

And While I'm on the Subject of Chiefs...

Description

I have plenty of "sea stories" about the E-7s, -8s, and -9s that made me look successful for 20 years. Most of them are uplifting and more than a few just plain humorous. Some are not so good, but I found out that incompetents, lazy, and slackers come in both genders, all colors and backgrounds. Conversely, dedicated, hard charging, make it happen people come in both genders and all colors and backgrounds. In both cases, there is no exclusivity.

When I was an XO, and we were on cruise, a few of the Chief Petty Officers were complaining to the Senior Chief Petty Officer of the Command (SCPOC) about how bad the junior officer were. Well, instead of the EMCS doing the "right thing," and having a short "meeting" in the Goat Locker, where he would have read them the riot act and then handed them the solution, he came to me.

I enjoy solving problems. On the other hand, on a Persian Gulf deployment, being the Navigator, the second in command, and the guy who had to keep all the right balls in the air, I was sort of busy with the "big picture" stuff. When the SCPOC brought this one and dropped it in my lap, I was slightly annoyed, so I had called the meeting in the Goat Locker.

I didn't yell, I didn't throw anything around. I just provided them with this fact of life (or words to this effect):

"You know how you you have served with COs and XOs and department heads that really sucked and made your life miserable, because they didn't know anything? Well, guess what? Their CPOS, when they were division officers failed to take them aside and train them, so you got stuck holding the bag."

"Not only do you have my permission to bring your JO down here, close the door, put a cup of coffee, no, strike that, can of Coke, in their hands and tell them how life is, I actually expect you will do that, because that's your job. If you don't take the time to do it, you'll just be stuck with them as department heads, XOs and COs who will make your life miserable and you'll have no one to blame but yourself."

It sure seemed pretty clear to me how to solve the problem. Once more, I refer you back to one of my earliest posts [about RDC Mac and his ensigns beginnings](#).

We need those senior enlisted to step up to the plate and form a bond with their "butter bars," so the wisdom of real leadership can be passed on. We also need the "butter bars" to resist the urge to think they have a commission and therefore a corner on the knowledge market in the profession of arms. When this happens, we see a military that can slice and dice more bad guys before breakfast, than most other armed forces could do in a week.

Since we see this capability in action via the many blogs, I know there is this sort of "training" happening. Let's hope the tradition stays with us.

A few "hall of fame" names of my enlisted mentors (in order of appearance):

OSC Michael P. MacCaffery
RMC Hansen
GMCM(SW) Don Dolance
STGCM(SW) David Frey
FTCS(SW) David Magnus
GSCS(SW) John "JC" Wiegman
GSMC(SW) John Graham
GSEC(SW) Denny Rohr
RMCM(SW) Rumbaugh
OSC(SW) Michael Bennett
GMCM(SW) David Cress

To swipe General Doolittle's book title, I'll just say, I could never be so lucky again, to have such great senior enlisted men who took the time to invest in me.

Category

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