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| To   | : Seafarers     | Our Ref | : Mentoring letter 1 - Introduction |
| From | : Marine Mentor | Date    | : 3 <sup>rd</sup> January 2020      |

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Dear Colleague,

You will be aware that there have been some significant changes in the crewing policies of the Grindrod Shipping fleet during recent months. One of these changes is that a Career Development department has been established under the guidance of Jaja Casas and I, reporting to the Marine Manager, Capt Hilton Stroebel.

The size of our officers' pool has also changed, and some have moved on. This has helped us to create opportunities for promising officers who meet the criteria for promotion. Some of these have already found their career paths gaining much-needed upwards mobility, whilst others are being encouraged to further their studies, or to work on areas where improvement is necessary, so that they too, can be considered for promotion when the time comes. Whether they will be ready to be promoted or not, and whether they will be successful at their new rank or not, is up to YOU and of course the individual concerned. And then, there are those who are comfortable where they are now. If this applies to you, please ask yourself some serious questions, and answer them honestly. IS this the career for you? If so, have you really reached your full potential? If not, what is holding you back from doing so? I personally have never been happy when my learning curve has flattened out, I'm at my happiest when learning. I'm sure I am not unique in this. If I'm not, I find myself going through the motions only, and then I realise that I am impacting on others and need to move on. Have YOU also become a roadblock to others perhaps? If so, let's get to work and change that, roadblocks only cause obstruction.

The personal growth and development of every officer and rating is of utmost importance to the Company, as I am sure it is to you. Our people are our single most valuable asset, and the time has come to devote more time and effort into embracing the realities of a tough economy, and to influencing that which we are able to control – our own and our shipmates' development as people and as officers. This requires a shift in thinking for some of us, we cannot only be "working passengers," concerned about merely doing our job and seeing out a contract, we need to also accept our responsibilities to our fellow officers and crew, and to play a positive and meaningful role in the shipboard community. Our time aboard must become an investment into our own professional development, as well as that of others.

This is the first of a series of (short) informal letters, the aim of which is to share my own experiences openly and honestly with all officers in our fleet, in the hope that you too will be encouraged to do likewise for those under your leadership regardless of your rank. Simply put, if you are a Master or CEO, the purpose is to help you to prepare your subordinates for the day they one day take Command or become Chief Engineers. This is one of the hallmarks of a great leader – to hold the ladder and show the way for those wanting to climb it. If you have not yet attained the rank of Master or CEO, this applies no less – as an officer or even Bosun you are already in a leadership role, and this implies that it is time to "give back." Everyone is a leader in his or her own way, and we have responsibilities to those junior to us, to those senior to us, and of course to ourselves. Each of us has much to benefit through mentoring.

I am fully aware that some of you are already active mentors, and that others are keen to learn how become mentors. This is written for you, as well as for those of you have may not have contemplated mentoring, or have perhaps considered it but have encountered one or more barriers to mentoring. I hope to be able to help you dismantle those barriers, and to help you discover for yourself how rewarding mentoring can be to you as well as those to whom you mentor.

Some of these letters were written whilst preparing the selection of Seagull CBT modules offered to all our vessels. Others were written (or revised) after studying the appraisal process carefully, completing an Onboard Assessor course, and naturally, with the benefit of my own experiences. Yet others have been written or even revised with the benefit of having helped prepare candidates one way or the other, for promotion. We have also surveyed a group of junior officers, and have taken their valuable input into account. Whatever the case, Mentoring and the CBT modules (particularly the soft-skills modules) all support self-development, and my hope is that they will motivate you to dig deeper into both, and to explore beyond.

Mentoring is a very broad subject, and many books have been written by experts on the subject. I have drawn from some of these (and will give credit where it is due,) but am a seaman not an author, and cannot hope to emulate them so please forgive me for that. I will however try to offer as much guidance and as many ideas on the subject as possible, while staying relevant to the unique environment in which you operate. I encourage you also to read as much as you can about mentoring online, there is much material available.

I realised at a very early stage of this project that mentoring cannot stand alone, that it is only a part of a culture which may be somewhat different to that previously experienced. Changing a culture means changing paradigms, and that starts ashore. This means revisiting our values, both those of the Company as well as our own. Hopefully, some of the changes which have already been made ashore are readily noticeable, and others will follow. Some of these relate to attitudes, others are entrenched in processes and systems. For example, we are reviewing the appraisal forms and process, as the goal is to monitor developmental progress of the individual, and to provide the individual with the tools to measure his own development. The focus is now on PROGRESS, rather than merely Performance. It should not be necessary to say that for this to work, we need appraisals to be carefully and objectively crafted. Each appraisal should be unique, and based on the most recent knowledge of the Assessee, with no reference to previous assessments or judgements. It must be obvious that we have entered into a new, more positive process, and your constructive participation is essential if we are to leave this environment in a better condition than we found it. This cannot work if changes are only made ashore, they must be made aboard our ships and in our homes also, starting with the way we interact together. I challenge all to draw a line, and as we start a new decade, to put the past behind us and start building a more positive and constructive future together. It starts with each of us, individually. Remember, I can only change ME, I cannot change anyone else. I can however be an instrument of change...

Finally, I believe that we all owe the Company a words of thanks for being visionary, and for introducing this program. I personally feel privileged to be involved in such a game-changing project, and appeal to all to join me in embracing it, and in firmly establishing it as a new and positive shipboard culture.

Kind regards,

*Mike Melly*

Marine Mentor

**TO COME:**

Letter 2 - THE CALL OF THE SEA

Letter 3 – MODERN MASTERS

Letter 4 – BECOMING A LEADER

Letter 5 – UNDERSTANDING OURSELVES AND OTHERS

Letter 6 - WHAT IS MENTORING?

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Letter 9 – GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR MENTORS

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