



# Mentoring Seafarers

## A report for the ITF Seafarers' Trust

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## Executive Summary

The Mentoring Seafarers research showed that mentoring schemes are cost-effective and demonstrated clear benefits:

- for those being mentored - with technical and behaviour learnings;
- for those mentoring - being able to share their experience and becoming part of a self-perpetuating and ongoing learning cycle;
- for companies and organisations - in terms of staff recruitment, retention and engagement - providing safety and financial benefits as well as improving crew skills.

However, the research also discovered opportunities for improvement with respect to:

- inconsistencies across different schemes which resulted in lower impact from mentoring;
- poor communication of mentoring initiatives from shipping companies to employees (ship and shore) reducing the uptake of these initiatives;
- a lack of common understanding about what mentoring entails resulting in mentoring initiatives differing in what they set out to do and how they are implemented.
- expanding the cultural focus of the research to create an avenue for further understanding of cultural relativity and the ability to share experiences from other large seafaring nations (e.g. India and China).

Overall, individuals, companies and organisations in the shipping industry can demonstrate the cost-effective benefits of mentoring programmes (echoing research from other comparable industries). The research highlighted the potential of several immediate measures that companies could take in order to gain longer term benefit from developing mentoring initiatives. These are listed in the 'Best Practice' and 'Recommendations' sections.

This research set out to establish the extent of mentoring on board in the modern Merchant Navy, its benefits and best practice. It explored the barriers to mentoring and identified areas for improvement. It investigated areas of safety, well-being, equality, gender, seafarer retention, and the subsequent financial implications. Conclusions were drawn from secondary data sources from published literature and gathered primary data through two industry surveys. The quantitative data from the surveys was complemented by detailed stakeholder interviews.

The findings show that the term 'mentoring' is not universally understood and means different things to different individuals and organisations. Interpretations include elements of training, coaching and mentoring. The use of these terms appears to be driven by the objectives or end results required by individuals and organisations. This presents a fundamental difficulty when trying to obtain information on a topic where base understanding is not uniform.

The research highlighted a lack of development in non-technical skills, and leadership and management qualities which can inhibit the potential for team performance within the

industry. Industry focus is predominantly on technical competence and theoretical learning rather than leadership and people management and investment into one of its largest assets, the seafarers.

However, the research showed that mentoring still happens on board, both formally and informally, and continues to have significant impact, improving lives. The research also demonstrated that developing a culture of mentoring and support, to bridge the gap between the classroom and working practice, is often naturally paid forward or repeated by the mentee once experienced. It is clear that informal mentoring is widely valued, not only as a way of sharing knowledge, but also through the relationships that it engenders. The value gained by those sharing that experience is cherished and respected, often leaving a lifelong imprint.

The research highlighted several inconsistencies across organisations in respect of:

- training establishments, sponsorship and shipping companies communicating the availability of formal mentoring opportunities to staff;
- matching cadets' on-board role to pre sea-time expectations;
- the provision of suitably qualified and experienced mentors (including a reliance on hard-pressed training officers sometimes having to step in);
- mentoring scheme relevance across different cultures in a globally complex industry.

Mentoring is considered a vital building block, not only for use as a teaching aid but also for psychological support to engender confidence and competence. The research found that although mentoring is considered a tool that benefits safety culture, training efficiency and personal development, inconsistencies of its delivery can affect the well-being of individuals and the industry. Cost efficiency and poor communication mean that managers are often constrained by short-term goals. This means that, whilst the maritime industry is growing and acknowledges its need for qualified and skilled seafarers, the attraction and retention of staff is compromised by neglect of support networks and long-term management strategies. Without greater consistency in education to support an international and complex network of seafarers, there will be a 'void' in terms of experience as well as a greater prevalence of human error. This applies to both ship and shore networks.

This research finds that those engaged in mentoring as a 'best practice' recognise that theoretical learning requires consistent support to become applied knowledge and understanding. It also recognises that people need more than just technical training and that mental resilience can be developed through experienced support such as mentoring during transitional training periods. This is also recognised in other industries, for example in aviation and healthcare. A balance between technical and non-technical competence helps to maintain an industry resilience.

## Acknowledgements

The research team would like to thank all those who participated in the surveys and the interviews. The engagement from all individuals was invaluable and is vital to the industry for evidence-based progression. We would also like to thank the research sponsors and supporters who are recognised in more detail below.

## Sponsors and Support



The ITF Seafarers Trust were the Mentoring Seafarers Project sponsor. Their vision is to be the leader in promoting and improving the wellbeing of maritime workers worldwide. They are committed to raising the standards of welfare on board ships during work and rest (leisure) times.



Nautilus International, the maritime trade union, endorsed the Project and worked in close collaboration with the Solent University Maritime Research Team to develop key areas of investigation connected to the project objectives. Nautilus works hard to ensure the standards that govern the way the industry works, including the health and safety and working conditions of employees, remain fair and level playing field.



InterManager and Captain Kuba Szymanski, Secretary General, have offered unwavering support to this project. They are dedicated to promoting the shipping industry as a positive place of work and are keen to encourage progressive and informed development within industry topic areas. InterManager advocates efficiency, quality and ethical ship management, encouraging the highest standards of ship operations.



The Honourable Company of Master Mariners (HCMM) are supportive of this project having run a member based mentoring scheme for several years. The HCMM recognise mentoring as vital support to their young members, encouraging career growth and personal development to those aspiring to be ships' officers in the Merchant Navy.

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## Introduction

The Mentoring Seafarers Project was a year-long research initiative undertaken by Solent University, sponsored by the ITF Seafarers' Trust. The project was established to examine existing mentoring schemes and their impact on the seafaring community. The long-term view was to raise awareness of sustainable mentoring initiatives and promote mentoring best practice, resulting in improved wellbeing and education. This research follows another study led by Solent University, The Gender Empowerment and Multicultural Crew (GEM) Project, conducted by Pike et al., 2015-2016. The GEM project recommended mentoring for seafarers as an accessible and relatively low-cost initiative, particularly beneficial for those in the early stages of their career or for those who work in a cultural or gender minority group at sea. The Mentoring Seafarers Project was also initiated in response to a motion tabled by the Nautilus Young Maritime Professionals Forum to the Union's 2015 General Meeting calling for younger members to be given increased information and advice to support them at various stages of their career.

This report presents the research aim and objectives, methods and data findings. It goes on to offer conclusions and examples of best practice which support the recommendations.

## Project aim

The project aim was to undertake a review of the mentoring schemes available within the seafaring community. This was with the goal of raising awareness of sustainable mentoring initiatives as best practice within shipping companies and ultimately to provide long-term welfare benefits to the seafaring community.

## Project objectives

- Conduct an international shipping company audit of current mentoring schemes.
- Review the value of mentoring and its current place within the seafaring community.
- Demonstrate how mentoring can help and support the seafaring community from a welfare, safety and economic perspective.
- Develop a report to highlight the best practices of mentoring on board.

The research objectives demanded a broad investigation to ensure an inclusive review of the performance elements which currently influence the industry. These included finance, safety and well-being.

## Background

Mentoring has been part of seagoing culture for centuries, with the mentor traditionally being the ship's captain. Many commercial and academic studies (Block and Tietjen-Smith, 2016; Germain et al, 2012; Goldberg, 2016 and others) have highlighted the importance of mentoring across maritime and other industries as a way of supporting learning based on the principle of passing on knowledge and helping others. In the earlier part of this decade, it was apparent that mentoring was becoming more widely promoted as part of seafaring life, with studies such as the Nautical Institute's 'Mentoring at Sea, the 10-minute challenge' (2012) and published articles including Goldberg, 2016 and IHS Safety at Sea 2013.

However, more recently this focus seems to have declined, with little published literature about mentoring in the maritime industry since 2014.

Mentoring in the maritime industry has recognised importance in the support and ongoing development of skills and welfare of individuals. During the 2014 National Seafarers' Week, Stephen Hammond, representing the UK Government and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, recognised the value of mentoring and quoted the philosopher John Locke saying:

*"Education begins the journey, but good company and reflection must finish it."*

(Stephen Hammond, 2014)

In 2013, Kevin Slade of Northern Marine Management made a presentation to members of the Nautical Institute about the meaning of mentoring in the 21st century. He suggested that because of shorter periods of qualifying sea service to gain certificates of competency (within the STCW training), and faster promotions, there is an increasing requirement to provide seafarers with the necessary skillsets for advancement in knowledge, management and practical skills whilst in post. Mr Slade also said that seafaring culture must encourage and allow mentoring to take place as a matter of routine and not of chance (Slade, 2013).

Dr Andy Norris discussed two-way and reverse mentoring in The Navigator journal in 2017. He talks about how younger seafarers who have not been influenced by years of using older equipment, are more adaptable to using different systems as the technology evolves. The article notes reverse mentoring by these younger seafarers will be valuable as technology continues to see major changes (Norris, 2017).

The July 2017 edition of the Nautical Institute's Seaways Magazine, CEO of Olvia Maritime Ltd. said:

*"No amount of formal instructions or manuals can provide safety on board. The only way to achieve good results is to build up a self-perpetuating mentoring system, which will give the opportunity to transfer knowledge from one generation to another"*

(Sagaydak, 2017)

In addition to this, the benefits of mentoring have been shown to include:

- Happier and more confident staff.
- Promotion of good practice.
- Support of company culture.
- Improvements in safety performance.
- On-going support of training and deeper learning.
- Prevention of knowledge leaks.
- Support of the multi-cultural crew environment.
- Provision of sustainability.
- Aid to retention of staff.
- Low-cost initiative.

(Le Goubin, 2009)

In their web article, “How to Become a Good Mentor and Succeed in This Role”, Crewtoo also discuss the benefits of mentoring to both the company and the employee.

*“For a company, the rewards for having a positive, planned and respected mentoring programme are many. They get to develop better officers and crew, and they provide them with the skills and knowledge to excel..... For those providing the mentoring, there are positives too .... being a mentor means being a better leader, it means challenging your own perceptions and digging deeper inside your own professionalism, knowledge and skills.”*

(Crewtoo, n.d)

Mentoring is complex and opinion regarding its meaning and function varies greatly. Some definitions consider mentoring as a short-term intervention where short bursts of knowledge can be shared to improve skill-sets. It can also be viewed as a longer-term strategy to support the learning process, personal development and resilience of individuals.

Mentoring is often described as a selfless giving with “*genuine client-centre*” care. Terms such as warm, dispassionate, non-judgmental and a readiness to go the ‘extra mile’ to advance the mentee are often used to describe mentoring (Colley 2003.p.40). Mentoring can offer an intellectual challenge and may increase personal skills and reputation (Clutterbuck, 2014). Mentoring and training have dissimilar goals, and although equally advantageous, are associated with different tools and techniques and supply different information (Goldberg, 2016). A coach requires knowledge and specific skills to complete a given task. Coaching can also focus ‘on strengthening or eliminating specific behaviours’ that detract from the good performance of an individual (Reh, 2017). In contrast mentoring is considered to be for longer term development, with coaching being described as having a more immediate effect (Reh, 2017).

Kathy Kram (1980, 1983, 1985) is known as one of the first authors to define the action and benefits of the mentoring process. Kram (1983) summarised mentoring based on a two-way function of trust to facilitate career advancement and personal growth. She suggests that mentoring is “*a vehicle for accomplishing primary developmental tasks*” allowing experiential knowledge to be transferred (Kram 1983. p.608). Kram also acknowledges that the term mentoring held too many different meanings and she preferred to use the term ‘*developmental relationship*’ instead.

The transfer of experiential knowledge and first-hand experience of the job can be supported through mentoring by colleagues and can provide an essential link to enhancing the cycle of learning. It is crucial that new personnel achieve job competency. However, it is reported that 75% of the skill base required for any job does not come from the classroom or formal training but instead from the transition period between the classroom and starting a new job (Le Goubin. 2009), placing further emphasis on the value of mentoring

It is estimated that between 75-96% of accidents and incidents are caused by human error (Maritime Journal, 2017). This statistic emphasises the importance of understanding the vulnerabilities and weaknesses of the industry and what can be done to reduce risk. Mentoring has a role in reducing this risk and this research has investigated what is happening in terms of mentoring and has considered the network surrounding the learning process.

*“Mentoring could simply save a life”*

(Interview 9)

## The role and benefits of mentoring

The benefits of being a mentor are described as an opportunity for reflection and taking satisfaction in making a difference for someone else. This can be an intellectual challenge and a way to increase one's personal skills base and reputation (Clutterbuck, 2014). Cranwell-Ward, (2004) describes additional benefits of mentoring: the opportunity to challenge personal assumptions and to keep in touch with the day to day working challenges. Mentors are described as having the ability to create a safer environment and offer support to allow ideas to be tested and new skills to be developed without impacting direct operations (Cranwell-Ward, 2004). Clearly then, the benefits of being a mentor can make long-term differences to people's lives and the rewards of giving are often reciprocated over time, as demonstrated by this quote from one of the research interviews:

*".... I asked him what the best part of his job is. And he said, it's getting a mentor, mentee basically and training them up and watching someone achieve their potential. And it's like, that's the kind of leadership that is invaluable, and lifts the whole industry up really. Because then you have got that one, that mentee which will then become a mentor for someone, and that's the way we change things."*

(Interview 11)

## Legislation

Legislation that impacts on training, health and well-being, communication, leadership and management are discussed below in terms of the role of mentoring.

In 1978 the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) introduced the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watch Keeping for Seafarers (STCW) to its member states to standardise maritime training globally. The STCW incorporates national statutory requirements and considers international compliance covering all aspects of merchant ship operations. Mandatory standards for competence are in place to ensure all seafarers are properly trained and have adequate skills to perform their duties within the Merchant Navy.

Recent amendments (2010) to the STCW have brought about changes that have seen a shift away from apprenticeship type training, where crew members would be expected to learn the trade over an extended period of qualifying time (Le Goubin, 2009). Now, qualifying sea time between a first 'Certificate of Competence' (CoC) into a third officer position has been reduced from 24 months to 12 months. This reduction places more emphasis on classroom-based training as opposed to practical 'on the job' experience, leaving some cadets with gaps in this area. This deficiency places a heavier reliance on other mechanisms of support to 'fill the gap' and mentoring can offer a solution.

In addition, the STCW, Table A-VI/4-1 and STCW Table A-VI/4-2, specifies minimum standards of competence in medical first aid and medical care. MSN 1865 (M) Seafarer Training and Certification Guidance describes the UK Requirements for Emergency, Occupational Safety, Security, Medical Care and Survival Functions. Certificated personnel are expected to identify probable cause, nature and extent of injuries. However, there is not a mandatory requirement in place to ensure personnel are equipped to deal with well-being and mental health issues.

*“Health and safety, people seem to forget the health part of ‘health and safety’ and the mental well-being of people”*

(Interview 4)

When considering communication of critical information to seafarers, the STCW A-I/14 ‘Responsibilities of companies’ states that newly employed seafarers should ‘receive essential information in a language the seafarer understands’.

Literature suggests that English remains the global language at sea, and that it is imperative to speak in a common language on board (IMO, 2018). The requirement for an ‘adequate knowledge’ of English is only necessary during a navigational watch, as stipulated in A-II/1, A-III/1, A-IV/2 and A-II/4 of the STCW Code. However, given that 85% of crew are mixed nationalities, issues with language and effective communication can be problematic, which highlights a need for more support in this area.

The Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) (2006) incorporates regulation surrounding health and safety protection and accident prevention (Regulation 4.3). Whilst this legislation is helpful it is also open to interpretation, which means that some companies will implement it more rigorously than others.

The Human Element Leadership Management Operational Level (HELM ‘O’) and Human Element Leadership Management Level (HELM ‘M’) are mandatory training requirements and can run in conjunction with Bridge Resource Management (BRM), Engine room Resource Management (ERM) and Crew Resource Management (CRM) courses, although the latter are not industry requirements. Cadets and those on the ‘experienced seafarer’ route would take the HELM (O) or another form of training course. Those trying to obtain management level qualifications (Chief Engineer, Chief Officer or Master) complete HELM (M). For those already qualified there is no requirement to complete either course retrospectively. However, it is reported that employers encourage their employees to complete the course regardless of legislation, although there is no mandatory requirement for staff leading teams to learn new skills or refresh old ones. The exemptions have been mentioned and there appears to be no globally consistent process to assess industry standards in relation to leadership.

Mentoring is seen as a mechanism to offer seafarers vital support to help navigate a dynamic industry with issues and certain deficiencies in training, health and well-being, communication, leadership and management.

## Project definitions

The lack of clarity surrounding the terms mentoring, training and coaching, and formal and informal mentoring, can cause confusion. The benefits and application of these terms vary according to the objectives of those describing them. For the purposes of this research, the following definitions have been used.

### Mentoring

This project uses Shea's description of mentoring:

*“Mentoring is a fundamental form of human development where one person invests time, energy and personal know-how in assisting the growth and ability of another person.”*

(Shea, 1997)

### Formal mentoring

Formal mentoring is a scheme which shows a distinct purpose with a clear sense of direction and positive motivation for the business and individuals concerned. It is described as informational and strongly related to career development and connected to 'top-down' task-based learning (Ragin and Cotton 1999).

### Informal Mentoring

The informal mentoring process is more organic, unstructured and 'bottom-up' with individuals developing a mentoring relationship amongst themselves to offer support from a personal and skills development perspective (Cranwell-Ward, 2004).

### Training

Training is the comprehensive transfer of new skills which aid the growth of knowledge and expertise, rather than the development of personal qualities and competencies (Coaching and mentoring network, 2017).

### Coaching

Coaching is a dynamic exercise, better associated with job-based tasks that have been recognised as requiring improvement or change to the way they have been done (Parsloe and Wray, 2000).

## Research methodology

A mixed method approach was applied to the research, including an extensive literature review, two quantitative surveys and a subsequent series of qualitative interviews for deeper investigation. Thematic analysis was applied to the data to produce the findings, conclusion and recommendations for this report.

### Literature review

A review of published materials was conducted to obtain a wide understanding of the use of mentoring and of the perceptions surrounding it. The review sought to establish the key industry influencers that support or create barriers to implementation of mentoring. Existing research was examined to identify optimal mentoring in shipping, and other industries. Consideration was also given to changes in the formal training requirements by the IMO and the implications of these on mentoring provision. Finally, papers detailing the changing trends and technologies impacting the shipping industry provided context to current mentoring practices. The review findings subsequently helped to inform the survey and interview questions, establishing relevancy and industry balance.

### Industry surveys

The review identified that current mentees were likely to be in junior positions, whereas mentors were more likely to have management or senior company roles. In order to obtain opinions from mentees and mentors, two industry surveys were developed which encouraged views from both 'Employers and Managers' (E&M survey) and 'Employees and Cadets' (E&C survey) as demonstrated in Figure 1. The surveys asked a range of demographic questions which provided the background information about the respondents. Other questions were focused around training, experience and expectations of mentoring.



Figure 1: E&M and E&C surveys - Data collection overview

Both the surveys and subsequent interviews were developed with input from the ITF Seafarers' Trust and Nautilus to ensure that questions were industry relevant. The survey questions were mostly closed to allow for comparable data. Strength of opinion was gauged using questions with a Likert scale of 1-5. Each survey had 3 open questions to gain a fuller understanding of participants' opinions. In addition, there was opportunity for respondents to leave comments.

## Survey participation

The surveys were distributed through Solent University social media tools, including the website, LinkedIn and Twitter. The ITF, Nautilus, InterManager, the Honourable Company of Master Mariners and ISWAN also used their various social media applications, email circulation and website publications for distribution of the surveys. There was a total of 321 responses; 257 (75%) responded to the Employee/Cadet survey and 64 (25%) responded to the Employer/Manager survey (E&M). The time constraints of a year-long project meant that the surveys could only be made available for 6 weeks (13 April 2018 - 28 May 2018) which restricted overall participation. It was also noted that multiple surveys were saturating the seafaring community at the time the Mentoring Seafarers surveys were circulated. However, despite this, the cross-section of nationalities and larger numbers of British and Filipinos who participated, provided a good representation of the current seafaring community.

## Interviews

The surveys were followed up by semi-structured interviews in order to gather more detailed responses into the key areas raised by the surveys. Candidates were selected from consenting survey respondents and other industry stakeholders to establish a cross-section of rank, nationality, gender and the vessel type sailed on.

The semi-structured qualitative interviews engaged 14 interviewees with seafaring experience and 5 interviewees with business or academic background and working within the maritime industry. One interviewee was an academic directly connected to the National Health Service 'Student Mentoring Scheme', in order to look at comparable practice.

## Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was applied to the data returned from the surveys and interviews. Thematic analysis allows for the identification of patterns within the data and can produce a rich and detailed description of the information collected (Braun and Clarke 2006). In this research, the personal narrative from the interview responses, as well as in-depth survey responses, supported the use of thematic analysis. This report includes a focus on respondents' nationality and gender to help provide context.

## Research findings and analysis

The research findings presented here draw on anonymised quotes from both data sets (surveys and interviews) to illustrate certain points that confirm, contradict or add new evidence to existing published materials. The survey and interview questions consider the global landscape of mentoring, which includes the barriers to, as well as drivers of best practice, at sea and on shore. The research also sought to understand the key benefits of mentoring and what can be put in place to optimise them.

## Demographics

The data respondents' demographics are described in the section below. The range of respondents are generally in line with the industry standard, and where this differs, is commented on within each section.

### Age of E&C respondents

Figure 2 demonstrates the age of the Employee and Cadet survey participants, who were primarily the mentees, showing that the 26-40-year age group had the largest representation in this survey. The most at-risk group likely to commit suicide in the UK are men aged between 45-49 (Samaritans, 2018a). This means that the years immediately preceding this age range (ie. 26-40 years old) are where intervention and support are most required and where mentoring can have impact in highlighting and addressing issues before they become too serious. It is noted that for other nationalities, this demographic may differ.

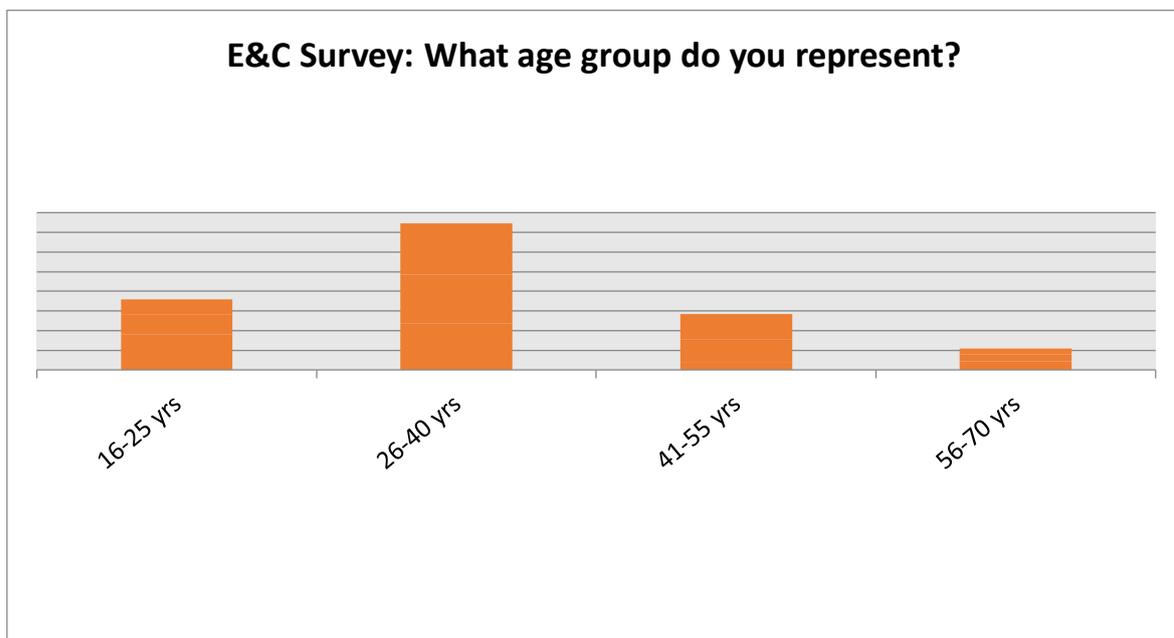


Figure 2: E&C survey - Age representation of respondents

## Gender

In order to address the project objective of being able to ‘*Demonstrate how mentoring can help and support the seafaring community from a well-being, safety and economic perspective*’ and additionally to acknowledge this year’s IMO topic of Empowering Women in the Maritime Community (IMO, 2019), it was considered important to examine the female mentee perspective.

The representation of women responding to the E&C survey was 12%, which is higher than the industry average of approximately 2% women seafarers globally (Nautilus, 2019). From the 257 E&C survey participants, 222 were male and 31 were female; 2 participants described their gender as fluid or gay <sup>2</sup> and 2 participants declined to answer.

## Nationality

Figure 3 shows the breakdown of nationality for the E&C survey participants. 16 different nationalities were represented with British and Filipino respondents being dominant (Refer to Methods section on participation).

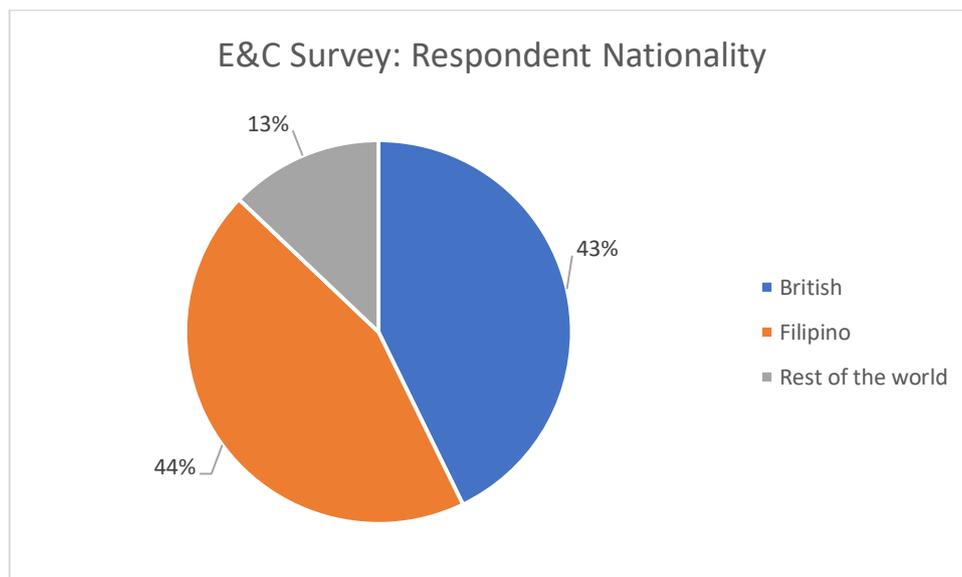


Figure 3: E&C survey - Respondent nationality

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<sup>2</sup> It is noted that the terms ‘gay and fluid’ are not genders, but these are included as they were the terms expressed by the respondents themselves.

## Companies represented

Participants responded from a total of 92 companies, 61 from the E&C Survey and 31 from the E&M Survey. The variety of shipping companies where respondents were working demonstrates a wide range of experience and associated skill sets which are reflected in the data findings.

## Fleet size

E&M participants were asked about the size of their fleets to consider if the company size has an impact on mentoring. The resulting range was very broad, spanning between 1 - 5000 vessels, with the most common fleet size between 101 - 500 ships (Figure 4). Again, this broad range of fleet sizes indicates respondents have had exposure to a spectrum of different experiences within their work, which has enriched the data findings of this research.

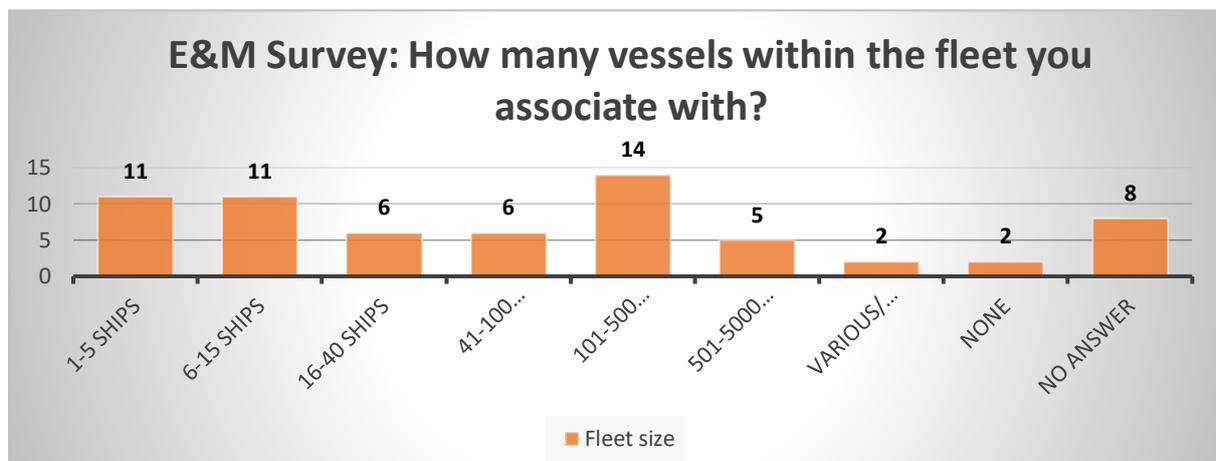


Figure 4: E&M survey - Fleet sizes

## Crew size

The E&C respondents were primarily working in crew sizes between 21 - 40 (Figure 5). This implies these crews were likely to be working on vessels such as cargo, freight, tanker, short sea passenger, as opposed to cruise vessels which would have a larger crew of likely 1000 and above.

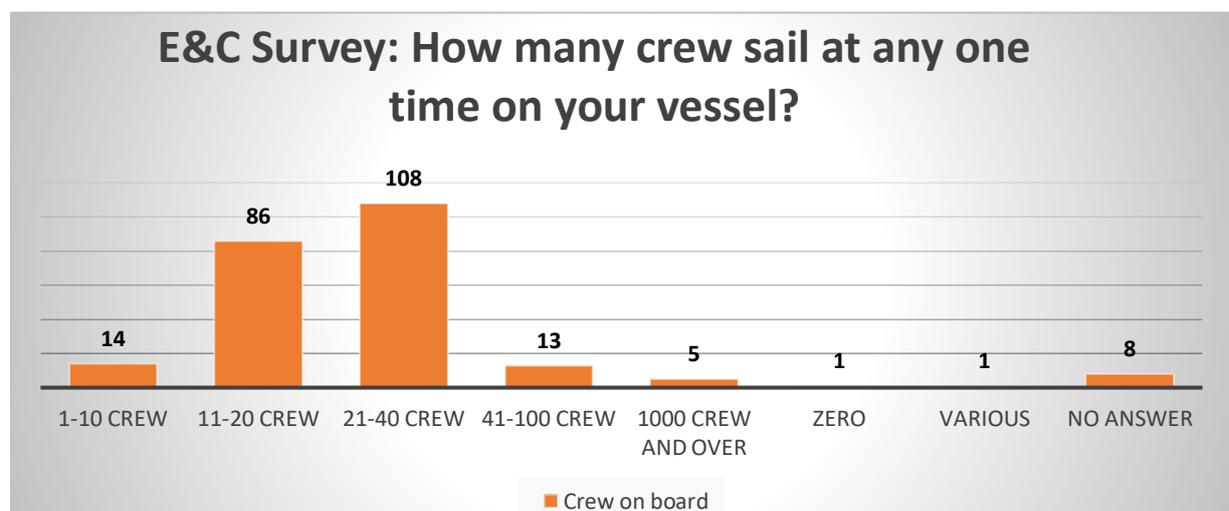


Figure 5: E&C survey - Crew sizes

Smaller crew sizes often mean increased workload and less available time to complete daily duties or provide contingency if something unexpected happens. Fatigue often results and these factors can place significant pressure on the time available for mentoring and the inclination to provide it.

## Sea time

As expected, the E&C respondents' sea experience was far greater than the E&M (Figure 6). Sea experience provides a unique insight into work and life at sea and some would argue, without it, understanding and the ability to mentor a seafarer may be difficult. Those showing zero sea time in the E&M survey were primarily office based and responding from a single crewing agency.

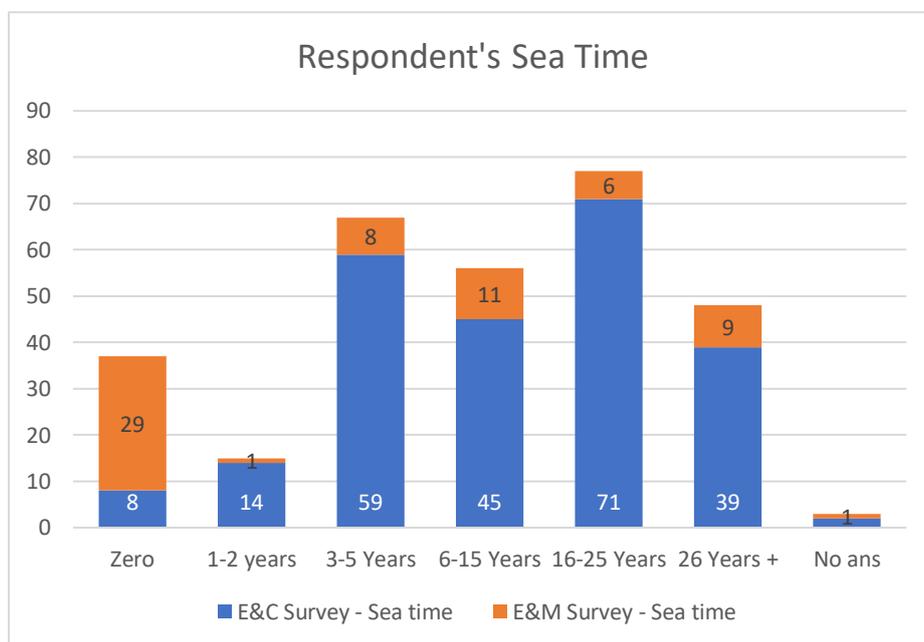


Figure 6: E&C survey - Respondent's sea time

## Defining mentoring

Survey respondents had conflicting views about the role of mentoring, which appeared to relate to their own or their organisations' objectives. Opinions also differed over what constituted informal and formal applications of mentoring.

*“If we receive a cadet on board then formally one of us would be designated as a training officer, which is obviously a mentor”*

(Interview 3)

The lack of clarity over the definition of mentoring is a fundamental issue which implies that those involved with mentoring provision will be applying it different ways depending on their understanding of the term. This issue fuels a lack of consistency in the delivery of mentoring and means there is no easy way to measure its quality. If different base lines of mentoring exist from the outset, outcomes will inevitably vary and may potentially be ineffective.

## What mentoring is taking place?

Survey participants suggested a variety of mentoring was being undertaken at sea and on shore. Confusion surrounding the definition of mentoring meant that some respondents were describing mentoring, whilst other described coaching, training, guidance and Computer Based Training (CBT). Figure 7 shows the names of some of the 'mentoring' initiatives highlighted by participants and demonstrates some confusion surrounding the term.

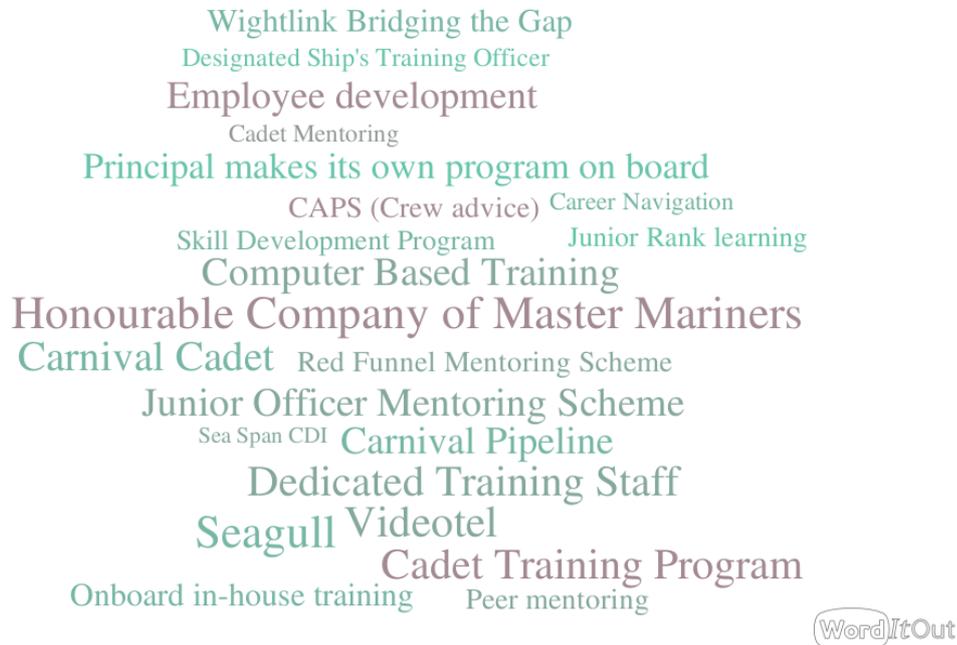


Figure 7: Names of schemes<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Word cloud created at worditout.com

The research demonstrated that confusion also existed around the mentoring schemes thought to be on offer within a company, which was highlighted by contradictory evidence between the E&C and the E&M surveys. For example, some of the mentoring schemes the Employers and Managers thought were in place were then described as not available by Employee and Cadets, who said there was no support for them. This may indicate poor communication about the available mentoring support within a company leading to lower take up of schemes by employees.

This issue also exists between ship and shore management where members of the same companies and shore departments indicated different understanding of what training support was available to sea-going staff. Senior staff suggested that support networks in terms of training and welfare support were available. However, this was not echoed through answers given by their team.

### Formal mentoring

30% of employees and cadets said that there was a formal mentoring scheme in place to accompany onboard training.

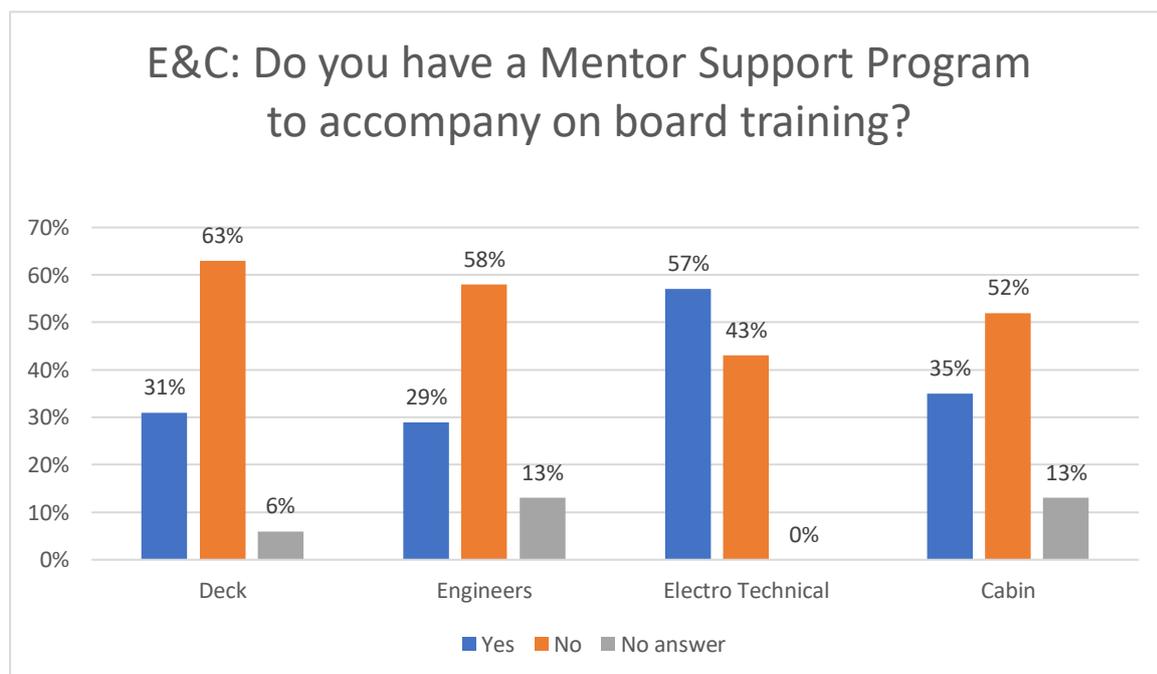


Figure 8: E&C survey - Mentor support programme

Figure 8 demonstrates the percentage of E&C participants who thought that their company offered a mentoring scheme for crew members. There were only five engineering mentoring schemes named, which tended to relate to Computer Based Training courses. This is concerning given the noted global shortage of engineers across industries (engineeringpro, 2018) and more specifically in maritime. Additionally, 41% of the deck programmes named were members who used the HCMM to provide a mentoring service. This is a free service primarily targeted at deck cadets on a career progression to become master mariners. Although the scheme does not exclude engineering cadets, they would need to become members of the company first in order to benefit from the mentoring scheme.

## Informal mentoring

The research demonstrated that informal mentoring was taking place through the transfer of knowledge between individuals. This tended to be on an ad hoc basis rather than a consistent approach developed through the vision of an organisation. It was assumed that informal mentoring would occur naturally without company involvement.

*“My relationship with him was, [.. not a ...] formal one, he wouldn't class himself as my mentor. But he was, because he's helped and guided me”*

(Interview 13)

Informal mentoring had a positive impact and some respondents described individuals who had made a difference to their lives through the mentoring relationship they had built with them. Others described mentors providing them with support and advice. This relationship was not often officially labelled as a mentee/mentor affiliation, although the success of mentoring was strongly dependent on this relationship.

*“It's about building a relationship and trust”*

(Interview 8)

Research participants spoke of the advantages and disadvantages of both formal and informal mentoring systems. The benefits of running both types of mentoring simultaneously were highlighted, particularly as the research showed that training officers were only available on board 51% of the time. Benefits of informal mentoring included the provision of assistance in helping with the development of other persons' skills and competence and becoming the 'go to' person for support. The mentoring role involves working in a longer-term supportive relationship, to build confidence and resilience amongst novice seafarers.

*“You can have a very structured approach to it [mentoring], make it official but more mandatory style of mentoring or it could be more of a motivational, inspirational style of mentoring where it's more the mentee driving it more than the mentor so to speak”*

(Interview 6)

## Mentoring for transition ashore

The research suggested that mentoring could help support those making the transition from ship to shore-based jobs.

*“I know people who have been successful Captains and they consider themselves 'top of the tree' and then they make the transition ashore and they suddenly realise they are now bottom again and you sort of work your way up again and I think mentoring could have a role in trying to encourage them in that scenario”*

(Interview 4)

Mentoring could provide the additional assistance required to make a smoother transition ashore. Whilst it is accepted that mentoring is an extra mechanism in support of training, it can sometimes be the difference in an individual's success or failure within the industry.

“I know a lot of seafarers who obviously decide that it’s not for them and they go back to sea, whereas with a little bit more mentoring they might have stayed put”

(Interview 4)

Evidence suggests there is inconsistent career and personal development in terms of transferrable skills for officers making the transition from ship to shore. A dual mentoring function where provision is made to help officers and crew transition ashore and benefit from each other’s experience would help to support individuals transitioning. This will also have direct benefits for retention of experienced personnel within the industry.

## Mentoring and career development

The employers and managers were asked how influential mentoring was in terms of career and personal development and in supporting training and developing a safety culture on board. As Figure 9 demonstrates, these respondents think that mentoring can play a significant role in these areas, with every respondent saying it was at the least of some importance.

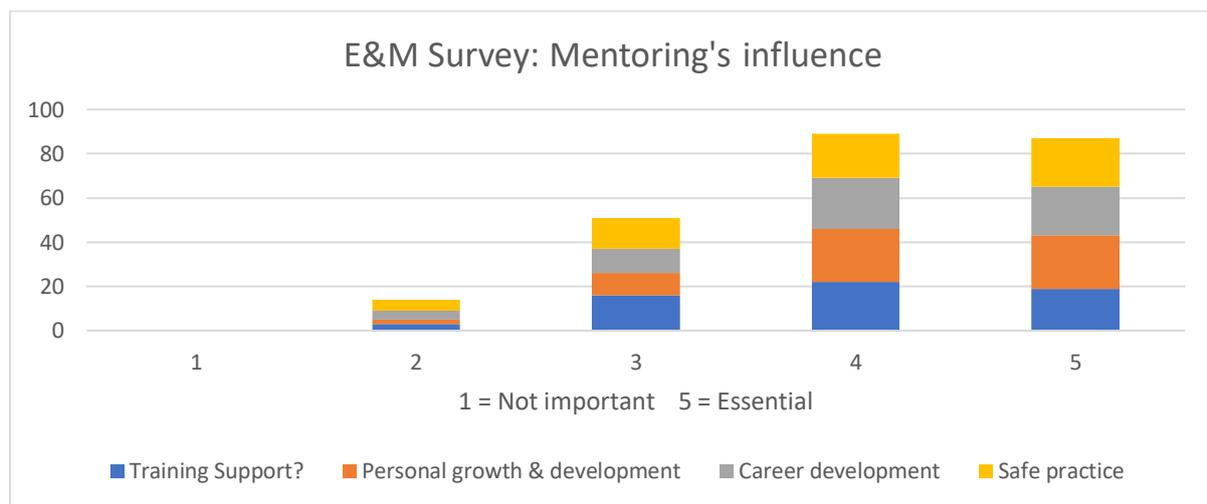


Figure 9: E&M survey - Mentoring’s influence

The E&M survey results showed that mentoring in the areas of training and support, personal growth and development, career development and safe practice was important. Despite this, low percentages for mentor support programmes were noted in Table 1. This suggests that formal mentoring is lacking and highlights a mis-match between the importance placed on mentoring and the number of programmes actually being implemented. This also indicates a reliance on informal mentoring.

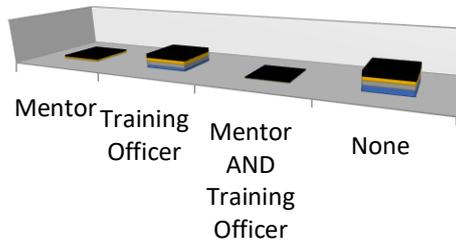
**E&M Survey: Is there an 'on board' mentor support programme to accompany your on board training for all ranks?**

	Officers	Engineers	Deck	Cabin	No	No answer
E&M participants	24%	20%	20%	8%	59%	11%

Table 1: E&M survey - Formal mentoring support programmes

An average of 53% of E&C participants state that ‘a mentor or training officer is **not** available’ to them (Table 2). The findings differ according to nationality; for instance, 61% of British and Irish participants said that neither a mentor nor training officer was available to them, with 49% of Filipino participants saying the same.

**E&C Do you have a Mentor or Training Officer on board?**



	Mentor	Training Officer	Mentor AND Training Officer	None
Average	6%	37%	3%	53%
ROW	19%	39%	3%	39%
Filipino	6%	43%	2%	49%
British/Irish	2%	34%	3%	61%

Table 2: E&C survey - Mentor or training officer on board?

The Filipino participants also indicated that 38% of their mentoring was conducted as ‘group mentoring’ (Table 3). Group mentoring cuts the time needed for this activity and it aligns more with the description of coaching rather than offering one to one mentoring support for personal growth. Table 3 shows high levels of ‘no answer’ as these participants had already indicated they had no mentor scheme in place.

### E&C: In your experience, what type of mentoring took place?

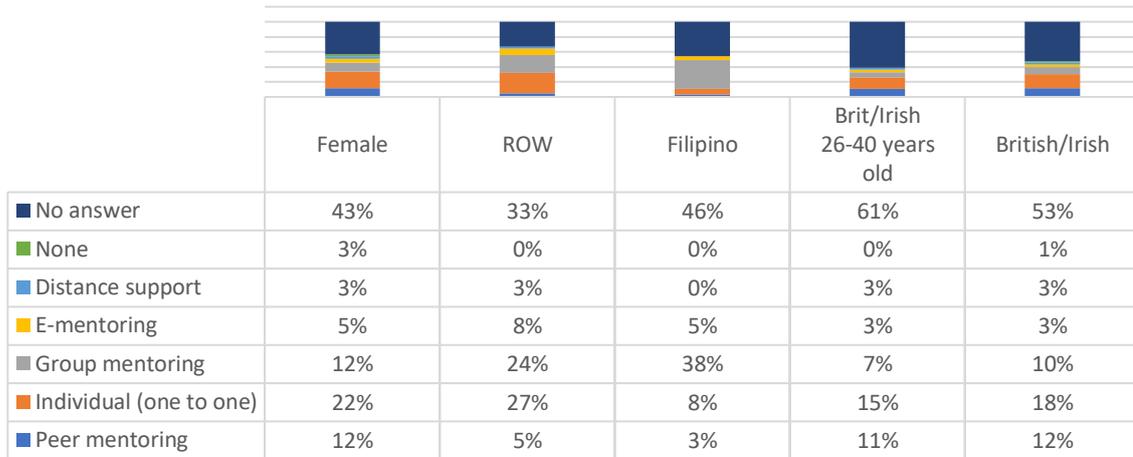


Table 3: E&C survey - Types of mentoring taking place

Confusion was noted in Figure 10 where an average of 41% of E&C Participants reported they had a mentor scheme; however, only 7-11% suggested they had a mentor in place. This would indicate that the role was being filled by a training officer and not a mentor.

### E&C: Is there a mentoring scheme available, a mentor and/or training officer?

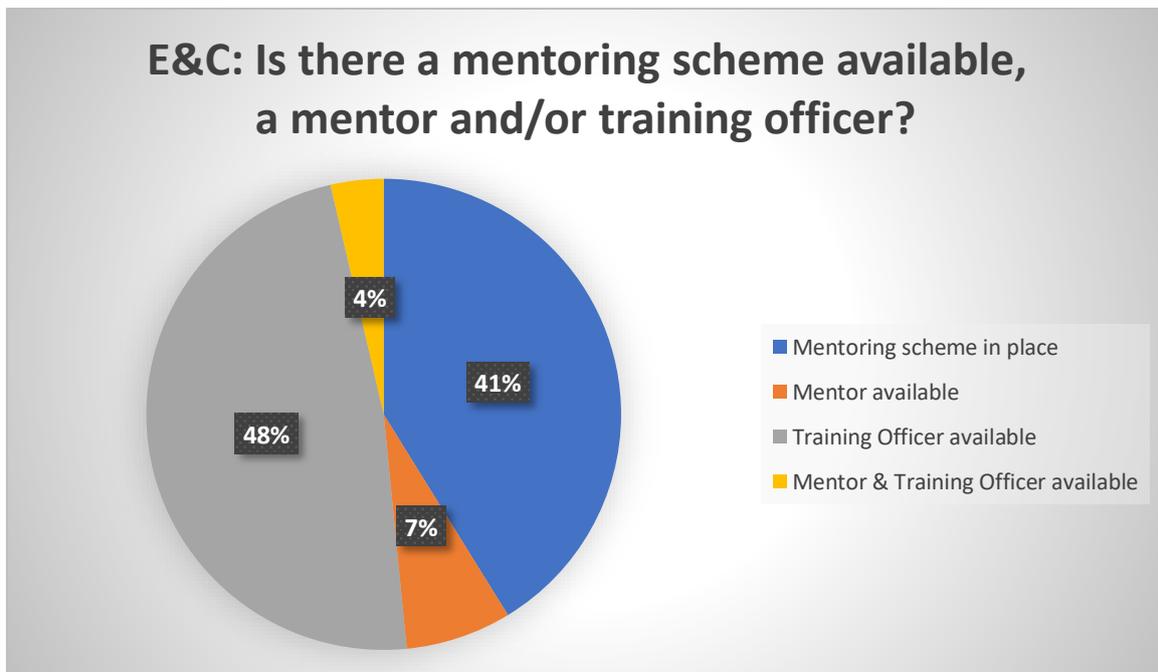


Figure 10: E&C survey - Available mentoring schemes and training officers

This conflicts further with the views shared in Figure 9 where Employers and Managers described mentoring to be important.

Table 2 and Figure 10 also demonstrate a breakdown in communication between ship and shore as to what and who is available to support development and training of new crew members. Figure 10 offers evidence that contravenes STCW Chapter II, Section B-II/1 ‘Guidance regarding the certification of officers in charge of a navigational watch on ships of 500 gross tonnage or more’ where it states that personnel in this training stage should be ‘closely supervised and monitored by qualified officers’. STCW Section A-II/3 (Deck), A-III/2 (Eng). A-III/6 (ETO) also states that training should be documented in a training record book. The suggestion that a training officer is not identified implies this may not be taking place. There is clearly room for improvement in this area and for ship managers to ensure on board staff and cadets are supported adequately in terms of legislation.

## Objectives of mentoring schemes

Employers and Managers were asked what objectives motivate their formal mentoring schemes. Of the 41% participants who said that they had schemes in place, only 31% offered objectives for these. Figure 11 identifies that the objectives listed directly relate to coaching and technical competence, as opposed to a more balanced approach and between technical and non-technical competence.



Figure 11: E&C Survey - Top 3 cited objectives of mentoring schemes

## Barriers to mentoring and learning

The barriers to learning were explored in both surveys, with participants being asked to highlight their top 3. There were many responses to this question which were themed and counted. The 5 most cited responses were then noted in Figures 12 and 13 and discussed in the sections below.



Figure 12: E&M survey - Barriers to mentoring and learning: Top 5 responses

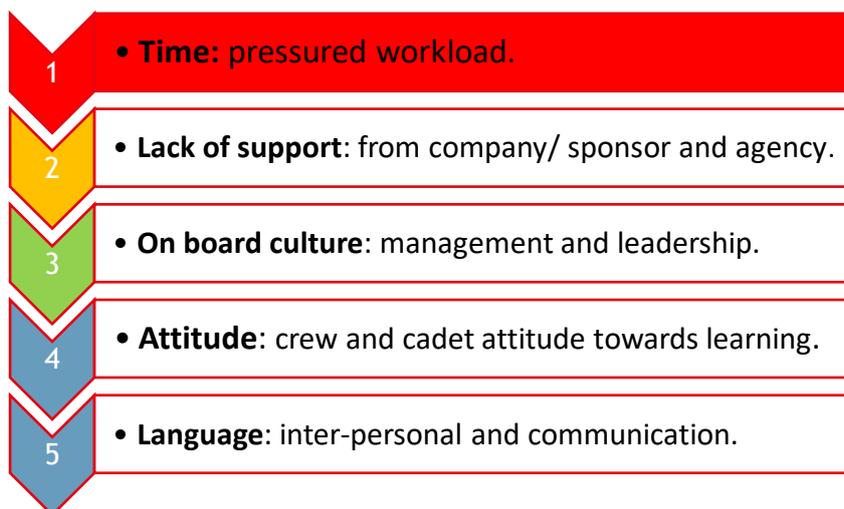


Figure 13: E&C survey barriers to mentoring and learning: Top 5 responses

## On board culture

On board culture is developed by the established hierarchy on board and the actions and expectations of those primarily occupying the top 4 senior positions<sup>4</sup>. It is those in these senior roles who direct the leadership and management style on board and primarily influence on board culture. Positive and negative behaviours stem from here and influence the standards, motivation, attitudes and performance. If the on board culture is not conducive to creating an environment where mentoring can be developed, this will limit the effect mentoring can have.

*“If you’re on a ship where the leadership is positive and by ‘leadership’ I’d say Captain, Chief Engineer, Second Engineer, and the Chief Officer. If that is a positive group of four then there is a level of informal mentoring going on.”*

(Interview 6)

Modern seafaring requires, but is often lacking, effective leadership and management of multi-cultural teams and onboard development of practice to reinforce training. This on-going development is demonstrated in other industries, such as aviation and the National Health Service, where proficiency in both technical and non-technical ability is a requirement for leading teams within high-risk safety areas.

*“When you actually get to a position of being able to be promoted based on your technical competence of your profession, the softer and management sides of it are just not part to any material sense within their training and development to get to being a senior manager on a ship. So, you get people in those roles who are technically proficient but are almost management blind.”*

(Interview 2)

Data from both surveys and the interviews demonstrated that leadership and management practice are still an over-riding issue within the shipping industry. Concerns were raised about deficiencies in leadership, management and ‘soft skills’ for teams on board and ashore. These were thought to significantly impact on safety outcomes and the well-being of individuals. Research respondents thought that the on board culture also affected the learning environment on board and the social cohesion needed for team building which has an impact on the retention of personnel within the industry.

*“We call it a ‘management team’ .... if that is flawed in some area, if one of those is not setting a positive example, then the knock-on effect is that nobody else [in] the hierarchy, will have the standards set that they need to provide an informal mentoring experience leading by example. So, then the whole house of cards collapses because the top card is not leading by example, which to me is the major part of informal mentoring.”*

(Interview 14)

The research highlighted the prevalence of traditional and outdated management practices which dictate a style of leadership that demands ‘rights of passage’. The following quotes

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<sup>4</sup> The top 4 senior positions refer to the Captain, First officer, Chief engineer and the Second engineer

highlight these practices and the lack of ‘softer skills’ needed for good leadership and management:

*“You have to be joking, seriously, we’re not here to train in social skills and such, job skills is what matters”*

(E&C 2)

*“ ‘I am the Captain, therefore if I tell you to do something, you do it’, therefore there’s no leadership involved, you just follow orders”.*

(Interview 6)

*“Old style captains and chief mates do not like the modern generation of seafarers”*

(E&C 187)

The research highlights that a lack of leadership and management skills on board and ashore are having a distinct negative impact on the working experience for employees and cadets.

## Time

Both surveys identified time as a main barrier to mentoring and learning on board. Time is a precious resource at sea and lack of it can restrict the establishment mentoring. Minimum crew numbers and varying contract lengths, changeover days and shift/rest periods can also impact on the time available for mentoring. Time can therefore be considered a luxury, and lack of it can act as a barrier for learning and the establishment of mentoring relationships.

*“For seafarers, time is a precious commodity. Time is very hard to come by and so I think it will be seen as a negative cost to establish a proper time for mentoring”*

(Interview 16)

*“Time - crew are already stretched in their roles and therefore have no time to teach or mentor cadets or new employees. They often complain that it is extra work for which they are offered no incentives”*

*(Additional feedback from Ukrainian officers)*

Although it is recognised that heavy workloads can affect safe practice, particularly in light of minimum crewing, both surveys indicate that any supervision or training to bolster the gap between classroom and practice is solely reliant on operational officers taking up the reins. Despite managers and employers acknowledging that ‘time available’ is a considerable issue, the reliance on operational crew remains high, but little support appears to be in place to assist them.

*“Manning levels which allow for the safe and effective operation of the vessel, but do not carry sufficient reserve resource to allow individuals the time to spend mentoring and developing others.”*

(E&M 139)

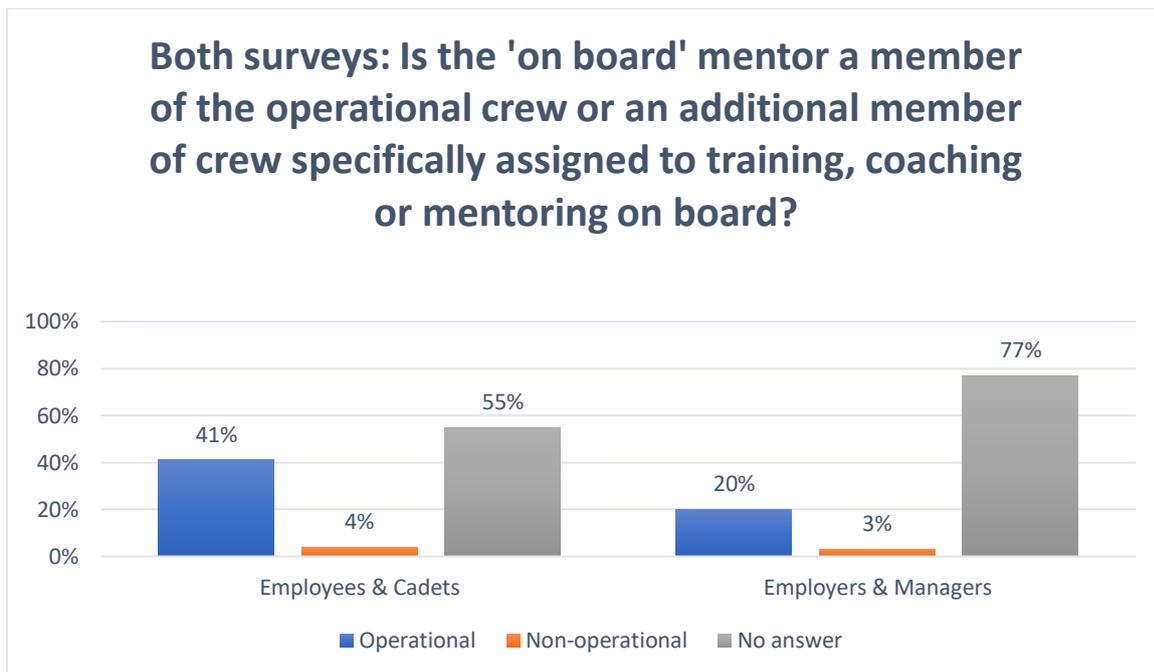


Figure 14: E&M and E&C surveys - Roles of the 'on board' mentor

### Lack of support

The research has demonstrated that there are generally low numbers of formal mentoring initiatives available at sea. The 'Best Practice' section in this report highlights some good examples of where shipping companies have invested resources into mentoring, but these are few and far between. In order to address this, support for mentoring should be encouraged and driven from shipping companies, sponsors and agencies in particular. The lack of formal mentoring schemes means that informal mentoring has become more the norm.

### Experience

Inexperience was viewed as another key barrier to mentoring and this was highlighted in several ways. Firstly, there was concern about a lack of experience of some senior officers which was mainly articulated by the Filipino respondents. For example:

*'Lack of trust in the ability or experience of the above rank and therefore not wanting to learn from them'.*

(E&C 315)

Additionally, some cadets and employees felt that experience was expected straight after they had qualified. For example:

*'[There is a] bizarre insistence on experience immediately after qualification'.*

(E&C 104)

*Lack of gainful employment and training opportunities within the industry for inexperienced seafarers who are not guaranteed employment following successful completion of cadetship.*

(E&C 308)

Safety concerns from the limited amount of sea time new cadets receive were also highlighted.

*“Lack of sea time - safety lacking - can’t relax due to this”*

(E&C 278)

Being the only one of your own nationality was mentioned as problematic when trying to learn from more experienced seafarers.

*“Sending cadets on vessels without any crew of the same nationality as this can make learning from experienced seafarers more difficult.”*

(E&C 152)

Some of the suggestions to address the issue of lack of experience on board included, pairing up with someone in the same role to learn from them and where this is not possible, obtaining distance (external) mentoring, such as that offered by the HCMM.

*“Familiarisation periods doubled up with experienced crew member for the same role is vital for building self-confidence to feel competent in the job that you will be doing alone.”*

(E&C 141)

## Language

Speaking a common language is essential on board and becomes a barrier to mentoring where this is not the case. Recruiters are responsible for ensuring that language levels on board (in the common language) are proficient and that their manning strategies support this. It then becomes the responsibility of the leaders on board to ensure that in common areas on the ship only one language is spoken (Le Goubin 2012, 2018). Equally, it is the responsibility of managers on shore to ensure that teaching aids are provided in all the languages required and that crew on board are receiving information appropriate to them (STCWa-I/14).

*“I keep going back to this common language because I see so many problems where one isn’t used and what a difference it makes when one is to the thwart on board and that has to be supported by on board management.”*

(E&M 12)

There are also social implications of speaking the same language as other crew members.

*“if you have a common language you will have far more of a social life because we can talk to each other and get to know each other socially”*

(E&C 64)

Isolation can be experienced by those who do not share the same language and who cannot socialise properly as a result. This is particularly the case on board where crew are away from family and friends for long periods of time. There are significant safety implications when people are unable to effectively communicate with each other. As the GEM study highlighted, people tend to panic in their own language, and measures need to be in place to address this (Pike *et. Al.*, 2016). Mentoring can assist with language issues but should not be used as the primary solution.

## Attitude

Seafarers' (both officers and crew) attitude to the job was raised as a barrier to mentoring. Poor levels of motivation from cadets and new employees were sometimes a concern for mentors who suggested that they were more likely to help those who wanted to help themselves.

*“Attitude of cadets (generally speaking), does not encourage officers to help them”*

(E&C 287)

*“If a person has an interest and a desire to work, why do I not share my experience with him? If a person doesn't show interest, I won't bother him with my advice”*

(Additional feedback from Ukrainian officers)

## Concerns about new employment

In order to consider retention within the industry, employees and cadets were asked what their three main concerns were when starting new employment. The data was able to highlight seafarers' concerns affecting their decision-making when considering career paths. This indicated where mentoring could be of assistance.

Table 4 shows the top six concerns which were primarily in the areas of management and experience, shift and leave patterns, job stability or availability, support from the shipping company, safety and inexperienced crew and wages.

For female and British and Irish seafarers, safety is highlighted as a key concern. However, Filipino and other nationalities (ROW - Rest of the World) indicate that salary is their main concern when starting new employment. Retention and attraction to the industry remains a prominent issue. In order to improve the concerns raised in Table 4, companies should consider long-term strategies by supplying leadership and management training and offer mentoring to support new seafarers.

**E&C survey: What are the three main things that concern you about taking up new employment as a seafarer?**

	Brits/Irish	Brits/Irish 26-40 yrs old	Filipino	ROW	Female	Average
■ On board management / Officer Attitude / Officer knowledge	37%	35%	11%	22%	35%	28%
■ Working / shift / leave pattern	37%	41%	0.01%	19%	35%	26%
■ Stable Contract / Job security / job availability	35%	47%	4%	16%	22%	25%
■ Lack of company support / shore management	26%	29%	9%	10%	16%	18%
■ Safety on board / Inexperienced crew	44%	41%	25%	42%	39%	38%
■ Wages / Salary / Equal pay	21%	27%	54%	42%	19%	33%

Table 4: E&C survey - Main employment concerns as a seafarer?

## Training

The data showed lack of consistent officer support globally for cadets and from the training and shipping/sponsorship company. This inconsistency points to a lack of standardisation, communication and management and leadership which impacts on safety standards and the quality of young seafarers. In some cases poor leadership and management meant that safety standards were sometimes bypassed or became part of a ‘tick-box’ exercise.

This also applied to cadet training record books, with different views held about the required engagement, which was often determined by the nationality of the officer and/or cadet. It would suggest that many with responsibility to provide training and mentoring on board are not adequately briefed regarding this role.

*“Unless shipping companies and mentors or training officers on-board provide those opportunities then, one, you can’t complete the book or, two, the book is completed and can put an inaccurate reflection of what’s happened on-board”*

(Interview 10)

The data showed that there were concerns surrounding inequalities in training standards globally. These inconsistencies can be linked to nationality and mean that mentoring must be adaptable and tailored to the individual to achieve the best possible outcomes. It also suggests that education standards should be enforced uniformly across the industry to maintain quality and consistency.

Some suggested coaching support was available but others reported no engagement whatsoever from officers. Others reported a feeling of being mis-sold and mis-led and that officers on board had not been briefed about their training role on board.

*“I feel that the Merchant Navy was sold to me in the wrong way. I came into the industry with the promise of 'world class' training to which I feel I have not received. I have come to understand that the industry I work in revolves around money, regardless of sector... College, Shipboard or Trainee Management. A lack of care by those involved with cadet training, as well as my current prospects of employment have led me to feel 'used'”*

(E&C 40)

Data responses showed variations in the amount of time, effort and enthusiasm that officers contributed towards training and mentoring on board. This varied greatly between vessels and company.

*“As a cadet I went on four ships, I had four totally different experiences. The first trip was awkward, the second one was fantastic, the third one was a nightmare and by the fourth one I wanted to quit. And a lot of that was all down to different management styles, the way people were treating people”*

(Interview 5)

Some of the employees and cadets mentioned cost drivers in relation to the ‘tonnage tax qualification’. This has the potential for mis-use, particularly without the requirement for feedback or accountable performance measures to be in place.

*“My current company have made it clear that they are sponsoring my cadetship purely to avail of UK tonnage tax schemes” (E&C 255)*

These issues again serve to emphasise the role of mentoring support and the need for current practice to be reviewed, especially in relation to the attraction into the industry. It also supports the idea of service and consistent training practice between ship and shore companies.

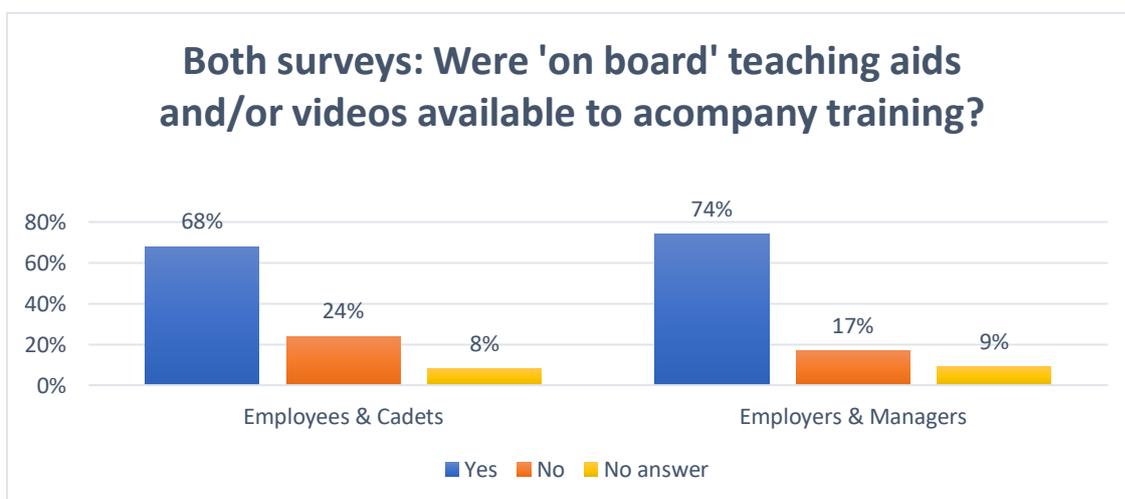


Figure 15: E&M and E&C surveys -Availability of teaching aids on board

## Teaching practices

The research looked at how experiential knowledge could be shared and what learning support practices were being adopted to maximise knowledge transfer and assist the learning process. The research also questioned what training notes and visual aids were used to assist learning; these often support understanding in multi-cultural crew environments, which are the norm on board (Figures 15 and 16).

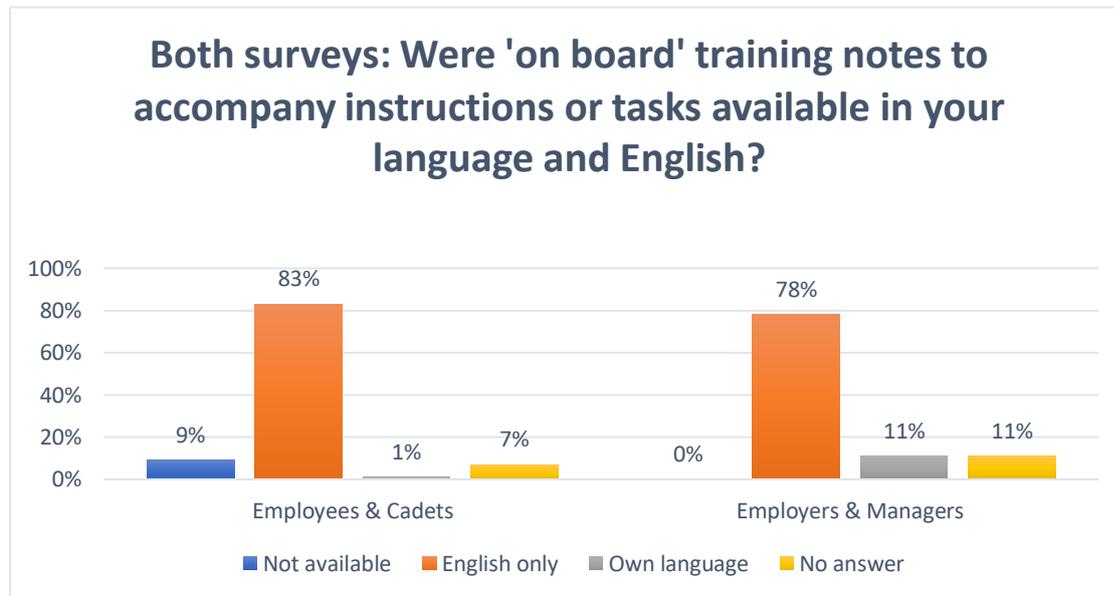


Figure 16: E&M and E&C surveys - Availability of relevant training notes on board

Feedback from both surveys showed that over 86% of respondents' crews comprised of two or more nationalities. Additionally, 50% of the E&C survey respondents did not have English as a first language. Figure 16 demonstrates that an average of 80% of participants who were offered or received training notes, were supplied them in English only. Although it is positive that training notes were available, only providing them in English can act as a barrier to learning and slow the learning process, particularly where there are low levels of training support.

Figure 16 demonstrates that training aids and videos were available, although it was questionable how comprehensive these were. Where there are multi-national crews and training notes are not being provided, and where language, comprehension abilities and teaching practices vary, mentoring is a tool which can support gaps in education.

*“Mentoring builds trust, it builds rapport, it breaks down barriers like language”*  
(Interview 9)

## Education

The research examined what training was in place to offer support surrounding areas of gender and cultural diversity, mental and physical health and bullying and harassment. It considered the role a mentor would have to play in being the 'go to person' to deal with questions and problems. Table 5 shows what was included in the respondents' training.

### What subjects are included in your training?

	E&M survey participants	E&C survey participants
■ Sexual Health	8%	17%
■ Whistle blowing	24%	23%
■ Bullying & Harassment	0%	1%
■ Stress & Fatigue	30%	30%
■ Physical Health awareness	23%	32%
■ Mental Health awareness	30%	24%
■ Diversity aware	15%	30%
■ Culture aware	29%	37%
■ Gender aware	14%	16%

Table 5: E&M and E&C surveys -Training subjects

The research shows that little training is provided to support the non-technical areas listed in Table 5. This increases the pressure on the role of the mentor to ‘bridge the gap’. It also suggests that mentors could potentially be dealing with some serious areas involving ‘life guidance’ - for example, in mental health, bullying and harrassment and gender and cultural related issues. This highlights the need for mentors themselves to be supported.

Topics such as culture, physical health, stress and fatigue are addressed to some extent in HELM courses, but limited time allocated to this means that materials addressing these issues inevitably do not go far enough. There are also exemptions in operation for attendance, (also known as ‘Grandfather rights’) meaning it is not a given that everyone will complete HELM courses. The way HELM is delivered varies between education bodies, which means course content can differ depending on who is delivering it. Additionally, the International Chamber of Shipping (2018) reports that approximately 53% of seafarers are ratings and therefore will not undertake the HELM courses. This means that unless a particular company chooses to engage in management and leadership education, there are minimal and inconsistent industry standards to support mentors, leaders and managers.

*“... we do HELM (O) which is what, two days, three days and it’s not enough to then put you on a ship in charge of people. Especially when you’ve got people qualifying at sixteen; it’s not enough to prepare people to do it and people don’t understand the importance of it.”*

(Interview 6)

Only 42% of E&C participants reported being taught any of the subjects mentioned in Table 7 prior to going to sea. The Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities (STCW PSSR) course is the only other basic mandatory course that offers limited information on the subjects noted in Table 7. However, the content of this course is often over-loaded, particularly

within the tight teaching time frame. The shortcomings of HELM and STCW PSSR again draw attention to the increasingly pressured role of mentoring and the support that needs to be available to help mentors should they need it. The following quote sums this up:

*“I actually feel there could be so much more support for the leaders themselves, you know it could be the captain as far as like, mental health, physical health, being able to be good leaders I think it’s a really tough job, and there is not the support for it”*

(Interview 11)

## Gender

The recent panel discussion at the IMO on ‘Empowering Women in the Maritime Community’<sup>5</sup> (May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019) drew attention to the importance of mentoring and its role in supporting women at sea and within other areas of the industry. The same topic is also IMO’s theme for 2019 (IMO, 2019a), which aims to raise awareness of women in maritime and help improve job attractiveness and retention of women within the industry. The value of mentoring, particularly for minorities at sea (for both women and men), was also demonstrated in the GEM study (2016). This underlined the importance of having role models and support at sea through mentoring, to help combat feelings of isolation and to provide a supportive ‘go to’ knowledgeable person to contact as new experiences and skills are being developed.

This research showed that female participants have broadly encountered similar issues with management and leadership as male participants. Mentoring was described as a support tool which assisted all stages of career development. However, with only 3% of officers being women in the Merchant Navy, feedback from the research showed that there were limited female role models available, particularly outside of those working on passenger vessels. Where mentoring support was available, it made a positive difference to the lives of women at sea, as the quotes below demonstrate.

*“ .... I remember being in the classroom and looking at the photos on the wall of previous students. And she was the only woman on that wall, and even just seeing that photo of another woman doing it, it made me feel like, ‘Okay I can do this’, someone else has done this before, and I think if we can offer minorities that connection with someone who has done it before, it’s invaluable.”*

(Interview 11)

*“... he was fantastic because ..... he provided me, like the pastoral side of mentoring as well as the experience. So he could give me his opinion and he could tell me what the reality is ...”*

(Interview 5)

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<sup>5</sup> Hosted by IMO together with BIMCO, International Chamber of Shipping, INTERTANKO and WISTA.

Unconscious bias was highlighted in the research, particularly in relation to the language used on board.

*“Unconscious bias I think is rampant throughout the shipping industry”*

(Interview 14)

Male participants discussed ‘a huge gender bias’ which some felt still existed within the industry and that ego had a large part to play in terms of leadership and management skills (Interview 18)

*“there is so much ego involved. I mean like a cadet talking to the Captain, I’m the Captain, you’re a cadet, how dare you talk to me.”*

(Interview 18)

*“I’ve got a bit of a problem because one of them is female so I’ve got to find a cabin for her”*

(Interview 14)

Research responses suggest that education, cultural intelligence, mentoring support and information are key areas for improvement.

## Human resources

To consider whether mentoring support is required for career or personal development, assessment is required to establish who might benefit from further education and who might be suitable for development. This research asked what assessment was in place to measure this.

The management of human resources was a main theme that arose from both the surveys and interviews and is demonstrated in Figure 24.0. This included the way that cadets were resourced, communication between training schools, sponsorship companies and shipping company management and how cadets were then managed regarding contracts, appraisals and their overall understanding of the industry. It is suggested that the management practice within human resources is integral to the experience felt by cadets and employees. This was discussed in the data findings, particularly in view of the lack of understanding between ship and shore operations’ management leading to inconsistent communication and support networks available.

*“Like with the HR Department. We just know they don’t get it. They don’t get us. So that makes it difficult then to, say, approach them if I had, you know, if I was having a like a personal wellbeing problem. I wouldn’t really feel comfortable approaching them because I don’t think they speak my language. They wouldn’t understand the context of my complaint if I had a complaint with a colleague. They’re completely separate from our context.”*

(Interview 16)

Unequal treatment of staff regarding contracts and appraisals was discussed and demonstrated in Table 6 where the focus and value was placed on officers and permanent employees, echoing the hierarchal nature of the industry.

E&M survey: Do you have an appraisal system in place for on board staff to identify training requirements and/or personal development?						
	Permanent crew	Seasonal crew	Per voyage	Temporary crew	No appraisal system	No answer
■ E&M participants	53%	11%	29%	15%	12%	14%

Table 6: E&M survey - On board staff appraisal systems

Using Wightlink as an example in ‘Best Practice’ for a formal application of a mentoring scheme, they demonstrate the need to assess and measure (benchmark) where improvement is required so mentoring can be utilised and targeted effectively. Informal mentoring remains a valuable tool; however, as the literature suggests, this may mean that many individuals could fall through the net with their potential barely reached or maximised. If it is considered that value enhances performance, then Table 8 (how likely are you to leave your current position) would suggest that the industry is not optimising its potential.

*“I mean the culture difference would be, like if you work in a UK office, you expect certain rights and then you go on board a ship with different nationalities with different backgrounds and cultural traditions and their different expectations and you realise that not everyone’s the same as the UK office or an American office or a Canadian office”*

(Interview 6)

It is also noted that appraising staff on board is not the simplest of tasks given the environment, shift patterns and trip lengths for example. However, it is an area that requires soft skills development and logistical planning and effort on behalf of human resources advancement.

There are further comments that new generations do not view careers with longevity. However, with business practice largely focussing on short-term, multi-functionality and flexibility, the industry has arguably created a norm for the younger generations.

## Value and well-being

The way people perceive whether they are valued can make a distinct impression on their well being. When personnel agree to a work contract, they will create a perception of the job expectations. These can include working conditions and support from leadership and management on board and ashore. If these expectations are not met then there can be a breakdown of psychological trust between employer and employee. This can have significant

influence over morale, motivation and productivity, with implications for poor safety outcomes.

*“.... actually, command and control isn’t necessarily leadership”*

(Interview 12)

If support or effective leadership and management is not in place, the daily stresses of life at sea (such as detachment from family and friends, fatigue and poor communication links) can compound the situation. In terms of mentoring and direct support to individuals, these elements are likely to put further pressure on a mentor to ‘bridge the gap’.

The shipping industry consists of people from a wide range of cultures and nationalities, from socio-economic backgrounds and varying personal circumstance. Social pressures felt by individuals will differ; as a result, human reactions, accumulative stressors and coping abilities are likely to vary depending on what social pressures are being experienced. Therefore, human resource management, and leadership and management of teams play a vital part in the well-being crew and have a strong influence over safe outcomes.

*“Unfortunately, the time I’ve been in the merchant navy I’ve seen... we’ve had at least two suicides .... and some of it is because they’ve got no-one to go to. They’ve got to that point where they can’t even go speak to anyone on board, they can’t contact home and I just think there is a big gap there.”*

(Interview 6)

Table 7 demonstrates that on average just 55% of employees and cadets felt supported by their shipping company. However, there is a significant difference noted for Filipino participants who appear to feel particularly positive about their employment. This could be a cultural response. During interviews it would appear that the Filipino respondents may have experienced a very different type of employment and learning culture from other nationalities. Filipino respondents indicated that they experienced mainly group mentoring with a focus on skill competence.

	Not supported	Neutral	Supported
■ Average	19%	26%	55%
■ Female	20%	42%	38%
■ ROW	24%	21%	55%
■ Filipino	2%	7%	91%
■ Brit/Irish 26-40 years old	20%	32%	48%
■ British/Irish	27%	30%	43%

Table 7: E&C survey - How supported by the shipping company did you feel?

Interviews supported the survey results in Table 7 with comments based around a lack of shore communication, low feedback and low levels of understanding. Experience of on shore management was described to be ‘hit and miss’ and dependent on the people within the department and their understanding of the job. Several reported that those managing them on shore ‘did not get it’ and often brushed difficulties aside (Interview 5 and 16).

A ‘SILO’ mentality, referring to a reluctance to share information between departments (Businessdictionary, 2019), is often considered to be detrimental to effective business. The research highlights working in SILOs as an issue and discusses how easy it is for a ‘them and us’ attitude to develop when working within your own area without being able to appreciate the ‘bigger picture’. A lack of shared experience affects life on board, impacting on safety and well-being. This demonstrates the value of sharing experience and experiential knowledge and highlights another role for mentoring. Increasing reflective practice and the promotion of good communication will assist with this.

*“The feedback I get from the captains is that a lot of the people in the office they are not mariners, they don’t really understand what is happening, and the environment”*

(Interview 11)

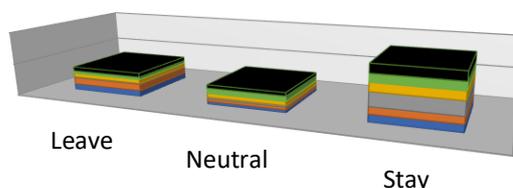
The research demographics indicated that 76% of the E&C participants were aged between 16-40 years old. Statistics indicated in Tables 9, 10 and 11 show potential for concern within the industry where relatively high levels of participants feel insecure, discontented or unsupported. As the highest age group reporting male suicide in the UK is 45-49 years (Samaritans, 2018) attention should be focused lower age groups where issues may be building up. Although there do not appear to be any accurate suicide figures for the shipping industry, mental health is currently a major topic of global conversation. The World Health Organisation report that “79% of suicides occurred in low and middle-income countries” (World Health Organisation, 2016). Although only referring to the UK, the Samaritans also report that suicide and poor mental health arise from inequality (Samaritans, 2018).

The current focus on mental health is also recognised within the shipping industry. Mentoring can support personal resilience and is a tool that should be more widely used throughout the industry and particularly at sea to help individuals learn their trade and assist their personal development.

## Retention

The research asked how mentoring and learning support could aid retention of seafarers. The survey results suggest that there are fundamental improvements required to address concerns regarding job security and job availability. Table 8 demonstrates a fairly high appetite for change within the job market, particularly among the British and Irish respondents. The Filipino respondents were the most satisfied with their current jobs. The statistics are also likely to reflect the fluidity of most seafarers’ contracts.

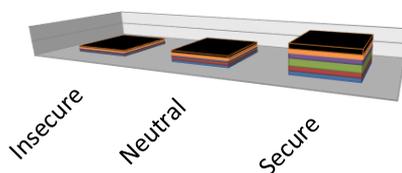
### E&C survey: How likely are you to leave your current position in the next 24 months?



	Leave	Neutral	Stay
■ Average	25%	20%	55%
■ Female	17%	33%	50%
■ ROW	24%	24%	52%
■ Filipino	6%	10%	84%
■ Brit/Irish 26-40 years old	41%	16%	43%
■ British/Irish	37%	17%	46%

Table 8: E&C survey - How likely are you to leave your current position?

### E&C survey: How secure do you feel in your current employment?



	Insecure	Neutral	Secure
■ Average	14%	25%	61%
■ Female	17%	33%	50%
■ ROW	20%	23%	57%
■ Filipino	2%	7%	91%
■ Brit/Irish 26-40 years old	12%	31%	57%
■ British/Irish	18%	31%	51%

Table 9: E&C survey - How secure do you feel in your current employment?

Table 8 and Table 9 show that there were concerns about job security. Some comments related to competing in the global job market and the terms and conditions of employment that may worsen as a result. The lack of a level playing field in the employment market was mentioned as was the variation in competence and leadership standards. The quotes below summarise these concerns:

*“The influx of cheap international labour into the market place; it’s squeezing the job market in a ridiculous manner right now”*

(E&C 255)

*“Competing for jobs on a global scale with differing standards of competence”*

(E&C 213)

Research demonstrated a lack of understanding as to why there appeared to be low levels of assistance for future employment from the UK-based training companies, sponsorship companies and shipping companies, especially given the recruitment drives to employ British cadets. It was suggested that the motivation from training and sponsorship companies was based mainly on profit; filling course places was sufficient but little and inconsistent investment appeared to be made in the support network surrounding the training process. It was suggested that motivation from shipping companies within the training process was simply a business interest in tonnage tax relief. It was also reported that cadet places were over-subscribed on purpose to meet with historic government policy initiated by John Prescott (BBC News, 1999 and Interview 2).

*“Tonnage tax companies only interested in tax rebate”*

(E&C 202)

*“My current company have made it clear that they are sponsoring my cadetship purely to avail of UK tonnage tax schemes. There is no job waiting for me once I am finished here.”*

(E&C 255)

SMarT Plus has been announced, doubling UK government funding with the aim of increasing cadets from 750 to 1200 per year and also supporting the Year in Engineering. SMarT Plus officers are also guaranteed a further 12 months sea time enabling them to progress towards their second CoC (Gov.UK, 2018). This addresses some concerns raised in the research but it leaves open the questions of what the drivers are, with repeated concerns raised regarding job availability and security for British crew.

*“There’s nothing to improve on the recruitment side because we are over-recruiting”*

(Interview 2)

*“We get nearly double out of our training plan because the government has set it up in order to get the benefits of tonnage tax so you over train. So, you actually get people, cadets coming out of their cadetship, over 50% will never serve as a ship board officer because there are no jobs for them”*

(Interview 2)

This suggests that mentoring should be included in the support mechanism to help strengthen theoretical training. However, there appears to be fundamental flaws in the management practices within the industry which affect retention and attraction. Mentoring has the capacity to increase learning aptitude and to help support gaps in development but

should not be considered the only solution or a substitute for industry improvement in this area.

## Transitioning ashore

Mentoring can provide a reciprocal arrangement between those transitioning ashore who could benefit from mentoring and support within shore-based employment, and for those in the office who can learn from people with sea time experience. This type of mentoring arrangement would help to widen understanding of sea and shore perspectives and in doing so, bolster organisational resilience and sustainability.

## Financial influences

Financial investment and areas where savings are made, should be examined in relation to mentoring. The research indicates that shipping companies should commit greater financial investment towards the development of the people they employ, allowing them to feel valued within a company. Compliance to MLC (2006b) Regulation 2.8, career and skill development and opportunities for seafarers' employment, implies that opportunities for seafarer development should be available across the industry in order to *“provide the maritime sector with a stable and competent workforce.”*

Investment in staff has positive implications for retention within the industry. Crew stability promotes this investment in people and sees it pay back over time in terms of reduction in recruitment, shorter hand-over times, and the greater sense of well being and ownership that crew feel when valued. Mentoring, supporting training and personal development, should be part of the investment made by shipping companies, and is particularly beneficial within a stable crew environment (Pike *et. Al*, 2019).

Table 10 shows that an average of 50% of respondents had not received support towards career advancement from their shipping company. This indicates a need for much greater focus on the investment that should be made in seafarers, who ultimately influence the safety outcomes of the vessel operations.

**E & C Survey: Since completing your training, have you been offered any further support for career advancement from the shipping company?**

	Yes	No	No answer
■ Average	47%	50%	3%
■ Female	35%	65%	0%
■ ROW	52%	48%	0%
■ Filipino	61%	29%	10%
■ Brit/Irish 26-40 years old	46%	50%	4%
■ British/Irish	40%	57%	3%

Table 10: E&C survey - Support for career advancement after training?

**E & M Survey: Other than STCW training what other type of training is supported within your organisation?**

	Employers & Managers
■ No answer	17%
■ None	6%
■ Safety	70%
■ Vocational training (other)	13%
■ Career advancement	26%
■ Catering/Steward/Internal	11%
■ Continuous Professional Development (internal support)	36%
■ Rating to Certificate of Competence	21%
■ Sponsored Cadetship (external)	24%
■ Merit based sponsorship (internal)	8%
■ Leadership and Management	51%

Table 11: E&M survey What other training is supported beyond STCW?

Employers and Managers were asked what training they invest in beyond STCW to ensure quality and advancement for their employees. Table 11 identifies low investment in this area other than mandatory requirements; the focus appears to be on safety and leadership and management, which seems positive, although it is not certain from the survey results whether this amounts to additional leadership and management training.

Moreover, low levels of internal investment do not go unnoticed by existing crew. Personal development is important, and when the opportunities to progress are not provided it can affect morale. This can impact on motivation and ultimately industry retention; crew

become more likely to seek employment with different shipping companies or revert to other industries who do offer opportunity to develop and progress, thus perpetuating a need for further training and supervision on board. Reduced experience at sea has safety implications with a greater risk of incidents and accidents. A higher crew turnover suggests lower team cohesion and continuity, both of which are likely to increase costs rather than reduce them.

*“The margins are so tight there isn't that little bit more, essentially to be humane”*

(Interview 17)

Mentoring works best as a long-term investment. However, there is a more immediate ‘payback’ in terms of safety and well-being improvements to those being mentored. These benefits are ultimately reflected in better industry retention.

## Overview of mentoring roles

As this report has shown, the role of mentoring can be very diverse and to some extent is dependent on the mentor’s own skills and experience. Figure 17 shows the various areas of the industry and how they may affect the seafarer. In addition, the diagram demonstrates where mentoring has a role in supporting deficiencies within the industry, particularly in the areas of resource management and well-being.

Figure 17 shows an overview of ship and shore activity and how industry outcomes are influenced by:

1. Context & external factors - influencing industry behaviour.
2. Human resources - crew attainment, application and distribution.
3. Management strategies - onshore, operation and crew management.
4. Staff and crew well-being - how management strategies can affect occupational health.
5. Outcomes - for the industry.

The lower arrow reveals there are driving forces that set the **context** and are the roots of subsequent behaviour. The **mechanisms** within the central section of the industry manage the drivers. Then, as a consequence of the drivers and **mechanisms** in play, the industry **outcomes** are produced. It is acknowledged that the elements within the description boxes in Figure 17 could easily be extended and adapted according to different industry perspectives.

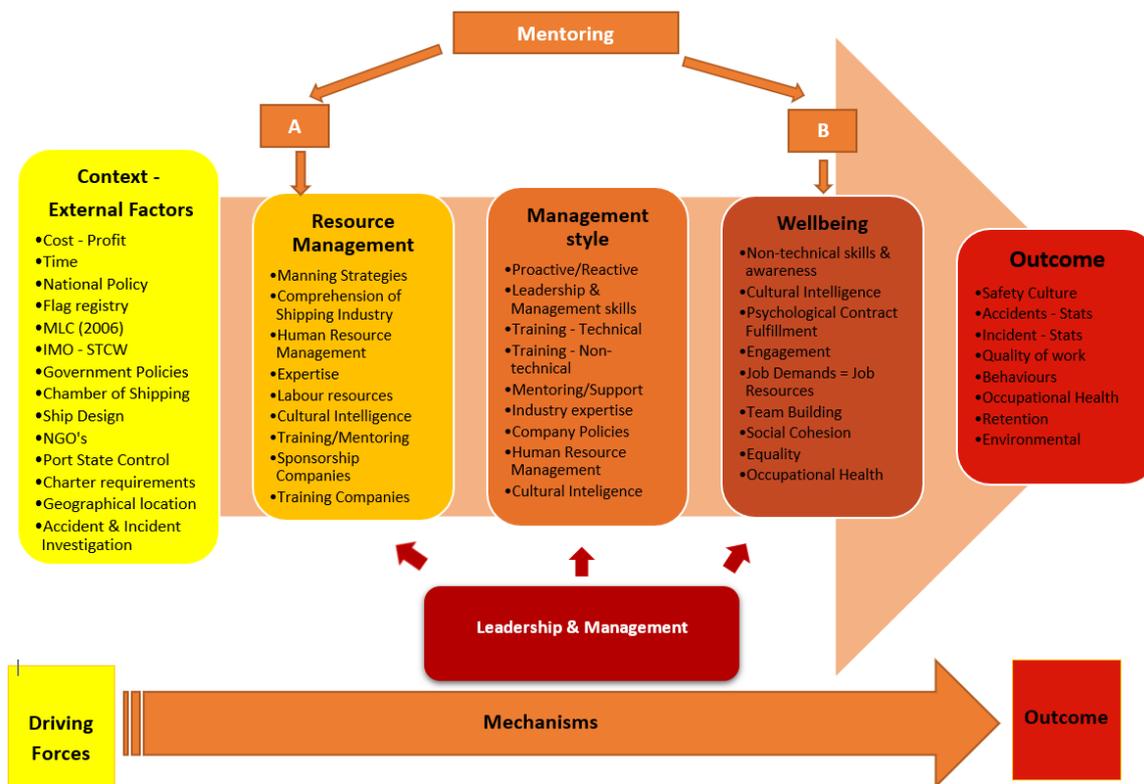


Figure 17: Industry progression diagram

Figure 17 indicates where strong leadership and management is required and where mentoring can help support seafarers and benefit overall outcomes within the industry. The diagram also points to where mentoring can assist in areas such as resource management and well-being (Roles A and B) and how these in turn impact outcomes such as safety and finance. It also shows the strong relationship of leadership and management in these areas and demonstrates the difference these skills can have on the outcomes.

### Mentoring role A

Mentoring role A (Figure 18), represents weaknesses and inconsistencies surrounding accurate communication between sponsorship, training and shipping companies. This can impact on the experience of cadets. Mentoring can help support cadets where issues are being caused by inconsistent communication and mentors can share their own experiences to help them learn on the job and be there to see them through their new experiences on board.

Although it is noted that a great deal of work goes into the production of Cadet Record Books (CRB) between IMO and the Merchant Navy Training Board, the research suggests that there are inconsistencies in its delivery and with its application between operators. Different global standards of certification and practice are also noted between operators and individuals who do not appear to be representing the shipping industry to its best advantage. This is potentially compounded by industry imbalance for training in technical areas over training in non-technical skills, as highlighted in the research.

The research showed that mentoring can address the following:

- The provision of consistent technical and psychological support for new seafarers during the initial stages of learning about seafaring.
- The provision on board providing training support.
- The offer of encouragement, motivation, industry experience, career development advice and networking opportunities.
- The provision of the building blocks to help develop human resilience by equipping individuals with experience, confidence and someone to contact without fear of reprisal (Interviews 4, 10, 7).



Figure 18: Mentoring role A

### Mentoring role B

Mentoring Role B (Figure 19) is concerned with the imbalance between technical and non-technical skills on board and ashore. Mentoring can help crew whose skills development may be lacking and who require guidance and a role model to allow them to develop their skills. It acknowledges an 'unlevel playing field' which may apply to human resource management and training. Again, mentors can make a difference to an individual's development, and even a little mentoring every so often, as promoted by Le Goubin (2012), can help.

The Nautical Institute's initiative 'the ten minute mentoring' (Le Goubin, 2012) describes mentoring as a cost-less resource which:

- encourages all seafarers to engage informally in sharing experiential knowledge to enhance team and individual performances.
- recognises the need for masters and officers to take charge of their teams in terms of communication, leadership and skill development.
- recognises the need for leaders to promote social inter-action on board to achieve team cohesion.
- acknowledges that time, on and off-duty, is a precious commodity and should not be inhibited.
- acknowledges the need for communication in one language on board in common areas to encourage inclusion, team cohesion and safe practice.

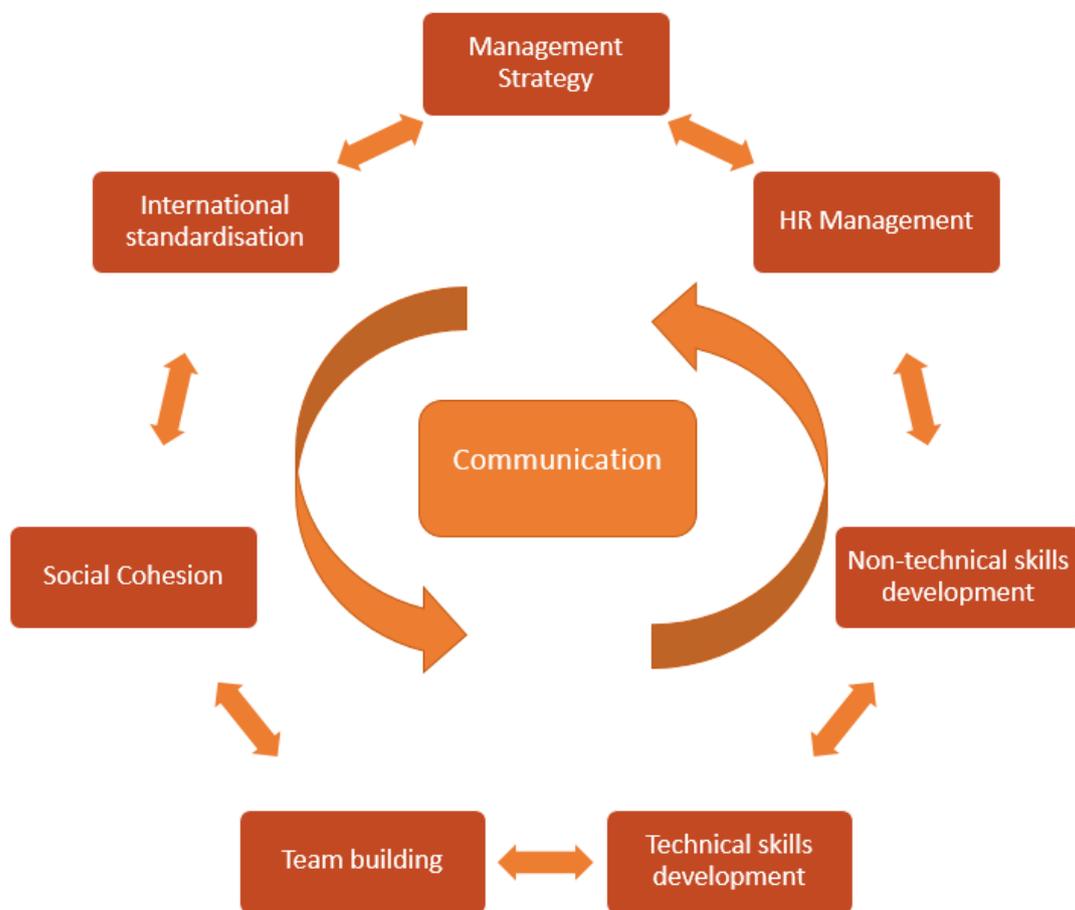


Figure 19: Mentoring role B

## Findings of best practice

Where mentoring schemes or management and leadership training have been implemented successfully, organisations have been able to reduce expenditure related to safety, health, well-being and staff turnover. Cost savings where, for instance, fewer off-hire and vessel damage instances occur, can be made. Mentoring can be a long-term investment which ideally works best within a stable crew environment where mentor and mentee relationships have time to develop and flourish.

In all cases, the research suggests that top-down vision and clear leadership were key to the success of mentoring initiatives, supported by a company culture which strives to strengthen collaborative and long-term approaches.

Successful mentoring initiatives are continually trying to improve, but have, nevertheless provided better resilience and outcomes for their organisation. They work best in conjunction with good training and a long-term outlook on skills and personal development.

## Examples of company best practice

This section describes examples of best practice being implemented within companies and at an industry level. These examples were selected based on detail provided from the research in terms of the mentoring initiative's structure, clear plan of intent and implementation, and measured outcomes.

### Princess Cruises

Princess Cruises recognised that new employees were coming on board with varying levels of practical skills. Informal and formal schemes are applied with operational and non-operational supervision to address the varying skills' levels and ensure crew quality is maintained. The company training is conducted under strict guidance and with approval from department heads on board.

Ratings with potential for promotion are supported through a 'Pipeline' scheme to ensure they are equipped with leadership and management skills prior to taking up a new role. The company recognises the importance of leadership and management and the influence this has on the teams on board. The 'David Marquet'<sup>6</sup> style of leadership is applied to encourage empowerment and team cohesion.

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<sup>6</sup> David Marquet describes a shift in leadership styles, moving from 'I command, you follow' to an 'intent (or empowering) based environment'. Teaching techniques that encourage everyone to engage at their optimum capacity, 'creating a place where people are happier and healthier'. [www.davidmarquet.com](http://www.davidmarquet.com)

## Seaspan

Seaspan have a 'Cadet to Command' programme in place for their seafarers which is promoted through their Career Development Initiative (CDI). This supports a learning culture that nurtures new employees through their journey from cadet to captain. Seaspan also recognise that leadership and management plays a large part in the success of the teams on board and ashore and acknowledge that non-technical skills are as important as technical competence.

## The Honourable Company of Master Mariners (HCMM) Mentoring Scheme

HCMM offers a formal mentoring scheme to its members throughout the various stages of their career. The scheme was originally set up to improve retention within the industry and support new seafarers through to becoming a Master. Individuals are paired with experienced members who can offer 'a wealth of maritime seafaring knowledge' (HCMM, 2019) as well as support, encouragement and advice. This is primarily a long-distance mentor/mentee relationship but provides the invaluable opportunity to share experiences and demonstrate reflective practice outside of the working environment. This initiative is a long-term service that allows relationships and trust to build over time and helps the mentee to develop a foundation for resilience and confidence, both personally and professionally. There is no cost for this service for deck cadets, although engineering cadets must first join as member of the company to benefit from the mentoring programme.

## Oil and gas industry

Recognising that safety is paramount within this sector, short sea programmes and psychometric testing are in place within the oil and gas industry. The short sea programmes provide supervision where there are high staff turnover, language issues and/or environments that are safety critical. Individuals go through structured competency tests before being allowed to work unsupervised.

## Wightlink

Wightlink have initiated a programme called 'Bridging the Gap'. This recognises that organisational performance is dependent on the quality of leadership and management and ensures objective results to assess its ship and shore staff. Several days of performance analysis identify areas for improvement for individuals across all departments within the company. A further mentoring initiative will then work on areas identified for improvement by the performance analysis, with individuals. This is intended to be a long-term plan to strengthen organisational resilience and overall performance outcomes.

## Key elements of best practice

This section identifies the best set of circumstances for implementing mentoring and offers specific recommendations for effective practice. These practices could apply to establishing or further developing mentoring within most companies.

1. Informal mentoring and sharing experiential knowledge with colleagues should be a culture that is encouraged. Even short bursts of time given to mentoring can mean that there is better understanding of a task or perspective.
2. Formal and informal mentoring systems that run simultaneously can offer the best advantage to those in the earlier stages of their career. As a shipping company, it is best to look at the elements of mentoring that you can provide and start there. Mentoring programmes can be developed over time.
3. Good communication of a company's training policy and available mentoring schemes are imperative to consistently and effectively raise awareness for all who could benefit from participating in them.
4. Shared experience and reflective practice needs to be encouraged at every opportunity in order to increase learning opportunities.
5. Becoming a mentor should always be voluntary. Companies should identify those in their organisation who would be willing to be mentors and who have the right aptitude for this work. Potential mentors may be willing to participate with guidance and encouragement to do so.
6. Mentoring should be free for those participating in it, to provide equality and equal opportunity.
7. Before providing formal mentoring, mentors should always be fully briefed on the company's expectations and the mentoring role. Support should be available for mentors.
8. Long distance mentoring can help manage some of the barriers to establishing mentoring initiatives, such as smaller crew sizes, time deficiencies and potential skills or experience gaps. Long distance mentoring then opens up a range of mentoring support which can be made available to all ranks on board and for those working ashore.
9. Mentoring initiatives should ideally provide long-term and consistent support for the personal and professional development of an individual in order to provide sustainable outcomes in safety, well-being and finance.
10. Mentoring should be available to support career development for all roles and ranks at sea and onshore. The investment of time in people development increases productivity and effectiveness.

## Conclusions

The following conclusions have been made based on the research findings:

1. All forms of mentoring can provide benefits which assist with the personal development of an individual and help to improve safety, well-being and financial outcomes.
2. There is a mixed interpretation of the term mentoring within the industry which appears to be dependent on business objectives or an individual's viewpoint. This means that there is lack of consistency for companies developing and implementing their mentoring schemes.
3. Mentors can be required to undertake very varied support roles depending on the mentees' background, training, mental health and social skills. This increases the pressure of undertaking this role and highlights the need for mentors to be supported themselves.
4. Informal, unstructured or spontaneous mentoring in the industry is evident and more prolific than formal mentoring. It is harder to quantify and formally assess these initiatives, although evidence in this research shows that it can have a profound and direct beneficial effect on individual's well-being, training and development, and indirectly benefits safety and retention within the industry.
5. Technical skills are given more emphasis than non-technical skills within the industry, both at sea and on shore. Mentoring can positively impact on an individuals' technical and non-technical abilities and improve the balance in this area.
6. Mentoring works best when good leadership and management are in place as this has a significant impact on the lives of seafarers and shore staff, emphasising the need for continual training in these areas.
7. Inconsistent and poor communication of some mentoring schemes within companies, can lead to confusion about what support is available.
8. The research highlighted fewer available mentoring schemes for engineers and electro-technical staff compared to most of those working towards deck qualifications.
9. Mentoring can have a positive impact on attracting new recruits into the industry and retaining staff.
10. Those who have experienced the benefits of mentoring, are more likely to become a mentor. This is part of the cyclical nature of a developing mentoring culture.
11. Reducing high staff turn-over through maintaining stable crews (rather than those leaving the vessel after one voyage) offers opportunity to develop stronger mentoring relationships, build trust and extend support networks.
12. To ensure full value is realised from training, it should be supported with mentoring to maintain and further develop skills and knowledge.
13. Mentoring is a tool that can greatly support individuals working within the shipping industry, but its success is also influenced by internal and external industry elements such as legislation, market forces, training and human resources.

## Recommendations

Further to these conclusions, the research team makes the following recommendations:

1. The shipping industry should agree on a working definition of the term mentoring and the explicit roles of the mentor and mentee. This would help to manage expectations and ensure greater consistency in the delivery of mentoring and the ability to measure its success.
2. Shipping companies should encourage their sea staff to mentor by showing them how this can be achieved and allowing time for it. This would help to embed the cyclical nature of mentoring culture within most company structures.
3. If mentoring is not readily available on board, sponsorship and shipping companies should think about sending cadets in pairs for their sea time. This would provide the opportunity for peer mentoring and help decrease the potential to feel isolated.
4. Informal mentoring and sharing experiential knowledge and reflective practice is essential for good skills' development and is a culture that should be encouraged. Even short bursts of time given to this can provide better understanding of the details of a task. This is applicable to sea and shore staff alike.
5. Where small, minimum crew numbers exist, consideration should be given to an additional and designated resource to facilitate mentoring.
6. On-going leadership and management training is recommended to help achieve better balance between technical and non-technical skills, allowing mentoring to have maximum impact.
7. Senior officers should undergo continuous management and leadership training, recognising that this has significant impact on crew well-being and safety culture on board.
8. The outcomes of Wightlink's new mentoring programme should be monitored to enable the industry to learn from their experience and share resulting best practice.
9. As there are fewer mentoring schemes for engineers and electro-technical compared to most of those working towards deck qualifications, and recognising that engineers are in short supply globally, it is recommended that a focused investigation into mentoring for this group would have wider industry and potentially cross-industry impact.
10. To provide a greater global understanding of mentoring, further research should be considered that would examine practice in other cultures beyond Britain and the Philippines; seafaring nations such as China and India could be of particular interest.

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