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Design Spotlight: First Edition Kazon [Tweet](#) [G+](#)

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"Kazon sects control this part of the quadrant. Some have food, some have ore, some have water. They all trade and they all kill each other for it." - Neelix, "Caretaker, Part I"

Overview

When *Voyager* was pulled into the Delta Quadrant, they immediately encountered new friends and new enemies; the Kazon were the first of the latter we encountered. The Kazon Order was fractured into different sects, each of which competed for resources - often violently. Modeled after street gangs, these hilariously coiffed aliens antagonized the crew for three seasons. In *First Edition*, the affiliation has struggled to find an identity and a place in the game.

At a Glance

Here's a quick look at the Kazon Affiliation:

Kazon

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Nouns | 33 Cards (1 Facility, 27 Personnel, 5 Ships) |
| Missions | 10 |
| First Appearance | Voyager (2001) |
| Recent Appearance | Metamorphosis (2018) |
| Signature Skill | OFFICER (44.4%) |
| Attack Restriction | NONE (Attack Anyone) |
| Appears In | Voyager |
| Doesn't Appear In | Enterprise, TOS, TNG, DS9, and Movies |

Strengths

Delta Quadrant Affiliations - I wrote about the general strengths of the [A](#) affiliations in my spotlight on [Delta Quadrant Federation](#), so please read over that article for details. In summary, the [A](#) affiliations feature high skill density, above average attributes, and a favorable points-to-requirements ratio on missions. The Kazon are no exception; there is exactly one (1) [A](#) personnel that has less than three (3) skills.

Kazon are a great choice for a player that wants to be aggressive. Like the Klingons, the Kazon don't have *any* affiliation attack restrictions. If you're playing Kazon, you can engage in battle against anyone, even other Kazon! Building a fleet is easy, as leaders are prodigious amongst the affiliation and almost all of their ships are universal. You can even stack ships together aboard a [Kazon Warship](#) for easy travel, then unleash an entire armada against an opponent (although the "Carrier Fleet" deck has been reigned in with errata).

Leaders - A leader for battle (or for a card referring to a leader) is any personnel with Leadership skill or with OFFICER skill or classification; or any personnel allowed by a card to act as a leader... Being a leader does not confer Leadership skill on a personnel. [See the glossary, page 41.](#)

If pure combat aggression isn't your desire, then you're still in luck if you play Kazon; they are one of the best affiliations in the game at [commandeering ships](#). There are two Kazon cards that can download [Boarding Party](#), which is one of the few ways to reliably get personnel aboard an opponent's ship. Once aboard, the Kazon can murder the crew and then take the ship with [Commandeer Ship](#) (downloaded with the aforementioned [Boarding Party](#)). It's a lot of moving parts, but the Kazon come equipped with most of the require pieces.

The Kazon also have one other unique ability, although it is very niche. If you have [The Kazon Collective](#) in play, you get immunity to assimilation. Since the Borg are one of the bigger threats to any Delta Quadrant player, having an entire affiliation immune to their assimilation tricks is a significant strength. **(Side note: I believe this is one of the situations where Decipher made a naming mistake. The "entity name" for the Kazon should be the Kazon Order, not the Kazon Collective. No shade intended here, I just found that to be interesting trivia while researching this article.)**

Weaknesses

Oh boy, here we go. The Kazon are in a rough place, and most of that is the fault of decisions made by the Continuing Committee. Before you call for anyone's head, this isn't the result of a deliberate desire to do harm to an affiliation. It's a result of lots of smaller decisions - mostly errata - that have had second- and third-order consequences on the poor Kazon. This is an affiliation in a rough place, still dealing with the aftermath of decisions made by the original designers. But this isn't about placing blame, and is instead about analyzing the situation.

If you take a look at [the Kazon ships](#), you'll see that all of them but one ([A](#) Voyager) have the same line of text: "Has no transporters." You wouldn't think that three little words could be so devastating, but they put the Kazon at a major disadvantage. You don't think about how easy it is to fly your ship to a mission and beam personnel down to attempt until you can't do that. I'll grant that the Kazon have the ability to land their ships, which helps, but it's still extra hoops to jump through. Not to mention the fact that there is exactly one [A](#) personnel - Seska - that has Transporter Skill.

A consistent weakness of all [A](#) affiliations is the lack of available sources for new personnel and ships. There are only thirty-three (33) Kazon-affiliation cards in *First Edition*. Compare that to the forty-two (42) Vulcan-affiliation cards or to the eighty-eight (88) [A](#) personnel, and it's easy to see why this is a big problem for Kazon. Combined with the fact





that the Kazon lost their auto-treaty with errata to The Kazon Collective, and you'll soon understand why they are hurting.

Another problem with the Kazon is their restrictions on free reporting. Most affiliations have a headquarters or similar card that provides a free report to a subset of that affiliation's personnel; for example, Admirals can report for free to [Office of the President](#). Kazon have a free report from The Kazon Collective, but it has a significant added cost. If I'm playing Federation with Office, I can play any Admiral there that's in my hand. Not true for the Kazon! I can play Kazon for free, but only if I already have a Maje of the same sect in play. It's extra hoops to jump through, and although we've [mitigated it a little](#), it's still more work for a free play than most affiliations have to do.



Looking Ahead

The Kazon feature some high quality personnel, but are weighed down with baggage that leaves them in a rough position. *First Edition* is a game where Trek sense is paramount, which is why Kazon ships don't have transporters (they didn't in the show). But it's a huge disadvantage compared to the other affiliations without sufficient "compensation" to account for it. It's a tough area, because there are players that will be **very** unhappy if we hand-wave the lack of transporters away, even if doing so would be a huge boon for the affiliation.

I'd love to see Kazon embrace their talent for commandeering. It's not an area of the game that's gotten a lot of development (the sub-par [Secondary Market](#) aside) and the Kazon already have cards that play into that space. I would like to see them get a scavenger mentality, riffing off of Neelix's quote that opened the article. Minor spoiler alert: there might be something to this effect in a current design file, so keep your eyes peeled. The Kazon need an identity, and this might be just what the doctor ordered.

Kazon, like the other  affiliations, face a supply shortage. We should explore adding in Delta Quadrant treaties to replace the loss (via errata) of the built-in treaty that used to be on The Kazon Collective. I can see making not only DQ/DQ treaties, but some thematic DQ/AQ treaties; in particular, I'd love to make a Cardassian/Kazon  treaty. However, treaties don't solve the problem of providing a Kazon-only option for players. We're going to have to ask some hard questions about the Kazon (and Hirogen and Vidlians) - is there enough material out there to support them as stand alone decks? If so, how do we implement it? These are big issues and ones I'm optimistic we'll be able to solve.

Conclusion

I've never been a big fan of the Kazon, be it in the show or in the game. I think I've been turned off of them by the loss of potential. In *Star Trek: Voyager*, they felt flat to me as antagonists, but they had the potential to be cool had they been used differently. I wish that Decipher had found a way to enable these affiliations without relying on an abundance of   personnel. Still, I'm eternally an optimist. I think that we can find a way to redeem the Kazon, and I look forward to the day when we're able to do so.

Thanks for reading!

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