

# NAVIGATOR

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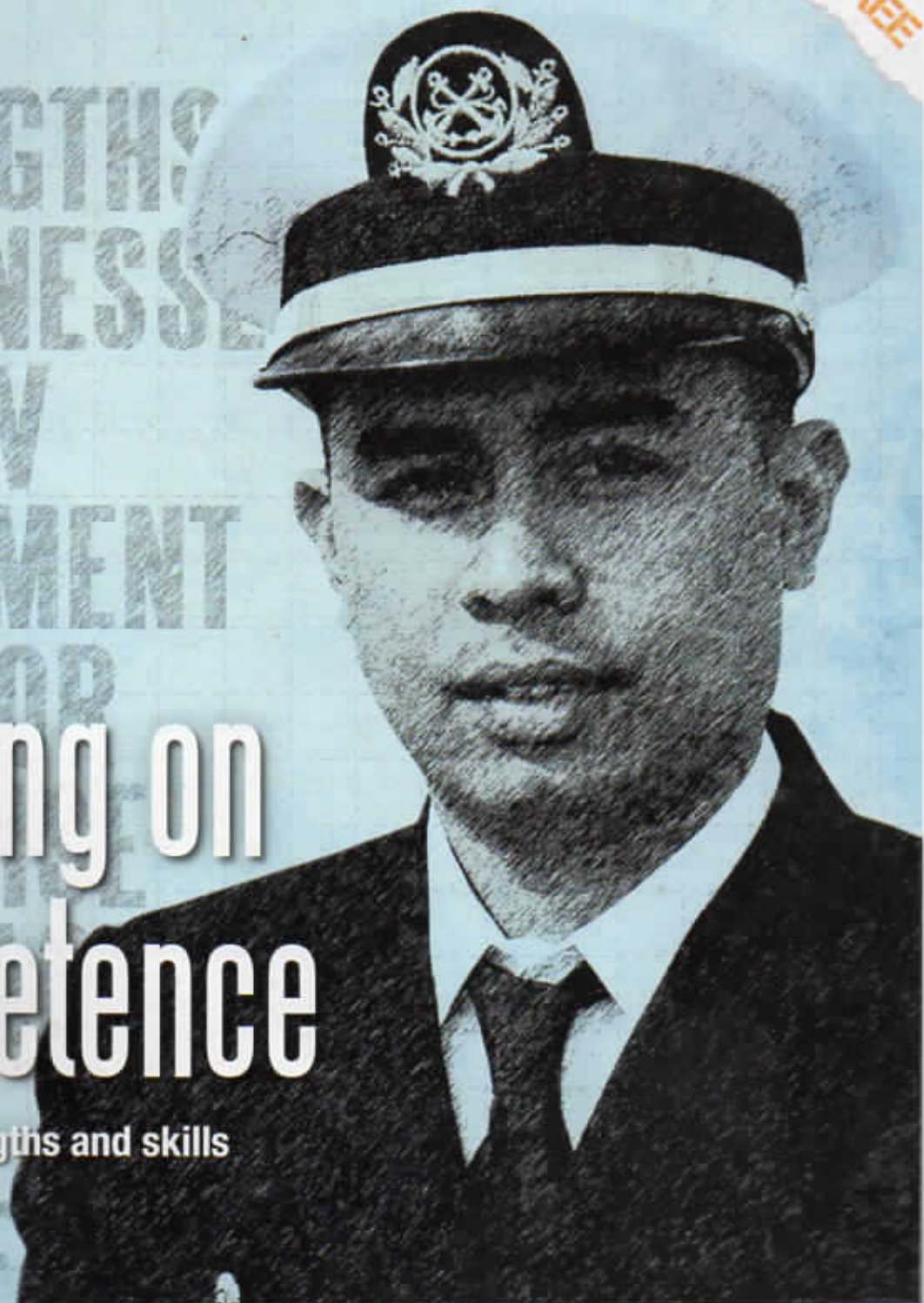
Inspiring professionalism in marine navigators

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## Building on competence

Developing strengths and skills



A free publication by The Nautical Institute in association with the Royal Institute of Navigation



## Comments on competence

You've worked hard, studied for years, completed the required sea time experience and are now the proud owner of a brand new Certificate of Competency (CoC). Issued by your Flag State, this tells the world that you are 'competent' to be a Third Mate, Second Mate, Chief Mate, or even Master of a merchant ship – well done!

However, do you really feel like an expert? If you're like most people, you will be very proud of your achievement, but also aware that there is much more to learn before you feel fully confident in your new post. It probably took a few years in your previous role before you felt able to relax and trust your abilities and judgement. So why is this, when you've passed your exams and been certified as competent?

A popular theory (the Dreyfus & Dreyfus model of skill acquisition) suggests that a student passes through five distinct stages: novice, competence, proficiency, expertise, and mastery. In the novice stage, a person follows rules as given, without context or

sense of responsibility beyond obeying what is laid out for them. Competence is characterised by active decision-making when choosing a course of action. Proficiency is shown when an individual develops intuition to guide their decisions and devise their own rules. So, progression moves from rigid adherence to rules to a more intuitive mode of reasoning, based on accumulated knowledge.

In the maritime world, the IMO has identified the 'competencies' of a navigating officer, describing them in the STCW Convention and Code. Maritime schools teach these subjects and the flag states then assess if you, as a student, are truly 'competent' in these areas. This fulfils their legal requirements, but should not be your end goal as a professional navigator.

Many ship owners ask for more than just the IMO-defined minimum competencies in their deck officers. Instead, they require them to display greater proficiency above and beyond this, before they are promoted

to the next level. Some ship owners/managers define extra competencies related to their business, for example specialist operations or commercial knowledge. The IMO is concerned with safety, security and environmental protection; the ship owner must try to be profitable too.

In this issue of *The Navigator* we aim to show you how to 'build on competence' and further your knowledge. We will reveal tips for demonstrating your own skills and identifying those of other people.

At The Nautical Institute, we are delighted by the high level of support and praise that *The Navigator* is receiving, not to mention the number of navigational officers contacting us for further learning opportunities. We've set up a separate area of our website for those inspired to learn more. Please visit our blog at [www.nautinst.org/navinspire](http://www.nautinst.org/navinspire) for regular updates and new material related to issues raised in this publication. Tell your friends too; there's plenty of learning to go about!

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We welcome your news, comments and opinions on the topics covered in *The Navigator*. We reserve the right to edit letters for space reasons if necessary. Views expressed by letter contributors do not necessarily reflect those held by The Nautical Institute

Good day! I'm a deck cadet onboard the vessel MDL Growth. Today, we received a distress message that four yachtsmen capsized on a boat near Sepetiba, Brazil. All four were saved by our crew. This was very good practice for a young cadet. So good luck, and don't forget, safety first!  
**Dmitry Marushchak, Deck Cadet**



I am a Master, currently serving onboard the Ethiopian Flag general cargo ship, *M/V Assosa*. I was happy to read the issue about CPD. It is a lifelong learning process, which makes us a fully-fledged professional and, above all, human.  
**Captain Sileshi Siyoum, Master**

I hope it is smooth sailing for everyone! I'm a South African deck cadet, doing my second sea phase on *SS Germata*, a Singapore-flagged LNG carrier. It was always my dream to sail on tankers. *The Navigator* has been helpful throughout my cadetship. Thanks to technology, I have caught up with all the issues since October 2012 via the mobile app. To all seafarers out there, I suggest you get yourself the app and get up to speed before the hard copy even gets onboard ship.  
**Bonga Brian Xhakaza, Deck Cadet**

I am a trainee Third Officer onboard *LNG Clean Ocean*. *The Navigator* is very informative reading. All crew members onboard my vessel wait in line to read each new edition with great pleasure. All topics are always discussed and feedback shared. Great job!  
**Andrei Romanenko, Third Officer**

Professional development is a very inspiring topic for me. Reading about it was like an eye-opener for seafarers. There are many doors open to us, not just at sea but also onshore. I keep myself motivated while onboard by learning as fast as I can, because whatever success we achieve onboard will become our tools, or passport, when working onshore. I salute navigators sharing their

comments in *The Navigator*. They are just like mentors for us; in a simple way, their ideas can change our perceptions.

**Joseph Inding Jr, Second Officer**

I'm presently serving as Chief Officer on *MSC Joy*, a Malta-flagged containership running in the Baltic and North Sea. I've read every issue of *The Navigator* since I was a Third Officer.

Being a seafarer is a tough job, taking our time and a lot of nerve, but giving us something special instead, that cannot be put into words. Good seamanship is something that is always upgrading and developing. Sharing this knowledge among my colleagues and shipmates is important to me. It makes us closer; it makes us a crew!

**Denis Artyushin, Chief Officer**

I'm Third Mate on board the VLCC *Watban*, a 300,361 DWT tanker, 340 mtrs long and 56 mtrs wide. The remarkable thing about being on a VLCC is when you realise the value of the cargo you carry on a routine voyage. Let's see: we're carrying 298,258 MT (95% load), which is 2,104,246 barrels of crude oil. Multiply by \$45 per barrel equals about \$94.7 million. That adds even more responsibility during navigation and cargo operations!

High standards of safety and good seamanship practices are the only things which help to avoid big environmental damage, economic loss – and most important, help to bring seafarers home safe to their loved ones.

**Max Khromov, Third Officer**