

36. Effecting Discipline (4:03)

Well, I think they were just practicing, first day or two, and a boat came out there and I fined the guy. Boy the word got around immediately, "Don't go near that racetrack. You get in the wrong area, it's going to cost you money."

But lots of times, you know, you nail the first offender and that takes care of it. Well that's deterrence, that's right. It's like my throwing the guys off the base at Yorktown, with their fooling with gals under training. That solved all that. I was fairly firm at mast.

Like the first guy that had marijuana seeds in his car. Came to mast, and I fined him three hundred dollars. And he says "I'm from Michigan! That's a five dollar fine!" I said "No, you're in the United States Coast Guard, and we don't tolerate marijuana on this base. Your seeds in your car are a violation, that cost you three hundred dollars. Next time it'll cost you six hundred dollars, and the next time I'll probably court martial you, and see if we can get you out of the Coast Guard."

Did he get the message? They got the message, they got the message. I've told you the story about, the first muster we had there, the guy that didn't go to muster, did you remember that story? He just, "Well I never had to go before! Nobody ever made me go before!"

I said "Hey you, that's Disobedience of Orders. We don't tolerate Disobedience of Orders. You are now a seaman, instead of being a corpsman, you're now a seaman." And he got about as white as that wall.

But I didn't have any problem with discipline. Art, Art was a wonderful guy, Art Hancock. But he just was so easy and he had 10 or 15 mast cases a month. I had been there two years, two months, and I never had over two or three mast cases ever. In the future. In a month, I never had that many.

You get a certain reputation for being military, and then they just measure up to that standard. I could go to a base and they would say "We know about you Commander. We know you believe in the military system, believe in hard work, coming in to work on time, you won't tolerate alcohol interfering with the job, I mean these are just things we know about you.

And being aware and consistent, you have to be patterned. You can't be changing, vary from one day to the next, you got to be the same - right - and then of course, I was always available. I was out and about the base, people could talk to me anytime and, I did walk around a lot, and I smiled a lot.

But like you said, if the smile went away, there was something going on. They fed on that. They straightened it out. Half the time you don't have to do anything. Just let them know you're a little unhappy about a certain thing, and it's taken care of.

Related Primary Leadership Principles

Accountability

Active Listening

Authority of Position

Character

Credibility

Decision-Making

Discipline

Effective Use of Resources

Example

Expectations

Feedback

Field Presence

Followership

Military Core Values

Money

Recognition

Responsibility

Team-Building