

# Marketing and Motivation: *Telling the Coast Guard Story*



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## Marketing and Motivation: Telling the Coast Guard Story

Cardboard cutouts—those life-sized photos marketing an actor, athlete, or other personality – are they able to provide a greater good? Yes, provided that they tell a story (literally and figuratively) —the Coast Guard’s narrative—our story. Sector San Francisco proudly displays six self-standing cutouts of Sector and subunit personnel prepared to engage in day-to-day activities: manning an M-240 machine gun, conducting a boarding, drafting procurement orders, managing traffic within the vessel traffic service, collecting oil samples, and inspecting a commercial vessel. Hundreds of other options exist—the Coast Guard, as we are all well aware, is charged with executing 11 statutory missions. Given the number of processes involved with each mission, and the support functions, the number of photo opportunities of our dedicated work force seems endless.

The purpose of our cutouts is twofold. First, they market the Coast Guard to the thousands of visitors who tour our facility. Many of these visitors are unaware that we are one of the armed branches of the United States military, that we stand as unwavering environmental stewards, and that we promote economic prosperity through fisheries enforcement and by maintaining safety and security across the Maritime Transportation System. The cutouts may also be an effective recruiting tool for young adults who are thinking about the various paths that await them after high school or college graduation.

Second, they serve as motivation to the Sector’s supporting staff – those amazing individuals who comprise the mighty shaft of the Coast Guard organizational spear which provides support and stability for the pointy end (the operators) when in flight. The cutouts are a constant reminder to everyone who walks by that their shipmates are frequently working in hostile environments to defend our freedom and democracy. Even when we are having a tough day in the office, a glance of at a life-sized photo of an MST, BM, or ME working in the field, with a pithy affixed statement such as, “I ensure security for America—please support me” puts work/life into perspective.

The following considerations are intended to help units develop personalized cutouts:

- The images are large and require a high quality photo image. A high-end DSLR camera shooting in fine mode (or better yet, RAW) and quality lighting are a must. The larger the file the better, with a minimum of approximately 10MB.
- Generate short strategic statements for each cutout (the statements will be embedded in the photograph). We experimented with statement box placement (e.g., as a speech balloon); however, body positioning appears to work best (as represented in the associated photo).
- Dialogue boxes for each model should be added using Photoshop or other suitable software.
- Models should be diverse in gender, race, rating, mission, etc.
- The only source for printing is the Government Printing Office.

Thanks to our models – their names and messages follow (from left to right):

- MK3 Meylin Sanchez: “I ensure security for America.”
- MST1 Daniell Lashbrook: “I am America’s first responder. Thank you for supporting me.”
- Mr. Stacy Ward: “I prevent maritime casualties, ensure economic prosperity, and am an environmental steward.”

- SK1 Chris Steele: "My support ensures my Coast Guard shipmates are able to protect those on the sea, against threats delivered by the sea, and the sea itself."
- MS2 Malcolm Meredith: "I help to ensure economic prosperity by protecting the Maritime Transportation System."
- ME3 Derek Rozich: "My job is to stop threats delivered by the sea--with your support I will succeed!"

Leadership competencies addressed: Aligning Values, Influencing Others, Respect for Others and Diversity Management, Creativity and Innovation