

Seven Steps to an Effective Command Prevention Program

There is no silver bullet in prevention - no one single thing you can do. Instead, an effective Command alcohol and drug abuse prevention program will encompass efforts on several fronts. The below seven steps have been implemented at many commands resulting in a reduction in incidents. This is not say that this is the only way to reduce incidents, but it is one way.

Step 1

Announce the Program

[Command Policy Statement](#)

This is the most important step. If you want to go somewhere, make sure you know where you want to go. It can be a simple as the CO creating a one-page policy statement and then making it available to command personnel.

Step 2

Educate all hands

Create a Substance Abuse Prevention team. An effective prevention program is not run by one person at a command, but instead is embraced by as many people as possible.

Education includes:

- SAFE AWARENESS for E1-E4
- SAFE SUPERVISOR for E5 -O3
- SAFE MANAGER (CO, XO, CMC, OIC)
- BASICS (conducted by MLC APS's by request.
- Quarters
- Local Law Enforcement agencies

Step 3

Deglamorize alcohol

Command events not centered on alcohol.

Leaders & Supervisors talk about risks and consequences instead of glamorizing the use of alcohol with "sea stories." Everyone understands that a DUI will result in an alcohol incident according to Commandant Policy.

Step 4

Reduce risks

Limit availability

This is not prohibition. However, the command does have choices related to alcohol. This step includes:

- Not using Command monies to purchase alcohol. (It is no surprise that many people will drink more when it is free.)
- Ensure designated driver programs are in place.
- Promote responsible use
- Include the message "It's OK not to drink."

Step 5

Provide and Glamorize alternatives

What do Sailors at your command have to do with their free time? If the answer is nothing but drink, than other alternatives need to be found or created. Typically, alternatives are already available, but just need to be identified and advertised.

However, if there are few alternatives now, consider adding the following:

- MWR Events, Trips, Tours
- Community volunteer events
- Fun Runs (moonlight runs, Saturday morning 5Ks or 10Ks)
- Education
- Other sporting events (Golf, softball, bowling)

Updated 2/14/05

Step 6
Referrals
treatment
education

Knowing when to refer out is an important part of prevention. Then getting the member the correct help early on can save man-hours lost in the future.

Step 7
Hold people accountable
consistently

A policy that isn't enforced will be tested continuously. If one Sailor has no consequences for an alcohol related incident, other Sailors may see his behavior as acceptable. Worse, when one Sailor receives the maximum punishment for a DUI, and another Sailor apparently receives nothing, ripples of discontent may seriously effect the unit's morale.
