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The principal object of the Officers' Courses in the Royal Naval Barracks, Portsmouth, is to give an inexperienced Temporary Officer of any Branch an ideal of officer-like qualities at which he can aim. It will be noted that officers of all Branches are concerned; not only Upper Deck Officers. This is an important point, as an officer must be an officer no matter to what Branch he belongs, and as an officer he must remember that the art of leadership must on no account be subjugated to technical qualifications. After all said and done, the uniform that carries with it His Majesty's Commission is, in itself, a symbol of leadership. An officer, when faced with an emergency cannot discard ignominiously his responsibility of leadership on the basis that he was granted a Commission on purely technical grounds. If he did so, it would be with a shameful realization that he had no other alternative due to lack of self confidence to shoulder responsibility resultant in no small measure to ignorance and inexperience. An inexperienced officer can assimilate a respectable modicum of technical knowledge through the medium of tuition



and textbooks, which can be perfected by experience. That is a comparatively simple procedure by contrast with learning the art of leadership, the success of which rests so much with the personality of the individual concerned. Some are born great—to them the ability to lead presents no difficulty—others have greatness thrust upon them. Some of these have latent powers of leadership, and others to a limited extent only, which is a worry to them. Unfortunately for this latter category, books cannot supply the remedy to the same extent as they can for technical deficiency.

To develop the first essential of leadership, which is self confidence, it must be a matter of practical experience, possibly painful to endure, demanding courage and the will to avoid the shadow and to come out into the light. It is with the idea of giving a helping hand to those who have the will to succeed and who may be groping in the dark for a lead of some sort towards the attainment of their ambition, that the following notes on what is expected of an officer are made available. They have been compiled from various sources which may be recognized by their authors whose help is acknowledged gratefully.

#### BEARING AND EXAMPLE

Be smart and alert in your bearing, and be always meticulous about your dress.

Develop your voice and word of command.

Your demeanour should be cheerful and enthusiastic—it is your business to inspire enthusiasm and pride of ship and Service. Never appear bored or fed up, however irksome the work may be. Britishers have a capacity for cheerfulness in adversity. Give this a chance; it is infectious.

Never allow panic to show in your voice or manner; there is an ever-present tendency in your men to turn to an officer for their cue in emergency.

#### KNOWLEDGE

Do not be too proud to study the Seamanship Manuals or other technical books; they are the teaching of many generations of experience.

Do not despise advice tendered to you by your subordinates.

On taking up a new job, keep your eyes and ears wide open and, unless and until you know something about it, your mouth tight shut. As leaders of fighting men it is your business to do your utmost to acquire knowledge and impart it.

Men quickly form a very shrewd opinion of your ability and your capacity for just dealing. On this assessment their readiness to follow your lead and work with a will under you, mostly depends. You cannot be just without knowledge.



## FIRMNESS AND FAIRNESS

You can only acquire these through knowledge and the resulting confidence in yourself.

Be precise in your orders.

Think ahead, and thus avoid indecision and contradictory orders. Remember that many mistakes and much apparent slackness may be due to ignorance of what is required. Your job is to teach as well as to take charge and find fault only if necessary.

Ignorance may be your fault, and there are times when you could and should, be kindly.

To obtain the essential grip on your men, be on the lookout for opportunities to nip slackness in the bud. These will not be rare. Use your voice on these occasions so that others may hear you, but do not scream or use sarcasm; a short, sharp, hard word is by no means excluded, but it must be justly deserved.

Remember that it is more difficult to taughthen up a rope than to ease it away. Therefore, at first particularly, you must be alert and strict; but do not overdo it.

Do not deal harshly with a man solely for the sake of making an example of him. It sometimes happens that a Ship's Order or Regulation becomes temporarily unenforced. The initial fault then lies with those in authority, and it is not just, therefore, to drop heavily on one man, when there are possibly many others equally deserving punishment.

There are other ways of getting the "buzz" passed around than by giving a heavy punishment.

The latitude permitted in summary punishment is best used in relation to the man rather than to the offence.

You must study, and know, the varying effects of punishments.

Once you have discovered a bad character you must catch him by watchfulness, and not by guile. By using guile you may be tempting him to commit a second offence, which is akin to leaving valuables lying about in order to tempt a suspected thief to steal them.

## LOYALTY

Loyalty can only start from the top and grow downwards. It can be checked, or even destroyed, by lack of strength in the link just above.

Loyalty can only flourish when it acts both ways, i.e., be loyal to your superiors as well as to your inferiors. The former is often forgotten.

Do not risk giving the appearance of washing your hands of responsibility, or giving a hint of criticism of high authority.

The "Popularity Jack" is soon discovered by the sailor and immediately loses grip.

Do not discuss the failures of your young Petty Officers and men in the hearing of Wardroom Attend-



ants or others of the Lower Deck. That is just as bad as admonishing a higher rating in front of his juniors.

At Defaulters do not lose an opportunity to speak in favour of a good man or of a man's good qualities. This is not only in justice to the man; it is of importance to the Captain or Commander. On the other hand, do not whiten a sepulchre.

Difficulties sometimes arise in your endeavour to support your Petty Officers. Like others, they are liable to make mistakes, and may wrongly bring up a man for punishment. Even so, it is rarely desirable to indicate publicly your displeasure.

Never judge a man if you have lost your temper.

#### LOYALTY TO YOUR SHIP

How well you did things in your last ship is of no consequence. You must avoid saying how you did things in your last ship.

The saying "Different ships; different long-splices" means, amongst other things, that there is more than one way of making a good long-splice.

#### SMARTNESS

A ship is either efficient, smart, clean and happy, or none of these things. They go hand in hand, or not at all.

It is no good an officer putting the blame for inefficiency—which is very largely caused by unhappiness—on his ship's company.

The whole tone and efficiency of a ship depends on the officers.

Most work and most activities can, and should, be performed in a businesslike manner. Slackness in falling-in, mustering or moving-off, quickly react on the whole spirit of the ship. Time is wasted; the hands are fallen-in earlier and the Defaulters List grows.

Of the two seamanlike terms "Roundly" and "Handsomely", the latter should be used rarely, and not as a substitute for "Safety First".

"Safety First" was invented to preserve the blind and ignorant amongst shore-goers. It implies delay afloat and has no place, as we depend for safety on a quick eye and rapid action.

Do your best to preserve what might be termed the minor traditions of the Service on board. Do your best to keep such things as piping and the ringing of the ship's bell up to standard, as little things like these help to spread pride of ship.

Because we are at war there is no excuse for not casting your eye over your ship for signs of slackness which are foreign to the Royal Navy, such as flapping ensign halyards, ropes ends over the side, and anything that could be described as not being ship-shape.



When going rounds of inspection, bear in mind that old adage: "Look after the corners and the rest will look after itself." The gun may be outwardly shining; just open the breach—you may find the Bluebell tin.

#### WORD OF COMMAND

A great deal can be gained by making a determined effort to improve the tone and delivery of your orders. This applies equally to seamanship and parade ground orders, although the best manner of giving each differs somewhat.

Whenever you hear a strikingly good order (some—a few)—have a gift for it) study it and mimic it. Many officers do not make themselves heard—a bad fault.

The order "Hoist away" can be given with every bit as much life and drive as can an order on the parade ground.

Fill up your chest before giving an order. Put enthusiasm into its tone. Give it as if you meant it.

The amount of grip which can be obtained by a good word of command is remarkable.

Men cannot work at the rush to poorly given orders. The amount of strength of body and enthusiasm exerted by your men is in proportion to the grip of the person in charge and his ability to enhearten them.

#### PARADE SMARTNESS

As a means to an end, there are few opportunities as valuable for building up smartness of bearing as are afforded at Divisions. Officers are expected to set a high example in their bearing, manner of giving orders, marching and saluting. Do not have too many parades, but when you do have them, insist on smartness and be smart yourself.

#### SALUTING

A salute is not complete until it has been smartly and properly returned. A slovenly return is bad manners.

Never try to save a man a salute by turning away from him. Look at a man as he approaches you and give him a chance to do his part unhesitatingly.

Whenever a salute is made the chin should be raised.

Officers on shore should do their utmost to avoid any chance of not noticing a salute.

The foolish, shy manner in which many officers return salutes and sometimes endeavour to avoid them is the principal cause of slack saluting.

Remember that a sailor is proud of his officers and if an officer does not do his best to uphold his position by returning marks of respect it is letting the sailor down, in addition to being bad mannered, as the sailor expects an officer to be a gentleman.



## KNOWLEDGE IN SERVING YOUR MEN

Learn their names. You must make a sustained effort in this direction should it lie within your powers.

There is nothing more irritating to a sailor than to be addressed as "You there" or something akin to that. He likes to know that he is known by name.

Know their pay, allowances, and opportunity for advancement. Learn their circumstances, qualities and ambitions, as unobtrusively as possible, gradually gain knowledge of their budgets and family situation, but beware of prying into a man's family affairs in a manner which might strike him as being that of a busybody.

After all said and done, an officer's bearing towards his men should be that of a friend, and, as a friend, a man should realize that if he is faced with professional or domestic problems that need advice, he can go to his officers without fear to obtain it.

Learn what your men are interested in outside the Service, and their topics of conversation and discussion.

Make yourself familiar with the work of the Family Welfare Section and the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust.

Should a man come to you for advice, do not let the matter drop and be forgotten. It may well be that a subsequent enquiry as to how things are going on will

sometimes bring to light that a man is still in need of further help but is averse to coming along a second time because he thinks he has already made enough fuss about it. In this connection, how many times is this heard at the Defaulter's Table? "I put in a request but heard no more about it." This is just cause of complaint on the part of the rating.

Do not be discouraged because a man prefers to see a more senior officer about his affairs. A man will often open up to you later after he has unburdened himself to an older officer.

Study the conditions in which your men live in their ship or station, details of the serving of his food, where he writes his letters, the true extent of the facilities, or lack of them, for washing, shaving and keeping his kit tidy.

Discover their recreations. We all know the experts at games, but there are dozens of others who get just as much enjoyment out of a game of football as does a member of the team.

Do not be afraid to accept an invitation to play games, however poor a performer you may be. You would not be asked to play because of your value as a player only.

Always avoid concentrating on the good hands at the expense of the poor fish. The poor fishes, especially the young ones, may turn into something better if you devote some of your time to them and learn their difficulties.



Never neglect opportunities for getting into touch with a bad hat. You may, in time, be able to influence him or find out how bad he really is. The latter may be useful information one day. Bad hats are a danger in a ship or establishment, and it is important therefore that information about bad characters should be as full as possible. In this respect, remember that bad hats in a ship usually form their own cliques, as they realize that their way of life is not appreciated by the remainder of the ship's company. It should be easy to observe these cliques and whether they are being a danger to the youngsters, a situation with which you ought to be able to deal.

Much of the above savours of the "Paul Pry" or the "Popularity Jack," but it is possible to obtain this knowledge without deserving either title.

There is a quality called tactfulness, a very misused word in many ways, without which no officer can succeed.

Your endeavour should be to inspire in your men a feeling of respect for you and confidence in your sympathetic interest and understanding of their problems as well as in your professional ability. Do not forget that this is the basis of our treasured discipline in the Royal Navy, which can be summed up as the fruits of mutual confidence between the officer and man.

Never turn down an application on compassionate grounds because you think it is impossible for the

Captain to grant it. Through his greater experience the Captain is better able to judge and explain. Moreover, it is important that the men should realize the availability of their Captain.

It is within the competence of any officer to show consideration to his men. Uncertainty as to whether they will be required during working hours; a sudden alteration or curtailment of a meal hour, should rarely, if ever be necessary. If it is, pass the word as long beforehand as you can, and, if possible, give the reason. Do not forget that a man will always work better if he knows what he is working for, and if it is a question of working at what might be described as an unusual time or for an unusual time, the reason should be stated.

Never keep a boat waiting. This is as bad as keeping hands fallen-in waiting. An officer's job is to be first on the spot, and this applies in particular to junior officers.

Always remember that if it is ever necessary to alter the routine time for a meal the galley should be warned in plenty of time.

Always give as much information as you can about long leave dates, week-ends, and, for that matter, drafting, if possible.

The more you can interest your ship's company in what is going on the better. Moreover you will then



short-circuit the disgruntled man who spreads the yarn that they are being bully-ragged and driven unnecessarily.

It is also your business to instruct and educate your men with a view to inducing ambition to better their positions in the Service as distinct from their rate of pay. It is well-known that few men on the Lower Deck regard special promotion with any enthusiasm. Trade Unionism and an innate fidelity to their own kind limit their aim to one of general security; that is, equal opportunity to rise steadily on a pay scale.

The principle underlying the red recommend for promotion to help on the exceptional man is foreign to their upbringing and environment, and is oft-time regarded with suspicion. The Service aspect of this does not enter their heads. There is no reason, however, for your acceptance of that view. It is up to you, as an officer, to cultivate higher endeavour. Comparatively few men volunteer readily to move outside the ordinary run.

Many men are grateful for having their minds made up for them, and have a child-like faith in the advice of an officer they know and respect.

#### ENCOURAGEMENT OF YOUR HIGHER RATINGS

There was a day when the Warrant Officer was described as the link between the Wardroom and the Lower Deck. In those days a Warrant Officer, in

addition to his specialist duties, was a storekeeping officer, and, as such, the importance of his department carried much more weight than it does in these days of general messing and central store-keeping. In consequence, the modern Warrant Officer, by reason of his status as a junior officer who, apart from his specialist duties, plays a much larger part in the internal economy of the ship, has handed over the title "link" to the higher rating. It is therefore of the utmost importance that you should bear in mind that the responsibilities of the higher rating are more important now than they have ever been. They should be made to feel that they are in your confidence, and they should be made to feel that they really are the men that matter. Bring them into any discussion on a job of work, drill, improvement or amenity. Not nearly enough is done by Officers to recognize the status of Higher Ratings.

Make a point of sending a word of commendation through your higher ratings, and you can follow this up later, should you so desire, by giving it in person.

On the other hand, do not expect too much of your higher ratings. You cannot expect their standard shall be a very level one, as large numbers are at present being made and many are of very limited experience.

Endeavour to avoid putting a higher rating in charge of a job without first discovering whether he knows how to set about it.



Avoid showing preference to a higher rating of higher quality at the expense of the remainder. The latter, besides being far more numerous, are in more need of your assistance, and this type includes a large number who, with a little guidance, quickly grow to take a jealous pride in their work.

You must also bear in mind that the young higher ratings, and particularly the Leading Seaman, have a difficult job. They find themselves in charge of men older than themselves, some of whom endeavour to trip them up. If you spot any sign of insolence or disobedience, do not wait for the Petty Officer to complain or run the man in.

Give the higher rating the benefit of your greater knowledge by making opportunities for discussion, and if possible, instruction. However busy you are, these opportunities will occur, possibly when you are on watch at night or closed up at your action stations.

#### FIGHTING QUALITIES

Endeavour to bring out the fighting qualities of your men. This should be your constant consideration, as in your position as a leader it is your business to inspire enthusiasm.

It is no easy matter to bring into proper significance the bearing that fitness has on fighting ability, which is our sole purpose and great responsibility. We are

inclined to forget that even in these highly mechanized days superiority in battle is far more a matter of fighting qualities in ourselves and our men, than the calibre of guns and thickness of armour.

#### FORETHOUGHT

Life at sea differs essentially from life ashore. We are far more dependent at sea on the whims of the elements. These have an uncomfortable habit of upsetting our plans and routines unexpectedly unless we use forethought.

Look ahead; do not wait until something goes wrong. If you anticipate that you may run into bad weather, have that rope, that jigger, that heaving line, that strop or that hand spike handy in the place where you may want it.

Look over your head, and train the men to do the same. Most of us are born with a tendency to look only along the level of our noses. Trouble usually comes from overhead, and in these days in more ways than one.

Napoleon's reply to a sycophant is well worthy of remembrance, and this is it: "If I always appear prepared, it is because before entering on any undertaking I have meditated long and have foreseen what may occur. It is not genius which reveals to me what I should do; it is thought and meditation."



Napoleon's secret was little more than careful concentration of his thoughts, the carrying out of a mental "dummy-run" whenever possible.

Finally, it is not possible to write a handbook on how to be an officer and a leader. We have each to find out for ourselves the best use we can make of those particular qualities possessed by each of us in varying degrees.