

UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY



LIFE & LEADER POINTS (LLP)
2nd Set Detailers

INTRODUCTION

The USNA Mission Statement tells us that we are preparing Midshipmen morally, mentally, and physically, not just for the demands of serving as a junior officer in the Naval Service, but also for the highest degree of citizenship. The desired end state is to have Naval Academy graduates who are well prepared to tackle life's challenges once they leave Bancroft Hall and to become the bedrock of American society.

Not all lessons can be learned in the classroom or inculcated by military training. The purpose of this booklet is to provide a pocket resource for key influencers in the lives of Midshipmen (Detailers, Brigade Leaders, Company Officers, and Senior Enlisted Leaders) who have opportunities to engage Midshipmen individually as they work through the challenges of life and the unique transitions to and from USNA.

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ACTIVE LISTENING



Tripoli monument near Alumni Hall, oldest military monument in USA. Celebrates Jefferson's careful listening to his Naval Advisors and decisive follow-up in engagement against Barbary Pirates, 1801-1805.

“When I am getting ready to reason with a man, I spend one-third of my time thinking about what I am going to say, and two-thirds about him and what he is going to say.”

- Abraham Lincoln -

Conversation Starters

How can I tell if you are actively listening?

Can you keep military bearing (eyes in the boat, etc) and actively listen?

If I hear “Sir, Yes, Sir” (or “Ma’am, Yes, Ma’am”) does that mean you actually listened? Is it easy to listen, especially during briefs, etc?

What is it?

Active listening is a powerful communication technique that is used in learning, training, and conflict resolution. It requires that the listener fully concentrate, understand, respond and then remember what is being said.

Steps to Active Listening

- 1) Face the speaker and maintain eye contact (unless “eyes in the boat.”)
- 2) Be attentive, but relaxed.
- 3) Keep an open mind.
- 4) Listen to words and try to picture what the speaker is saying.
- 5) Don't interrupt and don't impose your own “solutions.”
- 6) Wait for the speaker to pause and ask clarifying questions.
- 7) Ask questions only to ensure understanding.
- 8) Try to feel what the speaker is feeling.
- 9) Give the speaker regular feedback. Repeat what was said.
- 10) Finally, REMEMBER that body language is 80% or more of effective communication.

Are there any ways I might practice or work on active listening?

The best way to work on active listening is to practice. When engaged in a conversation, focus your attention on what the other person is saying. Often when we talk to others, we are too busy thinking about ourselves or other things to really listen. Some people are so busy thinking about what they want to say, that they fail to listen to the words being spoken at that moment. So as you are listening, summarize in your mind what the person is saying. When you have a chance, reflect back to them what you are hearing. This type of reflection not only lets the other person know you are listening, but it conveys to them that you really understand.

Practice Exercise: Talk to three people throughout the week using the above mentioned active listening techniques. How is it different from the way you usually interact with others?

“Learn to concentrate on what those around you are saying. Enter as deeply as possible into the mind of each speaker.”

- Marcus Aurelius, Roman Emperor -

HEALTHY INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS



The Submarine Centennial Memorial near 2nd Wing commemorates the thousands of officers and enlisted who gave their lives in the Silent Service during World War II. Why were (and are) healthy relationships extremely vital in this community?

“A healthy relationship doesn’t drag you down. It inspires you to be better!”

- Anonymous -

Conversation Starters

What are signs of a good relationship? Signs of a bad relationship?

Why do we need to pay attention to relationships in Bancroft Hall?

How have your relationships been different here during Plebe Summer?

Healthy Relationships

“No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main...” John Donne highlights a basic truth: we are connected and our lives can either build up or hurt one another. The foundation of a healthy relationship is friendship. Cicero declared that: (1) friendship is based on virtue; (2) one never asks a friend to do

something wrong or dishonorable; (3) one never looks down on a friend; (4) friends make one another better, are willing to tell the other his/her faults, and are willing to hear about one's own faults.

The 60-40 Rule: A simple way to assess the balance in a relationship is to apply the 60-40 rule: a healthy relationship should be at most 60% 'about' one of the people and at least 40% 'about' the other.

Qualities of healthy relationships: Mutual Respect, Trust, Honesty, Kindness, Mutual Goodwill, Good Communication, Compassion, and Fairness.

Indicators of unhealthy relationships: Anger, Jealousy, Dishonesty, Manipulation, Meanness, Narcissism, and Abuse.

Success in Healthy Relationships: Intention versus Impact

In relationships, the impact one's words and/or actions have on the other is often different from what was intended. One way to reduce conflict is

to have the patience and courage to tell others the impact that they are having on us without making accusations. Conversely, when other people communicate the impact that we are having on them, have the patience and courage to listen, without defending our intentions. Accept responsibility for the impact of your actions and be willing to say “I am sorry, that is not what I intended, and what can I do to correct or improve the situation?”

“From this eight year experience [of being a POW], I distilled one all-purpose idea, plus a few corollaries. It’s a simple idea... That idea is you are your brother’s keeper.”

- Admiral James Stockdale -

CIVILITY



John Paul Jones, buried in the Main Chapel, father of the American Navy. His reputation for civility was encapsulated in 1900 in the Qualifications of a Naval Officer.

“I never considered a difference of opinion in politics, in religion, in philosophy, as cause for withdrawing from a friend.”

- Thomas Jefferson to John Adams -

Conversation Starters

You're low on sleep and you're in King Hall at chow time. Give some examples of where you might lose civility.

You're working together as a team on the E Course. How can you challenge your squadmates without losing patience with them?

What are your “triggers?” What will cause you to lose your professionalism or civility with others?

Civility (treating other people with sincere respect and dignity) is a crucial practice for effective leaders. Individual intentions matter because our intentions motivate our choices, shape our actions, and inform our habits. However, how one chooses to externalize intentions also matters. Civility and incivility is in the

mind and heart of the recipient. Winning over and shaping the hearts and minds of followers should be one of the key goals of any good leader.

Do's:

- Challenge yourself to relate to others as a human being, not just as a Midshipman.
- Tolerate others' quirks and foibles in the same manner you hope your strengths and weaknesses will be appreciated.
- Make yourself accessible to people so that you can genuinely get to know them and broaden your perspective, i.e., leave your comfort zone for others.
- Embrace hierarchy when it promotes order and routine, but do not rely upon it as a privilege or leadership crutch.

Don'ts:

- Publicly mock or belittle others in a way that communicates a devaluation of the other.
- Remind others/subordinates of their standing or "roles" within our hierarchy in a thoughtless manner.

- Tease people in ways that are personal, sarcastic, or that “sting” emotionally.
- Take credit for a team win, but point out teammates’ flaws when difficulties arise.

“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

- Maya Angelou -

COMMUNICATIONS & NEGOTIATIONS (CONFLICT RESOLUTIONS)



The World War II Surrender Table, located in the Museum (Preble Hall), was the site of a momentous moment of conflict resolution between world powers. Communication and negotiation skills were a must.

“To listen well is as powerful a means of communication and influence as to talk well.”

- John Marshall, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court -

“If one gives answer before hearing, it is folly and shame.”

- Proverbs 18:13 -

Conversation Starters

Your roommate’s rack is consistently “hosed up.” The squad has more than its share of burpees as a result. How can you effectively handle this with your roommate?

Your squadmate says something to your squad leader that you do not agree with. How do you respond?

Listening is of equal importance to speaking. How we communicate is often the key to our success, professionally and personally. There are common ingredients to Communication, Negotiation, and Conflict Resolution.

Do's:

- Actively listen, restate what was said, and ask if you heard/understand the point(s) clearly; show you are seeking to understand the other side.
- Work to: solve a problem, resolve a conflict, and find mutual agreement.
- Stay calm and remember body language is 80+% of communication.
- Be honest, transparent, respectful, and open to questions.

Don'ts:

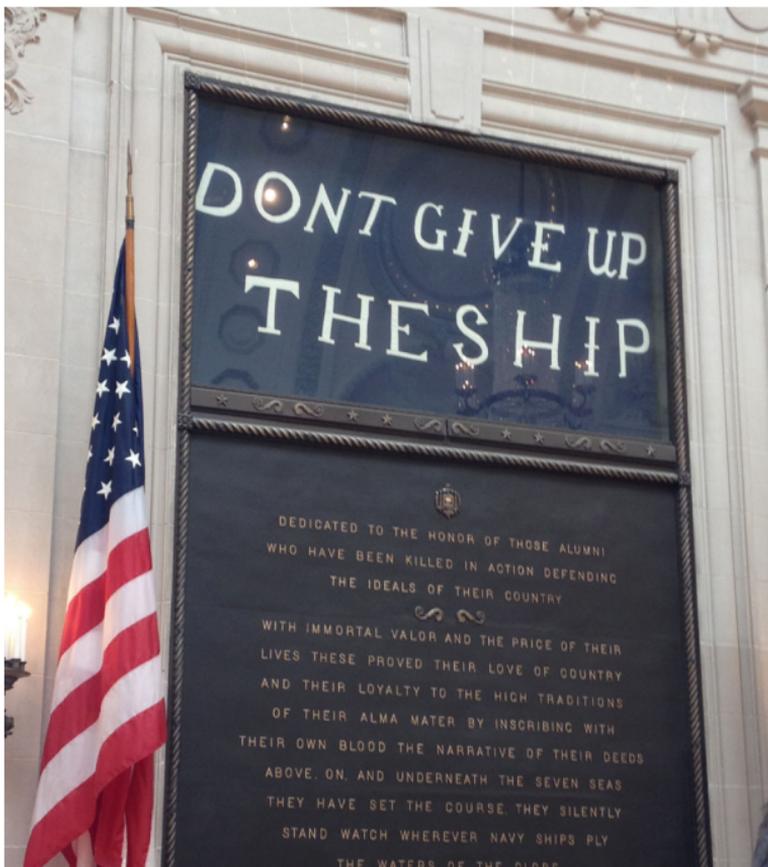
- Don't get personal; stay focused on reaching an agreement.
- Don't make a hasty decision, or respond in anger or in reaction.

- Don't ignore the other side, repeating the same thing over and over.
- Don't view communication as a battle to be fought and won.

“The most important single ingredient in the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people.”

- President Theodore Roosevelt -

FRATERNIZATION



After being mortally wounded during the War of 1812, Captain James Lawrence of the USS Chesapeake issued this command to his officers: “Don’t give up the Ship! Fight her till she sinks.” Would fraternization have inhibited this execution of orders?

“Associate with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation; for it is better to be alone than in bad company.”

- President George Washington -

Conversation Starters

While chopping down the P-way, you notice a detailer out of the corner of your eye whom, in other circumstances, you would ask on a date. Do you see any problems with this if you did? What could happen?

What if you start to “fall in love” with someone in your squad? Is this OK?

Is it OK to become friends with senior officers? Why or why not?

Fraternization can sometimes be a confusing topic. Our MIDREGs state that it is circumstances prejudicial to good order and discipline that call into a question a senior's objectivity, result in actual or apparent preferential treatment, undermine the authority of a senior, or compromise the chain of command. What does this really mean? Admittedly, this can be a gray topic. Fraternization can tear a unit apart in ways beforehand thought as harmless.

Fraternization is not always sexual in nature—an undue relationship can permeate any work environment and it can be a result of three factors: 1) Perception and a “quid pro quo” relationship, 2) Association with power— top-down or bottom-up, and 3) Lack of Professionalism. At USNA, and most certainly in the fleet, fraternization is a subject that you WILL face, and you must know what it is to be an effective leader. It is a relationship and not necessarily a single act.

Official USNA Position

MIDREGs breaks down fraternization between four categories:

1. Upperclassmen—4/C relationships.
2. MIDN—USNA Staff.
3. MIDN—Enlisted.
4. MIDN—Officers.

Fraternization can apply across the four categories. The conduct system states that Fraternization of a non-sexual nature is a major offense. Fraternization of a sexual nature is a 6k level offense. The bottom line is that the perception or actual act of an unduly familiar relationship that disrupts the good order and discipline of the organization is fraternization—whether in the operating forces or at USNA.

Strategies for Success

1. If you are ever in a questionable/gray situation always inform someone – your SEL/CO.
2. If you can answer “yes” to the following questions you will mitigate fraternization:
 - Is the act/relationship right for yourself?
 - Is the act/relationship right for your subordinate?
 - Is the act/relationship professional in nature?

Think about the perception in every situation. If it can be perceived as fraternization, think of ways you can mitigate the situation (refer to step 1!).

“Before you act, ask yourself: ‘What are the likely consequences of this act? Will I later have cause to regret it?’”

- Marcus Aurelius, Roman Emperor -

NOTES