

# VENLYS

Maritime Specialisation Services

Changing the Human Performance  
for the Future

## **Editorial**

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Katerina Skourtanioti  
*Managing Director*

Dear All,

Dear partners and friends,

We are delighted to continue our informative campaign titled '**GET TO KNOW THE HUMAN FACTORS**' with an article discussing communication issues, in specific: Communication: **We Can Work It Out!**

We are very honoured and grateful to host this insightful article from our esteemed colleague and well-known expert on topics related to human element in the shipping domain, Mr. Panagiotis Kourkoumelis, Training and Development Manager of Kyklades Maritime Corporation. Thank you, Panagiotis!

Happy reading...

As previously discussed, every article will be disseminated to our clients and the maritime community. You can also find it on our website to download for any further publication. Once more, our goal is to promote the role and capabilities of the human element, the most valuable asset within our industry.

\*Panagiotis studied Mechanical Engineering (BSc, MSc) at the University of Leeds and entered the shipping industry at the start of his career. Since then he has worked in various positions in the shipping industry, always with a view to safety, quality and developing the human element. He is currently the Training and Development Manager of Kyklades Maritime Corporation.

## Get To know the Human Factors

# “Communication: We Can Work It Out”

By

Panagiotis Kourkouvelis

*Think of what you're saying  
You can get it wrong and still you think that it's alright  
Think of what I'm saying  
We can work it out and get it straight, or say good night  
We Can Work It Out, Song by The Beatles*

When we talk, we take for granted that we pass our message, and sometimes we forget how complex it is or how important is to get our message across.

Communication is that powerful that it can shape one's mind and thus can build or can destroy; it can convey all sorts of information and can express all ranges of emotions.

From our first minute in life, we are constantly bombarded by our senses and a multitude of information, which we process and try to communicate them. From the simple information that we are hungry - if only it was as easy as sending an SMS to mommy – to learning to talk just to pronounce the most valuable thing to us – mama or papa, depending on preference!

Then when coming of age, we find ourselves onboard, exchanging information with our mates to prepare for this big job that we need to keep ourselves safe.

It is certain you have examples where you talk with someone and seem to understand each other naturally and fit together. Your discussions flow interestingly and new ideas and enthusiasm spring effortlessly. And then there are people where discussions seem to hit a wall and it is impossible to get a simple message through.

There are many studies on how people communicate, but this is not a text about cognitive skills, language structure, semantics or nonverbal communication. This is a radio message in the middle of the Atlantic!

You see communication is like the radio onboard, it needs a transmitter and a receiver! Every one of us is both of them, like the station onboard.

When you receive a message, you might choose to ignore it, you might be obliged to respond or you might find it your seamanship duty to respond. Sometimes words come broken and can't really understand the message, or even a strange accent makes it hard for you to understand and you might ask to repeat or to clarify.

To improve your communication skills and ensure you convey your message consider the below.

*Before you press 'talk' think:*

- What is the message you want to convey?
- Is it going to be understood?
- Whom are you addressing?
- After you give the message do you feel (or see) you need to provide clarifications?

*When you 'receive' a message*

- Be prepared to listen.
- Appreciate who is sending the message and why they are sending it.
- What are they trying to say? If not straightforward, go ahead and ask for clarifications!

## **SIRE 2.0**

In the past year, there is great fuss on the new tanker inspection regime – SIRE 2.0 – and much information is passed on to the seafarers in order to prepare them.

To put it in simple terms SIRE 2.0 makes a transition from an inspection, the examination of the condition of the vessel, to an audit, where the inspector will interview crew members to assess how the crew understand and relates to prescribed procedures. So it becomes essential that all crewmembers, from ratings to officers, are able to communicate effectively to the inspectors the information they are looking for.

Therefore, working to improve your communication skills has a threefold benefit

- Creates better personal relationships onboard
- Promotes safety amongst your team
- Ensures great work effort!

Even in the most unconventional discussion, there is one rule that always works: treat the other person with respect and you will always figure out a way to get your message through.

## CLOSURE

Remember that the most engaging, effective communication is not when we simply express what we have to say, but to care about what the other person will take away from what we are saying.

If you were to take away one line that would be:

**Make communication not just about you but also about others.**

**Thank you!**



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