

# CURRENT TRENDS IN THE MARITIME LEADERSHIP TRAINING APPROACHES

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**Abstract:** *The paper presents aspects of the current trends in the maritime domain in the context of the diversity management practices and gender perspective. The relevance of the problem increases by different processes like demographic change, labor market fluctuations, shortage of high qualified maritime personnel etc. The changing maritime environment itself is high dynamic and specific. The technological processes in the fast developing maritime industry makes the profession more demanding. Various circumstances in the current globalized and competitive maritime economy challenge the successful implementation of already established practices. Considering the high level of regulation of the seafaring profession the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) put a great value on the development and implementation of new leadership training framework including effective management of the mentioned trends. Change needs time especially when it comes to values, organizational culture or habits. The paper describes some approaches for establishing, managing and changing organisational culture in the shipping industry pursuing the diversity management and gender perspective in the maritime profession. The overview of the presented functional leadership techniques with respect of orientation and retain of female personnel in the seagoing services demonstrates the need to train additional team management skills in the specific maritime environment combining and expanding them on the basis of anti-discrimination, fare resource provision and adequate promotion which seafarers pointed out as the most common problematic issues by carrying out the duties.*

**Keywords:** NAVAL FORCES, LEADERSHIP, MARITIME EDUCATION, TRAINING APPROACHES

## 1. Introduction

Based on the conducted large research on attitudes of different professional groups in the maritime domain some conclusions give us an intention to identify some challenges regarding the involvement of women in the seafaring profession. Especially, the most common obstacles occur by promoting female staff to leading positions. Although the question has many different sides and point of analysis we will focus on some problems that are specifically valid in the maritime environment. The relevance of the problem increases by different trends and processes like demographic change, labor market fluctuations, shortage of high qualified maritime personnel etc. National or international perspective, promoting gender equality as a whole concept can not be applied overall despite some major common problems.

The very specific maritime environment indicates some thoughts on existing constraints that need to be more detailed analyzed and understood. The management and the leadership include capabilities for effective management and/or participation in the deck team. The problem is not if men and women possess in the same way those capabilities - technical know-how about the ship, managing know-how and team work experience and proactive approach- but rather why they can not execute, apply and perform them equally. On the first sight it is because of the specific structure of the ship organization: hierarchical one with very clear chain of command. So, overcoming the obstacles being on lower level positions onboard opens the way to higher ones.

You may possess all of the mental, personal and physical characteristics of the good leader but it does not mean that you will automatically "climb the ladder" because you are prepared for that. It is a statistically approved fact that exactly the age and the professional experience influence the attitudes to the gender perspective and equality problems onboard. Older professionals find it hard to accept the change in gender stereotypes in the maritime industry. The most common way of leading in the ship organization culture is a combination between authoritarian, bureaucratic and task-oriented leadership. So, does it mean that effective integration of female personnel onboard means to consider different leadership styles, namely the strategic leadership and the so called transformational leadership. The answer is no. Good leaders often instinctively switch from style to style depending on the people who they manage and the work to be done. Furthermore, effectively

promoting social justice and moral very often refers to more "stronger" and decisive way of leading than to the very liberal and democratic one. So it is about applying different leadership techniques rather than fixing one or another style of managing the crew members. Current practices of techniques should be presented in view of diversity and gender management skills.[1] [2].

## 2. Leadership approaches

**Help interpret the meaning of events:** Helping people to discover the meaning of complex events is important, especially when the change is quick and practically touches every part of life. In this sense the gender perspective is definitely the case. On one hand, the maritime industry face various problems: shortage of management experience in such new relationships; the routine accumulations of the past; and deficit of prepared managers for effective diversity management of the overall transformation process. On the other, professional reliability, in general, is a result of not only professional competence (i.e. certain knowledge and skills required for performance), but also reliable functioning of a human organism and mentality. Thus the problem of reliability of professional activity is directly connected with reliability of the person's mentality, in other words - with psychological aspects of the human factor. People with a long record of service on sea-going vessels are characterised by narrowness and specialization of aspirations and interests, jealous attitude to their status, a peculiar emotional conservatism.[3] Maritime personnel should be assisted in adapting to the new environment, to understand it correctly, and to change their behaviour (where needed) in order to deal with it successfully.

**Consent on goals and strategies to achieve them:** One of the most challenging processes especially when it comes to a heterogen groups with diverse structure. Effective collective activity requires agreement on what and how to do. The consensus in this case is particularly important for newly formed groups and for groups in crisis. It comes to the manager's particular ability to express strategic views about the organization's or individual substructure's purposes, and to motivate and persuade others to perceive these views. The potential ability to influence members of the organization, and even to make changes related to the organization's development and activity as well. The leader should be able to define and develop the organization's goal, the vision for its realization, the key strategies, the optimal structure, to identify the right people for the right positions, and to organize the most efficient processes to achieve the organization's success. The leader

should try to create an organizational structure, allocate resources to the organization, and express strategic views about the organization (about its development). An environment is created where members of the organization can predict its needs in the context of its work. This kind of leadership practice (so called functional strategic leadership) is the use of creativity, understanding and planning to help each member of the organization fulfill its goals and tasks. Leaders are people who can generate and express strategic views about the organization's development, assert them, and constantly lead their subordinates to their realization.

**Dedication and optimism:** The execution of difficult, stressful tasks requires dedication and persistence in the face of obstacles and temporary defeats. There are several basic theories-behavioral, random, distinctiveness, theories of power and influence etc. On the basis of all theories today, it is concluded that leaders must have different qualities that will bring benefits to them to be successful. In this context the gender problematic has important role because of the psychologically incorporated differences. Men and women could act instinctively different especially in stress situations which are very common onboard due to the specific environment. The know-how about physical, mental and social personal qualities is provided from the beginning of the maritime leadership training. Additionally the programs are updated in regard of the gender problematic in order to maintain common proper understanding of the personal motivation and dedication attitudes of seafarers.

Physical characteristics	Mentality/character	Characteristics related to participation in the work process
Powerfulness Resistance	Self-confidence Honesty and integrity Enthusiasm Desire to lead Independence	Striving to reach the outcome, to excellence Good faith in reaching the goals Ability to work with any difficulty, persistence
Social requirements	Social characteristics	Mental abilities
Education Mobility	Contact manners, interpersonal relations Ability to attract people to cooperate Team work experience Tactic, diplomatic manner	Intellectual, cognitive abilities Knowledge Thoughtfulness Decisive manner

**Mutual trust and cooperation:** Effective implementation of collective tasks requires cooperation and mutual trust that is possible when people are understood, tolerant to diversity, and capable of resolving their contradictions in a constructive way. In this context the masculinity-femininity social dimension among crew members plays an important role. A society is called „masculine” when emotional gender roles are clearly distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough and focused on material success. Whereas women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and

concerned with the quality of life. A society is called „feminine” when emotional gender roles overlap: both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.[4] Such stereotypes are not changeable over night if ever but the issue should be discussed in the context of finding mutual understandable way to cooperate in order to perform tasks together without isolation and division and finally to achieve the organizational goals.

**Building and strengthening of collective identity:** The effectiveness of a group or organization requires at least a medium degree of collective identification. If not correctly managed diversities could split the team, respectively the crew. Again, the challenge of building the desired effective organizational culture needs more attention and clarification. Cultural values unite people around high ideals and common goals, create enthusiasm and direct the teams' action in line with strategic priorities in the organization's development. Achieving results is strongly dependent on the values of organizational culture and the economic performance of the organization. Organizational culture management, based on Kurt Lewin's model [5], includes the following stages:

- "Unfreezing" - there is a disturbance of balance, there is a motivation for change.
- "Culture changing" - this is the process of learning new behavior, which is realized using the "error-proof" method or by the imitation of the behavior of others.
- "Re-Freezing" - this is the establishment of new behavior and views through obtaining confirmatory evidence.

When an organization begins to change, it is not clear from the beginning whether it will need to change its culture or not. The question should be answered whether culture will contribute to the changes in the organization or in contrary will hinder them. That is why clear objectives for change are first formulated and then culture is evaluated.

**Organization and coordination of activities:** Successful implementation of complex tasks requires the capacity to coordinate many different but interconnected activities in a way that makes effective use of people and resources. Since the goals we pursue are almost always more than what we can achieve with the available resources, an important issue of efficiency is which goal to choose, or, "what exactly" we want to do. Thus, effective resource management requires prioritization of goals. Another important problem of resource efficiency, which also follows from their limitations, is how to do what we have decided to do. This means that effective resource management also requires prioritization of resources and technologies. Last but not least, limited resources imply the distribution question "for whom". Many of the ship's resources are used to sustain the lives and motivation of the crew. How to distribute „fair” food, water, living space on the ship? How to distribute power? Should the female crew have more of this goods and how to distribute this between them as well?

**Encouraging and facilitating collective learning and providing the necessary resources and support:** Continuous learning and innovation are essential to the survival and prosperity of the organization. Its members should collectively study good practices of working together to achieve the common goals. For most groups and organizations, survival and development require interaction with outside groups, people, organizations. Resources, endorsement, assistance and political support should be obtained from senior levels or from people outside the organization. In the context of the gender perspective we have good examples for supporting, legally, the problem. Various national and international doctrines, programs, regulations etc. set the necessary framework for the right approach. Not least the non-governmental sector, incl. the maritime industry, shows affection and initial support. More should be done from now to start implementing it in more concrete and pragmatic way.

**Developing and empowering people:** To be successful, any group or organization usually needs active membership of their members in solving problems, making decisions, and making changes. The leader should help members of the organization develop appropriate skills to be ready for leadership roles, new responsibilities, and participation in changes. In this sense the concept of the transformational leadership could be very useful because we have a process of significant changes in the transition from one condition to another, subject to certain rules that will probably change.<sup>1</sup> Again, we face the challenge of a routine accumulations from the past and respectively deficit of prepared managers for effective management of the overall transformation process.

**Promoting social justice and morals:** Satisfaction and dedication of members of the organization grows by creating a climate of honesty, compassion, and social responsibility. Establishing and maintaining it requires active efforts to protect individual rights, encourage social responsibility, and oppose unethical practice. Especially when dealing with diversity management the aspects of an ethical leadership are very important. Moral standards include the extent to which the leader's behavior: violates basic public laws; denies the rights of others; endangers the health and life of others; includes attempts to exploit others for personal gain.

### 3. Conclusion

Current reserach in the area of diversity management including the gender perspective shows more demand on re-thinking of well-known and well-established approaches used in the leadership training programes on national and international level. The overview of ten functional techniques with respect of orientation and retain of female personell in the seagoing services demonstrates the need to train additional team management skills in the specific maritime environment combining and expanding them on the basis of anti-discrimination, fare ressource provision and adequate promotion which seafarers pointed out as the most common problematic issues by carrying out the duties.

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<sup>1</sup> A process where leaders and followers help each other and interact on the way to the common goal. The process is based on high ethics and motivation that can not be achieved by the usual labor force exchange for its material equivalent. Transforming leaders make people pursue their personal interests, work for more goods; they are addressing the needs of their followers. In essence, this is an expression of a behavioral pattern of a fundamentally new type of leader, whose style goes beyond the old doctrine of strategy, structure and system, to a more flexible model built on the purpose, process, and people (Maslow Theory, MacGregor's Y theory, Chris Argyris Model, Two-Factor Theory of Frederick Herzberg, Bernard Bass Transformational Leadership Theory a.o. ).

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[4] See above.

[5][https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newPPM\\_94.htm](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newPPM_94.htm), accessed on 10.01.2019.