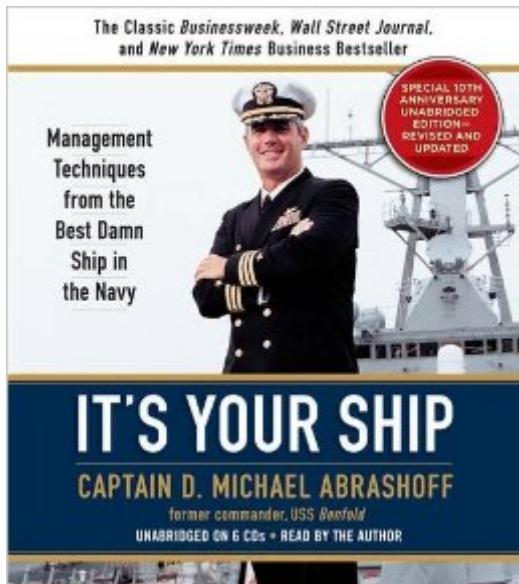


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It's Your Ship: Management Techniques From The Best Damn Ship In The Navy (revised)



Synopsis

The story of Captain D. Michael Abrashoff and his command of USS Benfold has become legendary inside and outside the Navy. Now Abrashoff offers this fascinating tale of top-down change for anyone trying to navigate today's uncertain business seas. When Captain Abrashoff took over as commander of USS Benfold, a ship armed with every cutting-edge system available, it was like a business that had all the latest technology but only some of the productivity. Knowing that responsibility for improving performance rested with him, he realized he had to improve his own leadership skills before he could improve his ship. Within months he created a crew of confident and inspired problem-solvers eager to take the initiative and take responsibility for their actions. The slogan on board became "It's your ship," and Benfold was soon recognized far and wide as a model of naval efficiency. How did Abrashoff do it? Against the backdrop of today's United States Navy-Benfold was a key player in our Persian Gulf fleet-Abrashoff shares his secrets of successful management including: See the ship through the eyes of the crew: By soliciting a sailor's suggestions, Abrashoff drastically reduced tedious chores that provided little additional value. Communicate, communicate, communicate: The more Abrashoff communicated the plan, the better the crew's performance. His crew would eventually call him "Megaphone Mike," since they heard from him so often. Create discipline by focusing on purpose: Discipline skyrocketed when Abrashoff's crew believed that what they were doing was important. Listen aggressively: After learning that many sailors wanted to use the GI Bill, Abrashoff brought a test official aboard the ship-and held the SATs forty miles off the Iraqi coast. From achieving amazing cost savings to winning the highest gunnery score in the Pacific Fleet, Captain Abrashoff's extraordinary campaign sent shock waves through the U.S. Navy. It can help you change the course of your ship, no matter where your business battles are fought.

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Customer Reviews

This book and its author have received a lot of media exposure, so I decided to check it out. While Abrashoff espouses proven leadership techniques, the only really new learning is how one man applied the principles on a Navy ship with a complement of 311 sailors. This is more a story of one man's awakening to how leadership is considerably more effective than management; how getting out of people's way is wiser than micromanaging them. Leadership is emphasized in the book, and in every endorsement quote on the back cover. Yet, the subtitle says "management techniques," not "leadership techniques." Leadership did not come easy to Abrashoff; he had a lot of learning to do...and undo. As he moves through the chapters, this retired Navy Captain talks about his experiences in leading by example, listening, communicating purpose and meaning, creating a climate of trust, focusing on results, taking calculated risks, building people and unity, and strengthening quality of life. Good leaders can tell you all about these concepts and how they are applied in their organization. Aspiring leaders and those who have not yet seen the light will be awe-struck by what Abrashoff accomplished. Solid, experienced leaders will see this book as more of a case study and a reinforcement of what they're already doing. As I have observed today's military leaders-as a citizen and as a consultant who has had the privilege of working with military leaders, the "system" is not as counterproductive as the author would lead us to believe. Bureaucracy is still bureaucracy, but Abrashoff is not alone in his practice of leadership skills. Abrashoff applied leadership skills on his ship to achieve significant measurable results. I'm glad he documented his achievements so others might be inspired.

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