And While Iâ€™m on the Subject of Chiefsâ€¦

Description

I have plenty of â€œsea storiesâ€• about the E-7s, -8s, and -9s that made me look successful for 20 years. Most of them are uplifting and more than a few just plain humorous. Some are not so good, but I found out that incompetents, lazy, and slackers come in both genders, all colors and backgrounds. Conversely, dedicated, hard charging, make it happen people come in both genders and all colors and backgrounds. In both cases, there is no exclusivity.

When I was an XO, and we were on cruise, a few of the Chief Petty Officers were complaining to the Senior Chief Petty Officer of the Command (SCPOC) about how bad the junior officer were. Well, instead of the EMCS doing the â€œright thing,â€• and having a short â€œmeetingâ€• in the Goat Locker, where he would have read them the riot act and then handed them the solution, he came to me.

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I enjoy solving problems. On the other hand, on a Persian Gulf deployment, being the Navigator, the second in command, and the guy who had to keep all the right balls in the air, I was sort of busy with the â€œbig pictureâ€• stuff. When the SCPOC brought this one and dropped it in my lap, I was slightly annoyed, so I had called the meeting in the Goat Locker.

I didnâ€™t yell, I didnâ€™t throw anything around. I just provided them with this fact of life (or words to this effect):

â€œYou know how you you have served with COs and XOs and department heads that really sucked and made your life miserable, because they didnâ€™t know anything? Well, guess what? Their CPOS, when they were division officers failed to take them aside and train them, so you got stuck holding the bag.â€•

â€œNot only do you have my permission to bring your JO down here, close the door, put a cup of coffee, no, strike that, can of Coke, in their hands and tell them how life is, I actually expect you will do that, because thatâ€™s your job. If you donâ€™t take the time to do it, youâ€™ll just be stuck with them as department heads, XOs and COs who will make your life miserable and youâ€™ll have no one to blame but yourself.â€•

It sure seemed pretty clear to me how to solve the problem. Once more, I refer you back to one of my earliest posts about RDC Mac and his ensigns beginnings.

We need those senior enlisted to step up to the plate and form a bond with their â€œbutter bars,â€• so the wisdom of real leadership can be passed on. We also need the â€œbutter barsâ€• to resist the urge to think they have a commission and therefore a corner on the knowledge market in the profession of arms. When this happens, we see a military that can slice and dice more bad guys before breakfast, than most other armed forces could do in a week.

Since we see this capability in action via the many blogs, I know there is this sort of â€œtrainingâ€• happening. Letâ€™s hope the tradition stays with us.

A few â€œhall of fameâ€• names of my enlisted mentors (in order of appearance):

OSC Michael P. MacCaffery
RMC Hansen
GMCM(SW) Don Dolance
STGCM(SW) David Frey
FTCS(SW) David Magnus
GSCS(SW) John â€œJCâ€• Wiegman
GSMC(SW) John Graham
GSEC(SW) Denny Rohr
RMCM(SW) Rumbaugh
OSC(SW) Michael Bennett
GMCM(SW) David Cress

To swipe General Doolittleâ€™s book title, Iâ€™ll just say, I could never be so lucky again, to have such great senior enlisted men who took the time to invest in me.

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1. "Sea Stories"
2. History
3. Leadership
4. Military
5. Military History
6. Navy

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