

Training Tomorrow's Maritime Leaders: An integrated approach to regimental discipline and self-actualization.

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Presentation length: 40 minutes (includes question and answer period but in addition, I would like to offer a break-out session for regimental administrators who may attend)

The concept of internalization relates to the integration of attitudes, values, and standards into a subjects individual identity. This process has several development windows as outlined in the self-determination theory which identifies a continuum of development that begins with extrinsic motivation and ultimately develops into intrinsic motivation which in turn yields autonomous self-regulation.ⁱ

It is this autonomous self-regulation that is the hallmark of the MMA Regimental graduate and is sought after by the maritime industry as essential to being a successful officer.

The extrinsic motivation at the beginning of the process is generally related to the child rearing stages of discipline and reward (negative and positive extrinsic motivation respectively) being used in concert to shape the behavior of a person or group. Intrinsic motivation occurs once the person or group recognizes the desired action as being good based on that actions own merits and a sense of self satisfaction is achieved when the action is completed.ⁱⁱ

The four year Regimental Program is based on this progression from extrinsic to intrinsic motivation within a 4-year timeline. The standard convention of Self Determination Theory is as a life-long pursuit, with large gains occurring in the adolescent developmental years. This paper will identify areas where regimental programs might be able to leverage focused training, both academic and experiential, to increase the student's transition from the extrinsic to intrinsic motivation based behaviors.

ⁱ Deci, E. L., Eghrari, H., Patrick, B. C. and Leone, D. R. (1994), Facilitating Internalization: The Self-Determination Theory Perspective. *Journal of Personality*, 62: 119–142. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-6494.1994.tb00797.x

ⁱⁱ Ibid

Training Tomorrow's Maritime Leaders: An integrated Approach to Regimental Discipline and Self-Actualization.

Despite the Code of Federal Regulation mandate that state maritime academies establish a “regimented program that utilizes a demerit based disciplinary system” (Title 46 CFR II.H.310.10) the question has been raised as to the efficacy of such legacy programs in the modern state maritime academies construct. A comparison of the various state maritime academy missions (Academy and Regimental) highlights common themes that have been developed with the maritime profession in mind.¹ However, little has changed in the regimental programs developed in the WWII era. As a result, many of these programs are not equipped to ensure all cadets develop the self-regulation or autonomy that is increasingly important in today's maritime profession. Regimental programs need to be integrated with educational instruction to ensure that all levels of cadet are developed with a deeper understanding of their own self-regulation in order to meet the missions as described by the state maritime academies.

Directly following the CFR, a regiment is a requirement of the unlimited license programs. Logically, such a mandate should translate into an academic requirement. However, it seems that some state maritime academies do not view their regiments as academic but rather as a social organization. To continue such a model is to significantly diminish the potential of an existing tool and to ultimately propagate the industrial era military moniker that drives modern administrations to label such programs anachronistic. The current student and the modern maritime profession require deeper understandings of process and self-regulation in order to be a successful component of the cadet education. Current regimental missions require integrated education and autonomy facilitation to adequately prepare cadets for the rigors of the highly regulated yet Spartan oversight within the maritime profession.

Every state maritime academy mission shares the following common themes: Honor, Leadership, and Maritime Professional. This paper will focus on the elements of the maritime professional because, when broken down, it tends to encompass many other elements of the similar but varied mission statements. A maritime professional is someone who holds tremendous responsibility, oft times with very little oversight. When looking at the myriad regulations and requirements levied on today's professional mariner or when simply observing the inspection process on a ship it is clear that there is more being regulated than is humanly possible to verify by our regulatory agencies. This system depends on highly trained, responsible people with a strong professional ethic to be doing the right things despite the limits of regulatory oversight.

Most students have lived a life where minor inattention to detail results in bumps and scrapes but rarely anything more serious. Regardless, when such mistakes led to more serious physical consequences they have had extensive medical care available. When we prepare them

¹ Comparison was conducted using Mission Statements from Maine, California, SUNY, & Texas Maritime Academies via online catalogues and websites.

for a life at sea, we are preparing them to utilize all manner of heavy machinery and tool in conducting jobs with minimal manpower and maximum attention to detail. Add to this mix that the environment is inherently hostile to humans and extremely dynamic and it becomes clear that a high degree of professionalism is essential. This criticality is further highlighted by the fact that seemingly minor inattention to detail could result in a deadly mistake due to lack of medical care in the middle of the sea. From *Organizing for High Reliability: Processes of Collective Mindfulness* the authors identify “A mindful awareness” that stems from Ron Westrum’s “ecology of thought.” All of this connects to a deeper understanding of the environment in which the professional works and ultimately leads to a professional body that is quicker to identify hazards and that makes fewer mistakes.

A less severe example that serves to demonstrate the breadth of lifestyle change undertaken by Cadets relates to the normally mundane world of trash. Most students arrive to campus having, at most, separated recycling from all other waste. However, they likely paid little attention to the amount of waste generated by their daily activities nor have they needed to show much concern over the inadvertent misplacement of paper or plastic into some general garbage receptacle. Yet, at sea, trash will accumulate quickly and depending on type, may not be able to be disposed of until reaching port. Current Maritime Policy (MARPOL) regulations stipulate that only food items may be discarded at sea.

A final example of how this regression occurs might be found in the simple function of emergency procedures. Students arrive after nearly two decades of conditioning to evacuate the building in case of fire and not to re-enter. They are further taught to wait for the fire department to arrive and take control of the situation. Now, we are going to train them to alter that Pavlovian response to one of positive action, incorporating maintenance of firefighting equipment, proper use of said equipment, and procedures for effectively fighting a fire in the burning structure they have been taught to avoid.

The state maritime academies are attempting to train a student in a short period of time for a world of tight regulation and intermittent oversight. This simple difference requires a significant change to the training model. Enter Self Determination Theory or SDT. Taken in its simplest form, SDT seeks to explain the process of human motivation. Developed from Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs theory, as a person reaches the “self-actualization” stage of need, a higher degree of autonomy is desired for the individual to feel fulfilled. Therefore, autonomy stimulates satisfaction and is thereby a form of motivation. SDT asserts that individuals will perform better when they act due to intrinsic motivation verse extrinsic motivation. Much to the chagrin of many a cadet, nobody begins at a level of internalization. SDT is a continuum from initial extrinsic motivation that ultimately leads to a higher level of consciousness and internalization, also known as intrinsically motivated behavior.

The precision and professional ethic required for a Cadet to be a successful entrant to the maritime field bears a striking resemblance to that required of military professionals. Granted

that despite the occasional self-defense action against piracy, the industry does not engage in combat at this time nor does it entertain the pomp and circumstance of military pageantry. However, the conditions under which the professional mariner conducts their daily business does mirror the unforgiving military work environment but without the continuous oversight of the military complex. This comparison may be the primary argument for a regimental program at state maritime academies and to a point that would be sound logic but even military organizations are looking at the right way to utilize such a system to enhance the participants' long term development and success. (Delahaij, Theunissen, & Six 2013) Despite the obvious similarities, military organizations rely on long term, pervasive oversight to develop the professional ethic in a new recruit. Even so, military service academies and similar institutions have already made the connection that regimentation is not enough. Education must also be a component. All military service academies are requiring multiple credit hours, regardless of major, in areas such as leadership, ethics, sociology and psychology. By comparison, state maritime academies seem to be lacking in providing current cadets with a well-rounded program.

The concept of SDT and internalization relates to the integration of attitudes, values, and standards into a subject's individual identity. This process has several development windows as outlined in SDT which identifies a continuum of development that begins with extrinsic motivation and ultimately develops into intrinsic or internalized motivations which in turn yields autonomous self-regulation. It is this autonomous self-regulation that should be the hallmark of the Maine Maritime Academy Regimental alumni and is sought after by the maritime industry as essential to being a successful officer.

The extrinsic motivation at the beginning of the continuum of development is generally related to the child rearing stages of discipline and reward. Both negative and positive extrinsic motivational tools can be used in concert to shape the behavior of a young person or group while simultaneous education and growth occur. Intrinsic motivation and thereby autonomous self-regulation occurs once the person or group recognize the desired behavior as being good based on that actions own merits rather than previous implemented extrinsic motivators.

Consider the use of seatbelts in the United States. Extrinsic motivation was used in the 1980's in the form of police enforced use. This extrinsic motivation was coupled with a pervasive education campaign to improve the public's knowledge as to the benefits of using seatbelts, especially focused on children. By the early 1990's, seatbelt use was largely embraced by the US population not because they feared police enforcement but because they valued the safety benefit. Philosophers have argued the true meaning of autonomy and autonomous thought but Ricoeur (1966) provides a useful critical analysis in defining what autonomy or self-determination entails. The essence of this analysis is that a person can be self-determined despite external input or extrinsic motivators if the individual has determined that complete consent is in keeping with the individual's own values. Therefore, we can conclude that those of us who wear our seatbelt out of concern for safety, are acting in an autonomous, self-determined way.

When we consider the example above, we are looking at a decade of extrinsic motivation and education to move a population toward a more autonomous behavior. The mission of the regiment seeks to impart an authentic self-determined behavior or professional ethic under a much shorter timeline. In our favor is the fact that we are working with an entry level group that, by and large, has already self-determined that they want to join this profession and therefore should be more apt to develop intrinsic motivation toward that end. Despite this initial starting point, the majority of entry level students have no real understanding of the austere operating environment and the hazards associated with such a profession. Compounding that deficit of environmental knowledge is the age demographic that an entering class occupies. Most new Cadets are 18-22 years old and are at a stage in life where they are ready to seize the opportunity for autonomous behavior. In fact, most parents start experiencing that push-back as early as the pre-teen years as their children start to rebel against the extrinsic and to establish their own reasons for their behavior. These teens are looking to establish autonomous action based on a world they have spent 10, 15 or even 20 years deciphering. (Grolnick & Farkas 2002) When they arrive at the state maritime academy of their choosing, much of that education becomes inadmissible in light of their new environment and the knowledge base for that struggle to establish autonomy must be rebuilt.

Utilizing an extrinsic motivation program to instill the entry level knowledge and behavior required to embark on a safe and successful maritime career can be a highly effective method if it is thoughtfully employed and provides for a transition from the extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation as the cadet moves through the program. To make such a significant impact, the regimental construct provides for an intensive initial training phase as well as an educational laboratory that can allow more senior students to again begin to delve into more autonomous behavior and decision making that will mirror the maritime industry.

Arguments have been made regarding the ability to act autonomously and the effect of free choice as well as excessive choice. (Ryan & Deci 2006) In light of that debate, this paper supports a combination of these arguments in presenting that early instruction should utilize a higher degree of heteronomy coupled with education that will allow for a transition to more autonomy in the later years of the regimental program. This process will be divided into three general phases that belie the nuance required to maintain order in complex, adaptive social organism.

In the first phase, new students are introduced to a system of laws and regulations that relate directly to the new societal construct of the professional mariner. At this point, exact standards, rules and compliance need to be enforced. However, these standards need to be evaluated against the demands of the maritime profession and each need to be able to be explained as beneficial to the education of the cadet. Use of positive and negative extrinsic motivators focuses the new student on completing these tasks initially without explaining the reason in any significant detail. However, the shelf life of such a process will be limited if education is not introduced within the first few months as the new cadet will begin to seek a

higher understanding of this new environment. Therefore, the education needs to be enmeshed with traditional academic and Standards of Training, Competency, & Watch-keeping (STCW) programs, highlighting the strict regulatory environment that the maritime profession must appease.

This educational component is a significant departure from traditional regimental programs and requires the use of curriculum development tools such as learning objectives and educational outcomes. By developing such a curriculum in conjunction with STCW requirements, Cadets will be able to see the connection between those initial heterotopic requirements and can begin to develop their own self-endorsement of said regulations. That self-endorsement is one step closer to autonomous behavior and leads the Cadet into the second phase of this process.

Phase two begins to expand the availability of autonomy to the individual Cadet within the limits of industry codes of conduct and procedures. Continued integrated education between what are currently defined academic courses and the regimental program are required, particularly now that the Cadet has gained some degree of practical experience in the maritime profession. By the second year of the Cadet's education, opportunities to control some aspect of the regimental program become necessary in order to feed that need for autonomy that re-emerges as familiarity and understanding of the environment expands. In past regimental models, this has occurred by putting second year students in charge of the first year training they just completed, often in positions of significant authority.

However, this tends to put a Cadet who is just starting to apply the analysis and self-endorsement to the educational program and will likely over-reach the Cadet's own stage of development. By relaxing some of the heterotopic regulation and at the same time incorporating the second year Cadet in the education component of the first year program, deeper self-analysis can be completed, preparing the cadet for a greater degree of autonomy in phase three of the regimental education process. Put another way, have second year students' role center more on mentorship and teaching with limited assigned authority. This will allow time for second year cadets to spend more time in analysis of those heterotopic regulations before expecting them to have responsibility for wholesale administration of those regulations.

In phase three, third year Cadets need to begin to take control of their regimental and educational environment. This is not to say that the institution is given over to the Cadets, however, a mechanism needs to be in place that allows them to influence their environment based on the previous two years of education and self-analysis. Now is the time to introduce the Cadet to the concept of regulatory enforcement at the same time that they learn processes for regulatory influence. Drawing on the previous two years education, the Cadet should have the ability to propose and implement changes that continue to meet the previously mentioned educational outcomes. Education continues to play a part in this process but the focus must shift focus from regimental regulation to personal ethics and philosophy. It is in these later stages of

the educational process that students should focus less on the “Why the regiment does what it does” and more on “Why do I do/think the way I do.” Further, understanding how to apply this self-understanding to the expected highly regulated industry with little supervision should be the ultimate desired outcome of the educational process.

The suggestions presented in this paper are not without challenges. Curricula have already been established for the degrees conferred in conjunction with the unlimited license programs and the requirements are already quite heavy. However, it is inappropriate to label a university level program as a “lab” without providing a lesson component and a system of evaluating objectives. Simply assigning the lab designation, while operating the program as a social organization on campus, will not meet the lofty mission statements that have been published. The level of critical thinking and application of ethics with philosophy that are suggested in this paper are firmly in line with the humanities discipline and could be used to fulfill humanities credit requirements already established in the degree process. Such credit bearing classes, when coupled with an effective “lab” component already provided by the regimental programs in existence, can ultimately be coalesced into a professional certificate or even the foundation for an accredited Minor program if sufficient effort is put forth. Such a need has already been identified by military academies around the United States, instituting compulsory classes in leadership, ethics, philosophy, and psychology for the prospective officers. Some of these institutions have a requirement of up to 40 credit hours in those areas regardless of major.

It is not good enough to simply claim a regimented program teaches leadership. Administrations at the STATE MARITIME ACADEMY’s need to evaluate objectives of their respective regimental programs and ensure that adequate methods of outcomes facilitation and measurement are resourced based on valid education theory. SDT provides one, seemingly valid approach to developing a modern regimental program that facilitates critical self-analysis and higher degrees of autonomous self-regulation critical for success in the maritime profession.

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