



RHUMB LINES

Straight Lines to Navigate By



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Retention Call To Action – Brilliant on the Basics

“Cultural fit is, as with any organization, crucial ... at Microsoft, being brilliant at the basics is a given.”

– Paul Hart, Microsoft Director of Finance and Administration

Starting on the first day of a Sailor’s career, personal interaction between the entire chain of command and each Sailor is critical to meeting retention goals and caring for the Navy’s most important asset – our people. Sailors are talented, hard-working and well-trained; lack of leadership engagement in their careers should not be the primary reason Sailors leave Naval service.

The basics of retention for every command

Every successful career is built on a foundation of six activities, outlined in [NAVADMIN 043/08](#):

- Sponsorship/First 72 hours: Proactive interaction with a Sailor with a sponsor and ombudsman can solve many issues for the Sailor and family even before arrival aboard, creating a smooth transition. Detaching commands must ensure Sailors have positive contact with the new command before departure.
- Indoctrination: An effective indoctrination program sends a strong, positive signal that the command values the Sailor’s presence, skills, and talent and the command has a plan to integrate them into the team. Requirements and best practices can be found in [OPNAVINST 1740](#).
- Career Development Boards (CDBs): Involvement primarily by the Command Master Chief, the Chief’s Mess and Command Career Counselor, is important to every Sailor’s career development. CDBs are required within 30 days of reporting aboard, and again at six and 12 months. RC Sailors must have a CDB prior to completion of their third drill weekend ([NAVADMIN 227/07](#) and [OPNAVINST 1040.11B](#)).
- Ombudsman program: Ombudsmen disseminate information up and down the chain of command. They can also provide referrals and are instrumental in resolving family issues before the issues require extensive command attention.
- Mentorship: As of December 2007, only 60% of all enlisted Sailors and 56% of all officers had a mentor. Leadership should be proactive in mentoring and sharing their experience with junior Sailors and peers.
- Recognition: The end of a tour should not be the only time a Sailor is recognized. Recognition can be creative, should be public and can include mid-tour awards, letters of commendation and appreciation, and highlighting accomplishments in command publications or other public venues.

Upcoming retention tools for command leadership

In the next few months, Chief of Naval Personnel will release updated guidance on Indoctrination, Sponsorship and Mentorship, a “Brilliant on the Basics” reference package and links to a “First 72 Hours” video.

Key Messages

- The six basics of retention are sponsorship/first 72 hours, indoctrination, CDBs, an ombudsman program, mentorship and recognition.
- The Navy’s goal is to be a Top 50 employer, on par with any company in the civilian world.
- The change in demographics demands that we diligently work to retain a talented, diverse workforce.
- Being brilliant on the basics will help retention in all areas from diversity to our most critical ratings.

Facts & Figures

- For Zone A Sailors leaving Naval service, 2 of the top 3 reasons why they left were “morale in your unit” and “command climate.”
- Only 57% of Sailors are satisfied with the support the Navy has provided to them and their family.
- The 2008 National Navy Counselors Association Symposium will be in San Diego, Calif. July 21-25.
- SECNAV’s most recent monthly review included a review of retention numbers and view by diversity group.