Ropeyarn Sunday "Sea Stories" and Open Trackbacks

Description

Iâ€™ve got a short story today, one related to the current political buzzword: â€œChange.â€•

At one command, I worked for a driven man. He slept some during the day, but mostly spent his nights awake, once making the remark â€œThatâ€™s how you get out of writing night orders!â€• (forgetting he only edited and signed what the navigator handed to him, but thatâ€™s another sea story).

Anyhow, the scheduled change of command was coming, and we were looking forward to â€œchange.â€• In our minds, this sort of management style was, shall we say â€œdifficultâ€• to perform under, yet we drove on, knowing the tunnel was a one way traffic flow, and the several lights we had seen ahead had turned into the virtual trains that are joked about, but this time the lighting at 000 deg relative was natural light.

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An amount of work had been backlogged by the leadershipâ€™s working ethic, or perhaps I should say desire to determine exactly the right tone, wording and nuanced references. Many, many edits took place of reports leaving the command. So, there we were, at sea, during a fleet exercise for the upcoming deployment, with full watch standing responsibilities, with the direction to get everything wrapped up.

Needless to say, once more, sleep was an almost unheard of luxury for about a week. One late evening, the Ops Boss and I were in the donated staff space on our guest vessel, slogging through our assigned tasks, adding some manufactured cheer to our attitudes, when all of a sudden, he looked at me and said: â€œWhat if heâ€™s (the incoming commander) worse?â€• Hard, in that moment, to imagine, but there was that possibility. We got quiet and went back to work. At about 0230 on the morning of the change of command (at sea, working environment, with the Battle Group Commander heloing over to speak), I was told, as the signature went on the report that had been in the works for 6 months, that it was my fault that it was late (2 months at that point). A cheery â€œAye, aye, sirâ€• was all I could dare to respond with. That job was now done.

â€œChangeâ€• occurred about 1100 that morning. After lunch, we were ordered to the commanderâ€™s cabin, he looked about, with a big grin on his face and asked â€œdid everyone get enough sleep last night?â€• Oh, noâ€¦.He continued, as no one said a word: â€œGet to bed. I canâ€™t afford tired people making bad decisions. Iâ€™ll take the watch and call you when Iâ€™m getting tired.â€•

Needless to say, there was major change in the working environment.

Category

1. Open Trackbacks

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