

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

United States
Coast Guard

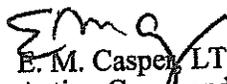


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MEMORANDUM

From: 
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To: COMDT (CG-133)

Subj: 2010 SPOTLIGHT ON LEADERSHIP CAMPAIGN CONTEST

Ref: (a) ALCOAST 154/10

1. This memorandum is to nominate the personnel of CG MSST NY 91106 for the 2010 Spotlight on Leadership Challenge. When word of the challenge was received, a solicitation was distributed via CG email to the unit for volunteers to take up and lead the task. One member stepped up to the plate and nine others joined in. What followed was four weeks of leadership training and group discussion like none the unit has ever seen.
2. The leader of the team took the spotlight guidebook and other resources home to formulate a plan. Once an idea was formed, a meeting was held with the other members of the team to discuss and shape a final draft. Changes were made, ideas were constructed, and the training plan was completed. Once complete the members consulted with the command for last minute ideas. The command's full support and approval was given and the crew jumped into action.
3. Week one: The initial idea for this week was to create an instructional leadership video encompassing the challenge of Leading Self: Accountability and Responsibility entitled "Doing the Right Thing Because It's Right." The goal of making this video was to depict Guardians in real life scenarios that caused them to make a tough decision because it was right and not necessarily because it was easy. After some deliberation we decided that the scenarios used should be a right versus wrong depiction with a pause between scenarios to reflect on what happened in each scene. The purpose for this change was to realign the video to meet the accountability aspect of the challenge by displaying poor leaders and then discussing how those leaders can make changes to hold themselves responsible for their own actions towards others, applying those changes to their daily routine. Then each of the four scenarios was adapted to depict a specific situational leadership approach in regards to the behavioral diagnoses (role clarity, ability, willingness, and emergent problem). Filming took place during the following weeks, followed by editing and crew discussion.
4. Week two: The challenge of teaching Leading Others: Influencing Others seemed easier after the lesson was complete. The real challenge for this week was figuring out how to compress 17 pages of notes and discussion into this memorandum. Our training exercise was simple and fun, the entire crew was invited to watch the movie "300". The purpose of this exercise was to watch and discuss the leadership traits of the various characters in the movie and also discuss what leadership traits one man had to have to inspire 300 others to join him and die for his cause. While it was expected that the crew would be thrilled to watch a movie during the workday what could not be expected was the sheer volume of participation during and after the film. The discussions were massively in-depth and at some points even turned to debate.

5. Week three: This week was a week of activities, to encourage an open forum for discussion and provide a hands-on experience for learning. One member purchased a book called "The Leadership Activity Training Book" and used three activities from the book to teach Leading Performance and Change: Decision Making and Problem Solving. The first activity was called "Meet My Leader, an Orange." This activity posed the challenge to members in a group of having to describe the leadership qualities of an object such as an orange or a pocket knife. Then the groups stood up one by one to explain their object and qualities with the other groups. Then a discussion was held to relate how these qualities would help that leader solve problems, which quality they liked best in their leader, and how we can determine others leadership qualities in the real world without a similar hands on approach. The second activity was called "Balance Balls and Balance Life." This activity challenged a volunteer to hold various "balls" of life, work, etc. Then a discussion was held on balance and juggling. Members drew out representations of their own life circles, discussed them and also came up with a list of goals which they furthered with a review of how they could alter their life circles to better achieve those goals. The final activity was a review on a media presentation board of all the data collected from the previous topics and then the members were asked to write down on a note card answers to questions such as, "What did you learn?", "What did you re-learn?", and "What disappointed you?". Each member had to share what they wrote and a squishy koosh caterpillar was passed around to signify which member had the floor to speak.

6. Week four: For this final week, the group decided to take a survey of the surrounding community and find out how Coast Guard leadership fared in the public's eye. Unfortunately we were unable to get proper approval for such an undertaking in time for the training so we used the XO's idea instead. His idea was to take news articles and videos from the internet and sift through the comments section, find comments for each article and hold a group discussion on how the public views the entire Coast Guard instead. Several media videos were displayed and the unit held at length discussions about how people viewed us as a service, what job kind of job they think we really do, and how they view leadership in the Coast Guard.

7. This challenge was an eye-opener and very enjoyable. The unit has several new ideas for continuing training, including adding monthly leadership activities from our activity book to our training schedule. Our crew is excited about what they learned and look forward to conducting the monthly training activities and participating in next year's challenge.

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Enclosures: (1) MSST NY Spotlight on Leadership Challenge Notes/Summary
(2) MSST NY Spotlight on Leadership Video

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