

What Do You Take With You In Your Suitcase?

Tips & Tricks for Maritime Adventurers

Or: How to prepare for your first On The Job Training Onboard

INTRODUCTION 3

1. HOW TO APPLY FOR A CADETSHIP? 3

2. WHAT DO YOU TAKE WITH YOU? 3

3. DO'S AND DON'TS 4

4. POSITIVE WORKING ATTITUDE 6

5. DEALING WITH COLLEAGUES: GIVING FEEDBACK 8

6. DEALING WITH OTHER CULTURES 10

7. HEALTH 13

8. BE YOURSELF 16

9. LEARN MORE? 20

10. CONTACT INFORMATION 21

Rough translation of “Wat neem je mee in je koffer. Tips & trucs voor maritieme avonturiers”

INTRODUCTION

Time has come... you're almost going on onboard! A cadetship may be something you have been looking forward to for a long time. It is also quite exciting. You will put the theory you learned at school into practice onboard a ship or on a project.

During your studies you have already acquired a lot of knowledge about navigation, engines and/or survey technology. So you take a suitcase full of knowledge and skills with you. The technical skills no longer hold any secrets for you. But even if you are no longer in school during your cadetship, you still have a lot to learn. You will discover how you put this all together as a young professional.

What are you good at? What are your weaker sides? On board or on a project it is not only about expertise, but also about how you work together with others. How do you position yourself when you work in a team? This involves 'soft skills' or 'power skills' such as entrepreneurship, creativity and social skills.

Social skills are important to function well on board or on a project. If you want to grow in your career, your personal competencies will be of great importance. During your cadetship you will be given plenty of space to explore your 'skills'.

In the cadetship preparation guest lessons at your school, you have already studied a number of 'power skills'. This booklet gives you additional information. Read it carefully, it can help you to turn your cadetship into a success.

Enjoy!

1. HOW TO APPLY FOR A CADETSHIP?

Finding a cadet position is not always easy. There seem to be fewer On The Job training positions available, especially in economically poorer times. It is helpful if you can find a place through your own network of family and friends. They can also help you with an introduction to a company. When looking for a cadet position, also think of social media, friends of friends, or via-via.

Letter of application

Your application letter is your first business card. Make sure your letter looks neat. Have it read again by someone else before you send it to a company.

Make it personal

Do you find it difficult to write a letter? Then ask yourself why you are applying for this company. Why do you find this company so attractive? If you have an answer to that, you can use it in your letter. A tip: make your letter personal. Tell something about yourself. Finally, state why you think you are the right person for the job.

2. WHAT DO YOU TAKE WITH YOU?

You have found a OTJ training position, that is beautiful! But what do you take with you in your suitcase? That, of course, depends on how long you go and whether you stay on board or on shore. In any case, remember:

- Passport, seaman's book, certificate folder (with a set of copies).
- Inquire whether the company will provide you with working clothes.
- Not too much clothing: casual wear, sportswear, slippers (you wear them in the accommodation) and something neat (for when you go on shore leave).
- Laptop or tablet and a smartphone. Take an old phone with you that allows you to use a local SIM card if you stay longer in the same place.
- Debit card, credit card.
- Important phone numbers.
- Things you like to do in your spare time (reading, watching movies, sports, music).

Do you have an cadetship abroad? If you go by plane, you will receive an itinerary. Keep it to hand at the airport. You might meet all your new 'colleagues' there!

3. DO'S AND DON'TS

There are written and unwritten rules on board a ship or on a project. The latter are nowhere on paper, but they are taken into account in practice. Handy if you know in advance what is expected of you. The most important unwritten rules to keep in mind:

1. Respect the hierarchy (ranking) on a ship and on a project. Your supervisor really is the boss!
2. Be pro-active and take initiative
3. Introduce yourself to everyone
4. Meet your cadet supervisor on board as soon as possible. Stay in touch with each other.
5. Always be on time.
6. Think when you do a boring job: what can I learn from this?
7. Making mistakes is allowed.
8. Accept feedback, it's meant to get you started.
9. Be sociable and think of others.
10. Be honest. Crewmembers really hate liars.
11. Be reliable: keep your promises.
12. Consistently keep your to-do book.
13. Feel free to approach your supervisor if you think you can or want to do more because you feel ready for it (without the pretense of knowing everything already).
14. If you are a tough guy/girl at night... be a tough guy/girl in the morning!
15. Try to be kind to everyone. Keep in mind that sometimes older colleagues don't appreciate it when you're popular or brash.
16. Don't let problems pile up. They don't go away on their own. Talk about it with your internship supervisor.
17. Keep your cabin or apartment clean.
18. Be flexible and dare to take a punch.
19. Keep in touch with home, but not too much!
20. Homesickness usually goes away on its own. Bad days are part of it.
21. Sense of humor is appreciated.
22. On many vessels no shoes or work clothes are allowed to be worn in the accommodation
23. Don't try to pretend to be better than your fellow intern(s) on board or on the project.
24. At the second internship: never say that you were allowed to do something at the previous internship, which is not allowed now. They do it this way on one ship and that way on another. You are still a student.

These unwritten rules have been suggested by various crew members and cadet supervisors of various ships.

4. POSITIVE WORKING ATTITUDE

As an cadet, you are a student and colleague at the same time. With a positive working attitude you make it easy for yourself and your colleagues. But how exactly do you do that? A few tips.

A positive attitude to work revolves around: teamwork, showing initiative, working accurately and problem-solving, giving and receiving feedback, dealing with other cultures and the ability to look critically at yourself (reflection).

Team player

At school you sometimes work together with other students on a project. Together you go for the best result, everyone contributes something. It turns out: on board or on a project you do this in the same way! It is not about you, but about keeping the ship running together or making a project succeed together.

It is therefore important that you act as a 'team player'. Important for a well-functioning team is: listening carefully to each other, working together and keeping the common interest or goal in mind. This also includes small jobs. Everyone contributes to the bigger picture, so do you.

Show initiative

As a cadet you don't always have to wait until you are told what to do. You can also take the initiative yourself. For instance:

- By cleaning up something you see laying around.
- Make a proposal for an assignment that you would like to carry out.
- Summarize whether you have understood the assignment correctly.
- Request information about how something works exactly.
- And by showing interest in colleagues.

Of course you have to choose the right moment. If it's really busy, it might not be convenient. Then it is better to ask a colleague something at a later stage.

Work accurately

At school you might get away with a sloppy paper or a half-finished assignment. However, that's not how it works on board or on a project. Precise work, from start to finish, is important. The consequences of a small mistake can be huge. Carelessness contributes to unsafe situations.

If you are a slob by nature, it is good to pay extra attention to that. If you are a perfectionist, you also have to be careful: the work has to be done and you don't have all the time in the world. Good is good enough.

Resolving problems

During your cadetship you will learn how to carry out assignments. But you may come across something in practice that may become a problem. There is always something that doesn't work or breaks down. Sometimes the circumstances mean that the work does not go as planned. Then there's only one thing you can do: solve the problem.

You can also try to prevent problems, for example by performing good maintenance or by following the safety measures. If problems occur frequently, you may be able to come up with a solution to prevent them from happening again. You can use your knowledge for that!

During work or conversations during the coffee break, the crew members will regularly test your knowledge. That is part of your cadetship. Thinking out loud about the answer to a question isn't bad either. They do that themselves.

5. DEALING WITH COLLEAGUES: GIVING FEEDBACK

If everything goes well during your cadetship, then there is nothing to worry about. But what do you do if you don't like the behavior of a colleague? Or if you hear yourself when something is not going well? Then you have to deal with giving and receiving feedback.

'Giving feedback' means: responding to the other person. You make it clear how you think about the behavior of the other person. Someone else can also tell you how your functioning is experienced. Giving feedback in the right way is part of good communication between people. During your internship, giving and receiving feedback is crucial. Most people find it difficult to give feedback. You don't know how the other person is going to react. If you stick to the feedback rules of INBE+ model, it becomes a lot easier.

Consciously or unconsciously

You can give feedback in two ways: consciously or unconsciously. When you consciously give feedback, you do it with a purpose. You give praise because you think something is beautiful, for example. Or you tell someone what you think about something. But you can also give feedback unconsciously, for example when you yawn during a presentation.

Verbal or non-verbal

There is also a distinction between verbal and non-verbal feedback. You do it verbally with your voice, for example by giving a compliment or expressing criticism. You give non-verbal feedback in all other ways, except by talking. Like raising your thumb or turning your eyes. Either way, the result is that the other person picks up on your response and perceives it as positive or negative feedback.

Criticism? Make it constructive!

Giving feedback is not always easy. Especially if you don't know how the other person will receive your feedback. Negative feedback may sometimes be necessary. The way you do it determines how the other person receives it. Of course you don't want the other person to feel attacked and get on the defensive, making a conversation no longer possible. The trick is to let criticism be constructive.

A rule of thumb when giving feedback is: always focus on someone's behavior or work and never on the persons themselves. Do not only name the negative aspect of someone's behavior or work, but also try to give alternatives. The INBE+ model can help you with this.

INBE+ model for giving feedback

+: Start positive For example: I like that you ...

I: You use an I-message (and not a you-message). For example: I feel that, I notice that, I notice that...

Now: Don't wait too long to give feedback on an incident. Otherwise it will be getting old cows out of the ditch.

Behavior: State briefly and clearly what you do not like about the behavior or work of the other person.

Effect: Tell what thoughts or feelings you get from the behavior or work of the other person. For example: The effect on me is that...

+: End positive. You tell how things could possibly be different (you give an alternative) and try to end with something positive.

How NOT to do it:

“You really are a strange guest. You never give me a chance and I hate that. This morning you were circling it again.”

How it SHOULD be done:

“It's good that we spoke this morning. It struck me that this way we do not quickly have a solution to our problem. I had previously offered you a solution that I think works well. Because it's my job, it bothers me if you don't make a decision. The effect is that I don't feel taken seriously. I'd appreciate it if you'd give my solution another chance.”

How do you receive feedback?

Getting a compliment is always nice. You want to hear that you did something right. But what do you do when someone gives you negative feedback? That is less pleasant. But you can do something with it!

If you deal with negative feedback in an open way, an unpleasant conversation can still end well:

- a. Don't get defensive right away. It's not a boxing match, it's a conversation with a colleague.
- b. Always take feedback seriously, but put it into perspective. It doesn't have to be as bad as how it comes to you.
- c. Try to understand why the other person is giving feedback.
- d. Be open to change.
- e. Try to give positive feedback to negative feedback. You can do this out loud to your interlocutor or to yourself silently. For example: Okay, I got it. Or: Did I understand correctly that...? Keep asking if you don't understand yet.
- f. It's okay to have a difference of opinion and make your own arguments. However, do this in a calm manner.
- g. Have a good finish of the conversation!

6. DEALING WITH OTHER CULTURES

The maritime world is an international world. There is a good chance that you will encounter crew members of other nationalities on board. Well-known suppliers of personnel in the maritime world are: Philippines, China, Russia, Ukraine, Baltic States, Croatia, Indonesia and India. That means you will be working in a very varied group!

Language of instruction

English is the international language. But even if everyone speaks English, that doesn't mean you understand each other right away. Due to the differences in cultural background, a misunderstanding in communication can easily arise.

That's what I say!

The language used by the Dutch stands out because of the direct communication. Even very direct, in relation to other cultures. We say it like it is, we are so used to that. We don't care if there are others there. In many countries, however, this comes across as hard. There is more indirect communication. Sensitive points are discussed privately. The Filipino "no" is also famous. You will not soon hear a Filipino say that. He or she is more likely to declare, "I don't know yet" or "Maybe". So something to keep in mind.

Prejudices

Thinking in stereotypes plays a role in the encounter between people from different cultural backgrounds. Stereotypes are clichés or prejudices. For example: Germans dig pits on the beach. Or: English people always get drunk. That's not to say that the German working on your project actually digs holes on the beach every weekend. Stereotypes can help to understand the behavior of another nationality. But they can also act as a negative bias. Sometimes people start to behave according to the stereotype. For example, if you think that all Filipinos are humble and can never say "no", then you may be approaching them very bossy. Without examining whether it is really so. So always keep an open mind.

Cultural differences

When you work with people from a different culture, you have to take each other into account. Cultures can differ quite a bit:

- Non-verbal Behavior

Giving a thumbs up might be considered an obscene insult in parts of Africa and Australia. In Islamic countries, you should not show your shoe soles when you sit.

- Personal Space

Filipinos find it less bothersome than the Dutch to sit close to each other. They also touch each other more easily.

- Expression of Feelings

In some countries, feelings are expressed more exuberantly or quickly. For example, in southern countries, people tend to shout more quickly. Conversely, Russian speakers sometimes bottle things up until they explode.

- Greeting

We are used to shaking hands. In other cultures, particularly Asian ones, a bow is made.

- Time Orientation

Dutch people live by the clock and like to be on time. This is not always taken for granted everywhere.

- Eating

In many cultures, people are used to eating warm meals three times a day and not eating bread. The food is also seasoned very differently. Filipinos always want rice with their meals. For Dutch people on board, meatballs are very important.

- Language Use

Proverbs and sayings are not always understood. You also have to be careful with literal translations of our proverbs.

- Moral Codes

In many cultures, religion plays an important role in life. There can also be other reasons why something is allowed or not. In India, some people do not eat pork (Muslims) while others do not eat cows or any meat at all (Hindus).

What is helpful to do?

The most important 'power skill' when it comes to working with other cultures is to treat each other with mutual respect. Do not assume that what you are used to is also self-evident for someone else. If someone speaks bad English, it doesn't mean he or she is stupid. Practice 'multiple perspective viewing'. That means you look at someone from multiple angles. Someone is not just Filipino or Russian, but also someone's son or daughter, a local resident, a peer, football enthusiast, and so on.

Practice

Technical skills require practice. In a simulator you get an idea of what it feels like to stand on a bridge. Or what it's like to work in an engine room. What applies to technical skills also applies to soft skills. That means: practice! Practice giving and receiving feedback. Practice dealing with other cultures. You will automatically discover what you are good at and what you are not good at.

Self-reflection

To develop yourself further, it is important to look at yourself critically. Do you dare to stand in front of the mirror and really examine how others see you as a person? You may not be able to change yourself right away and you don't have to. But you can develop yourself by working on your weaknesses. If you know what your strengths are, they will come in handy in your work. We have that unique ability as human beings: that we can think about ourselves. That's called reflecting. With self-reflection we can develop ourselves further and further.

Reflection assignment:

1 = very much; 5 = not at all

I think that I:

o a team player am 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

o easy to take initiative 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

o accurate work 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

o problem solving thinking 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

o deal well with feedback 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

o find it interesting to work with other cultures 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5

o = point where I still need to develop myself further

7. HEALTH

The cadetship period is an intensive period, during which you will probably be away from home for a while. For some that is a piece of cake, for others a completely new experience. It is important to take good care of yourself during your internship and to stay healthy. Going on an internship can also affect the personal relationships you have.

Health

Various watch systems are used on board. In principle, cadets work during the day shift, but sometimes you will be asked if you want to work in watch shifts. Especially if there are several cadets on a ship. On projects abroad people are used to longer working days: a 12-hour working day (or longer) is normal. It takes some getting used to at first, but you get used to it pretty quickly.

Define borders/limits

Freedom means: don't worry, be happy! After all, you are only young once. Nevertheless, it is wise to use alcohol wisely, to eat healthy and get enough sleep. Going beyond your limits is not a bad thing. As long as you build in a recovery period. At your age you may not suffer from 'fatigue' (exhaustion), but if you are very tired, you are more vulnerable and you are more likely to make mistakes.

There are companies (particularly in the offshore sector) that enforce a strict alcohol policy.

Seasickness and other diseases

Your company will inform you about certain diseases that can affect you. Seasickness is a normal phenomenon, especially on a first trip. It's nothing to be ashamed of. There are pills on board that can help you. If all goes well, seasickness will go away on its own after a few days. You may need to be vaccinated against certain other diseases. In any case, it is wise to be careful with raw food and water from the tap in warm countries. And perhaps an unnecessary advise, but pay attention to the risks of contracting a venereal disease.

Mental health

Nowadays there is a lot of attention in the maritime world for 'mental health'. In addition to staying physically healthy, you also need to watch out for your mental health. Research has shown that seafarers can experience negative feelings and stress. If this is not given proper attention, a burnout or possible depression is lurking. Of course it doesn't have to come to that. Just keep watching yourself a little bit.

It is good to pay attention to any stress signals during your cadetship. Healthy tension is of course not wrong, it is part of it. But too much tension is unhealthy. Signs of stress can include constant headaches, insomnia, fatigue, irritability, and being easily emotional. Stress can be caused by work pressure, because things are not going well or when you take too little rest. Stress can also be related to private circumstances: the situation at home, major events in your life, things from the past. It is important to call your internship supervisor if you experience stress on the ship or at school. Then you can discuss together what the options are to do something about it.

Relaxation

Prevention is better than cure. Relaxation during your cadetship is therefore important. On board or in your apartment you can exercise, watch television together or alone, and make contact via social

media. Participating in social activities (bar, BBQ on deck) is always good. Many colleagues will alternate these types of activities per day.

It is of course even more fun on shore. Be wise when you go out abroad. Don't go out alone, don't bring too much money, don't dress too expensive. Always make sure you know how to get back on board or at the hotel.

Dealing with negative feelings

During your internship you don't feel great every day. Normal feelings during your internship may include:

1. You feel tired or empty. That's not strange, because you work long hours.
2. You feel alone or feel homesick. That is not strange either, because you are away from your familiar surroundings for a long time. You have a lot coming your way.

Take a break

If you have negative feelings, good rest is important. A good night's sleep ensures a 'reset' of your entire system. In addition, you can also refurbish listening to music or view photos. So bring a good, happy playlist on your phone. Try to think of positive things or look at yourself differently. If a fellow cadet is nearby, you can talk to him or her about it.

Think of the statement 'Don't ever make small things into a big issue'. Don't let the little things become bigger than they are. In the small space of a ship it is sometimes difficult to let go of something that has been said or happened. The question 'Do I still think this is important in six months' time?' can also help.

Difficult people

In addition, you may be bothered by certain people on board or on the project. They can cause a lot of negative energy because of what they say or how they treat you. A few rules of thumb for dealing with this:

- Don't take it too personally. They might do it to everyone. Or they're looking for a "victim" and you happened to be in the area.
- Some people can only feel great by pushing others down. Try to think of what could be behind the other person. Often his/her behavior says more about him/her than it does about you.
- Look for positive energy.
- Try to let it go. That takes you beyond feeling sorry for yourself or "paying back" the other person.
- Make it a learning moment. What can you learn from this situation?

Dealing with family, friends and relations

During your cadetship, you probably spend less time with the people who are important in your life: your girl- or boyfriend, family and your friends. Make clear agreements in advance. It should be clear that you are not always available.

Love

Your cadetship period is a good test of whether you really (want to) have a serious relationship. Also try to see the positive side of missing each other. It will soon be all the more fun to be together again! You have to be able to trust each other when you are far away from each other. Golden rule: if you don't dare to tell your boyfriend or girlfriend about your actions, you might have to reconsider whether you should undertake these actions at all.

Supervisor

If problems arise during your cadetship, it is usually not wise to ask for advice from home. Even though you may be used to it. At home they don't know exactly what it is about. They're probably just worried. Try to find someone at work you can trust. Your cadet supervisor on board is the first designated person. If that does not help, you can always consult the cadet supervisor of the school. Only then does the advice from home come into the picture.

Social media

The internet has become an integral part of our world. Not even on board or on a project. The use of social media is subject to certain agreements:

- Be social with social media. If you're just looking at your phone every coffee break, it's not really fun for your colleagues.
- Looking at your phone while working is not a good idea. It's not safe either, even if your colleagues might be.
- Companies have certain rules about what can and cannot be distributed via social media. Keep those rules in mind when posting.
- The golden rule is: 'what happens on the ship, stays on the ship!'

8. BE YOURSELF

On board, you live and work in a kind of mini-society with very different people. While you are all seafarers, you have different backgrounds or nationalities. There are also differences in age. On many ships, men and women work together, which can sometimes create tensions. Additionally, when it comes to sensitive issues such as religion, sexual orientation, or politics, opinions and judgments can vary widely. The remarkable thing is that, in the mini-society on board, people usually manage potential tensions very well, while these same issues can cause problems on land.

While you will need to adapt to many customs and rules on board, it is important to remain yourself. You need to be able to handle some rough situations. You will be tested. Sometimes jokes will be made at your expense, and that is not always pleasant. But there are limits. Sometimes you will have to set those limits yourself. Not all jokes are funny, not all comments are appropriate, and you don't have to go along with everything.

Where is the line?

Usually, there is no ill intent behind them.

- An intern who left his internship logbook in the Engine Control Room can't find it anymore. The crew wants to teach the intern a lesson: don't leave belongings lying around.
- A paper with rates for each question asked by an intern is posted on the ship's bulletin board. Of course, you can always ask questions as an intern, but the message is clear: think for yourself first or look it up.
- When you cross the equator for the first time, you experience the Neptune baptism. This ritual is ancient, but you usually don't come out clean.
- A classic task for an intern is cleaning a clogged sewer. It has to be done, and you shouldn't take it personally.

In the following situations, it becomes more complicated. Do you think boundaries are being crossed here?

- An intern is forced to drink beer even though they don't want to.
- A female intern is told that no sanitary pads will be ordered for her, while other toiletries like shaving foam are easily added to the list.
- An intern is given a task that violates safety rules.
- A dark-skinned intern receives various comments about their skin color.
- An intern is continually ignored – when they ask something, no one responds.
- A captain states that if he had homosexual crew members on board, he would kick them off immediately.

Dealing with Peer Pressure and Maintaining Boundaries

When faced with peer pressure, it's not always easy to stay true to yourself. The fear of not fitting in can lead you to do things you might later regret. However, it's better to avoid being swayed by the desire for popularity. Respect is earned by staying true to yourself. It's often easier to firmly set your boundaries right away than to go along with something half-heartedly. Ultimately, everyone on board counts, and there's a place for you as well.

Moreover, it can be dangerous if the atmosphere on board is such that someone feels excluded. When someone feels unhappy, it can lead to unsafe situations. While the chances of encountering this are not very high, if you feel that your boundaries are being crossed, try to find someone on

board you can talk to. Your internship supervisor is the obvious person to approach, but sometimes there's another wise crew member who will listen and offer good advice.

If necessary, don't hesitate to involve your school. In severe situations, it's important to know that shipping companies also have designated confidants who can be consulted.

Bullying and Harassment

Bullying and harassment can occur not only at school but also on ships. The Maritime Labour Convention (MLC 2006, Guideline 4.3.1.4) specifically mentions:

"In addition, the competent authority should ensure that the implications for health and safety are taken into account, particularly in the following areas: (a) emergency and accident response; (b) the effects of drug and alcohol dependency; (c) HIV/AIDS protection and prevention; and (d) harassment and bullying."

As an intern, you might also face bullying and harassment. Some people can only feel good by bothering others, making themselves feel bigger by belittling others. If their behavior is not stopped, they will keep pushing boundaries. Sometimes, people don't realize that what they might consider harmless can be very hurtful to someone else.

The taboo around bullying on board has largely disappeared. It is no longer accepted. Many companies have established grievance procedures, allowing employees to seek attention when they are victims of bullying.

Key Points to Remember:

1. *Stay True to Yourself:* Don't give in to peer pressure just to fit in or become popular. Set your boundaries early and firmly.
2. *Seek Support:* If you feel your boundaries are being crossed, talk to your internship supervisor or another trusted crew member. Don't hesitate to involve your school if necessary.
3. *Be Aware of Bullying and Harassment:* Know that bullying and harassment are not acceptable. Companies have procedures in place to address these issues, and you have the right to seek help.
4. *Safety First:* Exclusion and unhappiness can lead to unsafe situations on board. It's important for everyone to feel included and respected for the overall safety of the crew.

What does this captain say?

Captain M.V. graduated from her HBO program as a maritime officer. After 14 years of sailing, she became a master on a container ship and has now been a captain for 4 years. What advice does she have for interns on board?

The maritime world is still predominantly male. As a woman, you can work well and enjoy yourself in this environment. However, it's wise to keep a few things in mind. You may receive a bit more attention as a woman because you're an exception. Don't be alarmed by it. Just behave as a colleague. If a situation arises, you'll handle it.

What do you remember about your own internship?

Sometimes, decisions are made for you as a woman, assuming you can't handle certain tasks. Male colleagues might take over physically demanding work. Stand your ground. If it doesn't work out, it's not a big deal. Not everyone is equally strong. And if you're not strong, be smart; use your brains.

We also hear that you might be blamed if you can't handle something physically because you're smaller or less strong.

That's true. What helps is addressing it yourself. Highlight your strengths: 'I need some help with this, but I can handle that very well and will put in extra effort.'

Another issue is sometimes criticism about clothing choices.

I say: stay true to yourself, but be mindful of the circumstances. Don't dress provocatively. This applies to men as well. It's practical to wear leggings or bike shorts under your overalls. Some foreign cultures are much more modest than we Europeans.

How can you ensure colleagues don't cross your boundaries?

Humor can resolve a lot. A general tip: if colleagues cross your boundaries, be direct. Give a sort of warning first, for example, 'I don't want to hear jokes about condoms.'

The MeToo movement has brought about significant change. Mentors and supervisors on board must also be cautious about what they say and fear doing something wrong.

The most important thing: your cabin should be a safe place. It's useful to think about certain situations in advance so you're not caught off guard.

Do you have any practical tips specifically for your female colleagues?

- Think about bringing enough toiletries; they are often not available on board or at seafarers' centers.
- If you think there might be issues with laundry, consider taking your clothes out of the dryer yourself.
- If there's only one shared changing room, consider what you wear under your overalls. However, you can also expect men to be considerate and not walk around half-naked. This is also a cultural issue. But don't let this discourage you. Most importantly, have a lot of fun during your internship!

Tips:

Lock the door while showering and in ports.

A closed curtain means: I am here and you may disturb me.

A closed door means: Do not disturb me.

Keep an overall or pajamas handy at night for emergencies.

Is someone crossing your boundaries? Consider the following:

- * Use humor to set your boundaries if you can. For example, if a colleague frequently makes inappropriate jokes in public, you can either use humor to deflect or seriously address the unwanted behavior with them.
- * If someone truly crosses your boundary, immediately let them know you don't appreciate it. Give a warning and try to stop them.
- * If they continue to cross your boundary, walk away or seek help.
- * If a situation gets out of hand, document the incident. Report or file an official complaint with your mentor or the captain.
- * You can always inform your mentor on board or the captain and ask for help. They won't find it strange or bothersome; they want everyone to be comfortable on the ship or project. Consider them as trusted confidants.
- * Inform your school if you feel the need.
- * Talk to someone about your experience.
- * If you don't want to handle it alone, you might ask for a trusted witness to be present.
- * To avoid unpleasant situations or if you feel unsafe with a colleague, use a professional setting for one-on-one conversations. For example, the bridge.

And then... off on an adventure!

You are well-prepared, and your internship is sure to be a great adventure. During your internship, you will discover if the profession you are studying for is truly the right fit for you. There is much to enjoy while you are traveling, so make sure to do just that. Fill your suitcase with wonderful experiences!

9. MORE INFORMATION

The International Seafarer's Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN) website has a brochure entitled 'Psychological Wellbeing at Sea. A Good Mental Health Guide for Seafarers'. You can also find tips about staying healthy on board here: www.seafarerswelfare.org.

The Sailors Society's 'Wellness at Sea' app is very useful. The app can be downloaded for Android and IOS.

Two Dutch books are very suitable for further reflection:

- Lida Nijgh en Nicolien van Tol, *Leren Reflecteren*, Meppel: Uitgeverij Boom, 2021.
- Mirjam Groen, *Reflecteren: de basis. Op weg naar bewust en bekwaam handelen*, 3e druk, Groningen/ Houten: Noordhof Uitgevers, 2015.

10. CONTACT INFORMATION

You can always contact us if you have a question, or if you have personal problems. You can do this by phone, email or Messenger. We can both be found on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

Stefan Francke, pastor for workers in dredging, offshore and marine construction

SPWO – Care for Workers in Dredging, Offshore and Marine Construction

T: +31 6 37008432; E: waterbouwpastor@gmail.com;

Whatsapp: +31 6 53585423

I: www.spwo.nl; weblog: waterbouwpastor.nl;

Helene Perfors, port chaplain

Dutch Seafarers Mission

T& Whatsapp: +31 6 53679265; E: helene.perfors@gmail.com

I: www.nederlandsezeemanscentrale.nl

Pascal Handschin, port chaplain

Mission to Seafarers

Tel. & Whatsapp: +31 6 49902025

pascal.handschin@mtsmail.org