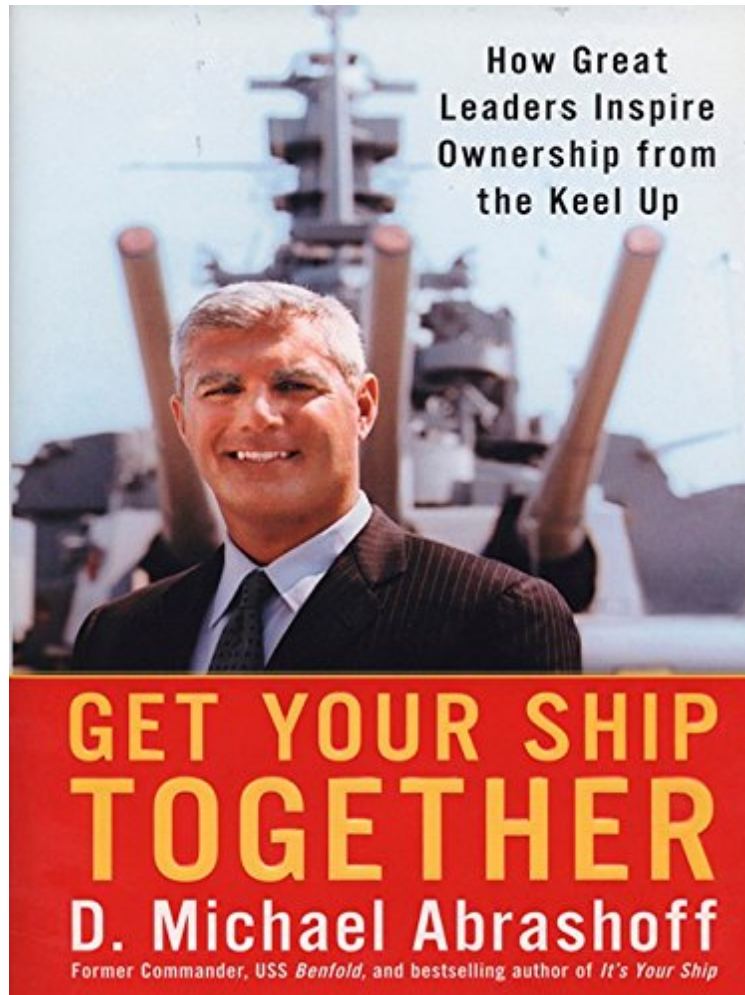


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Get Your Ship Together: How Great Leaders Inspire Ownership From The Keel Up

D. Michael Abrashoff

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D. Michael Abrashoff : Get Your Ship Together: How Great Leaders Inspire Ownership From The Keel Up before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Get Your Ship Together: How Great Leaders Inspire Ownership From The Keel Up:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. What a great leader doesBy IBuy2MuchThere seems to be uproar about the use of "I" and "my" in Captain Abrashoff's books. There is no "we" for a Captain of a U.S. Navy vessel... the buck stops at the commander's desk. The commander cannot say "we (they, he, she, all of them, etc...) screwed up", the Captain has to step forward and take it on the chin. (This is especially true in the U.S. Navy. Please see action reports on Navy vessels that have run aground).Captain Abrashoff used the principles of teamwork and reward to get what he needed to accomplish and that was to have a top-notch war machine ready to go. He gives full credit to those

in his command for their performance, and praises those who rose to the task. That is exactly what a great leader does - and that is why Captain Abrashoff was, and is, a successful leader. As for relating back to his prior book in his current book(s) - he does not ask you to buy it, he uses it a foundation of his points. Instead, he shares examples that he can relate to within his plane of experience. Much the way we do when we share third party experiences. I have tremendous respect for this man, and I hope my grandchildren serve under such a man as Captain Abrashoff. Godspeed to you, Sir. 7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Getting It Together With Capt. Abrashoff By Alan L. Chase Since leaving the Navy, Mike Abrashoff has set sail on a second career that includes leadership consulting, speaking and writing - helping those in the world of commerce to navigate the tricky currents of competition, change, and corporate complacency. His latest book follows in the wake of his best seller that I reviewed yesterday, and chronicles heroes from business and the military as they demonstrate the practical wisdom of leading through building teams of committed employees. "Get Your Ship Together - How Great Leaders Inspire Ownership from the Keel Up," offers six portraits of leaders who "get everyone to buy into the cause and accept personal responsibility for the organization." I found this book to be both inspiring and full of practical wisdom. The six leaders whose leadership stories Abrashoff shares are different enough in temperament, context and in the specific challenges they face that it becomes clear that the book's leadership principles truly are universal in their application. First Lieutenant Gabriel "Buddy" Gengler was faced with transforming a platoon of soldiers trained to launch rockets into a band of street-fighting urban guerillas. Trish Karter of Dancing Deer Bakery in Roxbury, MA had to find a recipe for building a team that shared her vision of delivering a balanced diet of world-class cakes and cookies, healthy profits and community involvement as the icing on the cake. Roger Valine is CEO of Vision Service Plan in Rancho Cordova, CA. Roger has been able to see his way clear to build an enterprise that has cornered the market on eye-care benefit plans while creating an atmosphere that focuses on giving his employees a healthy lifestyle balance between work and family. Al Collins rose from the backwater of Warner Robins, GA to sail the seas as Captain of the USS Fitzgerald. During his voyage to his role as a naval officer and inspiring leader, he learned to apply his mother's words of advice spoken as he prepared to leave the Deep South: "You'll never be a great leader until you're a great follower." Laura Folse leads a team of 700 scientists and engineers at BP - a rare female leader in the male dominated world of oil exploration. Laura has fueled her success at BP with an unshakable determination to use her staff as consultative partners who share accountability for the success of each project. Her approach has tapped a deep reservoir of trust and loyalty among her team members. Ward Clapham of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police has pioneered "smart policing" across Canada. In the course of learning to work alongside community leaders to refine police priorities and procedures, Mountie Ward was forced to mount several challenges against the entrenched bureaucracy of those above him in the RCP chain of command. The overarching impression I have after having read and absorbed the stories of these six very different leaders is that great leadership can happen anywhere - in any setting, in any context, in any company - as long as the leader is willing to share the vision, the responsibility and the credit with her team. I trust you will enjoy this book as much as I did. Anchors aweigh! 10 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I bought this book for a friend because I saw ... By Hadley MI bought this book for a friend because I saw him speak at an event, [...] in 2015 and he motivated me so much, I wanted to go out and lead a ship and change the world...

Former U.S. Navy Commander Michael Abrashoff attracted worldwide media attention for his success in turning around a struggling ship, the USS Benfold; the subject of his acclaimed bestseller, *It's Your Ship*. Since then, he's been a fixture on the business lecture circuit, spreading an empowering message that any organization can be turned around with compassionate but firm leadership. Abrashoff never claimed to have all the answers. He also knew that there were plenty of other creative leaders in the navy, army, air force, marine corps, and even the coast guard who could teach businesspeople how to motivate, inspire, and get great results under pressure. So he asked around, found some fascinating people in every branch of the U.S. military and the business world, and interviewed them about leadership and teambuilding. The result is *Get Your Ship Together*; a book that will be just as valuable as *It's Your Ship*. For example, Abrashoff introduces us to a working-class enlisted man who rose rapidly in the navy for his creative leadership under fire; an army platoon leader who fought in Afghanistan; the first woman to fly an Apache helicopter in combat; a former commander of the air force's elite Blue Angels; and many other unsung heroes. Abrashoff distills their stories into fresh lessons that can be applied in the business world, such as: Make a contract with your people and honor it. Develop your subordinates better so you can buy back a little quality of life. Conduct the battle on your terms, not those of your adversary.

About the Author D. Michael Abrashoff served for almost twenty years in the U.S. Navy, culminating in a tour of duty as captain of the \$1 billion warship USS Benfold. After leaving the navy, he wrote a bestseller about progressive leadership called *It's Your Ship*. He lectures to business audiences around the country. Excerpt. copy; Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. INTRODUCTION MY NEW LIFE AS THE CAPTAIN OF USS BENFOLD BEGAN ON A gleaming day in San Diego Bay. A high sun warmed the salt air to a perfect 73 degrees; the pale blue

horizon, flecked with white sails, blended seamlessly into an indigo sea. And there I was on the bridge of a billion-dollar navy warship, a thirty-six-year-old master of the universe lounging casually in the captain's chair, as I prepared to take my ship out to sea for the first time. Benfold was a beautiful fighting machine—a destroyer armed with the navy's most advanced guided missiles, a radar system that could home in on a bird-sized object fifty miles away, and a presumably superb crew of 310 men and women. With four gas turbine engines at my fingertips, I could push this 8,300-ton leviathan to more than thirty knots—at least thirty-three miles an hour—sending up a massive rooster tail in her wake. My adrenaline was flowing. The moment I had been waiting for my entire career was at hand. The tugboats were alongside, standing by for the order to guide us away from the pier. Despite all that power and sophisticated machinery, and no matter how good a ship handler the captain may be, we still need tugboats to help steer us into and out of our berth. Mooring to and getting under way from the pier are two of our most difficult maneuvers. Lots of things can go wrong—you can smash into the wharf or into ships behind you, or run the ship aground. If any of those things were to happen, I could get fired almost on the spot; my head would roll even before the investigation started. Also, right underneath the bow of the ship is a huge, bulbous sonar dome covered by a black rubber protective device. Think of it as a five-million-dollar steel-belted radial tire. If it scrapes the curb (read pier), you can decrease the sonar's ability to detect submarines. Or, worst case, you can puncture the protective shield and deflate it completely. So prudence dictates that we use tugs to move us away from the pier. Now, with the engines just whispering at idle speed, their vast stores of power bridled, we prepared to shove off. What a kick. I was bursting with pride. I couldn't wait to hit the open sea and order all engines ahead, flank speed. I gave the order to take in all lines, directed the tugs to start backing us slowly from the pier, and then, like air whooshing out of a balloon, my ego cruise ended before it ever got under way. Benfold suddenly lost power. Her engines quit turning. In an instant, she became nothing but 8,300 tons of steel likely to run aground or crash into another ship. In the eerie silence, red warning lights blinked everywhere. I dashed into the pilothouse, fumbling for emergency phones, demanding information. At that moment, I was enormously relieved and grateful to have the tugboats hovering nearby like watchful parents running alongside a kid on a new bike. I ordered the tugs to push us back to the pier while we investigated the power failure. When a ship loses power abruptly, you have four chances to avoid disaster. You can kick-start the engines by shooting a jet of high-pressure air into the turbines. Like an old-fashioned hand crank, the air jolt gets everything spinning and firing up again. If the first attempt fails, you have three flasks of emergency air for three more tries. But if those don't work, that's it—your ship is dead in the water, a useless and dangerous hulk that has to be towed back to port. That is the ultimate disgrace, rare but not unheard of. Benfold lost power and unmade my day because at least one of the watch standers had not followed procedure. Whenever a ship is under way, the watch standers constantly monitor dials and gauges on the bridge and in the engine room to make sure all the parts of the huge, complex vessel are in sync. If anything goes wrong, they have to react in time to prevent further damage and engine failure. When Benfold's watch standers failed to respond in time, a cascading series of events was set in train—much like the massive power outage on the East Coast in the summer of 2003—and the engines shut down to prevent serious damage. With the ship about to cast off the tugs in the narrow channel, disaster had been only seconds away. We were lucky. Members of the engineering crew came to the rescue and got the engines up and running again in about fifty seconds. My mind was racing just as fast: I had been taught that a captain must be always alert, prepared for any disaster that could materialize in a given situation. Before backing away from the pier, I should have envisioned every possible scenario and had a preplanned response to deal with it. Whether from youthful inexperience or plain old cockiness, I didn't. We were just lucky the tugboats were still there to save us from disaster. Luck, though, is not a sound strategy for success. With time I would come to understand that being the captain when times are good is easy. But true leaders must also prepare for what might happen when times are tough. Sometimes you have to steer a big ship near shoal water and that takes extra skill. The captain's biggest challenge is to be able to navigate wisely under any circumstances, expected or not. Why was I so unready for a thoroughly possible crisis? How should I train myself and my crew for the inevitable next time? I would soon learn that I could order a mission to be accomplished, but I couldn't order great results. Real leaders lay the cornerstone around which a team comes together to produce superior results. A mission based on luck or hope is not sustainable over the long haul. Had I been directing Benfold's castoff and departure like a winning leader, I would have behaved very differently. Real leadership is caring so intensely about something under your control—a ship, say—that you prepare for its success in both good times and bad. As Benfold's fledgling captain, I quickly learned the importance of making sure that every sailor on the ship understood that he or she had a stake in guaranteeing Benfold's readiness for war, peace, or anything in between. As you may have read in my first book, *Your Ship*, I soon learned how tough—and rewarding—it is to turn 310 sailors into teammates who really care about the mission. Not me-firsters, but true collaborators. Winners in any weather. Since leaving the navy almost four years ago, I've learned that the same thing can be accomplished in civilian life if you understand the components needed to ensure success. First and foremost, you must have a sound business strategy that values technical competence. You may even be able to get by on technical competency alone. But truly great results will only come when all crew members believe not only that what they are doing is important,

but also understand that delivering great results every day serves their own best interests. With the right strategy and first-rate leadership, nearly any human enterprise can become a winner. That's why I wrote this book: to share real stories of unsung leadership derived not only from the U.S. military, but from all kinds of fields and organizations, private and public alike. My own reeducation as a leader began out of disgust at myself, a sharp reaction to my unreadiness when Benfold lost power that beautiful San Diego morning. From then on, I trained and retrained myself for emergencies, those sudden jolts when there is no time to think and you have to switch to autopilot. To make that shift successfully requires a repertoire of reflexes. Forward planning is essential. To minimize damage, you have to anticipate and rehearse the first few steps to be taken in a crisis. I hadn't done that. Furthermore, I had forgotten that remedial action should begin with the captain—me. For my entire tour as captain, I constantly tried to visualize worst-case scenarios and what I would do in response. Was I compulsive? Absolutely! But it wasn't because I wanted that next promotion. I could live without getting promoted, but I couldn't live with myself if one of my crew members got seriously injured or killed on my watch because of my failure to be prepared. I know that every other military leader in uniform today feels the same way. I hope and pray that our civilian leaders in the Pentagon share that sentiment. Always preparing for trouble, I became a walking database of contingency plans for everything from a man or woman overboard to World War III. Missiles, plagues, terrorists, heart attacks—I envisioned all those and more. One dawn, I even woke up in a cold sweat after dreaming that terrorists had stolen my dress white uniform, leaving me in my skivvies just as the president of the United States was piped aboard to inspect Benfold. I immediately went out and bought a second set of dress whites—just in case. My sailors sometimes thought I was nuts. The captain's eyes were peeled for terrorists whenever Benfold pulled into a port in the Middle East, so we manned additional watch stations in port for protection. It was 1997, a year after a terrorist bomb had exploded outside the U.S. portion of the Khobar Towers housing complex in Saudi Arabia, killing nineteen servicemen and wounding hundreds of others, civilians and military personnel alike. Having stood in the four-hundred-foot crater left by the blast, and being ever mindful of the senseless loss of lives, I was determined that we would not be caught unprepared. Even after receiving an e-mail from a commodore telling me to relax, I couldn't. There was no history of terrorist attacks on a navy ship in port, he reminded me, and no intelligence that would lead the navy to believe an attack was coming. Maybe so, but it wasn't his crew that I was worried about. The deadly attack on USS Cole came three years later. All this ever ready research did pay off, especially when I asked my ablest sailors how they would handle the nasty situations I imagined. Example: Suppose we're towing a million-dollar array of sonar hydroph...