

Performance, Outcomes and Results
The MET Network with NGO Observer Status at IMO

GlobalMET

NEWSLETTER



To promote, develop and support in the spirit of cooperation, the common interests of its members in all matters concerning the development and quality of maritime education and training.

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Editorial

Industry Leader Addresses Seafarer Training Needs

In his keynote address at the Crew Connect Global Conference in Manila in mid-November Esben Poulsson, Chairman of the International Chamber of Shipping and also of the Singapore Shipping Association, spoke about the importance of seafarers in shipping and the essential role they play in the modernisation of the industry as a whole. He also paid tribute to the contribution of many seafarers, living and working away from home, contributing to economic development and the improvement of living standards worldwide.

Training acts not only as a career enhancer, but "the future sustainability of the industry requires an evolutionary response to the training and retention of seafarers," he stressed. "We need to do more than simply respond to changing needs, we must learn to anticipate them and thereby control the development of the industry."

While change is always present, the industry is currently going through significant structural change in these times of great uncertainty. Seafarers will continue to be needed for operating the ships into the foreseeable future and for relevant posts in the shore-side of the industry. Their skills are fundamentally important at sea and in many positions ashore. Technological development is impacting their work and their training must adapt quickly to recognise this.

From an industry perspective, generally speaking however, their training is of relatively low priority and little is being done to keep up with technological developments.

"There is always a danger in these circumstances that investment in training can be a victim," warned Mr Poulsson. "Now, perhaps as never before, companies must have an eye to the future and consider that significant growth in shipping could return within the next 5 years. Employers must recognise that decisions made in these difficult times should not inhibit the future sustainability of the industry. Investment in training and recruitment is an essential part of assuring good industrial health."

Integrated technology and automated functions and systems will be a feature of the future, but maritime training appears to be stuck in dealing with present needs and little is being done to look into the future needs.

"We are experiencing a transition into a 'smart' era, which will feature integrated technology and automated functions and systems. Certainly, there will be a continuous challenge to ensure that seafarers' skills reflect their changing roles on board ship," Mr Poulsson explained. "Seafarers may no longer be required so much to use machines but rather to collaborate with them."

The training amendments to the STCW Convention that were developed in 2010, together with amendments to the ILO Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) providing worldwide protection of seafarers, which will come into force in January 2017, are a step forward, but there is little evidence that the industry, in collaboration with IMO, is looking at future needs. Why, we ask, are the parties responsible for the employment and training of seafarers, not consulting on future training needs and working out how to introduce them? The industry needs to get together to work out the implications for maritime training of the future technological development on ship operations.

Mr Poulsson returned to the issue of future proofing training, warning: "Changes may well be rapid and a failure to respond with equal speed may leave training needs assessment trailing in their wake."

I agree. We can't afford to let maritime training stay behind in assessing future needs. GlobalMET advocates that the industry must form a consultative committee to look at the future and make recommendations to the International Maritime Organisation.

By **Rod Short**



Members and their staff members are encouraged to submit their thoughts through authoring articles for publishing in our Newsletter. Articles should reach the Secretariat by the 1st Friday of each month. Publication usually will be in the 3rd week of each month. GlobalMET reserves the right to reject any article that may be deemed inappropriate for the promotion and well-being of MET.

Human Performance Improvement: The Mega, the Macro and the Micro



“What is the city, but the people”

– Shakespeare



Photo taken from ISD website <http://sdg.iisd.org>

Reflecting back on my two year or more journey to become a Certified Professional in Learning Performance (CPLP), the above quotation by William Shakespeare comes to mind because of how differently – or more accurately, indifferently people and nations seem to be towards modelling good performance improvement behaviours – issues surrounding Climate Change as the prime example. What has been expressed in Shakespeare’s short quotation is essentially the essence of great organizations, societies and nations. And, in the context of today’s global imperatives—a blueprint for a competitive, sustainable and environmentally safe “Living Blue Planet”. The quotation embodies Human Performance Improvement (HPI) possibilities up to and including the global level; but what does “success” looks like? One could infer this question embodies job performance, organizational, national and even the global level of success. Understanding this, what one is after is the gap between what success looks like, in this case a city of the people, and what that city might look like now – the mystical performance gap. And finally, we are essentially asking the important question – What are we (our Mega existence), but for the people?

Thinking about that bigger Mega picture or Mega Goal that makes ordinary men and nations – great men and nations, what is holding us back from achieving greatness? Is it approaching or the framing of performance outcomes from a Micro view or results instead of a Mega view that itself allows for successful Macro (organizational), Micro (individual performance) and process goals to be great! Further, the author suggests that the only thing holding us back is quite possibly our own consistent and currently flawed behaviours. This must be the only logical conclusion – as simple as it may be.

Exactly what is Mega Thinking or Goals? According to, The Manager’s Pocket Guide to Mega Thinking and Planning, most of us can’t count on luck to be great and must therefore, have a “rigorous results-oriented plan...” (Kaufman, Roger). Further, Kaufman quotes Peter Drucker’s advice – “if you can’t predict it, create it”. Mega thinking and goals is about creating the kind of successful future that enables opportunities, defines problems and helps to ensure successful organizations – and by extension successful nations and a sustainable but competitive and environmentally safe global outcome. It “...provides the key concepts...to justify what to change and what to continue in your organization...provides practical and proven tools for successful strategic thinking and planning...to define and deliver success...value...to the organization, clients and our shared world” (Kaufman).

The author’s own experience in this regard is that people generally think you’re crazy when you talk like that, suggesting “...that kind of thinking is too high minded... start small... people’s

mind-set won’t allow otherwise”. And, by starting (thinking) small – it should be evident to all that no coherent plan or vision is possible, sufficiently articulated or disseminated in order to implement and have any chance of “real success”; indeed organizations using this model are on autopilot and any destination is as good as any other destination as long as the organization is hitting the KPI on making money as the prime directive. Most likely they aren’t really achieving the targets they could be! Is money really the primary target or Mega Goal? Maybe money should be the outcome of the sum total of other rigorous processes as referred to earlier – Mega Thinking? Quoting Kaufman again, “If you don’t want to succeed, there are many popular approaches available... but before you choose to follow the leader, do you look at the wreckage of contemporary organizations – from Wall Street to Main Street and Washington, D.C., to your town – that will stand witness to the fact the ‘popular strategic planning approaches are not necessarily ‘effective’” (Kaufman)?

One could look around the globe and site more than a handful of companies and nation-states that have failed miserably because of this lack of Mega Thinking and instead focusing on the opulence of the moment only to succumb to the hard realities of austerity programs aimed at correcting systemic mismanagement, corruption, fiscal irresponsibility and short sightedness. When one says start small, what does one really mean? Does it mean go off in some blind direction that leads to... The author contends that a model and process must be adopted that can help frame and somewhat chart a direction and future that has the highest probability of success instead of jumping on the “band wagon” of popular processes. Dare to be different, dare to assess, plan and do.

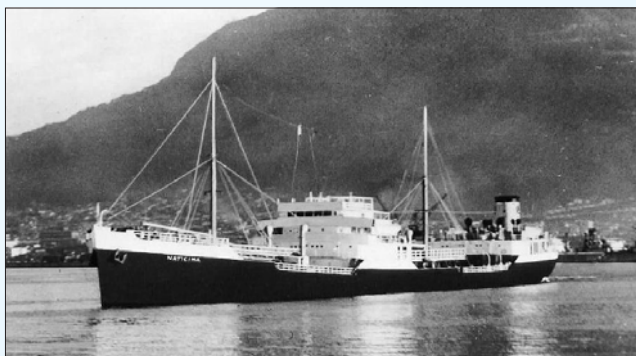
In any number of my writings I have introduced the Human Performance Improvement (HPI) Model as a methodology to ascertain the performance gap and profit solutions while also dealing with change management issues. Only now, the author is framing that same argument in the context of a bigger idea – a Mega idea, one that involves a successful Living Blue Planet and mankind specifically. At the organizational level this may mean Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs. What does this look like? The author refers one to the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) that focuses on “...new, comprehensive management...on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and uses the IISD’s network of experts to provide information on SDG implementation and to link key partners engaged in SDG implementation” (<http://sdg.iisd.org/events/unfccc-cop-22/?rdr=climate-iisd.org>).

In conclusion, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Cup 22, otherwise known as The Marrakech Climate Change Conference convened from 7 - 18 November, in Marrakech, Morocco. It was the 22nd Conference of the Parties (COP). These are real Mega Goals and Thinking for all mankind, not some Micro KPIs designed to ensure mutual assured destruction (MAD) of the organization. I invite one to the IISD website and to Google COP 22 and learn about the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. What are your Mega Goals and Thinking? What are your thoughts, see you on the globalmetblog!

By

Iman Fiqrie Bin Muhammad (LCDR, USN ret), CPLP®, MBA
Lecturer, Malaysian Maritime Academy

Cap'n He Give Me Plenty'



I worked in the Shell Eastern fleet as a Third Mate from September 1959 until October 1960. The time was spent mainly aboard Naninia and Naticina, though for the two week break between ships I was Second Mate on the little Guntur, which was on the slip in Tanjong Rhu in Singapore.

Naticina, a Shell tanker of 8,179 gt, was built in 1943 by R & W Hawthorn Leslie at Hebburn on the Tyne. She survived the war and was broken up in 1962. I was aboard Naticina as Third Mate for six months in 1960. We were employed mainly in carting diesel around S E Asia, between Tarakan on the coast of Borneo to the east and Penang on the coast of Malaysia to the west. We were frequently in Singapore. The officers were from the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand. The ratings were a Hong Kong Chinese crew. She was a happy ship.

We left Pulau Bukom one afternoon bound for Pladju in Sumatra. The master, an older man, had the con out of busy Singapore waters. After letting go and getting under way, the bosun came onto the bridge and said 'pumpman he die.' In response to the master's reaction 'when' the pumpman said 'we letting go'. He had waited to tell the master until the ship was under way. So the master slowed the ship, turned her around and headed back off Bukom, where we anchored, the body was landed and we complied with requirements. The pumpman was elderly and had apparently died from a heart attack. It was in darkness that we left again, with an AB appointed to stand in for the pumpman.

Another incident occurred leaving Balikpapan, a port on the coast of East Kalimantan. A feature of Balikpapan was in the middle of the harbour, where the forward section of the tanker San Flaviano swung around an anchor and was full of gas. In 1958 she had been bombed by a covert mission of the CIA to stop all oil exports from Indonesia, set on fire, broke in half and the after

part sank. The CIA had orders to attack unarmed foreign merchant ships in order to drive foreign trade away from Indonesia and weaken its economy, the intention being to undermine the government of President Sukarno. Shell however continued operating in the area.

The master had been at the Shell Club ashore and had walked back to the ship having consumed a large quantity of alcohol. When the time came to sail, the mate was unable to rouse him. The mate called a meeting of us two deck officers and the chief engineer and it was decided to sail, with the mate on the bridge acting as master, the second mate forward and myself at the after station. The pilot came aboard as expected and didn't say anything. We let go and proceeded to sea. The pilot left the ship and the mate had the con. At the buoy marking the end of the dredged channel – there were mine fields on either side - the mate ordered a turn to starboard, guessing that we should head for Pladju or Singapore. Some hours later the master came onto the bridge, thanked us all and said we were going in the right direction.

Another master was a pleasant man, popular with us all. Whereas the previous master was a man in his fifties, this man was still in his thirties. While at anchor it was common for him to host a social gathering on the bridge wings or on the monkey island where we would swap stories. Often he referred in a derogatory manner to the cess pits of S E Asia, where younger men, especially the unmarried, were at risk of going astray and catching sexually transmitted diseases. Soon after departing the second mate would comment on the number of victims in the 'sick prick' parade.

We frequently took a cargo to Bangkok. Soon after entering the Chao Phraya River with a pilot on-board, the girls would also board and be in the after accommodation. We took little notice of them. Later, when we were alongside discharging cargo, some would appear around the midship accommodation. I had just commenced the 2000 to 2400 watch when an attractive, shapely girl in the briefest of hot pants came to me with a proposition. I told her I was on watch and not available. She went off. Near midnight I saw her again. She was smiling and came over to me and showed a handful of US dollars, commenting that the Captain was a very good man and 'he give me plenty'.

By Rod Short



The Expanding Influence of Instructional Systems Technology on Higher Education



Education is regarded as a “fair hand” in our society. We have heard many stories of people, who have gone through tough early childhoods and yet still have completed their examinations successfully. Some of these successful people have even gone on to become prime ministers. Education gave them the remedy for their personal and situational shortcomings. Instructional Systems Technology (IST) is one way to help improve that education and is rapidly becoming an influence in many countries. In addition, in this new knowledge-based economy IST can help shape the knowledge of the future.

A rapidly changing world

The world is changing very rapidly and we must always be kept abreast with the technology so that we can use the technology to help benefit us and our younger generation. There is a saying, that the only thing that is permanent in this world is change itself. Many new devices with exciting features and designs are being displayed in the market. Technology has changed many aspects of life – education has also been changed accordingly.

Using technology in classrooms and presentations a conscious decision

The use of technology totally boils down to teachers and students to include technology in whatever presentations or activities they are delivering. Even so, there are still some teachers who are hesitant to use the latest technology to help improve their delivery—sceptical even. A college must be interested in the learning process of both the student and their trainers throughout their educational careers—this of prime importance. This would obviously include any new learning technology as a consequence. Market trends, i.e., the fair or free hand, will direct colleges and universities to move towards lifelong learning models, courses and create blended learning spaces.

According to Seels & Richey (1994), “The 1994 definition of the field, Instructional Technology is the theory and practice of design, development, utilization, management and evaluation of processes and resources for learning. The purpose of Instruction Technology is to affect and effect learning. Learning which can be seen by change in knowledge, attitudes and skill is the instructional requirement.

Higher education becoming the norm

In today’s world, higher education is becoming a norm in many parts of the world and so is getting a university degree. In fact, in the City Menlo, San Francisco, California—nearly 70% of its residents have higher education degrees. Almost everyone nowadays has an opportunity to undergo higher education, either abroad or locally. However, in today’s world there is also a lot of competition in industry and it is, therefore, necessary for employees to have undergone some sort of higher education in order for them to get a better job or complete. Employers also prefer to take graduates who have soft skills – one good example of a soft skill is to have some communication skills.

Technology helps to provide learning support

The use of internal facilitators allows the organizing team the use of local expertise, and in particular, ensures a great deal of support from the technology enhanced learning (TEL) teams

who are able to provide support to help improve teaching via the use of technologies (Hennessy et al. 2014). Technology can provide learning support. For example, a computer with a CD ROM provides the environment of learning where students can explore and experience the simulation process.

Once the students begin to get used to the system, they will eventually get to know the resources for learning. Through the internet the students can read different viewpoints of people, can analyse and construct accordingly. As Instructional Systems Technology is about building learning, providing feedback mechanisms and improving delivery mechanisms—it can help prompt the students to start to analyse and construct learning knowledge and systems.

Further examples of Instructional Systems Technology

Further education is also a hot topic nowadays and around the world many industries are taking a deeper interest in education. Even though the university claims that they produce quality graduates, industry seems to be unhappy as there seems to be a small miss match in what is taught on campus and what is needed in the workplace. The IST, if it’s been put into good use, can help close the gap between what is taught on campus and what is needed in the work place. One good example is through simulation exercises where the students get a real feel for the job. If the student makes a mistake in a simulator it is still okay, as compared to a mistake while performing his job.

Governments normally invite the industry’s input in the development of new curriculum that matches what is learnt on campus to what is needed in the workplace. The Malaysian government, for example, in the budget 2017 has given the green light to the Malaysian communications and multimedia commission to allocate RM340 million to provide tablets to 430,000 teachers.

Furthermore, they have given RM2,500.00 tax relief for subscription of newspapers, internet, gym membership and purchase of Smartphone. Parents should use this opportunity to have internet connectivity in each house however for students below the age of maturity the parents need to observe what their children are doing with the internet connectivity. By providing the tablets to teachers it will transform the method of teaching. It is supposed to change the way teachers present knowledge and their delivery will be more stimulating for the students.



In conclusion

If you are fair, genuine, friendly and honest in your actions and have a general interest in people and their welfare they will tend to follow you. These personality traits will begin to build that trust with your staff and will eventually bring trust. Once you get their trust and respect, you only need to tell them to use technology in their teaching, they will do it. You also should use technology in teaching yourself and your colleagues might imitate you and soon they will also follow.

There is good news in this regard from that the ministry of education who might convert textbooks to digital, so teachers would be able to upload them onto the tablets. The above actions show the expanding influences of instructional system technology on higher education. The reason for these efforts is not difficult to understand due to the fact that a nation's economic success in the 21st century will be linked to how well it can keep up and survive in a global IT environment.

And finally, technology is, by no means, the sole preserve of this field of Instructional Technology, it attracts theorists and

practitioners from many other fields (Seels & Richey 1994, p. 87). A combination of quality management, innovations and performance technology may provide a powerful tool for organizational change. In this global competitive market, managers and teachers should use this tool, and current resources, to stay ahead of competitors. The current education system should empower the teachers to effectively use computer related technology in the classrooms.

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By **Capt Sivanandan Vivekanandan**
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Virtual Classroom Tools, Apache Openmeetings

by
Iman Fiqrie, CPLP®

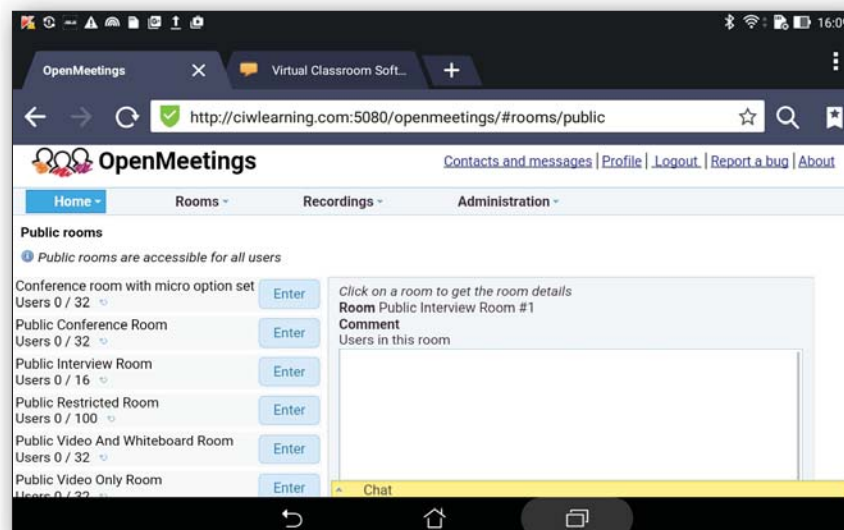
Highlight

For many institutions of higher learning, it's been difficult to crack the code on virtual classrooms, how to acquire and use them; many of the big learning management systems (LMS) themselves use only a few of them, many are Open Source. The two big ones that come to mind are Big Blue Button and Openmeetings.

Openmeetings was an Open Source project that was taken over by the Apache Openmeetings Project and is a robust virtual environment that can do public, private and personal virtual rooms. There are webinar rooms that can accommodate up to 100 users; conference rooms for 1 – 16 or 32 users; public interview rooms; video or microphone only rooms, restricted rooms and more. The real question is how

to use and incorporate this virtual environment into mainstream training or business. Apache Openmeetings (AOM) can be "plugged into" (plugin) such LMS as Moodle, Blackboard and others for an enhanced experience. Virtual space can be also used to provide virtual services.

As security is a concern, AOM can be configured with its own built in database, logon security (LDAP and OAuth2). It also considers backups and multiple server instances as well. Unfortunately, it's not that easy to install, compile and implement- more than two to three days for a real web developer Ninja. I've installed it on my server only just recently. Overall, a great choice for any virtual experience!



Essential Resources for Professionals from The Nautical Institute

As an independent, international professional membership organisation, we promote safer and more effective shipping practices for all those involved in the maritime industry. We achieve this through a range of products and services for both our members and the wider industry, such as DP certification, Continuing Professional Development, publications, free resources and self-study schemes. The Nautical Institute has over 7,000 members, representing more than 110 countries and an international network of 50 branches worldwide.

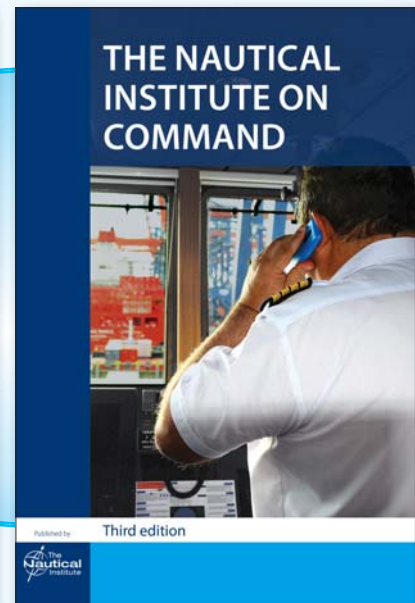
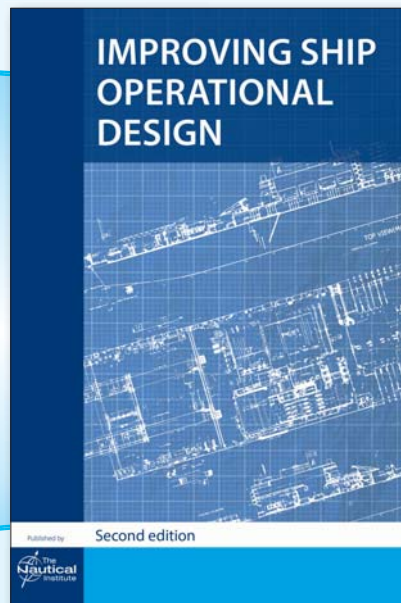
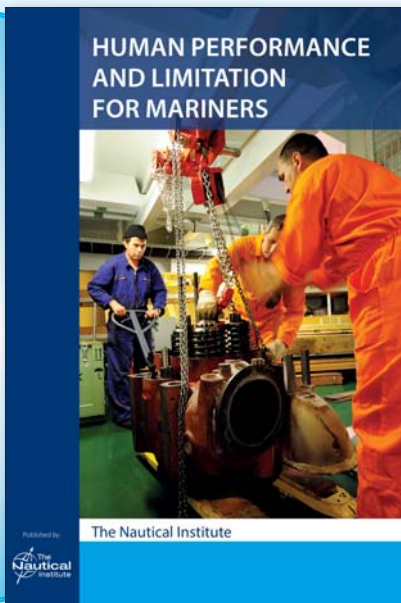
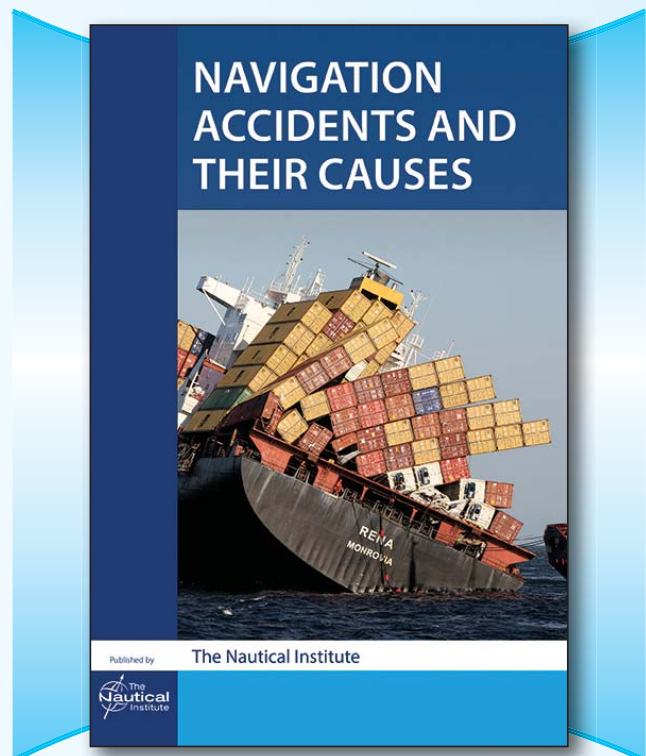
In the past year we have published a wide range of titles for the industry. These include *Human Performance and Limitation*, *Navigational Accidents and their Causes*, *Improving Ship Operational Design* and *The Nautical Institute on Command*. The publishing of best practice is central to the aims of the Institute, so subject matter and methods of delivery are constantly under review. Our members, our committees and governance process have all contributed to ensure that our books are current and reflect the Institute's aims and areas of focus. No single author is likely to be in a position to know all the complexities of a subject. With a broader authorship and peer-reviews, the books gain from the knowledge of people from different backgrounds, a variety of vessel types and operating experiences, and from different areas of the world. Every author is peer-reviewed, so you can be sure that you are getting the best quality products from us for your professional career.

Books are not the only means The Nautical Institute uses to distribute its work on best practice. We also publish:

- The industry-acclaimed monthly member's journal *Seaways*;
- *The Navigator*, is a successful free, technical, non-commercial magazine published as part of a major initiative by the Institute to help inspire navigators and develop and maintain their competence;

- The human element project *Alert!*, which is available for free online;
- Conference papers, briefings and videos.

The Institute will also continue to develop and strengthen links with other organisations that have specialist knowledge and share our desire to define and publicise best practice. Because of this, we are offering all GlobalMET members 40% off all Nautical Institute publications. GlobalMET members will also receive 15% off all IMO bestsellers. You can find all our products and services on our website: www.nautinst.org



Speech by the Vice President, Dally Ohdate of Women in Maritime, Phillipines at the Leadership and Management Seminar in Cebu



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THESE are some of the reasons that could explain why in the Asia-Pacific countries there is an apparent reluctance on both sides— on the part of the employers, in engaging women seafarers, and on the part of women, in taking up seafaring as a serious lifelong career. In Europe, the scenario is different, in Asia, the glass ceiling does not only exist up there but it is all over the place.

BUT, on the other hand, it is good to note that in the Asia-Pacific region, the protection and welfare of women in general are addressed through national legislations. China, for instance, has in place a program for the development of Chinese Women. There is a law for the protection of rights and interest of women and they have special rules on Labor Protection of Female Employees. In Singapore, there is what they call the Women's Charter which was passed as early as 1961, which protects and advances the right of women and girls. Korea has a lot of policies that protect women and family, such as those promoting gender equality, improvement of welfare and health rights of women and family, and policies reinforcing women's economic capability. In Australia, they have the Workplace Gender Equality Act. Malaysia has Sexual Harassment Law. Vietnam has policies, regulations and decrees relating to women workforce, such as the Law on Gender Equality and their Labor Code. Indonesia has several laws, rules and regulations pertaining to seafarers. In the Philippines there is the Magna Carta of Women among other legislations enacted for women welfare and protection. So, despite the several challenges and maybe limitations, government legislations and issuances all around Asia still offer support for the promotion of women in seafaring.

HERE you are, venturing into a man's world, trying to penetrate a male dominated profession, with so many important factors that are seemingly against you even before you started to embark on this career – physical, emotional, socio-cultural, even religious considerations that you have to seriously look into and decide whether you can do it or not, Isn't it heartwarming to know, to realize today, that within your personal struggles, there are organizations, local and international, government and private, that are actually looking at your welfare. And we are so much are better off in the Philippines because we actually have our own voice in Congress, the Angkla party list, which will ensure that the welfare of our seafaring professionals, not only the women seafarers but also the male counterpart are amply protected and assured better opportunities of being productive through relevant laws and legislations.

In the international scene, the Busan conference actually served as a venue for IMO to initiate the drawing of a roadmap for the development of a global strategy for women seafarers. And that is being done for you, the young

generation, the movers, the future leaders of the maritime industry. I hope knowing that will encourage you and reinforce your conviction that you have actually made the right decision, that this is the right career path for you.

It was in September 2011 that the WIMAPHIL CEVRC was launched here in Cebu. For me, much as it was an honor to have been given the chance to lead this regional chapter, it was more of a challenge. Number one, we had no funds, number two, we didn't know where to start and number three, we were practically unknown – We only had ourselves in the Board to rely upon in trying to steer the chapter into more relevant waters.

Today, among other plans and projects that we undertook, we have the WIMAPHIL CEVRC Cadet Training Scholarship Program which was initiated in response to the SHE TO SEA campaign of the national WIMA. With this program, we hope to bridge the financial gap that some of you may have experienced between finishing the academic requirements and starting the required trainings prior to apprenticeship. So far we are on our third batch of scholars, hopefully we can take in another batch before the month ends. If any of you should be interested, please get in touch with our scholarship committee in charge, Ms. Mary Jane Caledo of CREST Review Center, accomplish the application form and submit the requirements so we can deliberate on your application. We are proud to say that the first lady master mariner in the country, Capt. Gimbi Pondavilla Tiongzon, is an active member of WIMAPHIL. And just last March during the International Women's Month, the country's very first lady Chief Engineer, your very own Chief Engineer Niña Sue DaSilva was also inducted to the organization. We are also working very closely with MARINA, the Regional Director, Engr. Nanette V. Dinopol is the ex-officio Adviser of the Chapter. She is a very busy government official but still, she always finds time to help and actively support the group's activities and projects. I hope this will assure each and everyone of you that the maritime community is ready, willing, and able to work together for the benefit and welfare of maritime professionals most especially you, the lady seafarers.

I am a strong believer of the saying EVERYTHING HAPPENS FOR A REASON... why you are here, how you came up with the decision to take that big step and pursue seafaring as a profession, what sustained you to stay the course, NOTHING IS HAPPENSTANCE... you are meant for bigger oceans. I wish all good luck and sooner or later, happy and safe sailing in all the oceans you will conquer.

By **Dally Ohdate**
Vice President, WOMEN IN MARITIME
Central & Eastern Visayas Regional Chapter

Marinong Pilipino: Tatak ng Kahusayan

Clean. Adventurous. Rich. These are what we think of seafarers; clad in pristine-white uniforms, holding binoculars and gazing at the calm sea they are about to take while earning thousands of dollars. It seems to be an easy job, right?

Wrong. Those do not even reflect a fraction of reality. Imagine yourself, sweating, wearing layers of thick clothing, facing waves as high as a three story mansion, carrying goods worth millions, protecting the lives of people, providing the world's needs. Imagine, working with Indians, Japanese, Europeans and other nationalities, trying to adapt with their own ways and cultures. Imagine being oceans apart from your loved ones and always resorting to Skype and Facebook to somehow cope with absences and become even a bit part of their lives. Imagine, looking at the deep blue sea on the forecastle, pondering how many more days, or even months until you see your beloved family again. Imagine the sacrifice. This is seafaring!

Seafarers transport 90% of the world's cargo. Cargoes that feed the hungry, supply the cement, metals and bricks to build homes, clothe the naked, light up communities, cure and save precious lives, and of course, complete families that were once distant. Indeed, it is amazing. Now, out of the 1.2 million seafarers, 400,000 are Filipinos.

So how are Filipinos able to secure 1/3 of the seafaring fleet?

Skin scorched as you moor under the Middle Eastern sun. Dancing with the gales along your ship as it heaves and rolls. Sharp, cruel winds in the Arctic, chilling you while checking the cargoes. Oil and grease as manicure. Engine noises and constant alarms as your music. Would you still consider working on the ship? Well, Filipinos will still take this job, as others be disgusted. We will venture any noble profession, no matter how hard just to warm up our hearts by the sight of our wife and children as they smile. Our indomitable spirit makes us brave the ultimate tsunami that is called life. Furthermore, we do not pass these trials for compliance, rather, we triumphantly finish these challenges as we are equipped with technical abilities and flexibility sought after by foreign investors.

The Filipino culture, itself, is a mark of excellence amongst our seafarers. Can you imagine being able to smile amidst the storms that threaten to capsize your ship with a thought of "Sus! Lilipas din ito"? Can you imagine being able to laugh while working on a failed or malfunctioning machinery? Such is the optimism of the Filipinos that whatever spare parts left, we can always find

means to create, to rebuild, to fix and to continue sailing forward. That is what we call resourcefulness or "pagiging maparaan" that is coupled with our intrinsic Filipino ingenuity. We are able to view the light in a seemingly dark expanse infecting the other crew, creating a vibrant and positive atmosphere while still effectively working. Our patience towards work, reliability, and trustworthiness only attest to the proven competent number of Filipino officers and ratings the world's fleet already has.

Filipinos are good in speaking the language of the sea, English. Seafarers talk details of the voyage and engine maintenance fluently and confidently. This might seem to be trivial, but the Filipino's mastery in communication became an unbeatable trait that not only allow us to be fluid amongst foreigners on board but ultimately, in the safe transport of the ship.

As someone who toils miles away from their homes, you won't expect seafarers to always be there. It would be fortunate enough if they are able to watch their son's school play, if they are able to don the gold medals hard-earned by their daughter, and if they are able to give a bouquet of flowers to their loving wife for their anniversary. Yet, this characterize the most potent pillar of excellence of Filipino seafarers: Their desire and ability to fulfill their roles to their families and loved ones with utmost sacrifices. Their love knows no distance, fears no depths and expires no time. A love that is felt as if they are embracing you. Passion in both their families and their jobs. That is the seal of excellence of the Filipino seafarers.

Sa aking mga kapwa magaaral, naway huwag nating hayaan tangayin na lamang ng agos ang mga katagang: "Tatak Marinong Pilipino". Isapuso, isagawa, at ipagmalaki natin ito! Maraming Salamat po at tunay na mabuhay ang marinong Pilipino.

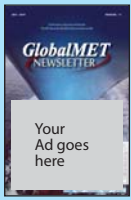
(To my fellow students, may we not allow the waves to wash out the words - Filipino Seafarer Seal "We must put this in our heart and actions and must be proud of it" Thank you very much and Long Live the Filipino seafarers!)

By

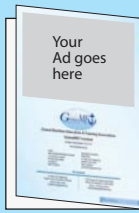
Andre' Chad C. Acosta

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