

SHIP MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY TO BE REVIEWED

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Abstract. Problems related to the training of the sea personnel and its further employment in the maritime industry depend mostly on the psychophysiological characteristics of the particular person. Therefore a close attention should be paid to the selection of the sea staff, especially to those employed on board the vessels carrying the cargoes potentially dangerous to the safety of the crew, the ship and the environment.

A number of negative features that compromise the safety of shipping characterizes today's global crewing market. And one of these that should be pointed out in the first place is the poor cooperation between shipping companies and marine educational institutions. If we look at the statistics we'll see that the most accidents at sea are caused by the wrong decisions and that the 'leaders' are those who are impelled to make a decision under dynamically developing circumstances. These are, first of all, the deck watch officers and pilots (25 % and 7 % respectively) in contrast to the engineer watch officers (2 %). It would be evidently wrong to draw a conclusion that the reason is in the different level of training of the deck officers and engineer officers. The reason lies in the ability of the human being to adapt continually to the dynamics of changing circumstances, what is, in fact, happening during the sea voyage, especially in the areas of intensive ship traffic. And the watch officer has to make a decision exactly under dynamically changing conditions. Owing to the absence of reliable scientific data, traditionally, the reasons are seen in a low level of theoretical knowledge and practical training (for the sake of justice we have to admit that nowadays a fatigue is mentioned as well). In order to improve the safety of shipping significant resources and time are devoted to training. Of course such approach brings certain results. But hardly the idea to make a professional soccer player from a man with a low level of reaction would come into somebody's mind. Today's state of crewing market is so that such professionally important issue as psychophysiologic qualities of seafarers are practically ignored. There are two main reasons of the above said situation. Firstly, it's the shortage of qualified officers which impels crewing offices to be content with random proposals from seafarers. Secondly, studies on problems of professional psychological aptitude demand additional resources. Few shipping companies are ready to invest in such studies and in implementation of its results in the sea transport. After all, a practical output is deemed to be in reduction of the accident rate. In such situations the Russian "trusting to luck" becomes an international concept. As trouble was passing by before it'll be passing by in future: "in for a penny, in for a pound". But, as it often happens, a greedy man pays twice". And if we mean a modern shipping, the losses born due to the accident of the vessel carrying dangerous cargo may be considerably more than "twice". Therefore, to the existing measures, such as theoretical studying, practical training, medical examination, or to the measures intended for implementation, such as investigation of the influence of the fatigue on human behavior, conflict settling learning, psychological aspects of the selection and training of seafarers, meaning their ability to act effectively and for a long time under stressful circumstances of dynamically developing situation, should be added. The following psychophysiologic activities should, in the first place, be the subject to investigation: spatial imagination, visual memory, visual perception, ability to switch over attention, on-line memory, ability to decode sign information.

Correlation and quality of combination of the above listed factors is very important for taking timely and correct managing decisions. However, to consider the above said qualities only would not be enough for

ensuring all aspects of the safety of shipping. Directly or indirectly those qualities depend on other important mental faculties and personal characteristics.

Studies of the influence of the psychophysiological qualities on the decisions taken has not been taken into consideration on board the sea vessels so far except, perhaps, for nuclear icebreakers which can hardly be rated as significant in regard to the number of the world fleet. Ever increasing intensity of shipping, the character of the dangerous cargoes being shipped demand more and more proper attention not to the quality of teaching and training only but to the psychophysiological characteristics of seafarers as well. The work on detecting the psychophysiological characteristics of seafarers should be started from the moment of his entering the marine college or academy and continued all along his sea career. First of all it's necessary to define the professionally important characteristics of every sea profession. As a result some kind of a document called, say, "psychological seaman's passport" should be drawn up. Such passport should, similar to the seaman's book, accompany a seafarer during all his sea career. Every change of psychophysiological characteristics and measures taken for their correlation shall be registered in such "passport".

It's quite clear that under dynamically developing circumstances during the sea voyage such characteristics must cause the anxiety of ship owners. Taking into consideration the fact that a verbal intellect determines the ability to deliver and to receive information as well as to learn it, an importance of this mental faculty becomes evident.

The intellectual lability determines an ability to switch over from one form of mental activity to another.

The level of erudition is determined by the general familiarity.

The characteristics that are above the "norm" fraught with serious consequences also.

Hence, the combination and correlation of the above mentioned characteristics make significant contribution into those 80 % of human factor which affects so much the accident rate at sea. Adding to the above said the lowering of the level of training, the loss of prestige of marine profession, the fatigue and other negative factors we can make a conclusion: the shipping business goes through a deep crisis. Therefore, only the comprehensive, detailed analysis of all processes affecting crewing policy and the working out of radical measures aiming to bridge a gap can lead the shipping out of the existing situation.

To illustrate the above said let's have a look at the data placed at the official IMO site. Please note, that the data cited hereunder may differ considerably depending on the nationality of the interviewees, but, in general, the character of the results coincides.

Table 1

Reasons for Choosing a Job at Sea
22,4 % – I wanted a career at sea
18,4 % – To see the world
16,0 % – For money
15,8 % – Better wages than jobs at home
7,6 % – Family tradition
6,0 % – Other reasons
4,8 % – Better prospects at sea
4,8 % – In my country, a seagoing career is a well-respected
2,4 % – Thought life at sea would be less stressful than at home
1,9 % – Working conditions are better than at home

To analyze the data shown in tables 2 – 4 we shall take advantage of the so called Maslow’s pyramid. To do so we’ll bring together the data from tables 2 – 4 in aggregate table 5 where the data will be distributed by columns: «Reasons for Choosing a Job at Sea» (1,3), «Reasons Staying at Sea» (2,3) and Realization of expectations «The Worst Aspects of Career at Sea» (4,5) in conjunction with Maslow’s pyramid. As seen from the table(columns 1,2) upper line related to self realization shows 22,4 % and 12,4 %. At the same time columns 4 and 5 show that shortcomings work at sea are accumulated in 3 lower lines of the pyramid. It goes without saying that in future more profound studies have to be carried out but naturally it will require additional resources.

Table 2

Reasons for Staying at Sea	
27, 5 %	– I earn a good salary that I cannot mach ashore
17, 8 %	– I enjoy a high level oa job satisfaction
12, 4 %	– I want to sail as Captain (Chief Engineer) before coming ashore
11, 3 %	– I want work at sea until retire
9,7 %	– Other
5,9 %	– Working away from home suits me best
5,7 %	– I am saving my salary to start a new career \ businewss ashore
5,4 %	– I have a large number of dependent who rely on my salary
4,3 %	– I am saiving to buy a house before moving ashore

Table 3

The Worst Aspects of a Career at Sea	
67,6 %	– Long time spent apart from family and friends
34,1 %	– Too much paperwork
29,7 %	– Time spent away from children
22,3 %	– Fatigue
19,7 %	– Fear of being treated like a criminal
18,3 %	– Onboard living condition
17,5 %	– Difficult to keep contact with home
15,7 %	– Lack of shore leave
14,8 %	– Crews are too small to share workload
10,0 %	– Few career opportunities
9,6 %	– Loneliness
7,9 %	– Concerns about accidents at sea
7,9 %	– Lack of onboard recreational facilities
4,8 %	– No privacy
4,4 %	– Piracy
0,9 %	– Bullying

The best practice of the most successful companies shows that the employees should always be treated with due respect. Respect may be expressed in different ways. There is no single recommendation. Everyone has to search for solution all by himself. It should always be kept in mind that each person may have his own problems, ambitions, abilities, anxieties, goals, etc .Obviously, the ideal situation is, when the targets of the employee and employer coincide.

An employee should always have a possibility for promotion. The best alternative is when an employee makes his way up in his own Company, though outsiders should be considered as well. Total absence of outsiders gives birth to self-satisfaction and this is the worst enemy of any organization.

Table 4

<i>Reasons of Choosing a Job at Sea %</i>	<i>Reasons Staying at Sea %</i>	<i>Needs (according to A. Maslow)</i>	<i>Realization of expectations The Worst Aspects of Career at Sea %</i>
1	2	3	4
22.4		In self realization	
	12.4	<i>I wanted career at sea</i>	
		<i>I want to sail as Captain (Chef Engineer) before</i>	
18.4		Cognitive and aesthetic (in order, justice, beauty)	
4.8		<i>To see the world</i>	
		<i>Better prospects at sea</i>	
	17.8	In respect (in approval, gratitude, recognition, competence)	
		<i>I enjoy a high level of job satisfaction</i>	
		In affections (love, belonging to group)	<i>Long time spent apart from family</i> 67.6
7.6		<i>Family tradition</i>	<i>Loneliness</i> 9.6
4.8		<i>In my country a seagoing career is a well-respected profession</i>	<i>No privacy</i> 4.8
		In security Physical and psychic	<i>Too mach paperwork</i> 34.1
2.4		<i>Thought life at sea would be less stressful than at home</i>	<i>Fatigue</i>
1.9		<i>Working condition are butter then at home</i>	<i>Crew are too small to share workload</i> 22.3
		<i>I want to work at sea until I retire</i>	<i>Piracy</i> 14.8
	11.3	In security phisiological (food, drink, oxygen)	
		<i>For many</i>	<i>Onboard living condition</i> 4.4
16		<i>Better wages than job at home</i>	18.3
15.8	27.5	<i>I earn a good salary that I cannot match ashore</i>	

There are exactly the employees that create the reputation of the Company they work for. And it's well known that advanced Companies consider the reputation as one of their main assets. Management of the ideas of social relations should become a corner stone of the Company policy. The shipping companies where, for the same work, captain-non citizen of the flag state is paid less than citizen can't rely on the

loyalty of the former. Globalization of the crewing market has led the shipping industry on the wrong way recruiting seafarers with the low level of competence or non competent at all. Such step will definitely contribute to further reducing of the safety at sea. Psychophysiological component forming part of "human factor" will worsen the situation even more. Shipping companies should upgrade the philosophy of business management. First of all, they have to establish the long-standing relations based on social and economic grounds with the educational institutions

CONCLUSION

Crisis of social and psychophysiological factors on the shipping crewing market is fraught with danger to the ecology of our planet. Accidents with the vessels carrying dangerous cargoes inflicted significant losses to the environment. And in the most cases the cause of the accident was the human factor, further ignoring of which in crewing policy will lead unavoidably to the irreplaceable harm to all the humankind. Assuming the fact that 90 % of the world transportations is carried out by the cheapest kind of transport—the sea transport, we have to understand that such "cheapness" is quite relative. It's high time to admit that chasing profit has become the reason of increase of sea trade. The world community should start to think over what for and whom for the sea trade is increasing so quickly. Is there real need in such increase if it threatens the existence of the humankind itself. Well known Russian writer and philosopher Fedor M. Dostoevsky was absolutely right claiming that "happiness of the whole world is not worth the single teardrop of one tortured child". It's not right to place the humankind on the brink of disaster for the sake of illusory profit. On the contrary, an adequate price should be set to ensure the safety at sea.

RESUME

We are convinced that the following steps are to be undertaken the soonest:

- To carry on the scientific research in ergonomics of marine professions in order to justify the level of effective and safe work of seafarers;
- To define and to establish the standards of professionally important characteristics of marine professions. Basing on the above research to implement a new document—"psychological seaman's passport" where dynamics of professionally important characteristics of the employee will be fixed all along his sea career;
- To review the philosophy of shipping establishing the relations with marine educational institutions targeting on selection of entrants, education of specialists, work out and realization of educational standards corresponding to the modern demands of the Shipping companies as well as their employees;
- To ensure professional selection and monitoring professionally important characteristics of seafarer.

References

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