



The Four Rules for Velocity

- 1. Keep the people in the boat**
- 2. Keep the water out of the boat**
- 3. Don't hit anyone**
- 4. Look good**

1. Keep the People in the Boat – On the Team

Take care of your people. Provide a safe and secure environment, treat everyone with respect and dignity, create an environment of empowerment and creativity to build confidence and self-esteem, and permit them to make mistakes, grow emotionally, spiritually and morally in a way that gives meaning and purpose to their lives. Give the team an opportunity to connect via the modalities of water and wind. No matter how hard the wind blows, no matter how high the “*Liquid Himalayas*” grow.

Maintain constant training and learning opportunities to improve personal expertise and skills that contribute to both the team and personal goals. Create a space within the vessel that promotes allows all team members to communicate ideas and observations. Enable the team to be recognized by the sum of the collective and personal efforts. In short, leaders value each team member as someone who keeps the boat sailing toward its intended objective and the overall mission for success.

Prevent contradictory leadership any source that disrupts the team and questions the motive and legitimacy of the leader. Support the team whole heartedly, go to bat for them, take steps to build team-member confidence and trust. Mentor to instill a personal and spiritual connection to the goal of the vessel and the team. Remember that the team consists on the support mechanism of each person on the boat. Their collective life experiences lead them to a moment of which they accepted the challenge. Their stepping onto the deck, first started by stepping out of their house. Teammates support mechanisms which enable them to sail. The support

mechanisms; family, friends and loved ones, each expect the Captain will place return the teammate a better person than before they left.

The time as the team spends away from their support must have a meaningful impact to the entire family upon return. Ideally, the family support should feel as if they are part just as part of the team as the sailor. The team should be able to problem solve boat and personal issues that prevent their total focus on the team vision and purpose. Each teammate must have interest in each other's life and well-being.

(Note the use of leaders, not "The Captain")

2. Keep the Water Out of the Boat – Protect Them

Safety is the primary priority of every team. It does not happen without intentional effort. If there is training available, take it as a team.

Teammates have different learning styles, so safety briefings need to have a) Briefing Placards (like airlines), b) scripted brief and c) demonstrations. Each crew member should be able to give the entire briefing. Practice! Get out on soft water to train for medium water, then medium to train for hard. The first time you put up a storm sail should not be in a storm. The first time you hit the water with a PFD should be in a pool. Doing this as a team reinforces rule 1) KEEP PEOPLE IN THE BOAT.

3. Don't Hit Anyone – Conflict Resolution

Conflict that isn't confronted is conflict unresolved. Leadership must be ready and capable to resolve conflicts, regardless of the magnitude of the problem. Leaders need to be skilled in relationship building with empathy, exhibiting a caring attitude about individual success and professional growth.

The Captain needs to develop and give cross training relationships, provide leadership opportunities and provide resources, tools, support to watch captains, training captains and shore crew.

Transparency and accountability practices enable individual team members to resolve internal conflicts. Resolve disruptive issues at the lowest level possible. Leadership requires a keen eye for disruptions in the personal

lives of team members that interferes with their ability to perform at high levels of success. Before jumping into a cat fight think about the timing.

A. Right Timing

Leaders who avoid conflict at all cost will find themselves regretting it later. Timing is everything when it comes to managing conflict, and the best time to take action is when there is hard evidence that actions are/may negatively impacting the performance of the team or boat. If everyone around you knows it must be dealt with and you are still waiting to act, you are losing the respect of your peers and those you lead. Leadership is about taking action and confronting the issues before it's too late. Do not let the issue affect the team's performance or it adds to the reputational risk of the team.

B. Know Your Boundaries

Conflict is complicated so it needs boundaries. The boundaries should not be the gap between the stick and the ass of the person being tolerated. It just might be a little late and complicated by then. So it would be important to express limitations and boundaries of your team. Everyone deals with conflict differently, so you must know the risks and rewards of conflict resolution within the boundaries of each of your employees.

The team needs to know they tend to cross the line through careful observation; identify behavioral tendencies that seem to trigger certain attitudes, provoke mindset shifts, or demonstrate a lack of self-awareness. Only through consistent coaching/practice sessions can a leader begin to set precedence and reinforce performance expectations. Establishing standards will help prevent conflict from arising.

C. Respect Differences

Realize your boat team is a team made up of other teams. Many on your team have lead other boat teams and a wealth of experience and diversity. Rather than impose your influence, hierarchy or rank – respect the unique differences in people and learn to see things from differing points of view so you can better understand how to avoid conflict in the future.

D. Confront the Tension

Leadership is often about doing the things that most other people don't like doing. Conflict resolution is one of those things – but as leaders we must confront the tension head-on. Don't wait, but rather activate your leadership to address the conflict before circumstances force your hand. Emotions will come into play and they must be managed. Often in conflict, it is the emotional things that are the most difficult to deal with.

As such, we must confront rather than allow it to fester because we failed to address the adversity when it first became apparent. Adversity is very big when it is all you can see. But it is very small when in the presence the sea, the wind and the teams that surrounds you.

Perception is not always reality and oftentimes we don't confront the most obvious situation before us because we let other points of view distort what we believe to be true. Effective leaders have the self-awareness and use wisdom and council to confront and diffuse tension. Leadership is about anticipating the unexpected. Trust yourself enough to take action. Effective leaders create authentic relationships with their teams.

4. Look Good – Boat (Crew) Identity

'Looking Good' goes beyond the name of the vessel on a shirt sailors wear. A Skipper should continually work hard in order to promote a boat identity and harmony. The crew will be proud to attach themselves to a fun well organized boat, win or lose. In order to accomplish this there are three components working in unison that solidify a 'Boat Identity'.

A. Create a Sense of Belonging

Every human being has a need to attach themselves to something that gives them a sense of belonging. It is in the Skipper's best interest to ensure their crews needs are being met. If not the Skipper's themselves, then a task should be given to a crew-boss to actively and purposefully create a 'Boat Identity'. Crews having a 'singular boat identity' do it so well, that external observers recognize the authenticity of the crew relationships. Win, place or finish – teams that have a well-established 'Boat Identities' tend to stick together for longer periods of time and consistently perform well. They understand their roles in sailing and managing each other's

expectations while training and racing. Each crew member's persona enhances 'Boat Identity' when expressed and managed.

On Velocity, in distances races, we ensure that each crew member identifies and shares their personal goals for wanting to be a crew member. We call it the 'Compass of Success'. In order to create a positive 'Boat Identity', we try to align the goals of the crew so we can develop this sense of belonging. We post these goals inside the boat for all to see and refer to them at shift changes. We refer to it as 'The Compass of Success'.

B. Create Fun

In my younger years, playing football in University, I won the wide receivers ping-pong tourney. This inter-squad competition enhanced the overall team identity that later lead us into a bowl game at the end of the regular season. Later I found out that the coach was prompting the Team Captains to encourage the inter-squad competitions to promote fun,,, it was an intentional effort to build the team besides practice, practice, practice.

On Velocity, we make conscious efforts to inject fun off of the boat. Last year in a race, we unfortunated decided to retired (zero wind in a 36,000 lbs. of boat). However, we had an unbelievable ping pong tourney in a local bar afterwards. That small inject of fun, immediately brought the crew together after a disappointing non-finish. Later in the year, after finishing second, the crew had a hilarious cornhole competition in-the-midst-of five hundred onlookers. It was a fantastic crew experience that was just as beneficial as the 'Lee Bow' at the finish of a ninety-mile race. Ferrying the boat back to home port, on both occasions were identical experienced because of the fun off of the boat.

C. Infectious Attitudes

Providing a 'sense of belonging' while 'creating fun' by themselves alone should provide measurable benefits for any Skipper. But to truly solidify the impact, Skippers need to do it in a way that is infectious to family, friends and aquatintists. Your team communication strategy has to include the families and loved ones of your crew. Open door policies for families can really have appositive impact. A crew member doesn't who is stealing time from a family, can cause conflict in the boat and in their personal life.

The sense of belonging a Skipper creates must extrapolate to the second tier relationships of the crew. If the 'Sense of Belonging' and 'Creation of Fun' are necessary ingredients of the 'Crew Cake', it is the 'Infectious Attitude' that is the frosting. Friends and families who feel the same sense of belonging enable the 'Boat Identity' win or lose. They provide the emotional support beyond that of the crew themselves. With the second tier support, the crew will drive itself in their personal and boat goals. On Velocity, we would rather lose a race and build the crew, as opposed to winning the race and having people say 'they will never sail with that boat again.'

The days of putting up with a tyrant, just to be on a boat racing, should no longer exist.