

Senior Lyons tilted his head back and just breathed in the salt air. Man, did he love this time of day underway. Most of the crew was still asleep, BULKELEY was slicing her way through the waves, his workout had really cleared his mind, and standing here he was conducting another **Mental Rehearsal** of the drill scheduled for later. He took one more deep breath, opened his eyes, knew he was ready for the day...and chuckled while shaking his head.

In only a few short months, his career and life had taken a turn for the better.

The new Commanding Officer (CO) reported onboard, and shortly thereafter, the triad was talking about COE 2.0 and that we were going to **Set the Standard**, display **Emotional Intelligence**, and **Build a Winning Team**. When the CO addressed the crew, you could see the triad were 'all in' and had drunk the COE 2.0 Kool-Aid to the last drop.

Senior kept his eyes locked forward, tuned him out, and waited to hear 'dismissed' so he could leave the fantail, get to the Mess, listen to the Command Master Chief (CMC) and then get back to the real work of the day in his office: he was getting crushed and his Sailors were woefully behind.

CMC walked in, grabbed her darkened coffee mug, filled it up and sat down with all the Chiefs present. She began, "Okay, let's start with an easy one. Why do we have a Sponsor Coordinator?" Glenn, the ETC, broke the silence, "Because Big Navy tells us we have to have one." CMC nodded, "That's right, but *why do we have one?* What's the **outcome** we are trying to achieve?"

The dam broke and Chiefs started saying stuff like, "To make sure **Families** are taken care of..." "Ensure the move goes smoothly..." "Show them we want them on our **Team**..." "Get it all lined up, the schools, **Indoc**, **CDBs**..." CMC kept them going and was writing it down and then she led them through how they were going renovate it, sustain it and **improve it continuously**.

She really represented the crew well. CMC met with First Classes, the rest of the crew, spoke with the Executive Officer (XO), and then facilitated a conversation alongside him as they walked through the plan with the Wardroom. The CO took it, implemented it and the triad began to replicate the success in

other areas. **Warrior Toughness** familiarization, **Human Factors Boards, Necessary Conversations,** and really good training and conversations on **Get Real, Get Better.**

But... his temper was getting harder to control. He heard the whispers and the nicknames he was getting in and out of his division: Mr. Volcano, Napalm, GOM (Grumpy Old Man). They just didn't understand, he had to get the work done and he was down two Sailors. Plus, the e-mails from home. The bills were stacking up and his wife might have to go back to the States for medical treatment.

It all changed when BMC Yavorski came and asked him to come down to the CMC's office. When they got there, BMC shut the door and CMC started it off with, "How are you? Really. How are you?" Senior hesitated and then slowly, it all came out. CMC and Boats didn't judge. They listened. Arranged for him to speak with the **Chaplain,** the **Deployment Resiliency Counselor** onboard the carrier, and **Fleet and Family Support Center** when they got in port to help with the finances.

"How did you know?" Senior asked. CMC smiled, "The CO caught it in the **Command Climate Assessment:** we knew this wasn't you and something was going on. There is going to be some accountability for your behavior, but we want to see you succeed and will be with you every step of the way."

She really meant what she said. When they got back, he had to leave the ship for a couple of weeks on Temporary Additional Duty (TAD) for all of his appointments, but a member of the Mess went with him to his temporary assignment. The CO had already reached out to his new chain of command and let them know what support he needed to get back into the fight with the XO and CMC reaching out to him while he was gone to see if he needed anything.

They really breathed life into the **Warm Hand-Off procedures** (MILPERSMAN 1320-307). It was obvious to him that he was important and they wanted him on their team.

The Navy changed the course of his life 17 years ago when he joined. BULKELEY, the **People,** the **Leaders,** and this **Team** changed it for the better again. Turning away from the open

ocean, he saw BM3 George walk by, and offered a wave in return for her contagious smile.

Man, BM3 is going to crush it and will either be a CMC or CO someday. With his own smile, he went inside the skin of the ship. He had **Warfighters** to train.