

Delivering customer benefits



THE world's leading maritime solutions provider, Bernhard Schulte Shipmanagement Group (BSM), is thriving even in the face of continuing uncertainties in shipping.

Yet the global leader in shipmanagement does not rest on its laurels. It continues to introduce fresh initiatives in its bid to attract solid customers and it is distinctly successful not only for its ship management services but also for BSM's 'value added' services which include newbuilding supervision and project management, commercial management, seafarer and corporate travel, catering and housekeeping and ship management software solutions.

A proof of its continuing progress, BSM recently opened its Ship Management Center and Crew Service Center in Mexico to cater to the increasing needs of the Group's steady growth in its operations in South America.

One of the Group's inherent strengths that helps sustain its growth is its ability to evolve as what the market situation warrants.

BSM officers as leaders/managers

One important change it recently adopted, keeping the BSM organization as proactive as before, was in the area of training its officers as indicated in its regular seminar



Mr. Robin Thuillier, BSM Director for Marketing and Business Development



Mr. John Pritchett, Corporate Training Manager of BSM



Capt. Joseph Raluta, Director BSM MTC-Manila

previously called Fleet Officers Meeting.

"We're now holding Fleet Leaders Meeting (FLM) as opposed to Fleet Officers Meeting. We want them (officers) to feel that they are leaders as well," Mr. John Pritchett, Corporate Training Manager of BSM, pointed out regarding the change in the title of the yearly gathering of officers.

In the past, there were always a number of case studies being discussed during FOM where officers could draw lessons from.

"But we don't want to be looking at past events, we want to concentrate on how we can help change future events," explained Mr. Pritchett, who has extensive experience in accident reporting and investigation while serving as safety security officer on board cruise ships in the 1990s.

"We want to focus more on leadership to

help our officers to focus more on managing all the problems that we might encounter. They will be the ones who will make the changes to address the problems," he said.

Hence this year, there was special emphasis on developing so-called soft skills of the 60 Filipino officers, who showed up for the FLM at New World Manila Bay Hotel on Roxas Blvd., Malate Manila.

Developing soft skills

There were ample discussions on Human Element, Leadership & management (HELM), Situational Leadership, Decision Making, Situational Awareness, Behavior Based Safety, Accident Management, Conducting Observations, Fatigue, Personality & Character Style, Mentoring, Communications Skills, Appraisals &



Participants to the Fleet Leaders' Meeting 2017

Competency Management and Management of PSC Inspections.

Mr. Pritchett adeptly facilitated quite a number of activities including table top exercises that elicited enthusiastic participation from FLM participants.

From time to time, he cross-referenced the topics to the Table of Competency in the STCW Convention, underscoring the fact that it is still part of their license to be a leader.

“They might think that it’s only a BSM thing, it is. But if they want to operate as proficient licensed officers they also have the requirements to be a manager and a leader and it is clearly written

in the STCW. That is to reinforce their certificate of competency,” he emphasized.

After his stint in the cruise industry, the Cyprus-based training manager also served for a decade at the training center of Hanseatic Shipping, one of the erstwhile shipmanagement companies of BSM.

Part of his mandate is to develop training materials for BSM various training programs as well as ensure that the FLM’s new focus is cascaded uniformly throughout BSM officers worldwide through its five training centers: Cyprus, Manila, Mumbai, Shanghai, and Poland.

Still on the need to develop the officers’ soft skills, Capt. Joseph Raluta, Director of the BSM Maritime Training Center-Manila, has one important thing to add.

Confident that BSM officers already possess the required navigational skills, he commented: “The competencies (of the officers) are already there, but they would have peak performance if they have the right attitude and proper behavior on board.”



Officers during a group activity



Participants doing table top exercise

Winning new business

And this exemplary performance of its officer onboard is what partly propels BSM’s growth, according to Mr. Robin Thuillier, Director for Marketing and Business Development of BSM.

This is the first time for Mr. Thuillier to speak at the gathering of Filipino officers, but his presence is definitely another welcome change in the officers’ meeting this year.

Mr. Thuillier shared with them some of the initiatives that his department took in the last 18 months in enhancing the Group’s communications with customers including the improved company website and the wider use of social media as well as internal communications among officers and between shore-based personnel and people on board.

Mr. Thuillier, who leads the global marketing of the entire businesses of the BSM Group, informed Filipino officers of the challenges in getting new customers.

“It takes a lot of work to secure ship management contracts with new customers in a strong competitive environment.

“They are more interested in what we can do for them that will enable them to be successful, how do we assist them in winning more business to meet their strategic projections and protecting the employment in their organizations.”

Customer benefits

Hence, he stressed the need for officers to be conscious always of customer benefits. And BSM has been quite successful in delivering customer benefits by providing them “safe, reliable and efficient ship management services through dedicated and highly trained BSM people at sea and at ashore.”

“This enable us to provide maximum vessel availability and efficiency to help them to achieve the highest possible income at the lowest possible cost, our responsive global support network, our ability to protect their reputation through integrity, full compliance and safety performance record,” he said.

“In this way, not only are we able to protect and grow business with our current customers but they also become excellent references in support of our work to secure new customers,” he said.

