

The Leadership News

A magazine on leadership issues in the Coast Guard • 2011 Spring Edition • Issue 43

Influencing Others



Feature:

**VADM Sally
Brice-O'hara**

**Beyond Gender
Series, pg. 9**



**CAPT Dorothy Stratton Legacy,
pg. 14**



ANNOUNCEMENTS

UPCOMING COURSES!

Civilian Employee Orientation Application due by 31 July

Career Enrichment Program Application due by 10 June

Senior Principles and Leadership Seminar Application due by 24 July

CG READING LIST!



Coast Guard Reading List!!!

Be sure to check out the Leadership website for the most up-to-date Reading List and information on how you can recommend a book!

Visit: www.uscg.mil/leadership/resources/readinglist.asp

CONGRATULATIONS!

CG-133 would like to congratulate Mr. Anthony Reed, a CGHQ Software Analyst/Microsoft Trainer, for his recent recognition as a Modern-Day Technology Leader during the 25th annual BEYA Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Global Competitiveness Conference in Washington, D.C..

Modern Day Technology Leaders are men and women who demonstrate outstanding performance in their fields. The BEYA conference is held on behalf of the Council of Engineering Deans of Historically Black Colleges and Universities , Lockheed Martin Corporation, and the US Black Engineer & Information Technology magazine.

Thank you Mr. Reed, for being a U.S. Coast Guard Leader in Technology!

NEXT UP!

Get your articles in! Submissions can include: personal experiences, stories, and general perspectives. The theme for the next edition of TLN is:

Personal Conduct

DUE to Editor NLT 10 July 2011!

This publication is yours! We seek articles on leadership issues, best practices, and your feedback on news content. Please contact Veronique.Freeman@uscg.mil or 202-475-5514 for more info and details.

ALSO be sure to check out awesome articles on-line at our website: www.uscg.mil/leadership/resources/leadershipnews.asp



Captain's View

I bid you "Fair Winds and Following Seas" as this will be my last Leadership News "Captain's View". Shortly after you receive this edition, I will report to Bahrain to relieve as the PATFORSWA Commodore...to really put my leadership toolkit to the test! Although I am embarking on the adventure of a lifetime to work in a unique operating and cultural environment with a new group of Coast Guard leaders, most of whom will be with me on the other side of the globe, I will definitely miss my daily interactions with the leadership program professionals across our service

who dedicate themselves on a daily basis to the top quality development of selfless, caring, leaders of character throughout the world's premier maritime service, the United States Coast Guard.

I would also like to welcome CAPT Todd Prestidge, who will report later this summer as the CG-133 Office Chief upon his detachment from the Army War College. CAPT Prestidge is a longtime friend who brings a wealth of leadership and professional experience that will serve the leadership program extremely well.

I encourage each of you to continue to use this publication to share your leadership lessons learned, challenges, experiences, and ideas. Also, please don't ever forget that each and every one of us has a responsibility both to serve as inspirational leaders and to continue improving our leadership skills and effectiveness on a daily basis.

Finally, thank you to the leaders throughout our service, both past and present, who have taught me so much throughout my career! I look forward to continuing to learn from all of you as I constantly strive to develop and hone my own leadership skills.

Go Bears!
Semper Paratus!

The Leadership News

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State of the Coast Guard

U.S. Coast Guard Commandant Adm Robert Papp delivered the 2011 State of the Coast Guard Address at Bolling Air Force Base in Washington, D.C. on Feb 10th. Adm Papp addressed the principles, priorities, and objectives outlined in his direction for all men and women who serve the Coast Guard. This direction is guided by his four principles of Steady the Service, Honor our Profession, Strengthen our Partnerships, and Respect our Shipmates. To view or read the entire Commandant's State of the Coast Guard address, or learn more about other CG Senior Leaders, please visit:

www.uscg.mil/seniorleadership

The Leadership News is published quarterly. Contents are unofficial and not authority for action. Views and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Homeland Security or the Coast Guard.

By LCDR Stephen Bird
SFLC Baltimore

COURAGE & CHARACTER



Change seems to be all the rage lately, and rightfully so. New generations bring fresh ideas to the table, and continuous technological advances make possible the once unimaginable. But I also argue that just as big as our need for change, is the need for constant courage in our men and women's character.

Strong courage and character never expire or go out of style, and are cornerstones in our nation's history. Furthermore, the two are inseparable because without courage, character is weak. Avoiding conflict and steering away from controversy is easy and requires little or no courage. Standing up for personal beliefs and the rights of others, especially when a major opposition exists, requires the greatest of courage. Some of our country's most courageous people had the most to lose, overwhelming odds against them, and if not for their actions, we would be oblivious to the freedom and liberties we enjoy today.

During six consecutive years of fighting, George Washington never once returned home, instead he stayed by the sides of his men, often in the direct line of fire having horses shot from underneath him and bullet holes in his coat. During one particular battle, the enemy stopped firing at him because they believed him to have special powers and that they were wasting their ammunition. Washington's men would march all night with no sleep, in the freezing cold, to engage the enemy in battle. Washington was most impressed by the courage of a 24 year old patriot named Nathan Hale. Hale's future looked bright as a Yale educated up and coming school teacher and he risked it all by volunteering his service in the War for Independence. After being promoted to the rank of Captain, Hale decided to serve as a spy gathering enemy intelligence. In the course of his work he was unfortunately captured, and when asked if he had any last words on his way to the gallows, he stated "I regret that I have but one life to lose for my country!"

All fifty-six men who signed the Declaration of Independence risked everything including their freedom, families, and their lives; for had things had turned out

differently, they would have been charged with treason. Benjamin Franklin famously stated "we must indeed all hang together, or most assuredly we shall hang separately." Our country was founded by the collective courage

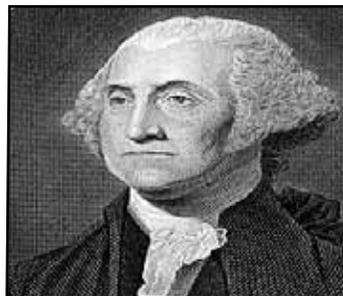


of these men, and almost ten decades later it would be one single woman who started another revolution that opened the eyes of the world because she had the courage to stand up -- or actually remain seated -- for what she believed.

In the 1950's, when racism rode rampantly through the streets of Alabama, and brutal murders, violence, and burning houses threatened innocent people, a 42 year old woman named Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on the bus to a white person. The now unthinkable rules requiring her to do so were known as the Jim Crow Laws. Rosa Parks risked it all to stand up for what she believed in her heart. It was her courage and character that inspired a then little known, Martin Luther King, Jr. to boycott the bus system, ultimately resulting in a Supreme Court ruling. The court ruled Rosa's heart correct, and the American civil rights movement was born! At the age of 86, Rosa Parks was awarded the highest civilian honor by President Clinton, the Congressional Gold Medal. There is still a long way to go, but if Rosa only knew that her courage would result in a fellow African-American being sworn in as the President of the United States of America five years after her death, she would be proud.

These great men and women are famous for their courage, as well as the outcome of their actions. Not being able to predict the future, the outcome of their actions was unlikely a major factor in their decisions to act upon their beliefs. Courage and character shown on a consistent basis is what truly displays character, much more than any one particular act. Today our country needs people that are willing to disregard immediate results or the popularity of their decisions. Strong character requires the ability to stand for what you believe in, even if the effect of your decision does not benefit yourself.

Leadership competencies addressed: *Influencing Others, Personal Conduct, Respect for Others and Diversity Management.*



By LT James Bendle
Coast Guard Academy

Should We Be Devoted to the Duty or to the Team?



Last week during a run on the Coast Guard Academy grounds, I witnessed an encouraging sight. I saw a team training on one of the hills to build stamina, and at the bottom of the hill was a cadet who must have been recently injured or in a rehabilitation status. One could not miss the large brace going halfway up her leg. The interesting thing about this cadet was that she was jumping rope. With some difficulty, she was getting the rope under the brace and had actually got a cadence going. I spent the next 25 minutes of my run thinking about that cadet and what her actions and commitment mean to the team and how closely it relates to success as a member of our service.

I just completed a tour at Coast Guard Station Grand Isle in Louisiana, arguably one of the most challenging and diverse operating areas in the country. The crew of the station rallied through incredibly arduous times; two major hurricanes that left five million dollars worth of damages in their wake and more recently the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. During those periods, the crew of the station accomplished incredible things, working months on end through intense heat, and being away from their families for long periods of time. Despite the conditions and long hours, they remained singularly focused on accomplishing the mission- reclaiming the station from the storm and restoring the Gulf of Mexico.

You cannot learn that sense of commitment from a book or sitting in front of a podium. It does not necessarily come from being on the boat for a big SAR case, pollution investigation, or law enforcement boarding. It can mean coming to stand duty when a shipmate gets hurt, answering a short notice TAD solicitation, staying late to finish up a report, working through sickness, training new members well after the workday, or volunteering for community service. Our best Coast Guard men and women do this for each other, because they know if they don't volunteer, someone else will be directed to do it. We recognize these members with personal awards, Sailor of the Quarter nominations, liberty time, and good marks. These men and women volunteer to do more because their sense of team is greater than sense of self. As leaders we need to build that sense within our ranks. We need to know our crews and the individual challenges they face and do everything we can to make them feel that they are part of something bigger and greater. We need to grow that sense of team and foster that sense of belonging.

At some point someone inspired that cadet to pick up the rope; the same way Coast Guard members across the country picked up shovels, MRE's, and pollution gear to serve in the in Gulf of Mexico. She was demonstrating to her team that when the brace comes off, she will be ready. Jump by jump, that cadet is sending a clear message to her team, class, and Academy-she wants to be a part of something great.

Leadership Competencies Addressed:
Influencing Others, Team Building

By CDR Todd Lightle
CGAS Sacramento

Managing a New Generation

Today's older work force members, usually the Chiefs and senior Officers, often express concern about the younger work force. The older generation often perceives the younger generation as self-centered and unmotivated with unrealistic expectations about success and the accompanying rewards. This article will examine the differences between the generations and explore whether these characteristics can accurately be applied to this younger generation or whether the older generation has assumed the role of their fathers in complaining about the latest generation of entitled and ungrateful youth. Furthermore it will explore the strengths of this generation and offer suggestions for how the two generations can most productively work together.

Today's young adults, often referred to as millennials, appear to have a strong "sense of entitlement". "A recent study by researchers at the University of California, Irvine, found that a third of college students surveyed said they expected B's just for attending lectures and 40 percent said they deserved a B for completing the required reading"¹. A St. Petersburg Times article from 2008 explained that, "More than 85 percent of hiring managers and human-resource executives said they feel that millennials have a stronger sense of entitlement than older workers" and further explain that "the generation's greatest expectations include: higher pay (74 percent

of respondents); flexible work schedules (61 percent); a promotion within a year (56 percent); and more vacation or personal time (50 percent)"³. Some research studies indicate that the millennial generation's great expectations stem from feelings of superiority. Michigan State University's Collegiate Employment Research Institute conducted a research study of 18-28-year-olds and found that nearly half had moderate to high superiority beliefs about themselves.

The superiority factor was measured by responses to such statements as "I deserve favors from others" and "I know that I have more natural talents than most"³. Millennials are truly "Trophy Kids," the pride and joy of their parents. "The millennials were lavishly praised and often received trophies when they excelled, and sometimes when they didn't, to avoid damaging their self-esteem"³. Millennials are much more lauded than any preceding generation and have come to expect these types of rewards.

There appears to be an automatic expectation that certain

privileges are owed to them instead of earned. This has been partially attributed to the honors and awards bestowed upon them in elementary school and through sports organizations. The awards were not for achievement but merely for participation. Everybody received a trophy or special recognition simply for showing up and not for anything special that they accomplished. People feel they deserve honors for being mediocre. Why should anyone bother working really hard at anything if everyone will get recognized for just barely getting by?

With so much positive reinforcement from parents and other

"Now what happens when these trophy kids arrive in the workplace with greater expectations than any generation before them?"

authority figures, the millennial generation is confident about the future. They believe their success will translate into success for themselves and society as a whole. Now what happens when these trophy kids arrive in the workplace with greater expectations than any generation before them?

Millennials expect the work schedule to flex around their personal agenda. Instead of working late to get the job done they would rather quit early so they can go out and have fun. The St. Petersburg Times article explained that, "Employers...are concerned about this generation's desire to shape their jobs to fit their lives rather than adapt their lives to the workplace. Millennials clearly value time spent with family and the pursuit of personal interests. They have seen from the generation before them that there is no more company loyalty so they are not willing to

sacrifice their personal life for the benefit of the company. The dues playing dynamic died in the '80's when companies decided that some people who'd been with the company for decades simply had to go for economic reasons. Having observed their parents go through this the millennials decided there are no guarantees"³.

Millennials want loads of attention and guidance from employers. An annual or even semiannual evaluation isn't enough. They want to know how they're doing weekly,



even daily. But managers must tread lightly when making a critique. This generation was treated so delicately that many schoolteachers stopped grading papers and tests in harsh-looking red ink. Some managers have seen millennials break down in tears after a negative performance review and even quit their jobs³. “When it comes to criticism there is a different approach by the generations. Boomers tend to criticize with equality and use “we” statements when discussing how to improve. The millennial generation generally likes to hear encouragement along

with criticism. Employers need to find the good along with the bad².

Millennials want things spelled out clearly.

Many flounder without precise guidelines but thrive in structured situations that provide clearly defined rules. It may seem obvious that employees should show up on time, limit lunch-time to an hour, and turn off cell phones during meetings. But these

basics aren’t necessarily apparent to many millennials.

Millennials are outspoken, tend to be highly opinionated, and fearlessly challenge supervisors. Status and hierarchy don’t impress them much. They want to be treated like colleagues rather than subordinates and expect ready access to senior leaders, even the Executive Officer, to share their brilliant ideas.

“With regard to teamwork, the older managers focus on results and a great shared experience. For millennials the focus is on collaboration, high energy and multitasking. These goals are not mutually exclusive. Taken together these approaches to teamwork can create a positive and productive work environment”².

Today’s older managers are encouraged to “Be open, flexible, and opportunistic”². The managers might benefit from focusing on their own attitudes rather than focusing on those of the younger generation. “Adjust our tactics for reaching this new generation, and act as inclusive leaders. When it comes to motivating and retaining new talent, seek common ground... catch the excitement and enthusiasm of putting a creative idea into action as well as adding your own perspective”².

“The older managers are encouraged to offer meaningful work reinforced with “you are special” messages”⁵. Provide opportunities for high-visibility individual success. The older generation would be wise to remember that the “millennial generation is better educated, more adept at using technology, and much more media savvy than generation X or the baby boomers”⁴. One positive result of their having grown up

with video games is that they use trial and error when learning to absorb the latest technology. “They are adept at solving puzzles and mastering a skill that required several different paths to obtain success”⁶.

Most authors encourage the generations to attempt to understand each other. A thorough understanding of how various generations can complement each other makes a strong case for the value of younger people in the workplace. An exploration and understanding of the differences in generations is

required if one is to better lead the younger generation in a work environment. It is important for the older generation to value the positive attributes brought to the work environment by millennials and to take their unique characteristics into consideration when managing them in the work force.

Overall, the generational tension is a bit ironic.

After all, the grum-

bling baby boomer managers are the same indulgent parents who produced the millennial generation. A leader in today’s workforce needs to be keenly aware of the different challenges presented by members of each generation. If they take it slow, they will find that persistence, effort, and understanding will pay big dividends.



(1) Roosevelt, Max. “Grade Grubbing Epidemic By Sense of Entitlement.” UNCC on line, 17 Feb. 2009. Web. 30 May 2010.

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(2) Hall, Cheryl. “Economy Has Millennials Hanging on to Jobs, But Employers May Not Benefit.” Dallas Morning News 08 Sept. 2009, final ed.: Print

(3) Anonymous. “Coddled Kids Hit Corporate Culture.” The St. Petersburg Times 02 Nov. 2008, p.2F: Print

(4) Mason, Cliff. “Millennial Generation is “Spoiled”? Oh, Really??” CNBC.com, 24 Oct 2008. Web. 30 Apr 2010.

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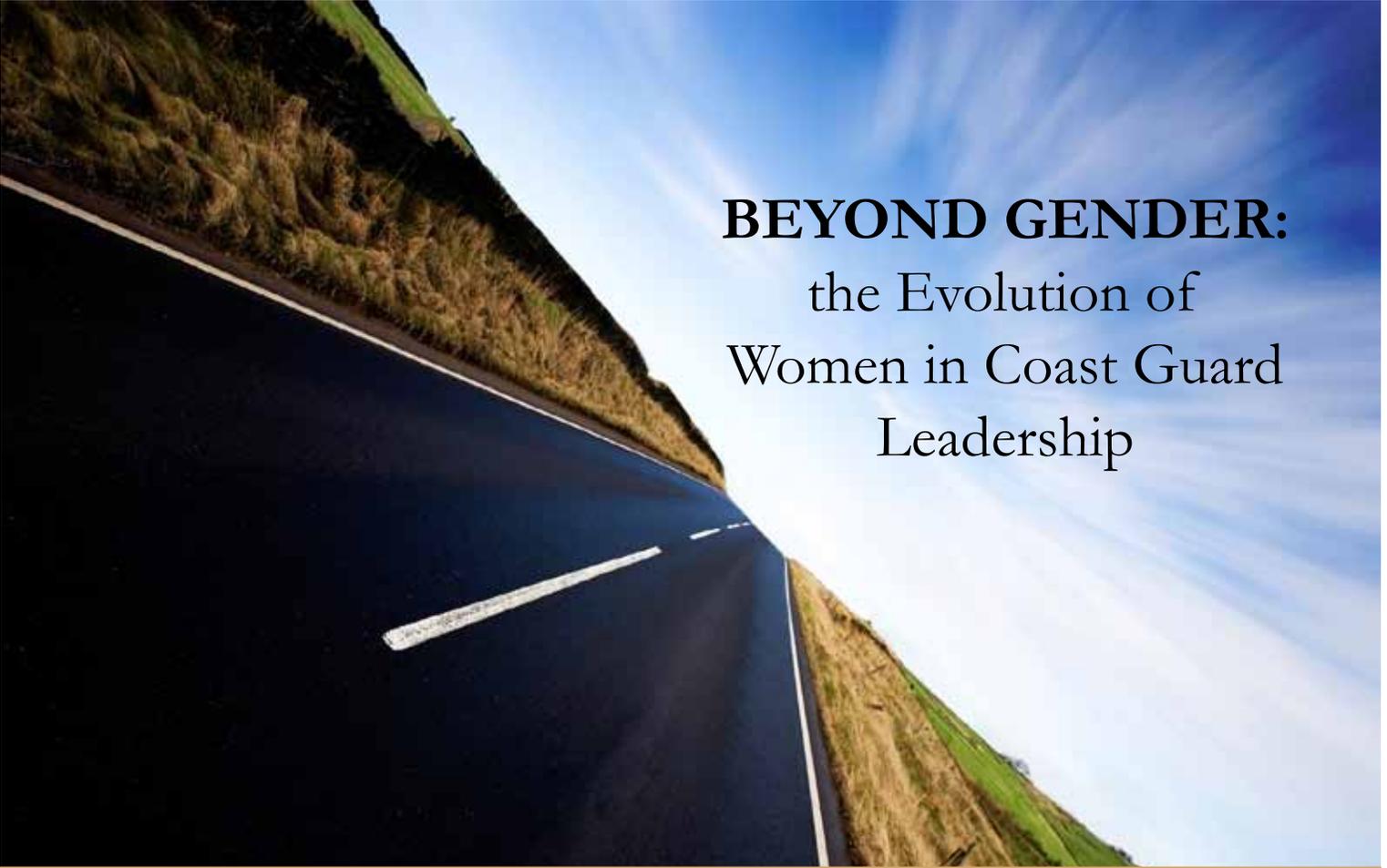
(6) McAlister, Andrea. “Teaching the millennial generation.” American Music Teacher 59.1 (2009): 13+. General OneFile. Web. 30 Apr. 2010.

Leadership Competencies Addressed:

Influencing Others, Team Building, Conflict Management

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BEYOND GENDER: the Evolution of Women in Coast Guard Leadership

The concept of a glass ceiling for women in the Coast Guard is a fallacy. As we celebrate yet another first for women in the Coast Guard, we must remember that these milestones are a natural progression of talented officers whose performance has been exemplary. Although women had been integral to the regular Coast Guard since 1973, we must recall that ENS Jean Butler was the first woman to graduate from the Coast Guard Academy in 1980 – only 31 years ago! Given this time frame, it makes sense that the Flag Corps is finally just reflecting the gender composition of the junior officer corps – not because of limitations imposed by seniors or peers, but because the Coast Guard values solid performance, diversity of assignment, and dedication. The concept of a glass ceiling is a transparent construct – any person, man or woman, can continue to rise up through the ranks. What frequently happens is women turning down promising assignments because of pressure from their personal life; either husband, children, or parental care responsibilities. Fortunately, the Coast Guard has recognized these constraints and taken positive action to mitigate their influence. This year, The Office of Leadership and Professional Development (CG-133), would like to present a Leadership News series that will include interviews, perspectives, and achievements surrounding some of the most commendable women leaders of the U.S. Coast Guard. The accomplishments, viewpoints, and profound success of these women encompass the true nature and meaning of sincere leadership.

Sit back, relax, and enjoy the journey....beyond gender and artificial constraints!

Series 1: *Influencing Others*-an Up Close Interview with VADM Sally Brice O'Hara

INFLUENCING OTHERS

AN UP CLOSE LEADERSHIP NEWS INTERVIEW WITH
VADM SALLY BRICE O'HARA

1.) IN A FEW WORDS, PLEASE TELL ME WHAT IS YOUR OWN PERSONAL DEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP?



Leadership is so much more than a one sentence definition. I would start by saying it is accomplishing a task through others. It's bringing the team together to be able to do the mission at hand. It's about communication, respect, and identifying talent. Leadership is both helping people pull up their talent and helping them develop those

areas that need to be fine-tuned. It's about all the qualities encompassed within our Coast Guard core values: honor, respect, and devotion to duty. But at the end of the day, leadership is the ability to motivate and stimulate others to want to do the job at hand with excellence.

The Coast Guard's ability to do this is why we have such a strong reputation – not just a reputation within our community, or within the Department of Homeland Security, but also the international reputation that we have earned by our professionalism and competence. And we're nothing without people who want to do the job well – our leaders excel at corralling their people's talents and directing them on the path to success.

As an operational leader, I learned how vital it is to take care of my people and to look after them - to ensure that I, as a leader, have a life that epitomizes what I expect my people to do. Whether ethics, integrity, compassion, commitment, dedication...anything you want to instill in your people, you must

model by your example. You also have to be able to look to your people for teamwork and be willing to accept their feedback.

2.) WHILE THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT YOUR PLATE IS FULL, WHAT MAJOR CHANGE/CHALLENGE HAS BEEN AT THE FOREFRONT FOR YOU AS VICE COMMANDANT?

The arrival of new leaders often brings new areas of emphasis. ADM Papp has four principles: steady the Service, honor our profession, strengthen our partnerships, and respect our shipmates. My role is to help ensure progress in each of those areas. I think one of the reasons ADM Papp asked me to be the Vice Commandant is that he and I understand the importance of settling down the reorganization and focusing on performance. We've had an alarming span of mishaps with tragic consequences. I recently completed the final action memorandum on the investigation into the Coast Guard Aircraft 1705 accident in which we lost seven crew members. We want to make sure that never happens again. A major focus is getting back to the fundamentals of our profession, so that Coast Guard women and men perform their duties safely and thoroughly – and come back home, ready and able to go out on the next mission.

The Deepwater Horizon oil spill made the transition between Commandants somewhat unique. Since Admiral Allen continued serving as the National Incident Commander, we had to clearly define roles and responsibilities. It was challenging, but we successfully worked through it. The response to the spill was an all-hands-on-deck evolution and our people - active duty, reservists, civilians and Auxiliarists - performed superbly despite the dynamic and complex circumstances of this Spill of National Significance. There are lessons to learn, absolutely, and our experience in the Gulf of Mexico will help us better position the Coast Guard to respond to future disasters. In particular, the Deepwater Horizon

response showed clearly why robust mission support is essential to our operations. Refining mission support and embedding this improved system within the Coast Guard will continue to be an area of emphasis for us.

3.) WHAT DOES IT SIGNIFY TO YOU TO BE A WOMAN THREE-STAR ADMIRAL IN THE U.S. COAST GUARD?

It's a great accomplishment, but not one that I have done by myself. I am a hard worker – and have always wanted to continue to contribute for as long as someone felt I was worth having around – so I was honored that ADM Papp asked me to be a part of his senior executive team. But looking back, I never thought, “I need to work hard so that I can become the Vice Commandant.” I credit my career success to the people I've met and opportunities I've had.

I have benefited from caring supervisors - people who pushed me in directions I may not have gone otherwise. I have had mentors, mostly men, who were there for advice and as role models when I was coming up in the Coast Guard. I've been fortunate to work with people very willing to help me succeed.

Although I entered the Coast Guard before women could go afloat or into aviation, I was able to build the operational side of my career ashore, in the boat forces specialty. My assignments have been geographically diverse, including overseas duty in Alaska and Hawaii. I was also afforded the opportunity to obtain my master's degree at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, which was a tremendous year of studies. Education, broad experience, and hard work – these are some of the main ingredients that will propel



anyone's career.

As a woman, I understand and appreciate the significance of rising to the position of Vice Commandant – but I must acknowledge the tremendous backing of my family, the great opportunities the Coast Guard has provided me, and the caliber and commitment of the people who've helped me along the way.

4.) WHAT DOES ACCOUNTABILITY MEAN TO YOU?

Accountability is a vital component of leadership: accountability to one's self, accountability to others, and accountability to the organization. First, we should be true to ourselves, doing everything to the best of our ability. This includes being humble enough to speak up and ask for advice when we need it – and to include others in the solution. Second, we should always look after people who work for us, making sure they have everything they need to do their jobs well: the right equipment, adequate resources, clear policy and guidance, and strong TTP (Training, Techniques, and Procedures). Third, we must strive to be the stellar Coast Guard men and women who wear the uniform and represent the Coast Guard to the world – and to do so with very highest standards of drive, determination, success, and trustworthiness.

By LT Jake London
Air Station Miami

Love it or hate it (probably hate), the Coast Guard relies on the Officer Evaluation System (OES) to accomplish a variety of necessary tasks. Officer of Personnel Management Division (PSC-OPM) and the Coast Guard Personnel Manual state the first and foremost goal of the system is the selection of qualified officers for promotion. Accordingly, any officer concerned with his or her career is committed to obtaining a strong OER, even if it means a lapse in primary duties, and personal lives grinding to a halt for weeks at a time in order to “properly” complete the three required pieces of paper. It doesn’t have to be this way. The current situation is a direct consequence of a report being pressed into service as a leadership tool. The current OER is a pseudo-narrative report that stifles leadership and the illusion of officer evaluation and professional growth is perpetuated.

Start with the practical realities of any officer evaluation system. Every service has its own unique evaluation method. The Army and Navy use a two page form. The Air Force also has a two page form, with several optional supplements available, while the Marine Corps evaluation is an intensive six page form accompanied by a 180+ page manual. Our CG-5310B is four pages including instructions, with additional guidance provided in Chapter 10 of the Personnel Manual. While some argue the form could be shortened to match the Army, Navy and Air Force, the construction of the form is not the problem. After all, a yearly evaluation deserves appropriate

time and effort to complete. Regardless of the form, or branch of service, all evaluations have the same mission: promote qualified officers, and accurately stratify a diverse population. Ask two people how to rank every officer in the service and they’ll have three answers, but almost all will agree the heartache with every military officer evaluation



Want a Better OER?

system stems from its basis as a narrative report. Officers bemoan that their OER is largely at the mercy of their boss’ writing skills, and the ability of the promotion board or detailer to read between the lines. Supervisors spend an amazing amount of time butchering the carefully crafted documents provided by their subordinates, in an effort to leave no “white space” free. It’s not just the Coast Guard - every service is hamstrung by the cultural norms of the OER process. Unwritten OER rules lead to weeks of lost productivity at every Coast Guard

“Feedback is critical, but the OER shouldn’t be the sole source”

unit, as the command cadre continuously pass awkward abbreviations back and forth until every accomplishment is boiled down to only essential consonants and punctuation. More time is spent adjusting the format than considering the content. This is shameful when it becomes clear what purpose the comment block serves. The obvious purpose is to elaborate on the OER’s numerical score, with a secondary goal of providing feedback to the rated officer. Unfortunately this is rarely accomplished in practice. All of the comments are based on support provided by the rated officer. Not a lot of great feedback comes from having your own ideas and accomplishments regurgitated on a different piece of paper and given back to you. To make matters worse, these comments don’t even elaborate on the numerical scores – the scores are basically predetermined. Newly promoted officers aren’t marked too high for fear they’ll have no room to progress over time. More senior officers in grade have carefully progressed to the right over time to ensure increased responsibility and growth potential. Admittedly, the majority of officers should have an “average score” since the majority of any group is, by definition, average. However, if the numerical scores are functionally meaningless, the comments become the only distinguishing element of an OER when you’re trying to stratify the competent majority. When the OER is really examined, the comment block is the hard nucleus about which a promotion or duty assignment is formed. Why then are the comments forced to be so painful? The status quo runs directly counter to the leadership’s competency of effective communication and creates the appearance of mentoring, when little of either is taking place.

The Coast Guard needs to refocus the OER as a detailed report card, used mainly to provide a group of strang-

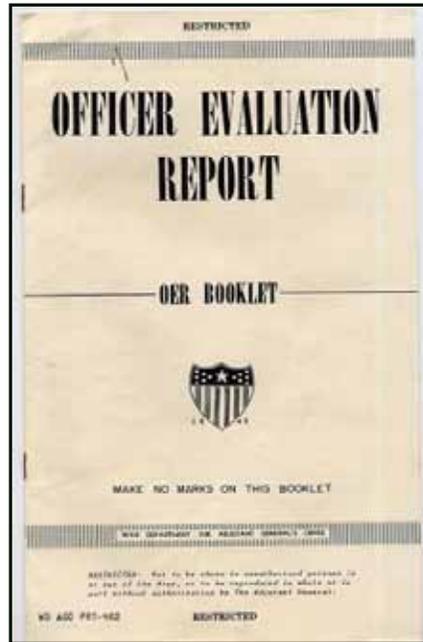
Just Do *Less*

ers an idea of where you rank against your peers. With an adjusted OER the Coast Guard's evaluation system and leadership program could both be more effective in meeting their goals and returning significant man hours to the service.

First, the focus of the OES should be clear and singular; gauge performance against the standard. Officers are leaders, and the Commandant expects us to lead ourselves, lead others, lead performance and change, and lead the Coast Guard. A written narrative is feedback, not leadership. Independent of the OER, effective leaders should be ensuring professional and personal development with guided discussions using the member's CG-4082 record of professional development, the unit's leadership development plan, the Individual Development Plan and the appropriate use of personal and team awards. Feedback is critical, but the OER shouldn't be the sole source. Place the burden of effective feedback where it belongs: on the supervisor, while allowing the evaluation to stand alone. This is a practical application of the self awareness and learning competency. Seek additional sources of feedback and find opportunities to develop yourself and your subordinates.

Second, the CG-5310B needs to be presented digitally, much like the EER. Keep the numeric scale and the specific items on the current form. In essence the current OER form does a good job sampling the majority of the 28 leadership competencies. The primary arguments for a digital form are the unlimited space for comments and the promotion of effective technology. Every service has embraced the narrative report as the basis of the OES, so do it right. Since the service seeks to embrace self awareness, officers should overtly write their own support and submit it with the OER. Why waste time writing the comments for a supervisor just so they can reword it? No more abbreviations or vain attempts to fill white space. The rated officer provides detailed support as a supplement (remembering that effective writing is a rated element), and supervisors are free to comment to whatever extent is appropriate. If the promotion board really wants more detail than the numerical score and

the supervisors' comments, the rated officer's supplement will provide the information.



By focusing the purpose of the OER and effectively using the appropriate leadership tools provided by the Coast Guard, valuable time and effective feedback will return to the service. The burden of the OER is placed on the person who cares most about it, the officer being rated. He or she provides all the supporting documentation and the officer's supervisors use this to mark the appropriate numerical blocks on the OER. This is accompanied by a few lines summarizing the officer's performance and sent to OPM. When promotions or billet assignments are determined, the evaluations are as brief or in depth as the board desires: raw numerical score only, score with comments from supervisors, or the entire package in detail. With the time returned to the service as a result of this more efficient process, officers could get appropriate leadership and counseling

independent of the OER submission cycle. The whole OER process could take a few days from submission to command endorsement, rather than the weeks it currently takes. Best of all, officers can stop focusing on the OES and get back to work. Steady the service and honor your profession by reducing the bureaucracy involved in leading yourself and others. Let's make efficient use of all our leadership tools, lead change by improving the OER process, and get back to our primary duties. 

Leadership Competencies Addressed:

Decision Making and Problem Solving, Taking Care of People

By Dr. David Rosen, Ph.D
Pacific Area Historian, United
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CAPT Dorothy Stratton's Legacy

Her Family's Reflections

Dorothy Stratton is widely acclaimed for her role in leading the Coast Guards SPARS in World War II. The visit of her family to CG Island in Alameda provided insights on what made CAPT Stratton a success. (Photo #1 of the family in front of the USCGC Waesche)

According to her niece, Barbara Stratton Myers, of Sunnyvale, CA, it was Dorothy's strong vision of Women's Equality which motivated her pioneering spirit. Her role as Dean of Women at Purdue University from 1933-42 was to triple the number of female students at a time when few women achieved academic credentials. Also, her invitation to Amelia Earhart to Purdue energized her students by providing another brilliant role model. In November, 1942, Dorothy was summoned to create and manage



the Women's Reserve for her country. She knew her purpose was to assist in defending the homeland, assist search-and-rescue, and rally the home front. Placing women in administrative and many other functions freed up thousands of men for combat. Moreover, she greatly admired Commandant Russell R. Waesche and jumped at the chance to work with him. At its peak, the Women's Reserve encompassed 1,000 officers and 10,000 enlisted women. For her efforts CAPT Stratton received the Legion of Merit in 1946.

As Mrs. Stratton Myers recalled, a trustee at Purdue warned Dorothy in 1942 that you can't afford to do that. Her aunt's famous response was I can't afford not to. (Photo #2 of Barbara and her husband Morgan)

Dorothy's nephew, Dr. Richard Stratton of Reno, Nevada, added that Self-Education motivated his aunt during her entire lifetime. Encouraged by her parents, Dorothy became a fanatic reader at an early age. Coming from modest circumstances, she achieved scholarships enabling her to complete a B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. She became one of America's first female Full Professors and Deans. Life-long learning was her motto.

Richard noted that his aunt read two books at a time, one serious and one for relaxation. After she retired, Dorothy would invite both friends and family over to her



house to socialize and to discuss contemporary issues. Guests had to be prepared to comment on the latest articles in the New York Times. Intellectual stimulation kept her brain active. Among the books she authored, *Your Best Foot Forward* achieved the most popularity. (Photo #3 of Richard)

For more details on CAPT Stratton's work with Purdue, the WAVES, SPARS, IMF & Girl Scouts, see: <http://www.uscg.mil/history/people/DStrattonBio.asp>

Capt Stratton's Personal Legacy: Bay Area SPARS

LTjg Barbara Eirls remembers CAPT Stratton as an inspiration to the SPARS. A graduate of UC Berkeley, Barbara enlisted in San Francisco in 1944 and was commissioned an Ensign on May 17, 1944. Barbara stresses Stratton's People Skills, which inspired the SPARS to the point that they still feel togetherness today. Nearly 93, Barbara attends many functions on Coast Guard Island.



Her first Duty Station was at 13th District HQ in Seattle. Later, she became Commissary Officer at the nearby Tongue Point Repair Base on the Columbia River. She was Officer-in-Charge for the 25 SPARS working in the Pay Office and Captain-of-the-Port facility. They handled inventory, supplies and admin chores for the Base, two Light Ships, and a Buoy Tender. For nearly a year after the war, LTjg Eirls worked as an administrator on the D14 Admiral's staff in Seattle. (Photo #4 of Barbara Eirls)

LT Kay Stoye (née Thomson) was inspired by Dorothy's Leadership Role. At one point in World War II, Kay was in charge of 273 military women. But the male enlistees at Hunter College were nervous at her rank, addressing her as yes, ma'am, sir. Her role model in maintaining her composure and asserting her own leadership was CAPT Stratton.



Radio Operator Elfie Larkin (née Hanson) worked in St. Louis, as well as Honolulu and Hilo. Operators worked around the clock coding and de-coding messages. Nearly 100 years old, Elfie still conveys the excitement of the Patriotism imbued by Dorothy Stratton in her women in World War II. (Photo #5 of Elfie Larkin)

The USCGC Stratton

The crew of the National Security Cutter *Stratton* has adopted the motto "We can't afford not to". These words combined with Dorothy's acronym "Semper Paratus, Always Ready" highlight the ship's seal. CAPT Bruce Baffer sees her drive, idealism and success as an inspiration and motivation for his crew. Under his direction, IS1 Jeff Di Landro is preparing a permanent library and display honoring CAPT Stratton.

Sources

- Interview with Barbara Stratton Myers and Dr. Richard Stratton, 12/6/2010
- Interview with LTjg Barbara Eirls, 2/18/2010
- Interview with Elfie Larkin, 5/20/2010
- Interview with LT Kay Stoye, 5/25/2010 

Leadership Competencies Addressed:
Leading the Coast Guard, Influencing Others

CAPT Cubanski's - 20 Officer Leadership and Career Pointers

Provided are some pointers to assist you to have a successful career based on my 22-years of experience. Thanks to those whom I have learned from in my career- E-2 thru O-10.

Leadership:

1. Mission Excellence is achieved through mentoring, teamwork, and standardization.
2. High Expectations – set them – they can be achieved.
3. Introspective reviews are essential. How can you better your performance?
4. Mentoring - no one wins if someone fails.
5. Tough love – if someone needs it - give it; and tell them the truth.
6. Most career failures occur due to lack of follow-up control. It is not micromanaging, but follow up control, to ensure tasks are accomplished.
7. Recognize success by praising in front of peers with coins, ribbons/medals, letters, and email.

Personal:

8. Read the manuals that guide your primary and collateral duties. Don't rely on the gouge.
9. Intuitive Curiosity – what is it? If you have it, great. If not, get it.
10. Situational Awareness – in ground, air, and desk operations – maintain it. Having it will save a life, prevent a casualty, or help a fellow Guardian.
11. Admit when you are wrong.
12. Laughter and jokes are both acceptable and encouraged in the workplace. Just realize there is a proper time and place. It is all about ti tim timi timing.

Career:

13. IDP – Everyone should have one. Don't consider this an administrative burden – think of it as a conduit for mentoring to get to know your personnel better. Think long term – beyond the current, next, and follow-on tour. Ask and answer the question - What do you want to achieve in your career? Write those items down on your IDP and reassess annually.
14. If you haven't read the Personnel Manual, COMDTINST 1000.6 Chapter 10.A read it, if you have read it, read it again.
15. Read the COMDT's precept for promotion boards – selection is based on Performance, Professionalism, Leadership, & Education. Review the text in the performance dimensions Planning and Preparedness, Looking Out for Others, Initiative, and Professionalism.
16. OERs:
 - a. Develop a system to track work in your primary, department, and collateral duties.
 - b. Provide your OSF input using the action, result, and impact format. Avoid listing info. Know what benefit your action had on unit personnel, the unit, or CG.
 - c. Write your own potential block. When differences occur between what you wrote and what was submitted – question why, but be ready for the answer(s).

Peeves:

17. Data does not lie. It is either bad data or great data. How is the data presented? Remember, measurement without action is not worth measuring.
18. Use titles, page numbers, and revision dates on documents.

Family:

19. Look at assignments balancing the personal tripod – Family, Self, and USCG. If all three can be balanced to match the effort required for each leg – great – if not, make sure it is realized sooner rather than later - otherwise one leg will get weak and cause problems.
20. Realize the toughest military job is being a military spouse.