





A free publication by **The Nautical Institute** in association with the **Royal Institute of Navigation**



Spread the mentoring message

Navigating a ship is a complex task, one that takes years of training, but more importantly years of experience. This is why between each rank you must obtain sea time. Classrooms are great for introducing new ideas and skills but those skills have to be developed and refined through practice on board.

Most mariners will have fond memories of fellow officers or pilots who took a few minutes of their time to help us learn lessons at sea. This sharing of knowledge is often referred to as mentoring, and it has been a key part of life at sea since the days when seafarers literally had to 'learn the ropes'. Most often, the knowledge is handed down from a more senior officer to a junior colleague. However, as bridges become equipped with more technology we often see juniors mentoring seniors. Either way, the most important thing is that knowledge is being shared for everyone's benefit. Even as a cadet, you will have knowledge that is valuable and can be

passed on to those coming after you.

Mentoring can take many forms. Formal programmes exist where a mentor can adopt a mentee for many years, sometimes spanning a whole career. Other types of mentoring are more spontaneous, taking as little as ten minutes, perhaps even over a cup of coffee. The Nautical Institute believes that mentoring is essential for professional development and has been promoting the 'ten-minute challenge' for many years. If you are not already mentoring, please take just ten minutes (a month, a week, a voyage, a day etc.) to share your experience with someone else. If that works, try and find time for another ten minutes and so on (see article on page four).

During discussions about mentoring with our fellow maritime organisations we concluded that we need to share examples of how good mentoring can help people develop their skills. So we invite you to share your own good mentoring

experiences. If someone took the time to help you or share their experience with you, please repay that favour by taking the time to tell us about it. Examples will be posted on our website, shared among the industry and used to promote the benefits of mentoring in the shipping industry.

Mentoring at sea doesn't just improve safety and commercial services. It improves life on board as well. This simple act of kindness can reduce social isolation, help overcome language and cultural barriers and generally improve your working and living environment.

On page six we share some of the stories that we have already heard. These acts of mentoring have made a tremendous difference and can be remembered for a lifetime. Please enjoy this edition of The Navigator and discuss with your fellow navigators how a positive mentoring environment can be encouraged on board your vessel. Then take a few minutes of your time to tell us.

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202 Lambeth Road, London SE1 7LQ, UK Tel:+44 (0)20 7928 1351 Fax:+44 (0)20 7401 2817 navigator@nautinst.org www.nautinst.org

With support from: 1 Kensington Gore, London, SW7 2AT, UK Tel: +44 (0)20 7591 3134 Fax: +44 (0)20 7591 3131 www.rin.org.uk

Editorial committee: Editor Emma Ward Design Phil McAllister

For The Nautical Institute Bridget Hogan, Lucy Budd, Laura Nicholls, David Patraiko FNI, Theresa Nelson MNI For the RIN Dr Andy Norris FRIN FNI

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We welcome your news, comments and opinions on the topics covered in *The Navigator*.

If you would like to get in touch with us, please contact the editor, Emma Ward at navigator@nautinst.org, or look out for the LinkedIn discussion. We look forward to hearing from you.

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We welcome your news, comments and opinions on the topics covered in The Navigation. We reserve the right to edit letters for space reasons if recessary. Views expressed by letter contributors do not necessarily reflect those held by The Nautical institute. In its simplest form, mentoring occurs when someone transfers experiential knowledge to another person because they want to help that person advance their learning. It's such a straightforward idea, yet one that has enhanced careers for many generations of seafarers. That's why we're supporting The Nautical Institute in promoting the value of mentoring across the industry.

Mentoring is a state of mind and a key part of being an excellent manager. While it remains an optional part of the job, we believe that anyone in a senior role who does not realise its importance is probably not in the right position! Not only does it help future managers, but it is also about 'paying back' those who have gone before us, sharing their knowledge to make us better seafarers.

Mentoring engages people of all levels and actively encourages two-way communication. Crucially, it can only take place when both the mentor and the mentee are willing for it to happen. It offers benefits beyond the knowledge transfer, such as friendship, social inclusion and cross-cultural understanding. Not to mention a safer ship – a happier, confident crew will feel more comfortable to ask questions when they are unsure about a task and to question decisions if they think

they could be unsafe.

Ultimately, mentoring is a social responsibility for everyone, whatever their level and experience. It helps you sleep better at night because you have taken the time to share useful wisdom with another member of the crew, whether they are above, below or equal to you in the hierarchy. It's easy to take up - you could be mentoring right now and not even realise it! So why not take that extra step to recognise the process and encourage those around you to make a commitment to it too? The Nautical Institute is taking valuable steps to promote the importance of mentoring - could you help us get the message across?

Captain Sarabjut Butalia FNI Captain Pradeep Chawla FNI,

GlobalMET

Kimberley Karlshoej,

ITF Seafarer's Trust

Phil Parry,

Spinnaker Global

Captain David Patraiko FNI, The Nautical Institute

Captain Andre Le Goubin FNI Captain Kuba Szymanski FNI,

Intermanager

I would like to thank you for your efforts to make the seagoing educational environment friendlier. Today's huge flow of information would seem overwhelming if there were no such publication as *The Navigator* making it more accessible. I started my career six years ago switching from banking to seagoing. There was not a day when I felt sorry about trading in the view from my office window for a bridge panorama, but because I started my career late, I have needed to work on my knowledge at top speed. *The Navigator* has helped me a lot. **Stanislav Kozachenko, Third Officer,**

The Navigator raises awareness about safety, shares life experiences of seafarers and offers latest news and updates on the marine industry. It gives us knowledge

m/t Kalahari

about how to manage real life on board ship. Seafaring is not a simple profession, it needs a lot of responsibility and commitment. *The Navigator* has been useful to us as cadets, particularly the recent issues about building on competence, error management and S-Mode. Keep up the good work and continue inspiring seafarers around the world.

Batch Equinox, V-Ships Cadets

I have been a regular reader of *The Navigator* since the time I stepped foot on board to start my sea career. When my colleagues and I read this, we absorb a lot and discuss it with each other, helping us stay safe at sea. Indeed, you are inspiring professionalism!

Paramveer Ahuja, Third Officer, *m/t Dubai Glamour*

Find us on social media and let us know what you think #NautInst

Learning the Ropes

Captain Andre Le Goubin looks at how on board learning has remained vital over the centuries, and how today's seafarers can continue the tradition



ext year – 2018 – will mark 250 years since Captain Cook set off on his famous voyage in HMS Endeavour to the South Pacific to observe the transit of Venus across the Sun. What fantastic navigators Captain Cook and his team must have been, sailing the same oceans as we do now with such basic instruments. Cadets ('midshipmen') and junior officers joined a ship for years at a time and gained most, if not all, their nautical knowledge on board. They spent their time quite literally learning the ropes and being taught by those more experienced than themselves who were prepared to pass their knowledge on. Their teachers were their officers and leaders but were also their mentors.

Some would have been very good at mentoring, and others not so good, but I'm sure most, if not all, would have passed on some of their experiential knowledge at some point. I am also fairly certain that they would not have been paid or rewarded for mentoring but would have seen sharing their knowledge and experience with those coming up through the ranks as part of their shipboard duties. Doubtless, many would have enjoyed and gained satisfaction from such a task.

Of course, the 'ropes' that they would have learnt are totally different today, but something that has not changed is the need for seafarers to 'learn the ropes' from fellow shipmates on board. Also different is the amount of time available for the learning to take place. Back then, you may have had two or three years on board a vessel before stepping up to become a watch-keeping officer. Nowadays, you have just twelve months. Of course you also have three years in college when you pick up the theoretical knowledge that you need to become a modern officer - but that is not what I am talking about here. Instead, I am referring to the on board, practical, experiential knowledge that is so valuable and, by its very nature, can only be gained on board.

10 minute challenge

This is where mentoring comes in. The lovely tradition of pulling someone aside and taking a few minutes out of your busy schedule to teach them something new, show them how to do an unfamiliar duty, let them try something for themselves under your

watchful guidance, or (gently) correct a task they have got wrong, explaining it to them so they don't make the same mistake again.

I call this my 10 minute challenge. That is the maximum time it need take (unless you want to take longer). The same time it takes to drink a cup of tea or coffee!

Let me give you an example I saw on a ship very recently. I was on board a large oil tanker and we needed to move a couple of miles, turn to a new heading to make a lee and stop in the water. Rather than have myself (the Mooring Master / Pilot) or the Master do it, the Master handed the conn to the Second Officer and let him perform the manoeuvre. The Master remained on

opportunities when a more junior seafarer may be called upon to show a more senior person how to do something. Let me caution you here though, as I had a bad experience when I was a Third Officer and tried to show my Captain how a new piece of equipment worked; I had been on a training course for it and he hadn't. He certainly didn't take kindly to my advice! Why? Well he hadn't asked me for it, so rather than plunging on ahead like I did, wait until you are asked and then everything will be fine.

When should we start learning (and teaching) 'the ropes'? How about today? Remember, your first day on board a ship is the first day you start training to be Master.

THERE ARE SO MANY DAILY OPPORTUNITIES ON BOARD A SHIP FOR MENTORING TO TAKE PLACE, AND I ENCOURAGE YOU TO IDENTIFY AND PURSUE THEM AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE

the bridge and offered occasional advice and guidance but it was clear who was doing the job. There is no doubt that the young officer gained valuable experience from this but, from what I observed in the background, the Master clearly enjoyed being a mentor as well.

There are so many daily opportunities on board a ship for mentoring to take place and I encourage you to identify and pursue them as often as possible, either as a mentor or as a candidate (anyone who gains experiential knowledge by mentoring).

For those of you who are reading this ashore, I hope you will encourage mentoring at every opportunity on board your ships. Facilitate it and acknowledge it when you see it taking place but please, do not mandate it in any way. Of course, mentoring is not restricted to ships. If you are ashore, look around your place of work and identify opportunities to be a mentor. I'm positive you will find plenty.

Ropes at the ready!

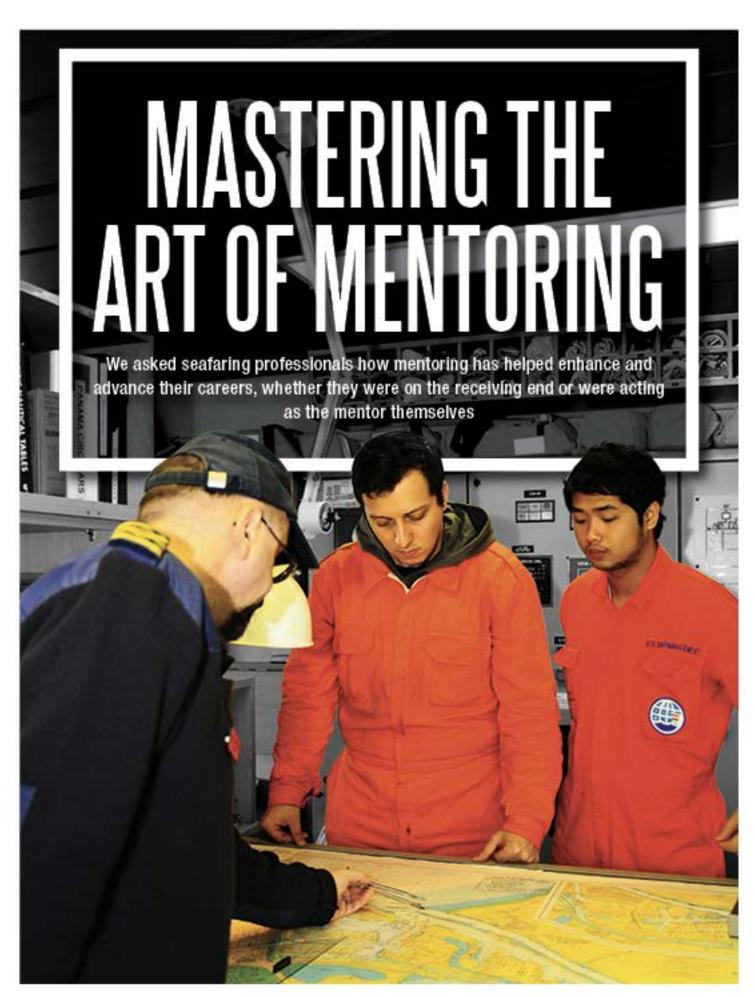
So, whose responsibility is it to show us 'the ropes' on board? It could be anyone – Captain, Chief Officer, Second Officer, Third Officer, Senior Cadet, Bosun, AB... Let's not forget about the engineers too, for they can teach us so much and they need to learn 'the ropes' as well. There may even be

I know it may seem a long way off and you may have a long way to go, but the more you can learn and experience along the way the better a Master you will be.

Who should you mentor? Anyone you can make a difference to! No matter how junior someone is, start showing them the ropes anyway. I know from personal experience how powerful this can be. One day, when they are in a position to do so, they will take the time to pass on the experiential knowledge you have shared with them.

I predict that in another 250 years' time, our successors will talk about us in the same awed tones as we do those who sailed in 1768 with Captain Cook. We are continuing the great tradition of seafaring; we're just employing some slightly different methods. Although I do wonder if they will speak in amazement about having to use such basic instruments as GPS and ECDIS!

Captain Andre Le Goubin wrote more about mentoring and being a mentor in the very first issue of *The Navigator* – find it online at http://www.nautinst.org/en/Publications/thenavigator/index.cfm He is also the author of The Nautical Institute's book '*Mentoring at Sea – the 10 minute challenge*'



It was on a cold winter's night on the northern coast of British Columbia that Captain Wedgewood and I were engaged in what was his usual evening routine. He would come to the bridge and we would discuss the past day's activities, what went right, what went wrong or what lessons we had learned. This was mentoring at its best, as we calmly discussed events. What made this evening particularly important to me was a simple statement: "Duke, you've got this job down... you need a challenge." I was in fact very comfortable with my position and my working relationship with the crew and Captain, but somewhere, somehow, the Captain knew something was missing. "You need to get on a ship where you have to fly by the seat of your pants, you need to go to the Arctic."

I was taken aback by this advice. A position on board a specialised shallow draft Arctic vessel on a six-month rotation didn't seem a terribly positive career advancement. What would I learn running back and forth on the 1,500nm of the Mackenzie River? Captain Wedgewood quietly persisted, explaining how the remote voyages, in waters for the most part inadequately surveyed, dodging river shoals and offshore ice would give me a new outlook on navigation, and how to deal with things that go "sideways" without being a short helicopter ride away from technicians, repairs or other support.

Captain Wedgewood pointed me in the direction that would become not only my professional focus but my personal passion that has lasted to this day. Within days I was hooked on the challenge, and most unexpectedly on the ice. Without that advice, I would not have gained the experience and learned from other great Captains about the subtleties of working a ship in ice that has guided my career ever since.

Captain David (Duke) Snider FNI

As a cadet, I was tasked to carry out chipping using the dreaded chipping hammer. The captain came to check on my progress. He saw me knocking away at a rusted steel plate and did not like the results. So he took the tool away from me, put on a pair of goggles and started hammering away at the rust himself. It made a lasting impression and his words still linger: "You should know how to do everyone's job on board, right from the cleaning and cooking. You have to know the bosun's job, be better than the pump man at what he does and be

able to handle the officer's responsibilities. Only then you shall be worthy of wearing stripes on your shoulder."

On board training programs need to include more hands-on training by senior officers for the juniors and trainees. I believe that hiding trainees behind the veil of paper and not showing them how to get their hands dirty could come back to haunt ships of tomorrow.

Rakshit Shastri

Throughout my career, many individuals have acted as mentors to me, offering experience, aptitude, knowledge and skills. But I learnt most from those who also showed me empathy, flexibility, understanding, respect, teaching and the ability to inspire others. As I progressed in my career, I started to study older and/or more experienced crew members to identify their positive and negative attributes.

On the other side, mentoring has been one of my own prerogatives and I have done it with great pleasure. I always take deck officers through a navigation audit, to make sure that they have the required competency level and know how to use the equipment in a safe and efficient manner. One time, I realised that the person I was guiding didn't know how to use the gain and weather adjustments on the radar equipment. The weather was foggy and once I had explained everything to them and they had made the necessary radar adjustments, they suddenly discovered a fishing boat coming up close on our starboard side.

Captain Cristian E. Ciortan MNI

One time when mentoring helped avert a potential incident was during cargo operations in port. There had been a few changes in C/O during the previous trips on the vessel and the Captain was relatively new, having only sailed for two previous month-long trips on the vessel. We needed to load a number of different bulk cargoes during the port call. The previous C/O had patiently explained the cargo systems on board the ship and allowed me to undertake the majority of the operations.

Due to his guidance, I was able to assist significantly in the loading processes and even spot potential problems before they arose so that the operations were completed without incident. If I had not been mentored in this way, the operations may not have

been quite so successful due to my lack of familiarity with the ship and its systems.

Ailsa Nelson MNI

Very early in my career as Master of a container ship we were asked by the port management to depart the berth prior to the completion of lashing, as the lashing gangs were on strike. Port management had told the Chief Officer that the previous ship had just co-operated in this way, clearing the berth and anchoring in the harbour where the crew completed lashing.

I was initially keen to assist as the strike had seriously delayed our schedule. However, I needed to confer with the owners, but it was a weekend and they were not available. So I made a telephone call to a Master with whom I had sailed several years ago. His first question was: "Do you want to be a hero?" That was all the mentoring I needed to decline the port manager's request. As things worked out, the lashing gangs returned to work shortly afterwards and we were away by the end of the day.

Captain Kevin Coulombe MNI

Good mentors allow enough space for the mentee to make their own decisions but are there to guide and, more importantly, assist if the planned action is not achieved.

I was lucky, in that I have continued to be mentored as I moved ashore. I have been trusted to carry out tasks that align with my abilities and recognise my qualifications, but have also been given guidance recognising my inexperience with working shore-side. Mentoring should continue as you move ashore and if you are mentored in the correct way, your seafaring skills will prove invaluable in the office environment.

Deidre Lane MNI

We want to hear from you!

Have you had a mentor who has changed your career? Or have you been able to make a difference to someone else? Let us know at navigator@nautinst.org! We want to collect your stories to encourage everyone to be a mentor.

Read more about mentoring on the Navinspire blog http://www.nautinst.org/en/Publications/thenavigator/nav-inspire.cfm





If you find our accident reports useful, check out The Nautical Institute's Mariners' Alerting and Reporting Scheme (MARS). A fully searchable database of incident reports and lessons, updated every month. Seen a problem yourself? Email the editor at mars@nautinst.org and help others learn from your experience. All reports are confidential — we will never identify you or your ship.

Poor leadership; explosive results

In this series, we take a look at maritime accident reports and the lessons that can be learned

What happened?

A tanker was transporting around 22,000 tonnes of methyl tert-butyl ether (MTBE), as well as several million litres of ethanol. At her first port of call, the MTBE was unloaded, but the empty tanks were not filled with inert gas to reduce the risk of explosions as they should have been. Once back at sea, a senior officer ordered junior crew members to open all the empty tanks for cleaning. The tanks still contained MTBE vapours, which mixed with oxygen to cause a highly flammable mixture. The MTBE flowed out onto the decks, and collected in pockets at various places.

As cleaning progressed, crew members began to blow compressed air down the cargo lines to clean them, unaware of the danger that a resultant static electrical charge could cause a spark that would ignite the vapour. The spark occurred, and there were two major explosions. In the panic, there was little or no attempt at an organised evacuation. Crew members jumped off the vessel as she sank – most with lifejackets; none with survival suits. Despite rescue efforts by the coast guard, the only survivors were six crew members who had managed to climb

Why did it happen?

From the start, the three senior officers on board had created an atmosphere of fear and intimidation. Junior crew members felt unable to question unsafe decisions made by their superiors and were actively prevented from reading safety, quality and environmental protection management documents. The senior officers also failed to train their subordinates in the technical skills they needed to work proficiently. When the CO ordered an unsafe cleaning process that ultimately led to an explosion and the loss of the vessel, junior officers did not have the knowledge or the confidence to question it. Fire and lifeboat drills were infrequent, making the aftermath of the accident even more catastrophic.

The issues

- > The senior officers discouraged questions from junior crew members and actively prevented them from learning how to do their jobs safely
- > The tanks were not rendered safe with inert gas after the MTBE was delivered
- Inexperienced crew members carried out highly dangerous processes when cleaning the tanks and received no supervision or correction
- > Safety measures such as immersion suits and regular fire and lifeboat drills were absent

You can download the full report at http://bit.ly/2r9TFoG

WHEN THE CHIEF OFFICER ORDERED
AN UNSAFE CLEANING PROCESS, JUNIOR
OFFICERS DID NOT HAVE THE KNOWLEDGE
OR THE CONFIDENCE TO QUESTION IT





Training the next generation

Third officer **John Malagad** has appreciated the support of mentors and senior people in the shipping industry as his career has progressed and is keen to give back. Here, he talks about the importance of mentoring and the many rewards of a life at sea

What interested you in a career at sea?

When I watched the movies *Titanic* and *Pirates of the Caribbean* I became fascinated by them and asked myself, "What if I could become a Captain?" I enrolled in one of the most prestigious maritime universities in the Philippines to begin my journey. I had to calculate positions using the stars, decode weather forecasts, learn about ship handling and manoeuvring and lots of other skills. I remained determined to go to sea and was encouraged by senior people in the industry talking about good wages, opportunities for responsibility and travel and job security at a young age.

What are the greatest rewards from your life at sea?

Rewards come after hard work and successful jobs. For me, I appreciate being able to travel and visit beautiful landmarks around the world. I have met a diverse group of people and nationalities on board ship, which has allowed me to learn about different cultures and personalities. The only thing I find hard is being away from my family for a long time.

How do you feel when you are in charge of a navigation watch?

The officer in charge of the navigational watch plays a big role in the bridge team. Nervousness, tension, stress and hesitation should be set aside for the



Name: John Malagad

Current position: Third officer

Training: John B. Lacson Foundation Maritime University, Philippines

safety of the crew and the environment. When I am in charge I feel confident due to my training and knowing that I am competent to navigate the ship in whatever situation she may face.

Tell us about a time when mentoring has helped you in your career.

During my first vessel assignment as a deck cadet I felt confused, anxious and homesick. Luckily, I was well supported by the Prospective Officer Training Program at Marlow Navigation, where I received my training. All the while I

was at sea they stayed in contact and helped keep me motivated. I now act as a career development officer with Marlow Navigation and provide similar assistance and mentoring to new prospective officers. I am happy to be helping people as I was helped myself.

Have you had experience of mentoring other people during your career?

Before my current role as a career development officer, I acted as a peer facilitator and president of my intake when I was at university. It greatly helped me develop my interactive and communication skills with other people, understanding them, mentoring them and helping them find solutions for their problems.

What do you think are the greatest challenges for future navigators?

There are always challenges in life and the shipping industry is no exception. One challenge for us seafarers is innovation and technology. Technology advances very quickly and seafarers need to adapt and familiarise themselves with the new equipment on board ships. Another challenge is finding employment; the number of seafarers is growing rapidly each year and competition is high. If you keep your motivation high and your performance strong, however, you will have nothing to worry about.

I AM HAPPY TO BE HELPING PEOPLE AS I WAS HELPED MYSELF

Two-way mentoring

Dr Andy Norris, an active Fellow of The Nautical Institute and the Royal Institute of Navigation, explains how mentoring across the ranks can break down the mysteries of bridge equipment and technology

Getting to grips with bridge equipment on a vessel will naturally result in discussion between bridge staff members; much of it definitely of a mentoring nature. This is an area where appropriate reverse mentoring can be particularly effective. Newer colleagues may have learnt many useful aspects not covered when older staff undertook their training. When new technology arrives (ECDIS being a good example) the associated training for existing officers is typically crammed into a very short course, which can mean that a lot of information is not properly assimilated.

As bridge systems steadily evolve, they accommodate newer user interface concepts that must be learned. Such changes can often come more naturally to younger users, particularly when they reflect recent developments in consumer technology. Younger people have not been so highly influenced by years of using older equipment, so their expectations of user interfaces are generally more open, allowing them to adapt to different systems more quickly.

During the 2020s we are likely to see major changes on the bridge as we increasingly embrace the advantages offered by e-navigation. This is likely to continue to emphasise the value of reverse mentoring, just as the mandatory and optional fitment of ECDIS on most vessels has done during the current decade.

[YOUNGER PEOPLE'S]
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Familiarisation: a good start

Anybody new to the bridge, whatever their seniority, must be familiarised with every piece of bridge equipment that they will be using before undertaking a watch. This is an obvious concept and is embedded in legislative requirements. However, different companies take quite different views on the formality and detail of how this should be achieved.

Whatever the quality of that initial familiarisation, it is really only a starter. Detailed knowledge comes with the actual use of the specific system on that particular vessel under different situations. This is greatly assisted by relevant discussions with colleagues and by reading the equipment handbooks. Importantly, this learning never comes to an end.

Even quite junior staff will often be

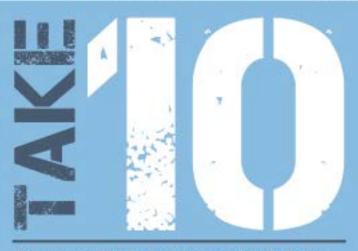
able to give highly useful knowledge to a newly arrived officer, however senior, on the detailed operation of the fitted equipment, especially any vessel-specific issues. In return, they may receive valuable comments about equipment fitted on other vessels and some useful observations about their vessel's equipment as seen from a different point of view.

Unfortunately, today's user manuals and their digital equivalents tend to be long and complex, which can put people off reading them in much detail. Fortunately, there will always be colleagues who are willing to put in the reading required and pass on what they discover. If that's not you, it's worth establishing who these people are and learning from them. However, all bridge staff should take at least an occasional look at the user manuals, whatever their experience or seniority. Not least, any useful information can then be mentored on to others.

As we get more experienced, we generally become better at determining our strengths and, more importantly, the limitations in our knowledge. Discussion with other practitioners, whatever their differences in seniority and experience, is a great way of assessing our own limitations and imparting useful knowledge to others. A two-way mentoring mindset helps everybody improve.



Contact RIN at: www.rin.org.uk | 1 Kensington Gore, London, SW7 2AT | Tel: +44 (0)20 7591 3134



This issue of *The Navigator* has explored what it means to mentor and be mentored in return

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Practice makes perfect

Navigating a ship is complex and takes years of experience to master; mentoring on the job is one of the best ways to achieve success.

Mentoring for all

Anyone can be mentored or be a mentee regardless of age or experience; everyone has some knowledge to share. Quite often juniors have more skills with technology than seniors.

3

Back-up support

Good mentors allow enough space for the mentee to make their own decisions but are there to guide and, more importantly, assist if the action does not go according to plan.

10 minute challenge

Mentoring can be a lifetime endeavour, but it can also take as little as ten minutes. Take ten minutes (a month, a voyage, a week, a day...) to help someone's understanding.

Reap the rewards

True mentoring is done without specific rewards or pay, however it can be rewarding in other ways, from having the appreciation of someone who you've helped to being able to sleep better at night in the knowledge that the crew are competent, confident and happier to ask for assistance when needed.



We're all in it together

Ships can be lonely places, particularly if you don't speak a common language. Mentoring helps build relationships on board and reduces social exclusion.

Lend us your ears

Mariners can learn a lot by listening to others, particularly if they are addressing a challenge. By using a common language on board all those who hear a conversation can learn from listening in.



Respect and understanding

If a ship adopts a policy of using a common language on board in all common spaces (bridge, engine room, mess etc.), and this is adhered to, it shows a huge amount of respect to all those who live and work on board.



Pass it or

When someone takes the time to share some knowledge with you, be thankful and repay the favour by helping and/or mentoring someone else.

10

Got a story to tell?

Do you have a favourite mentoring technique? Have you benefited from someone mentoring you? Please tell us about it at navigator@nautinst.org so we can share your story with the industry. The more examples we have, the better we can promote this essential learning tool.

LIKE OUR TOP 10 TIPS?

Read them in your own language at www.nautinst.org/NavInspire





ARE YOU A MARITIME PROFESSIONAL?





Are you, or do you support those, in control of sea-going ships?

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