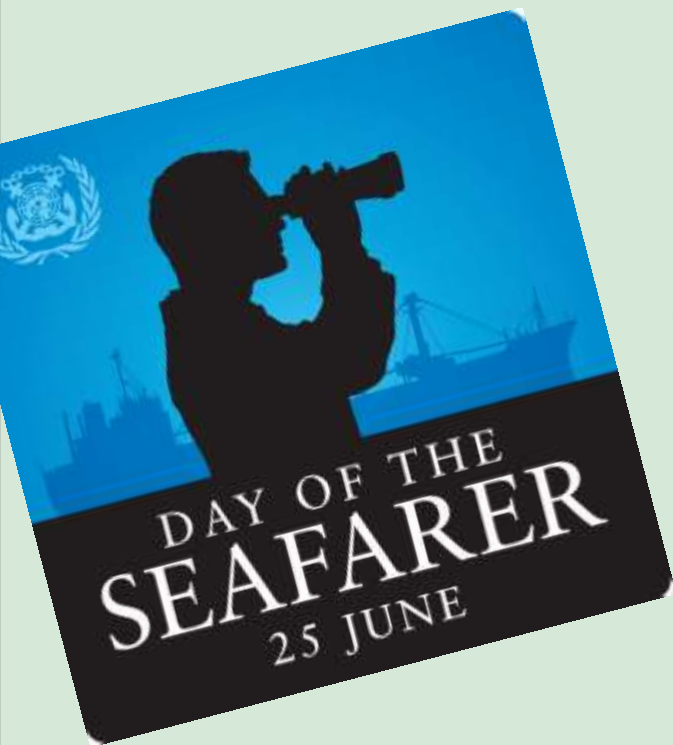




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Seafarers are the people who play the most crucial role in underpinning international trade. We rely on them every day. Synergy Group supports IMO in celebrating the sixth edition of its global campaign: Day of the Seafarer, held every year on 25 June.



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Fog Horn

Synergy Group Newsletter



MD's Note



All Hands on Deck!

Dear Friends

The last year has been a landmark for the freight lows experienced by the dry cargo industry. Both the bulker and container markets went through unprecedented lows and have taken a toll on most players. It's during such lows, we find that focus shifts to the operational end of ships to reduce costs. While it is important to understand the pain of the ship owners, it's imperative that everyone in the delivery chain understand and find innovative ways to support the shipowners without compromising on the safety and operational efficiency of ships.

When many companies see this as the time to cut costs to survive, we need to work with a different mindset. It's the challenge of such lows that help people find ways to innovate

and adapt for survival. **Innovation is the key to keeping pace with changing times.** At these times, it is important to understand; it is not the one big idea that can help companies survive the cycle. It's a large number of improvements or marginal increments across the spectrum of our operations that will help us tide through. Such marginal increments are best when they come from the people working on the field, our sea staff, our customers and people who provide various services to our ships.

In 2008, Starbucks was suffering during the financial meltdown. Rather than trying to find ways to cut down losses by closing shops making no profit or cutting down employee strength, Starbucks embarked on a technology-oriented strategy. An environment where employees could think freely about the organisation and contribute in terms of strategies and ideas was fostered. As a result, a community involvement concept was developed.

The lows provide us an opportunity to experiment with our ideas. Of course, it goes without saying that it's important to assess and implement the right ones. A mindset to try new things is the key to survival. **Share your ideas and let us find ways together to get over this low cycle with our heads high.**

Till then stay safe and be blessed

Rajesh M Unni

Synergy's Exclusive

Reach –out seminars held in various cities across India.

Our Fleet Personnel Department recently organized 'reach out seminars' in collaboration with MOL Tankship Management (Asia) Pte Ltd (MOLTA). The reach-outs were held in various cities across India and saw a huge turnout of seafarers and their families from Synergy group and other companies as well!



Capt. Anshul Rajvanshi addressing the gathering



Ranchi



Cochin



Lucknow



Jaipur



Dehradun

Cover photo credit – clockwise from top
Capt. Vivek Mittal on-board M.T. Grace Victoria (Page 17)
Ms. Sulagna Ray at one of her performances. (Page 8-9)
Crew on-board M.V. Equator Prosper as she goes alongside at sub-zero temperatures (-18 C) and strong winds. – Photo taken by Marine Superintendent, Capt. Dominic Jerry
2/O Mr. Aman Arora after scaling the Renok Peak (Page 17)



Synergy is all about
its people

Officers Seminar in Manila

Synergy Group Operations Inc.(Philippines) and J Lauritzen recently hosted their biannual Seminar for the J Lauritzen pool of Officers at the newly-established Makati Diamond Residences in the city's business district. About 90 senior officers participated in the two-day seminar, that included presentations and discussions on various issues including technical and crewing, as well as introduction of SGOI Seafarers' Wives Club – which recently initiated its maiden CSR outreach program to support underprivileged children. (detailed report on Page 21)



Speaking on the occasion - Capt. Rajesh Unni said that the officer's seminar is conducted twice a year to promote better communications between management and our crew. "Our agenda is not just focused on commercial, technical and operational aspects of shipping; we also put emphasis on the human element and reinforcement of value system -Synergy is all about its people," he further explained.

"We focus on quality and not quantity," Capt. Banta asserted, referring to the company's growth strategy. Capt. Unni added, "our company aims to serve a greater purpose, which is beyond profit."

"We endeavour to be recognized as a significant player in the industry. By consistently making innovations, Synergy adds value to the customer chain. This, in turn, provides the profit that benefits not only us but our society as well."

The insightful seminar came to an end with the celebration of talent, success and achievement – the awards function. And the Winners were:

- Capt. Dexter Capoy (Upkeep High Crew Morale)
- Capt. Rodolfo Tan (Best PSC Performance)
- Capt. Romeo Rosaldo (Maximum LARP)
- CE Antonio Murillo (Best Performance in Managing Difficult Ships)

Seaway Shipping Magazine was the exclusive media partner for the event.

The next seminar is scheduled to be held in June'2016 – watch this space for further details!

Our first visit to a ship!

We introduced ourselves to the duty officer who led us to Capt. Manoj Kumar Srivastava, the Master of the ship who gave us a warm welcome.

Captain then requested 2/O Pavithran Bipin and 3/O Thomas Sosan to take us to the bridge and show us the various instruments and brief us about their use.

We were then provided safety helmets and were taken to the Lifeboat Deck and also to the main deck to witness the discharging operations.

We then met C/E Mr. Praveen Kumar Singh in his cabin and he was kind enough to take us to the Engine room and showed us the Main Engine, Auxiliary Engine, Lube Oil Purifier, Ballast Pump, Boiler, etc.

This was an eye popping moment for us, we never imagined that a ship's engine room would be four storeys high and could churn out enough power to illuminate an entire town!

We then entered the galley of the ship. Galley is the place where the food is prepared for the staff on board.

We met Chief cook Mr. Varghese Jose and GS Mr. Nithin Peter both of them showed us the entire galley, Provision room and the freezer room where meat, vegetables, etc. are stored. It was then time for Lunch on-board a ship and C/Cook served us some awesome food!!

Thus came to an end a memorable ship visit and a day which will be etched in our minds forever.

A special thanks to Capt. Manoj Kumar Srivastava, C/E Praveen Kumar Singh, 2 Officer Pavithran Bipin, 3 Officer Thomas Sosan, Chief cook Mr. Varghese Jose and GS Mr. Nithin Peter for taking the time out during hectic cargo operations and for the knowledge and hospitality they provided.

Seafaring is not just glamour, but indeed, a very tough profession and our respect for seafarers has now grown manyfold!



Contributed by,
Johnson Leonard
Business Division

Seen here (L to R)- C/E Praveen Kumar Singh, Mr. Murugananthan. S, Mr. Johnson Leonard, Capt. Manoj Kumar Srivastava, Mr. Sathish Kumar .T, Mr. Ahamed Jamaldeen, Mr. Riyaldheen. R, Mr. Venkateswarlu.B



National Maritime Day

Almost a 100 years ago, on 5th April 1919- the first Indian flagged vessel "S.S. Loyalty" set sail from the shores of Bombay (now Mumbai) to London. This was no ordinary maiden voyage; this paved the way for many generations of qualified and competent crew from India, who have served the high seas and humanity in general to the highest standards.

India has a vast maritime history behind her. Shipping was a major mode of trade in India even before the prehistoric times. Let us have a brief look at the glorious Maritime history of our nation.

With over 7,500 km of vast coastline, nature has blessed this nation and was destined to be a maritime nation.

There is definitive evidence to suggest that the Indian ships have traversed vast oceans around the peninsula since 4,000 BC. Right from the ancient Indus Valley civilisation to the present day, navies of the sub-continent have been regarded amongst the finest in the world and renowned for their quest for adventure. Thus, adding many a colourful chapter to India's maritime history.

The world's first tidal dock is believed to have been built at Lothal around 2300 BC during the Harappan civilisation, near the present day Mangrol harbour on the Gujarat coast. History records that Indian ships traded with Arab nations and countries as far as Java and Sumatra and available evidence indicate that they were also trading with other nations in the Pacific and the Indian Ocean.

Even before Alexander, there were references to India in Greek works and India had a flourishing trade with Rome. Another account

of the early fifteenth Century describes Indian ships as being built in compartments so that even if one part was shattered, the next remained intact, thus enabling the ship to complete her voyage. This was perhaps a forerunner of the modern day subdivision of ships into watertight compartments, a concept then totally alien to other countries.

The decline of Indian maritime power commenced in the Thirteenth century, and Indian sea power had almost disappeared when the Portuguese arrived in India. They later imposed a system of license for trade and set upon all Asian vessels not holding permits from them.

Coming to the present day shipping, India has to go a long way to establishing itself as a regional super power. I sincerely hope that all of us including the Government of India, Ship Owners, Managers and Seafarers will work towards achieving this goal.

Wishing all our seafarers a very happy "National Maritime Day 2016". Happy and Safe Sailing!



Contributed by,
Capt. Sony George
Insurance Division

More Power to Women – International Women's Day Special!



Ms. Sulagna Ray, daughter of C/E Mr. Deepak Ray (exAPL California and OOCL Dubai), is an exponent of 'Odissi', which is widely considered to be the oldest surviving dance form in India and traces back its origin to the 1st Century B.C. (yes, you heard/read it right – 1st century B.C.)!

Sulagna has performed at various prestigious events across the globe – which include the World Expo in Shanghai, the Singapore Institute of Fine Arts and the Tribeni Mahotsav in India; she indeed is a true artist and an excellent ambassador of the Odissi art form!

On the occasion of the 'International Women's Day', our Editorial team got in touch with Sulagna for a Q & A session, here is how it unfolded.....

ET: As a leading artist, what led to your initiation into Odissi?

SR: It was my mother who introduced me to Odissi. I was very young, about three years of age, when I was admitted to Diksha Manjari for learning Odissi. I can say I grew up on Odissi. My Guru, Mrs. Poushali Mukerjee made me love this dance form even more.

ET: Tell us about one unforgettable moment from any of your performances.

SR: This incident took place when I was a teenager, very young to evaluate the depth of my art form. I was a part of Chitrangada, a Dance drama by Rabindranath Tagore. I played the role of Shurupa, which was one of the main characters. It was a government initiative for senior citizens. After the performance, when I came out I saw hundreds of people waiting for me just to congratulate me, and to give me their blessings. It was so overwhelming that I couldn't move. That day I realized how much emotionally and at times spiritually involved the audience can be – especially with a classical dance form or with any art for that matter!



ET: Talking about 'support teams', we are sure your parents and sibling/s have been a great support system for you?

SR: I cannot possibly thank my family enough for always being there for me. What I am today is just because of them. My father has always been enthusiastic and supportive. I cannot imagine doing anything without my mother, from dressing to make up, from practises to performances. I have a little brother, ten years younger than me; he loves classical music and in fact is pretty good at it, he learns the music of my dance pieces and sings for me while I practice.

ET: What is your typical day like, does it involve a lot of practice?

SR: I have a dance academy of my own, 'Sulagna Dance Academy'. I take classes almost every day; I love teaching children. I practise myself. I chalk out my next performances. And I read a lot. I do a lot of research on Indian classical dance forms. Apart from that, I own a firm called 'Sprish', where we make handmade, organic products like candles, beauty soaps and other skin care products, where I spend much of my time.

ET: What is your dream? How do you plan to popularize Odissi?

SR: I think it is imperative to inculcate the love for our rich culture and its art forms into our generation and the next. I teach my students how scientifically interesting our dance form is. I believe we should reach out to people through a modern perspective, keeping intact the integrity and grammar of the dance form... With current issues.

ET: You are currently pursuing your BSc in Electronics from the Calcutta University – how do you manage your studies along with the entire touring, practise, etc.?

SR: It has been challenging, especially when the big events clashed with my exams. I always submitted the assignments after the last date of submission, but it is not very difficult too. It's all about time management and prioritizing.

ET: Finally, your father has been a senior sailing C/E onboard our vessels, do you have any message for our seafarers?

SR: All I have to say is I miss my father a lot whenever he is away sailing... At the same time, I always look forward to the day he comes back home with bags full of goodies for all of us and tells us fascinating stories from countries far and wide. **To all seafarers - be safe and thank you for making the world a better place through the pivotal role you play in International Trade!**



Team Introduction - Fleet Personnel Department, Tankers



1 Name : Vinod Arun Xavier
Designation : Planning Manager
Hobby : Travelling, Music

3 Name : Vijay Ramalingam
Designation: Manning Executive
Hobby: Biking, Dancing

5 Name : Subbarayalu.G
Designation: Planning Manager
Hobby: Music, Football

7 Name : Malairajan S.P
Designation: Manning Executive
Hobby: Reading, PC Games

2 Name : Liji Manoj
Designation: Senior Manning Executive
Hobby: Travelling, Music

4 Name : James Michael Anand
Designation : Fleet Personnel Manager – Tanker
Hobby : Tennis, Music

6 Name : Arul Pratab.D
Designation: Manning Executive
Hobby: Reading

8 Name : Prabhu.S
Designation: Manning Executive
Hobby: Biking



We are pleased to announce the opening of our new office in Mumbai (India) which was formally and rightly inaugurated by team members from our seagoing staff – Synergy is all about its people after all! Here's wishing Team Mumbai fair winds and following seas!



Proud to be Synergian



Name : Mr. Suresh Kurup
Designation : Head of Ship Management
No. of years : 6
Location : Cochin

These six years with Synergy Group have been the most memorable and enriching of my professional life, and it gives me immense pleasure and pride to have witnessed the growth of the organisation. It is the value based approach in all aspects and the friendly atmosphere in the office that truly makes Synergy different. I've been privileged enough to take up tasks with complete responsibility and authority and get results that have indeed boosted my confidence and has further motivated me to bring out the best in me. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank each one of you for the support extended to me at various stages and adding to this wonderful experience. Look forward to your continued support!

Name : Mr. Ragaveandiran SV
Designation : Business Analyst – ERP Division
No. of years : 5
Location : Chennai

I have been working at Synergy for over five years now, and I have had the opportunity here to work with people you like and respect, which obviously grows over time. I am allowed to think rationally and express my views without any fear or favor. Being a Synergian provides me an opportunity to follow Buddha's advice, "Believe nothing, no matter where you read it, or who has said it, even if I have said it unless it agrees with your reason and your common sense."



Name : Ms. Rijjo Chopra
Designation: Manning Executive - Visa/ Documents
No. of years : 2
Location : Delhi

I vividly remember, my first day at Synergy- I was nervous and unsure if I would be able to deliver and justify the responsibilities entrusted to me. Well, two years down the line I can surely say that it has been a high learning curve which has led to my professional growth and has motivated me to come out of my comfort zone. We are all born with unique qualities and talents. Synergy has brought out the best in me and helped me hone my skills and work on my weaknesses. I am a PROUD Synergian!



Name : Ms. Jessica F. Fiel
Designation : Crewing Assistant - Masterlist /Data Management
No. of years : 2 years
Location : Manila

"Stars can't shine without darkness, work hard stay humble."

I am thankful to Synergy for trusting me and giving me an opportunity as this is my very first job right after my graduation. Synergy has shown me the importance of diligence and patience. I have considered Synergy as my second family, it's only matter of time before Synergy reaches the top and I hope that I am still around to call myself a Synergian as proudly as I do today.



Competency Management System



The competency management system is an enabling methodology for an objective evaluation of proficiency, strengths and possibilities. On one hand, while it shall be used for screening and selection of candidates for employment, promotion and reemployment, on the other hand it shall enable the assessor to identify training needs of existing pool of seafarers in the Synergy Group.

Synergy competency management system is based on industry best practices, e.g.: TMSA, CDI, SIRE, TOTS, SIGTTO. This, in addition to bare minimums of STCW competencies, enables the seafarers to complete their role on board successfully

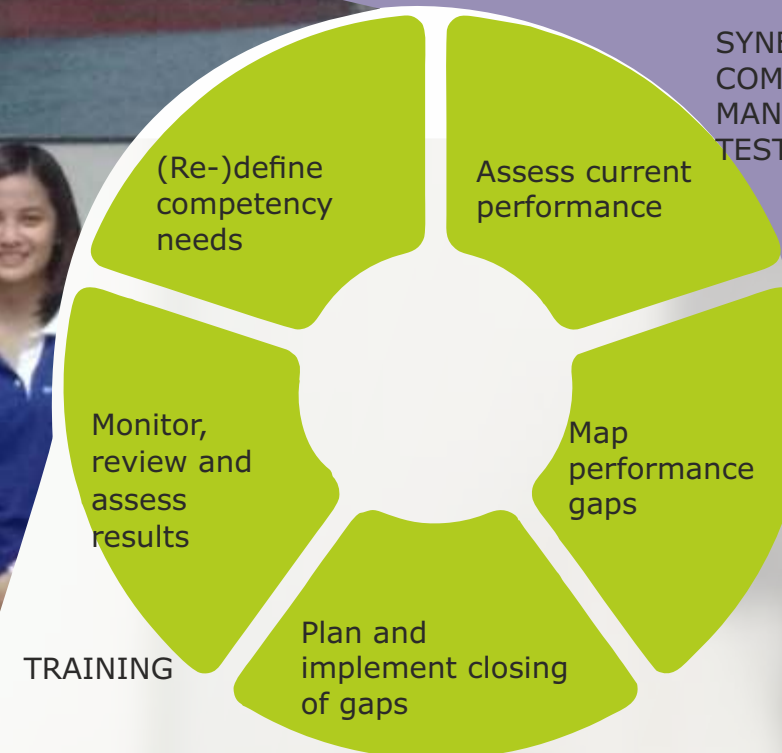
The process-

The process consists of a CBT (computer based test) consisting of multiple choice questions randomly selected by a software from an extensive question bank based on various functions, areas and ship types. The CBT has been programmed to give due weightage to the rank based responsibilities of the candidate. A maximum of 3 attempts is allowed and the seafarer is expected to score at least 60% marks.

This is followed by an interview. The software guides the interviewer through the interview process by way of randomly generating a set of questions from another question bank of oral questions. The software also aids in identification of training needs based on weak areas of the candidate.

BASIS
INTERNATIONAL
STANDARDS NOT
LIMITED TO STCW

SYNERGY
COMPETENCY
MANAGEMENT
TESTS



The competency management team has provided following guidelines to the interviewers/assessors-

- Prepare well for the interview- The interviewer/assessor should get well organized and have all necessary material at hand prior commencing interview e.g. appraisal reports, career summary, feedbacks, relevant statistics, records etc.
- Performance as well as potential should be evaluated.
- Career development should be assessed objectively. The seafarer's accomplishments on previous vessels may not be directly relevant for the interview, however, same cannot be disregarded as far as evaluation of career goals is concerned. It is the total career which needs to be discussed to ascertain interviewee's suitability and training needs.
- Impartiality and fairness is an absolute must. The interviewer must disregard his/her own biases or perceptions of employees. When the assessor has a negative or positive bias towards an individual group, same may cause assessment errors. One should be watchful against all kinds of conscious or subconscious prejudices around gender, race, province/region, age, educational background, nationality, colour etc.
- Interviewer must deal objectively with facts and concrete examples of employee performance and competence. It is especially easy for the assessor to get swayed or preoccupied with one or two critical incidents in an employee's work history. He/she should be careful that such incidents do not colour his judgement especially when they are isolated, do not form a pattern or are not typical. Recent performances do have a tendency to sway an interviewer towards an unfavourable or favourable conclusion but objectivity in evaluation should not be a casualty in any circumstances.
- Standards should be maintained at all costs. A favourable evaluation should be well earned by the interviewee and should not be a largesse. The tendency to give benefit of doubt may eventually lower standards over a period of time.
- Interviewer should avoid getting branded. If the interviewer gets identified as an "easy" or "tough" assessor or somebody who plays favourites, it is more likely than not to lead to inaccurate and unfair evaluations. Such situations may eventually propagate a culture where assessment of competence and performance is neither considered important nor perceived to carry any value whatsoever.



During closing and "signing off" of an interview, interviewers are encouraged to give straight and honest feedback, without being rude or impolite. Possible obstacles in career growth or realization of potential should be discussed as well. The interviewer should provide an understanding to the interviewee of his/her potential for growth and explore competence development alternatives. The seafarer should be encouraged to discuss his self-appraisal and any disagreements he has with conclusions of the interviewer.

Finally the interview should end on a congenial note with interviewer discussing his evaluation regarding identified competency gaps and development/training needs of the interviewee.

Implementation in Manila

The evaluation for ratings was simultaneously started in Chennai as well as Manila in March, 2015.

Two members of competency team (Debabrata Pattrea –Technical Superintendent and Vijayakumar Ramalingam –Software Developer) travelled to Manila in July to implement system for other ranks, and collect feedback, challenges being faced by Manila office were identified and acted upon, Software bottlenecks were removed for seamless operation.

Usage of the system jumped many-fold after the Competency team's visit to Manila and after repeated demonstrations by them. Separate database was created for SGO, Manila keeping in consideration local factors like usage of simpler language to remove any perceived ambiguity. During the visit by the team, DNV-GL Survey simulator was also installed to cater to future training needs.

List of Promotions



Congratulations and best wishes to the following sailing staff who have recently achieved their promotions.

Master - Mr. Sanjoy Torgolmath

Master - Mr. Shekar Chandra

Chief Engineer - Mr. Amarbir Singh

Chief Engineer - Mr. Bhupendra Shukla

Chief Engineer - Mr. Gaurav Aggarwal

Chief Engineer - Mr. Ramu Boopathy

Second Engineer - Mr. Jude Sathish



Contributed by:
Mr. Debabrata Pattrea
Technical Superintendent

Proud to be Synergian

Capt. Vivek Mittal Master - MT Grace Victoria



I am a sailor for years and have loved every bit of my job ever since I joined this profession almost 25 years ago. I have had varied experiences were I sailed in different waters with various companies. However, the professionalism that I've seen at Synergy is commendable. A young company brimming with enthusiasm and highly competent people. There's no issue which goes unaddressed. Usually, personal problems of seafarers are the ones which are least important for those ashore, but that's not the case at Synergy. I've realised that the emotions of the seafarers are equally valued and always kept at the forefront. It speaks volumes of a company's work culture and ethics. I appreciate the way Synergy engages with the seafarers family by making them contribute in different ways, for e.g. towards this newsletter. It is very encouraging and helps make everyone feel a part of the larger Synergy family. Kudos to all the efforts.

Mr. Rommel C. Canta 2/O - MV Occitan Barsac

It's an honor to be a Synergian. Even a newcomer like me already feels like an old timer in this company. The warm welcome they extended. The company looks after the welfare of their crew and their families. They are at the forefront in adopting standards for the safe working environment on board, wages are good and always remitted on time, qualified and competent staff are promoted in line with the company's policies and equal treatment meted out to all seafarers irrespective of nationality and rank.



Mr. Gulshan Singh Chief Engineer - MV APL Antwerp



From the day, I joined Synergy, I realized, that the organization cares for its seafarers, and it's not mere lip service. "No blame culture" is not just on paper, but the team strives to walk the talk. I feel it's another home for me. The relationship with the office is always informal without compromising what truly needs to be conveyed from either side. I shall sincerely, never hesitate going an extra mile in such an atmosphere.

Capt. Shankar Ayyar Master - MV APL Oregon

It all happened by chance in 2008. On a friend's suggestion, I just walked into a small office in Doshi Towers, which had a handful of people. But the magnanimous warmth, care, and affection shown by the office staff took me over instantly. Since then the company has grown leaps and bounds, but it is very heartening to see that same level of warmth, affection, along with professionalism is shown by the management and staff even now. The same core values are being inculcated into all new joiners in the company. The care and humility demonstrated by the leadership team inspire one and all. They never hesitate to acknowledge that Seafarers are equally important contributors to a company's growth. We feel, we don't work for Synergy, but we are a part of it. Now we have entered the 10th year of our existence, and I am proud to be associated with this phenomenon called Synergy, throughout all the highs and lows. I am indeed- Proud to be a Synergian



A few things money can't buy.....

Hi Synergians, myself Keerthi, wife of Chief Engineer Ashok Prasad. I'm happy to share my experiences of celebrating India's Republic Day on board Garnet Express along with my 5yr old little princess HIRANMAYI [lovingly called - HONEY].

On 25th Jan, a few of the team members suggested that I should dress up Honey a bit differently for the Republic Day celebrations planned for the next day. Had I been ashore I would have walked down to the nearest mall and could have bought a new dress perhaps, but since I was on board and the nearest Mall was only an ocean away I didn't know what to do! We then got this idea of dressing her up in the colours of our National Flag. We managed to find the other colours, but the green lowers were a challenge – we needed to think out of the box and soon! We managed this by painting a white cloth with green colour and making it a skirt [Thanks to J/E Siva for the same].

The next morning when I took her to the Wheelhouse wearing our tricolour everyone was so happy and thrilled that there was almost a race to get a 'selfie' clicked with Honey! A BIG thanks to Capt. Sridhar who

took Honey by his side & made her hoist the national flag, it was an emotional moment for me – here I was far away from my country in the middle of the high seas, and my daughter was hoisting the national flag- I almost had tears in my eyes. Honey also joined everyone in singing the national anthem and saluting the flag. They say a few things money can't buy – I guess this was one of those moments which am sure even Honey will cherish for the rest of her life! A special thanks to the entire team on board which has become more like a family to me now.

Finally, thanks to the FOG-HORN team for publishing this experience and making this an ever-lasting page in our memory book.



Contributed by,
Mrs. Keerthi
W/o Ch. Engg. Ashok Prasad

Team OOCL ITALY organized cricket and table tennis tournaments, which saw active participation from the crew. Seen here are the winners of the tournaments with their respective trophy's.



Anandu Shanmugasundaram - AB



Capt. Deepak Kalidas and Timothy Paul Iruthayaraj - AB

It's not the mountains we conquer but ourselves!

2/O Mr. Aman Arora (currently o/b D&K 1 and ex Ningbo Dawn) recently got an opportunity to scale the Renok Peak and the Rahtong Glacier- being an outdoor and adventure enthusiast- Aman grabbed the opportunity with both hands.

Here's what he has to say about his experience-

I always enjoyed the outdoors and I gradually developed this deep sense of liking for the mountains, to start with I hiked and trekked the mountainous terrain of North India (Himachal and Uttarakhand Himalayas), all of which turned out to be great experiences! I then found out about the Mountaineering Institutes in India as I wanted to pursue proper training in mountaineering (rock climbing, snow crafting, ice climbing, etc.).

Last September, before the beginning of my First Mate classes, I got the opportunity to pursue the basic mountaineering course at the HMI (Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, Darjeeling).

As a part of the training we were taken to Northern Sikkim -after trekking for a week, we finally reached the camp located at the base of Kanchenjunga Massif. We learned rock climbing, snow crafting, ice climbing and related techniques at the base camp for ten days and further summited the Rathong

glacier and finally the Renok peak, which is around 16,500 feet above the sea level (it is higher than the average flying height of helicopters).

This by-far was the most exhilarating experience of my life- the sight of the 28 thousand'er peaks of Kanchenjunga (the 3rd highest peak of the world) from the base camp was awe inspiring – hope to get there someday! Would like to quote my favorite mountaineer, Sir Edmund Hillary here "It's not the mountains we conquer but ourselves!"

Contributed by,
Aman Arora
Second Officer - D&K 1



Mr. James Morris, currently on board M.T. Ruby Express has come up with an ingenious way of 'upcycling' discarded material on board ships. As a hobby, he started making various showpieces from the waste material which include empty glass bottles, ice cream sticks, toothpicks, cancelled charts and wooden pallets.

Most of his leisure time on board is spent on creating such beautiful models out of waste. Upcycling is the best way to reuse material and reduce our footprint!

It's worth mentioning here for our readers that Mr. James and his family had to leave their hometown of Nagapattanam after the devastating Tsunami which struck the Indian Ocean region in 2004. He has moved to Chennai ever since!



If you have a garden and a library- you have everything one needs – 34th Cochin Flower Show!



The 34th edition of the prestigious 'Cochin Flower Show', the weeklong event which attracts flower enthusiasts from across the country was held recently. The event displayed about 20,000 flowering plants and theme-based floral design studios. The exhibition also showcased gardening trends and techniques. We are pleased to announce that our colleague Capt. Thomas Zacharias' (APL California) family bagged the second prize in the 'Best Home Garden' category. Capt. Thomas's father is a keen horticulturist and spends close to 6 hours each day in the upkeep of the garden which is home to almost 200 varieties of Orchids and 75 varieties of roses to name a few, the 1500 sq ft. lush green lawn also has various seasonal flowers and vegetables!

Our Editorial Team got in touch with Mr. Zacharia (senior), the man of few words that he is, all he had to say was 'If you have a garden and a library- you have everything one needs'

Coincidentally the Family name of the Zacharia's is 'Pushpamangalam', which in Malayalam (a language in India) means house of flowers (Pushpam is 'flower' and Mangalam is 'house').

A home away from home

2ND FEB 2016: - A day which changed my perception of life at sea. I boarded this beautiful lady while she was undergoing her makeup sessions at Singapore dry-dock. I was amazed by non-stop 24-hour working schedule of the ship's staff. I went through a thorough safety familiarization after joining which highlighted the importance of emergency preparedness and other safety practices.

Life jackets, Immersion suits, Drills, Port/Starboard, Bridge, etc. are all familiar terms by now. My biggest fear was that of rough seas and seasickness, God has been kind, though, and it's been fair winds and following seas thus far :)

Life on board is extremely challenging and very different from what land lubbers have in mind. I was impressed by the discipline and the safety consciousness of the crew. The way the team on-board handles daily operations including hygiene, cleanliness and Housekeeping apart from their routine jobs is remarkable!

The ambience in the accommodation doesn't allow you to miss home at all. People on-board come from different backgrounds, speak

different languages at times but work in unison to safely run the vessel and is an excellent example of teamwork and "SYNERGY."

Last but not the least, I would like to thank my husband Chief Officer Mr. Avnish Kumar Singh, Capt. Pravin Dhawan & the entire team of the good vessel. "EMERALD EXPRESS" for making this experience a memorable one!! Wishing all Synergians clear skies, Fair Winds and Calm Seas!

Contributed by,
Mrs. Vinita Avnish Singh



A different approach to avoid Collision/Grounding

The spate of collision/ grounding incidents which I have read about in the news recently has made me ponder for a solution for averting such incident. In my view, all that is needed- is a change in mindset!

Each member of the Bridge team and in fact each team member on-board must feel a sense of ownership towards the ship; they should consider the vessel like they would consider their car/bike. There would be times when the car/bike could be driven by someone else, but the car belongs to us, and any damage would be a personal loss. I have noticed that one is always more cautious when s/he is not in the driver's seat, we should have the same feeling when on-board too.

When the master is conning the vessel, think as if an elder is driving the car, if under pilotage, think as if a driver is driving the car and everyone on board is akin to your family sitting in the rear seat. But the car (ship) belongs to you and any loss of life or property is a personal loss.

Now, when your father is driving the car, say on a busy street, and you spot a bike parked on the side, don't you say "Dad, keep right, there is a bike parked there" that's because you don't want a single scratch on your car. Similarly, when the

Master is conning, and you spot a fishing boat, let him now about the boat and ask him to stay clear! Imagine this - your driver is over-speeding, your first reaction would be to ask him to slow down because you don't want to put your family in danger or damage your car. Similarly, if a pilot does not maintain a safe speed, point it out and request him to slow down. Remember, speed is the single biggest cause of accidents, be it on the road or at sea.

Friends and colleagues, at the end of it, it's all about perception, for the world outside these are giant steel bodies but for us ships are not just a home away from home, but they are a dream which we live every single day which we spend onboard (childhood dreams for most of us).

This change in mindset can avoid many unwanted situations; the bottom line is that in a case of a collision or any other incident at sea, irrespective of whether one is correct as per rules, you will, still have to answer many irrelevant questions and that too to different authorities. Let's together, make the seas a safer place!

Contributed by:
Capt. Vinod K. Sharma
MT Falcon Grace

Republic Day Celebrations



Capt. Ritesh Bhamaria and team
JBU Opal



Capt. Ajay Srivastava and team
APL Spain



Where Dreams come True - a real life story!

Himalaya Swain, a 25 year old Wiper from Orissa, shared his experience of how he got into the Synergy family and how his life has changed ever since. Coming from an impoverished background and with the resolve of supporting his family financially, Himalaya had set his sights on joining the merchant navy.

His father runs a petty shop outside the Marine engineering and research institute (M.E.R.I, Kolkata) and many officers and engineers frequent his shop on a daily basis, Swain's father also dreamt that his son would join the merchant navy someday and support the family. They took huge sums of loan to fund his education and make their dreams come true.

In 2014, Himalaya Swain obtained his watch keeping certificate after a lot of struggle but was unable to find a job. He started working at the shop to support his father and help in making ends meet. Luck finally shone on Himalaya in the form of a 3rd engineer who came to M.E.R.I and suggested that he try SYNERGY.

Himalaya packed his bags and came to Chennai hoping for the best. He fondly recalls

the time he spent in Chennai and the people he met. His experience at the Synergy office was very pleasant. He remembers how he was guided through the entire induction process by Mr. Samuel of the Fleet Personnel Department and how comfortable everybody made him feel.

Himalaya was welcomed into the Synergy family and given the opportunity that he had always dreamt of. He fulfilled his father's dreams of joining the merchant navy fraternity and is thankful to all those who helped him secure a job at Synergy especially, Mr. Debabrata Pattrea (Technical Supdt.) and to Mr. Samuel.

He wishes to be a Marine engineer someday and sincerely hopes Synergy will be the right platform for help him to achieve all his long term goals.
LET'S WISH HIM ALL THE BEST!!



Paint art by Mr. Sridhar Nagendran on-board OOCL Kualalumpur. A special mention for Bosun Mr. Sathish Kumar Kathavarayan, who has exhibited some great ropework and done the framing himself!



Paint art by Mr. Pushparaj Selvaraj on-board Nave Pulsar

SGOI Seafarers' Wives Club - Making a difference!

Since she gave birth to her daughter- Amanda, 36-year old Mrs. Canlas never ceased to pray for a miracle. The young girl who is now eight years old was born with a hole in her heart. As Amanda grows older, her condition worsens. Her recent reports revealed that the hole is about three centimetres big. She needs to undergo surgery immediately –step inside the 'National Children's Hospital' in Metro Manila and you will hear many such heart wrenching stories!

SGOI Seafarers Wives Club recently organized its first outreach program which was a blessing in disguise for kids like Amanda at the National Children's Hospital's department of Respiratory and Neuro Surgery.

The Club had initially planned to reach out to 50 cancer-afflicted children, but based on the suggestion of the Hospital Management (Social Service) it was decided that the outreach program would be dedicated to the children in the Respiratory and Neuro Surgery Department, who as per the Hospital authorities were being neglected in terms of financial assistance.

Mrs. Monreal, who serves as the Advisor to the wives club helped in the careful planning and execution of the outreach program which turned out to be a huge success! We are pleased to report that a total of 100 children benefitted from the proceeds.



Chennai Floods – Relief activities by Synergians

Tamil Nadu recently battled one of its worst floods in over a century, as several parts of the state were inundated and cut off from essential supplies.

Our very own Chennai was amongst the worst hit and constant downpour had turned the capital into groups of virtual islands!

Synergy Group rose to the occasion and left no stone unturned to ensure that all employees and their families were safe and accounted for. An emergency response centre was quickly formed and a few of our colleagues volunteered to man this station 24x7, a motorised boat was hired (with great difficulty) and was used to rescue scores of employees and their families (including aged parents in a few cases) from different parts of the city.

The doors of the company guest houses were thrown open to all staff as well as the general population – thus providing food and shelter to those who were forced to leave their homes due to the rising water levels.

Once all the employees were accounted for, the focus shifted towards the general population of the city of Chennai. Food packets, clothes, etc. were arranged for and distributed. After the relief efforts, the focus has now shifted to rehabilitation, a team comprising of our senior management visited the residences of our employees, in Chennai's worst hit areas – in most cases, entire houses had been submerged in 6-8 feet of water, thus causing loss of most of their possessions.

We are pleased to announce that a corpus fund has been created, with Synergy Trust contributing a significant amount to it. This fund will be used to help team members who had suffered material loss due to the floods and help their families move back to normalcy after the nightmarish experience of December 2015!

Special thanks here, to TEAM's Ruby Express, ISIS, OOCL Dubai & OOCL Kuala Lumpur for their generous contribution towards the planned rehabilitation activities!



Name : Dhairya
Age : 7 Years
S/O : Capt. Vivek Mittal on MT Grace Victoria

Dhairya has been learning Taekwondo since he was 3 years old. He is 7 now. The red belt is his 4th belt, after he started with the white, followed by yellow, green and blue. He loves the art and practices his regime every day



Name S. : Krishani
Age : 4 Years
D/O : B. Santhosh

Won Gold medals in the painting, Story Telling and running competitions.



Name : Richa Miriyam George
Age : 7 Years
D/O : Capt. Sony George

Multifaceted Richa bagged prizes in Malayalam Recitation, Flower Arrangement and Salad making.



Name : Saanvi Gandhi and Dhruv Gandhi
Age : 6 Years and 4 Years
S/O & D/O: Capt. Omprakash

Saanvi and Dhruv recently participated in the interschool karate competition, where both the little ones bagged the first prize. Saanvi participated in the 'Champion of champions' category in 'Individual Kata' and in a keenly contested event went on to win the championship prize!



Name : Aniruddh Ajit Pillai
Age : 14 Years
S/O : Capt. Ajit Kumar Pillai and Devi Ajit Pillai.

Aniruddh recently won the Drive Club Gaming Competition and came first in all 3 categories Seniors, Juniors and Sub-Junior- that's what we call a clean sweep! The competition was organized by IT Net, India.



Name : Ruth Rebecca Paul
Age : 8 years
D/O : Susan Paul

Receiving 1st prize for English & Malayalam - Recitation
Seen here is Little Ruth receiving the 1 st prize for Story telling (English) from famous Music Director- Mr. M. Jayachandran

A tribute to the spirit of Chennai!



Ms. Priyadarshini and Capt. Ramadass from Synergy Maritime participated in the half (21.1 kms) category of the Chennai marathon which was held recently. The marathon was a tribute to the spirit of Chennai and its volunteers who risked their own lives to save others during the recent floods

SWANTONS - Corporate Cricket tournament

Team Synergy Oceanic (Cochin) recently participated in the SWANTONS CRICKET TOURNAMENT which was held at the famous Palace oval ground, Tripunithura.

