**Leading with Stories Outline**

**INFORMATION:** The power of leading through stories

**History Segment:** The Navy in the American Revolution

http://www.doncio.navy.mil/CHIPS/ArticleDetails.aspx?ID=6200

Despite the success of the fledgling Continental Navy during the American Revolution the ending of the war actually brought an end to our nation’s first navy.

A few months after the British defeat at the Battle of Yorktown Oct. 19, 1781, the British Parliament made its first overtures to the United States to begin peace talks the following spring. Nearly a year later, the Confederation Congress issued a proclamation on April 11 in 1783, "declaring the cessation of arms" against Great Britain, which had passed a similar proclamation Feb. 4, 1783.

It was an incredible victory for an upstart nation with no navy against the power of Great Britain and the fleet of the Royal Navy.

From the littorals, lakes, and the sea, to coastal towns from north to the south, the young republic’s hastily pieced-together and inexperienced Continental Navy was mostly made up of private vessels carrying their “Letter of Marque,” which granted privateers the authority to attack foreign ships. Though most of their actions aren’t well known, they played a pivotal role in naval operations and showed the importance and need for vessels to challenge the British and their ships of the line.

On May 14, 1775 in the waters of Buzzard Bay, off the coast of Fairhaven, Mass., one of the first naval battles was fought just 25 days after the Battle of Lexington and Concord. It began what is often considered today a lost chapter of the navy’s history. Aboard sloop Success, commanded by Capt. Nathaniel Pope and Capt. Daniels Egery, a small force of men from the town of Fairhaven captured two British sloops and their crews.

In mid-June moving north we come to the port of Machias, Maine, then part of northern Massachusetts. Local towns were experiencing first hand harassment by the British, so, like in Fairhaven, they took matters into their own hands. Local Capt. Jeremiah O’Brian and an armed crew aboard sloop Unity joined by other ships attacked and captured schooner HMS Margaretta. O’Brian went on to actively engage enemy ships that posed threats to the Massachusetts coast during the war.

That was followed in August when the townspeople of Gloucester, Mass., called upon their militia to capture British seamen attempting to seize a grounded American merchant and then recaptured another merchant schooner.

These first battles sparked a level of confidence among the townspeople and seafaring communities that they could challenge and overcome the British as they seized American merchant ships of commerce and harassed local communities up and down the Eastern seaboard. And it finally convinced the leaders of our developing nation they needed to combat the vulnerability of the coastal seafaring communities to British waterborne assault.

It was Oct. 1775 when the Continental Congress authorized the building our Nation’s first Navy. They selected a commander for the Continental Navy, Esek Hopkins, and commissioned 18 naval officers, established two Marine battalions; even established pay and subsistence standards; authorized prize moneys for the capture and sale of enemy warships; adopted a naval code of discipline drafted by John Adams; and formed an administrative body, the Marine Committee, to give guidance and direction to our new navy.

It was a bold signal by America’s early leaders they were willing to challenge Great Britain on the high seas.

Commodore Hopkins was responsible for one of the early American naval victories when his squadron traveled south to the Bahamas in February 1776. Along with a battalion of Marines, the Hopkins-led squadron launched an amphibious landing on March 3 and raided the British colony of Nassau for military supplies that would benefit the Continental Army.

Another American naval legend, Capt. John Barry, was doing his part protecting merchant ships as they brought supplies into the port cities of Philadelphia and Delaware Bay. In June 1776, as the American brig Nancy, loaded with her cargo of weapons and supplies intended for the Continental Army, moved closer to Cape May, New Jersey, two British ships were seen in pursuit of the brig.

Barry, aboard his frigate Lexington and his companion schooner Wasp, were called to engage the two ships. Heavy fog caused Nancy to sail into the delightfully-named Turtle Gut Inlet. Barry and his men boarded and successfully unloaded her cargo while manning and engaging the British who had heavily damaged the ship.

In a daunting gamble, Barry abandoned the Nancy, lowered her flag but not before leaving 50 pounds of gunpowder wrapped in the mainsail leading to the powder hold below deck. As British closed in, the fuse reached the hold … the explosion could be heard for miles. Barry, his ships and crew safely eluded the British and claimed both the victory and much-needed supplies.

While those battles were mostly in American waters, another legendary Continental Navy captain was making a name for himself a bit closer to the motherland.

Capt. John Paul Jones, as the commanding officer of the sloop of war Ranger, battled the HMS Drake for an hour before claiming victory on April 24, 1778, in the North Channel off Ireland.

Then more than a year later on Sept. 23, 1779, as commanding officer of the 42-gun former merchant ship Bonhomme Richard, Jones uttered his famous cry — “I have not yet begun to fight” — as his crippled ship fought the larger 50-gun HMS Serapis in the waters off Flamborough Head.

Despite his sinking and burning [of the] ship, Jones refused to strike his colors. A well-timed grenade landed near ammunition on Serapis, and its ensuing explosion allowed Jones to get the upper hand and board the British ship upon their surrender. The captain who struck his colors that day was British. The Bonhomme Richard, however, sank the following day.

So what Revolutionary naval battle was the most important? The records and many historians might say it was the Battle of Nassau, the first victory of the newly-formed Continental Navy. That mission brought much-needed ammunition and gunpowder to the American army.

However your examination of history answers that question, it was on this date 232 years ago that, after eight years of skirmishes, smaller battles and outright war – on land and sea, Congress declared hostilities against its former motherland over. A few months later, on Sept. 3, 1783, the signing of the Treaty of Paris by members of the negotiating team brought an end to the American War of Independence. That treaty was ratified by Congress on Jan. 14, 1784.

What the British could not accomplish in war, peace did — the U.S. Navy which was disbanded after the war, leaving the new nation without a Navy until March 27, 1794, when President George Washington signed the Naval Act of 1794 authorizing the construction of six frigates.

**\*\*\*Plug “Ask DGUTS!” segment. dontgiveuptheshippodcast@gmail.com**

**I. Introduction**

A. Attention (Leading with stories is something I’d done for awhile but never recognized until I encountered a mentor of mine that had mastered it. He did it through experiences and Naval history. Others do it through telling stories that relate to the topic or more effectively communicate a point. These stories are wildly successful in a person grasping and retaining the point you are communicating).

B. Motivation (Junior Sailors should recognize the power storytelling in inspiring their charges to follow.)

C. Overview (No one remembers the powerpoint slides. They MAY remember what you said if it was powerful, informative and well articulated. But they WILL remember a STORY. Whether its you using someone else’s story to best articulate the point or relating your own experiences in the form of a story…this is what people REMEMBER.).

**II. Body**

A. Main Point 1 (Colonel Art Athens)

1. Sub-point (SEA) – I had the good fortune to hear Colonel Art Athens, USMC (Retired) speak while attending the Senior Enlisted Academy in Newport, RI. He is currently the Director of the Stockdale Center for Ethical Leadership at the Naval Academy. After hearing his lecture on leading with stories it brought everything full circle. It was something I had done because it made sense, but I didn’t quite understand why it worked or how I could further leverage the concept. I’m going to play a clip from his lecture and will also post the full video on the website but I highly recommend surging him on youtube and watching his lectures.

B. Main Point 2 (Leading with Stories)

1. Sub-point (History) – One of the reasons I care so much about history and heritage, besides that I just think it’s interesting, is the stories! I constantly relate the stories of our Navy to inspire those that follow me. It works especially well when you relate it to something someone has a personal interest in. Such as your rate or your warfare community. I’ve mentioned before that I use the heritage of my rating to stress the importance of what we do for a living. As cooks, we already are fighting an uphill battle. People like to tell us we can’t do things because we’re “just cooks”. So telling them stories about our heroes like William Pinckney, Dorrie Miller and Jacob Wasbie get not just my students inspired, but my staff members as well. Not much of our stories outside of Dorrie Miller are widely known which is another reason they are effective. Take the time to learn your ratings history! It’s SO EASY, it’s important to you and them due to the personal stake and it’s a huge motivator when utilized correctly.

2. Sub-point (Personal Experiences) – This is the most commonly used version of story telling in leadership. But it can also be the key in places that you can’t normally unlock. (Story).

3. Sub-point (Find Stories) – Sometimes the best stories are other people’s stories, fiction, parables, bible verses, mythology, etc. There are SO MANY OPTIONS. Read stories. Listen to them. Relay them. This is how knowledge used to be passed on. We’re programmed to learn this way. It’s how we retain information and relate it most effectively. Think about it. Think about what Colonel Athens said. You’re not going to remember the learning objectives on a powerpoint about nothing. But you’ll never look at train tracks the same way ever again. The power of this medium is limitless because there is no end to the number of stories you can utilize to inspire your charges to follow.

C. Main Point 2 (Direction)

1. The last piece of this for me is ensuring there is a direction and clarity to where you’re going with this. I’m sure many of us have been cornered by someone that simply loves to hear themselves drone on. About anything really. They tell stories that are barely related to anything going on in your shop or life to the point of you zoning out or getting extremely annoyed. So I caution you. Take time to plan where you’re going with this. Make sure the story relates to where you want to go. Each Sailor is in their own unique place. Each one receives information differently. So apply this concept judiciously. Have a plan. Otherwise, you will lose them.

**III. Conclusion**

A. Summary (We talked about…)

1. Leading with stories (Col Athens)…

2. The different types of stories that work, either history, personal experiences or others…

3. Having a sense of direction when using stories to inspire followers…

B. Re-motivation (Junior Sailors should recognize the power storytelling in inspiring their charges to follow.)

C. Closing – Telling stories to get a point across is a concept I love using. Relating a point through this method is something I’ve seen work time and again. When I take the time to explain to them the point and then use a story to provide understanding, you literally SEE the understanding wash over them. You see the clarity in their eyes and the retention happening. I’ve seen the flip side, as I’m sure you have, of briefing a powerpoint presentation and you can see the moment you lose them – about five minutes in, when their face and eyes glaze over. So I implore you to take this risk, go outside your comfort zone (if this is outside it) and try this. Use heritage, use your experiences…inspire your charges. Don’t just tell them what to do. TELL THEM WHY TO DO IT. Inspire them to do it. It’s incredible what can be accomplished when you do.

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