is learn more about where the other person's coming from and then survive a life-threatening situation.

Grace: That's all you have to do. It's just that easy.

Jarrah: It's like over and over and over again in these episodes because that's in *Good Shepherd*, it's in *Learning Curve*, it's in *Galileo Seven*, which I want to talk about. So many episodes.

Grace: I just thought this episode was such a pinpoint example of that.

Jarrah: It is a great example.

Grace: Yeah.

Gray: I like the fact that they have to form the team there. Like, they're the farthest thing from a team, and then it becomes that- It just highlights the idea that working cooperatively and working as a team is a survival mechanism, which is true in real life. They always say that the reality of disasters in humanity is not the whole dystopian, every man for himself kind of situation, but it's more about people cooperating and helping each other out because that is a survival mechanism.

Grace: That is how humanity has survived. I guess it's how Romulans also survived in a way, I guess. [laughter]

Jarrah: But it's also like Starfleet principle in action of overcoming your differences and your prejudice for the common better good on a micro scale.

Gray: Well, it's like Kirk and the Klingons in general.

Jarrah: Right.

Sarah: Jarrah, you mentioned *The Galileo Seven*?

Jarrah: Yes. Okay. So, I definitely can't say this is my favorite episode, but it is one that I think is important to talk about partly because it like lays down this storyline that we see repeated over and over and over again in *Star Trek*. But this is the one where Spock is leading-- Also based on a movie called *Five Came Back*. Spock is leading a shuttle of seven people to a planet. Only five of them come back. But this is more about like a crisis of leadership and is sort of juxtaposing Kirk's leadership style on the Enterprise with Spock's leadership style on the planet where people are dying and they want to have funerals for each other really hastily. But Spock just basically totally doesn't understand why he can't connect with the team members. In his view, logic should drive everyone, and he doesn't understand how to motivate people emotionally. But then also, some of the crew members are super adversarial.

So, it creates a conflict and Spock tries to understand them a bit better at McCoy's urging. But ultimately, it's a life-threatening scenario that brings them all together and Spock has to make sort of a Hail Mary pass trying to get them rescued. And yeah, this episode is more about leadership styles or team leadership because we don't really see the characters really working together other than a little bit Scotty trying to repair the shuttle. Scotty, I think, comes across great.

Gray: Scotty is great in that. Oh, he's so wonderful in that.

Jarrah: Yeah, this A+ Scotty episode. There's also Boma who is the most adversarial of the people on the ship. There is two yellow shirts that get offed pretty quickly. And then, there's a yeoman. I'm just going to call her Yeoman Deadweight because [laughter] she just sits there and kind of is like, "What are we doing now?" But they clearly were trying to make a bit of a microcosm of the crew with a little bit of diversity and a woman, even if she doesn't have much to do but--

Grace: She's Veronica Cartwrighting there. She's there to react to everything that's happening.

Jarrah: Yeah. So anyway, it has some germs of what could be kind of powerful lessons about teamwork and leadership. But I think it is unfortunately just kind of challenging because, well, yeah-- I mean, there's a lot of, like, some things seem to happen too quickly, and some of the things just maybe aren't believable. But yeah, ultimately, it's about logical versus emotional leadership and needing to understand where the other people are coming from to be able to build a team. So, I think there's some bigger concepts that are worth pulling out of that.

Grace: This really is one of those episodes that should be shown at management and leadership training stuff just to start off that conversation of, sometimes the way you lead is not the way the people you are leading need to be led right now. And that's really important to remember.

Jarrah: Mm-hmm.

Gray: I hear you on that. And also at the same time, and I will admit some bias here because I served as a marine infantry.

Grace: Oh, wow.

Gray: And so, watching that particular episode and watching the way that the command structure was disregarded and criticized and things like that, I just had such a hard time with it.

Grace: I bet.

Gray: I would say yes, put it in the management thing. But if you remember from the episode, they're out there, "We have to have a funeral." "Well, all right, have your funeral." "Oh, hey, look, you're about to die. Here, I'm going to run out here and have to save you all." And then, the other aspects of at the very end, he jettisons all the fuels. They only have six minutes left. And it was like, "Oh, you just didn't care and can't believe you did that. And what an awful person." Well, guess what? That happens to be the thing that saves them all. And so, I think, the beyond the lesson of just sometimes the leadership style you have is not the emotional thing your employees need. And sometimes, that's what's needed to get the mission done. They don't have to be happy.

Grace: Yep, yep.

Jarrah: I think that this would have worked a lot better on multiple fronts if they had been stranded on this planet for a longer period of time.

Gray: Yeah, I didn't understand why they didn't just go deliver the vaccines and come back.

Jarrah: Yeah, there was a lot of pieces, especially watching this, knowing that Kirk is just like, "No, I'm not delivering your stupid vaccines. We're going to wait until these people have investigated this quasar." During COVID that doesn't hold up. But also, I just feel like, yeah, maybe they're stranded on this planet for two weeks and they really aren't sure they're getting rescued. And Spock, during this whole time has been seeming like maybe not interested in rescue. Maybe he's interested in survival for a few, but pretty open that he's considering leaving people behind or whatever. Then, you can see some of that anxiety starting to build and that being a more realistic reaction. But it just felt like it was too fast. And why are they insisting on having funerals when the Enterprise is not that far away? So, I think it would've worked better if the survival stakes were higher.

Sarah: I definitely think this was an inspiration for- I think it was *Yesterday's Enterprise* where Data is in command and the one crew member is being so antagonistic and I actually think *Next Gen* did a better job of showing that and how to deal with it. I think Data did a lovely job of dealing with that officer.

Jarrah: It's not *Yesterday's Enterprise*, but I'm forgetting the name of the episode right now. But I do know which one you mean, and I agree.

Sarah: Any other thoughts on *Galileo Seven*?

Grace: It would be a great band name. [Gray laughs]

Jarrah: I will say that I think *Learning Curve* did it better of-- *Learning Curve*, the *Voyager* episode, where Tuvok has to bring into line the Maquis troublemakers. It's essentially the same plot, but the conflict feels a lot more realistic and the steps that they take feel a lot less ridiculous.

Grace: You've got to love with a 50-year franchise, we're able to say, "But another series did it better." [laughter]

Gray: Yeah.

Jarrah: Yeah, 30 years later.

Grace: 30 years later, they finally got it down.

Jarrah: So much running. So much running. And I don't know, I guess maybe just that I'm not a runner. I hope that there is, like, Starfleet methodology for instilling team discipline that does not always involve running. [laughter]

Grace: Today, I learned management is 80% jogging. [laughter] Teamwork.

Gray: They had that with Tilly in the *Discovery* as well-

Grace: It did, yeah.

Gray: -when she was studying. Yeah, she still did running then, so.

Sarah: But only because she wanted to get into leadership. Up until then, she wasn't having to run. So, maybe that's the trick. Just don't try to be a captain. [laughs]

Jarrah: It also seemed like Michael was again recommending it as, like, a way to facilitate discipline as something that worked for her. It didn't seem like it was like Starfleet makes you run a marathon every day.

Gray: Speaking of *Discovery* and teamwork, my sister, when I was mentioning that I was coming on this podcast, said that she's always been impressed with the team that Tilly and Stamets make. Like, the two of them together just seem to be this powerhouse of being able to do anything.

Jarrah: Cool.

Sarah: And now with Jett Reno.

Grace: Yay.

Gray: Yes. Yes. Oh, so wonderful. [laughs]

Grace: Got to love that Jett Reno is just universally loved.

Gray: Yes.

Sarah: Oh, goodness. Jett Reno and her licorice. So, moving along from *The Galileo Seven* to *The Magnificent Seven*.

Grace: Yay.

Sarah: I mean, *Magnificent Ferengi*. So, this is one of my favorite episodes of *Star Trek*, period.

Grace: Oh, it's so great.

Sarah: I especially love it for this episode of our show because you have the Ferengi facing this incredibly strong and intimidating enemy. But they succeed, and they succeed because of teamwork. And as I was, like, really looking at this episode, I was like, "Oh, this sounds a

lot like Agile teamwork," which is a methodology for software development. But if you go through their principles, a lot of what they do apply to what we see in the episode. So, one of them is the highest priority is to satisfy the customer, so they have to save [unintelligible 00:39:00] for the Grand Magus. You build your projects around motivated individuals. This is when you see Quark offering the bars of latinum from a pot that gets smaller and smaller every time a new person comes along.

The most efficient and effective method of conveying information to and within a team is face-to-face conversation. So, instead of communicating via screens, they all meet on the station and they practice in the holosuite. The team reflects on how to become more effective, then tunes and adjusts behavior accordingly. So, you see them trying to be like a Federation team and come in with phasers ablazing, and it all goes horribly wrong. And then, they're like, "Wait a second. This is not what we need to do as Ferengi. What do each of us do? Well, let's do that."

Grace: And where does Iggy Pop work into this mechanic here?

Sarah: Ah, that is the last principle I was going to mention, which is welcome change in requirements, even late in development. So, they get to the abandoned station and Iggy Pop comes in with an entire army and they're like, "Crap, what are we going to do?" They accidentally shoot their hostage and they have to change the plan on the run. But yes, because they're able to adapt, they are able to succeed.

Grace: Ah.

Jarrah: That was impressive.

Grace: Dude, I was saying that as a joke and it actually worked.

Gray: Yeah. [laughter]

Gray: Full disclosure. In another life, I was a Certified Scrum Master. So, yes, I totally agree with all of these things.

Jarrah: It's funny too that their shared purpose is essentially money. [laughs]

Grace: Yes.

Gray: Yeah. Yeah--

Sarah: Except for the one guy who just wants to kill.

Jarrah: Oh, yeah, that-- Yeah. [laughter]

Grace: They found the one bloodthirsty Ferengi.

Sarah: He's not like other Ferengi

Grace: We all knew he had to be out there.

Jarrah: And there is a degree to which risk brings together groups. There's a shared risk as well as shared reward. There's a degree to which that's unhealthy. And you wouldn't want to see that in a workplace place.

Grace: Especially not where your mother's safety is involved, no.

Jarrah: Yeah. Not to that degree of literalness, but you do have this element of you need to put yourself out there if you're developing a new idea and then being-- I like that point about being able to adjust course, which is a problem you can have if your teams are ginormous. And then, depending on the roles that people play, if everyone is empowered in a team, then sometimes changing course can be challenging to do quickly.

Gray: Oh, yes. I've done a lot of theater and--

Grace: You've worn so many hats. Oh, my gosh. [laughs]

Gray: It's true. But I have worked with a few theaters by consensus groups. And as much as I would love to be all hippy-dippy and say, "Yes, this is the way to do it. Everyone--" I hate that. I want to have one person and a team that's going to realize their vision and then it can be somebody else's turn to realize someone else's vision. But for that one project, we need to have somebody that is directing it. Otherwise, it's just a mess of compromise and different directions that don't work well.

Grace: Don't worry. I can be hippy-dippy for the both of us.

Gray: All right. [laughs] Yeah. I think that it doesn't have to be necessarily life threatening, but it can also just be time intensive, for Worldbuilders, our team, we actually had an entirely new team a year ago. There was a lot of turnover at the organization and even the one person who was left over from the previous one was in a different role. So, it was all of us learning how the organization works and how to work together at the same time. And we started with small fundraisers, but each one has a, we're going to fundraise during this time. And there's a lot of prep that goes into it. And then you go through this intense thing and you come out the other side and you're like, "Huh, how'd that go?" And like, you say the agile thing, you review it and you try and do better next time.

So, I find that while life threatening doesn't necessarily have to do it, it's definitely that if you can turn it into a story, which I think is what these *Trek* episodes do, is you turn your own situations into a story that helps to create that team because you have these things. You can say, "Hey, remember when we did the end of your fundraiser with the Women of Warp and how awesome they were on the channel?" and things like that, that becomes a part of that bond in the team.

Jarrah: Oh, yeah. Think about how many *Star Trek* shows kick off with the captain making a big motivational speech of some kind. So, there's definitely that bit of narrative construction to give folks a sense of the bigger purpose and the fact that their role is important.

Gray: Yeah, absolutely.

Sarah: Yeah. My dad's office, when I worked for him a while back, we would have a staff meeting every Thursday. And there was time set aside in that meeting every week for process improvement. And for anyone, say, like, "Okay, we're having a bottleneck at this point in the process," and anyone could come up with suggestions on how to improve it. And we would constantly improve our processes for going through tax returns. And it gave everybody a sense of ownership in what was going on, even though they were an employee.

Gray: Yeah, the sense of ownership, I think, is important. I'm trying to think of different examples of that within the *Trek* episodes, aside from just the general Starfleet mission. But I think that's kind the problem in *The Good Shepherd* is that none of the people feel like they have a stake in things, especially the one who's the cosmologist. Like, he doesn't care about Starfleet or exploration and he hates space and things like that.

And I think that trying to instill a sense of ownership is a difficult task sometime because they never show there's somebody who doesn't actually get in the team. The benefit of the narrative structure is they get to just write it in a happy ending. And, "Look, everyone did their thing. Even though this person died, he died fulfilling his most joyful day in the world." And so, I think that there's a limit to how much lessons we can get from it, I guess, would be the way would be what I'm trying to say.

Sarah: I mean, they do kind of do that and take me out to the holosuite when Sisko won't let Rom on the team, and then at the end, that becomes more important than Sisko's original objective.

Jarrah: I feel like the holodeck episodes are some of the few examples we have of teams forming a little bit more organically outside of the Team Starfleet, like, "We're just doing this adventure together because of our work roles." And so, taking it to the holosuite is one thing, they need enough people to make a baseball team. And it's pretty funny that we're almost an hour into this episode and have barely talked about sports given that we're talking about teams. [laughter] May be not surprising.

Grace: We made it eventually, didn't we?

Jarrah: But similarly, *Bride of Chaotica* is another one that I was thinking where you bring together, you have Tuvok and The Doctor on a team because of the way that they're working in the holodeck, Tom and Harry doing adventures together on the holodeck because they're friends. You have Data and Geordi doing Sherlock Holmes, and then Pulaski comes in. So, I like that holodeck provides some more opportunities for these more teams of choice to form.

Sarah: Or Badda-Bing, which is both a holodeck episode and a caper episode.

Grace: Yeah. [Gray laughs]

Jarrah: And just because they're all friends with Vic.

Sarah: I feel like, even though it's one of the most hated episodes, I love *Move Along Home*. [laughter] I love it to pieces.

Grace: They definitely are a team and they do things together. [laughter]

Sarah: They group problem solve.

Grace: Yes. Sort of. Eventually.

Sarah: In the escape room from hell.

Grace: Yep.

Gray: I didn't realize it's one of the most hated, but I can definitely understand why.

Sarah: It's wonderful. I think it's the first time you see any character development from Quark.

Grace: It's true. Yeah.

Sarah: Who's kind of forced to be a part of the team.

Grace: Yeah. That's a very good point.

Jarrah: Oh, and also, you also had it on your list, but just I feel like I can't let the episode finish without bringing up *Bar Association*.

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: Which the team of workers is against the oppressor, Quark. [Gray laughs]

Grace: Yes. Communism, the ultimate form of teamwork. Smile at the camera. [laughter]

Jarrah: It's such a delightful episode, and you have to love Rom kind of sticking his neck out there for what becomes a cause. And you're rallying people based on a bit more of an enlightened self-interest and the need for solidarity. And it's lovely.

Grace: Unionize. Support your local unions. Yes.

Jarrah: And then, you also have the rest of the crew trying to decide what side of the team-- like, what team to pick. And I still don't believe that Worf had crossed the picket line, but--[crosstalk]

Grace: I absolutely believe that O'Brien would tackle him for crossing a picket line though.

Jarrah: Yeah, well. And isn't that-- like, what happens is they all end up in jail because of that? Yeah, so I absolutely believe that part. But that is also kind of the thing is, like, all the other folks get roped into the team drama, like, "Are you going to be on Team Quark or Team Rom?"

Grace: See it as so much as Worf making a conscious, "Screw this union decision," so much as a, "I'm tired, I don't give a crap," decision, which is just as bad.

Gray: Do the movies count? I mean, are we-- [crosstalk]

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: Why not?

Gray: We really haven't mentioned that much at all. And I was thinking that in particular *The Voyage Home*, that one, I think, always made me think of teamwork. It's like, "Hey, we have a clear mission we have to do and everybody has their roles that plays to their strengths," although Chekov on an aircraft carrier is just hilarious. Or, "We have things that we think will play to their strengths," but they don't necessarily like Scotty and the Computer. [Jarrah laughs]

Grace: Which in a meta way is also a really good form of teamwork of the actors and showing just what they're all good at and showcasing that. And that just makes for a good movie.

Gray: Yeah, yeah. That's always been one of my favorites.

Jarrah: I think the movies do that, splitting people off into groups of two a lot, and *Voyage Home* is an example of that. It's pretty fun. It's one of the few ways you can get an ensemble feel while still covering your bases of a plot. *Star Trek Beyond* also does a good example of that, where they've got Sulu and Uhura doing a thing and Scotty in the forest with Jaylah. And so, there's that. *First Contact* has, like, the team on the planet and the team on the ship.

So, yeah, there's definitely a few movies that I think capture more of that ensemble feel by creating kind of mini teams.

Gray: That brings to mind the Spock, Kirk and Uhura in *Star Trek Into Darkness*, which is, I think, the only time I can think of that sort of interpersonal relations in a team is kind of highlighted and how that can cause both friction and hilarity within interactions.

Jarrah: Yeah. We do have some other examples of, like, love triangles, threatening teams like Paris and Neelix's conflict that they have to resolve by saving an alien baby in, I want to say, *Parallax*? [laughs]

Grace: You know that classic plot point of throw an alien baby into the mix.

Gray: Yeah.

Grace: Such a hackneyed cliché.

Gray: Are you having relationship troubles? We have an alien baby we can deliver to you.

Jarrah: Yeah.

Sarah: Tale as old as time.

Jarrah: And *Picard* definitely gets into the more fraught areas of, like, inter-individual issues interfering in a team cohesion.

Gray: That's true which honestly makes, I think, to some extent, a bit more realistic situation. I sort of wish there had been more in-depth things. It's fun to watch everything work together like clockwork. That's why we like the caper films. But at the same time, I do enjoy the, "Hey, this didn't go so well. We have to deal with this stuff and how are we going to do that and what happens afterwards?"

Grace: Okay, what's plan B?

Gray: Yeah, exactly.

Sarah: You know who I think the tightest knit team in all of *Star Trek* is?

Jarrah: Who?

Sarah: Is the genetically enhanced people that Dr. Bashir works with on *Deep Space Nine*.

Gray: Oh.

Grace: They heist their way out of their medical jail and into deep space. That's pretty awesome.

Jarrah: Yeah. So, I'm going to leave that for another episode, my thoughts on Bashir's genetically engineered pals.

Grace: Another band name right there.

Gray: Speaking of genetically engineered, there's all of Khan's people.

Sarah: Yeah.

Grace: Yeah.

Gray: They're definitely a team. At least in the movie, when they're allowed to be.

Jarrah: Yeah. As opposed to like Soong's Augments that are just like-- they're loyal to him--

Grace: And they're all very clearly J. Crew models. [Gray laughs]

Jarrah: Yeah. But they're not that hard to turn against each other. And same with the Synths and Picard.

Grace: I think it's because they're all teenagers and as teenagers, we all hate each other. [laughter]

Sarah: Do the Borg count as a team?

Gray: I was just thinking that, yeah.

Grace: Not a great example of a cohesive team but argh.

Gray: Aren't they all one organism? So, therefore--

Jarrah: Yeah. What were you saying about consensus-based decision making? [laughter]

Gray: Yes, yeah.

Jarrah: I feel like it's actually the opposite. Even though it's called the Collective, it is actually the opposite, in that it is like a brutal, inhumane efficiency.

Gray: Right, I agree. I think it's-- Yeah. It's the anti-team.

Sarah: How about the exocomps?

Jarrah: Hmm.

Gray: Hmm.

Grace: Maybe if we'd gotten to see more of them.

Jarrah: Yeah, I don't know. I feel like Peanut Hamper kind of took down the exocomp brand. [laughter]

Grace: Peanut Hamper. the Lando Calrissian of *Star Trek*.

Jarrah: Ooh, how about *The First Duty* as an example of like, "Hey, part of teamwork means lying to protect your friends"?

Grace: Oh, yeah, yeah. Covering each other's asses. [Gray laughs]

Sarah: So, I think we're coming up on an hour. That's about all the time we have today. Gray, where can people find you on the internet?

Gray: So, you can find Worldbuilders on Twitter @worldbuilders. Pretty easy. And on Instagram, @worldbuildersinc. So, those are main socials. I would love it if people would

come and visit our Worldbuilders Weekly, which we have a Twitch, [twitch.tv/worldbuilders](https://www.twitch.tv/worldbuilders) every Tuesday at noon Central time. We have authors and artists and creators and game designers and geeks doing good, which we've also just turned into-- some of the episodes into a podcast as well, worldbuilders.org/podcast. But just yeah, if you pay attention to when we do our fundraisers, because they are a lot of fun--

Even if you can't donate, just come and enjoy the different talks and the guests that we have. As you know, Sarah, we have a lot of fun people. And we also do sell really cool, awesome stuff to help fund our mission in worldbuildersmarket.com. So, those are the places to find us. And we're all around the socials. There's too many for me to list, [Sarah laughs] but basically, if you look up-- if you search for Worldbuilders or Geeks Doing Good, you'll find us. And we'd love to hear from you.

Sarah: Well, thank you so much for being here today. And, Jarrah, where can people find you?

Jarrah: You can find me on Twitter [@J-A-R-R-A-H-PENGUIN](https://twitter.com/J-A-R-R-A-H-PENGUIN).

Sarah: Very cool. And, Grace, where can folks find you?

Grace: Find me on Twitter [@bonecrusherjenk](https://twitter.com/bonecrusherjenk). And you can also find me writing for the Women at Warp blog.

Sarah: And I'm Sarah Goldie. And you can find me on Twitter [@SarahMiyoko](https://twitter.com/SarahMiyoko). And you can find my fanzine, Star Trek Quarterly, on Facebook.

Grace: To learn more about our show or to contact us, visit womenatwarp.com or find us on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram [@womenatwarp](https://www.instagram.com/womenatwarp). You can also email us at crew@womenatwarp.com. And for more Roddenberry podcasts, visit podcasts.rodtenberry.com.

Sarah: And thanks, folks, and we'll see you next time.

[Women at Warp theme]

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