

- Made decisions with council of elders
- Generally was elected by strength or prowess in hunting, or by lineage
- Gives thanks to Chiefs who died for food and to the Creator during feasts
- Directs village to duties for the day, and make sure food is shared equally
- Great respect for chief
- Different types of chiefs
- War chief in warring periods
- Medicine Man chief for purposes of healing and worship
- A leader of a council of elders
- Village headman
- Elders included females
- Female elders had more power in certain regions
- During war it could be a different war leader
- During peace it could be a different leader
- Shared leadership with experts in areas
- Always had support
- Mostly camps run themselves
- Four different camps based on season
- Chief would make preparations for camps and time of moving
- Gave responsibility for daily jobs
- Always organizing
- Talking and discussing with elders
- Led spiritual practices
- Organizes vision quests
- Preserved food for winter camps
- At spring camp people were nourished more
- Protected community
- Met with other chiefs
- Settled conflict and problems
- Lived normal life when there isn't any business to conduct

# A Day in the Life of a First Nations Chief

Chief Tahatan had begun breaking his fast upon a simple meal of pemmican, a mixture of meat, crushed berries and animal fat. When he was done, he donned his headdress and fur clothing.

Winter was coming, and he needed to prepare the winter camp to be habitable for his people; he also needed to prepare enough dried and smoked meat, along with dried produce in order to see his people fed throughout winter. He convened a council with the wise and sagely elders of council to advise him on what must be done for the day.

"We must send most of the young men of our village to hunt game. We have enough firewood to last through the winter."

"No", said another, "We must focus on sending them to split wood to make fires for staying warm in the winter, as we have plenty of food stored for us."

"What good is firewood if we cannot feed ourselves"?

"When we hunt the animals, we will have fur and meat to sustain us."

Tahatan raised his hands for quiet. "Both are vital to our survival; seeing as both of our supplies are dwindling, I will dispatch two groups of ten men to each task so that we may have both sustenance and warmth."

All elders present at the council nodded in agreement, praising the wisdom of their chief. "I will have them notified at once," Tahatan declared. It took the better part of the next two hours to decide on the other matters at hand. Relieved at the end of such a lengthy council, Tahatan took his leave to sup and to prepare for his meeting with the chief of the Dene K'e.

He went back to his tent to enjoy his meal. It comprised of a great slab of venison smothered with mashed yams. As he was eating he pondered about how the encounter with the neighbouring chief would go, and if he would need to bring any men with him. He decided on two of his village's strongest men to bring with him. He took a short nap of a half hour to prepare himself for the long journey ahead.

Upon awaking, he took leave of his tent to fetch the two men who would be accompanying him. As he was making his way to their tents, he chanced upon two of the hunters he had dispatched earlier to hunt for stags and deer arguing about who would take the choicest pieces of meat from the kill the two of them had made.

"I drew first blood! I should be the one to take the finest parts", bellowed one of the hunters.

"First blood? Who cares about that? Mine own arrow struck the killing blow, if not for me the stag would have escaped", exclaimed the second hunter.

"Shame on the both of you," scolded Tahatan. You should give the meat to the village so that we may give thanks to Creator for providing us with this meat, and so that the village may enjoy such fine meat."

"Forgive us, they said in unison, "We were caught up in a quarrel and did not stop to think of the village".

"I accept your profession of apology. Now deliver this to the women of our village to dry and smoke". The men scurried away quickly, and now Tahatan would begin his journey.

They walked through dense foliage for an hour, when suddenly a thunderstorm came upon them, so fierce that it almost blew trees away from their roots. They had no choice but to head back for fear of catching a fever and being struck by the Creator's wrath.

When they arrived back in their village, it was dusk, so most of the village was asleep by now. The two men who had accompanied him took their leave, and Tahatan retired to his tent to rest for the next day, where he would be moving near the winter camp as they were a nomadic village. Tahatan laid his head down on his bedrest and fell into a sound sleep.