

Annex A

The PACE model and assertiveness

Assertiveness from more junior team members could potentially lead to conflict if it is not used in the correct manner. However, if the assertiveness is graded, the risk of confrontation within a team can be minimised.

The PACE model is a way of using graded assertiveness in shipboard operations to help someone reconsider the instruction that they have given. It comprises of four steps, although it may not be necessary to use all of them. An example is given below for explanatory purposes.

PROBE For better understanding

Chief Officer: OK, Bosun, please could you enter the freshwater tank and start cleaning it.

Third Officer: Chief, why are you asking the Bosun to enter the freshwater tank before we have tested the atmosphere inside?

Chief Officer: The tank only had fresh water in it, and it is now empty. It will be safe in there.

ALERT To the potential consequences if the instruction is carried out as intended.

Third Officer: But if we don't test the atmosphere, there may not be sufficient oxygen and the Bosun may be unable to breathe.

Chief Officer: The tank doors have been open already for 12 hours for ventilation, so it should be fine, besides, we only have a couple of hours to finish this work. We need to hurry up.

CHALLENGE Offer an alternative solution.

Third Officer: As per procedures, we should not enter any space before testing the atmosphere and completing the pre-entry checklist.

Chief Officer: Departure is in two hours; we don't have time and we need to get this tank cleaned and closed up before then. I don't want any delays.

ESCALATE Contact higher authority.

Third Officer: OK, I don't think this is safe, I am going to contact the Master.