

Case Study: Inappropriate Use of Equipment and Personnel

Description:	Commanding Officer used squadron personnel and government furniture to support a holiday party at his residence.
Background:	An informal investigation was convened to examine the case and to determine what decisions, events and circumstances contributed to the behavioral failing. The results are published here.

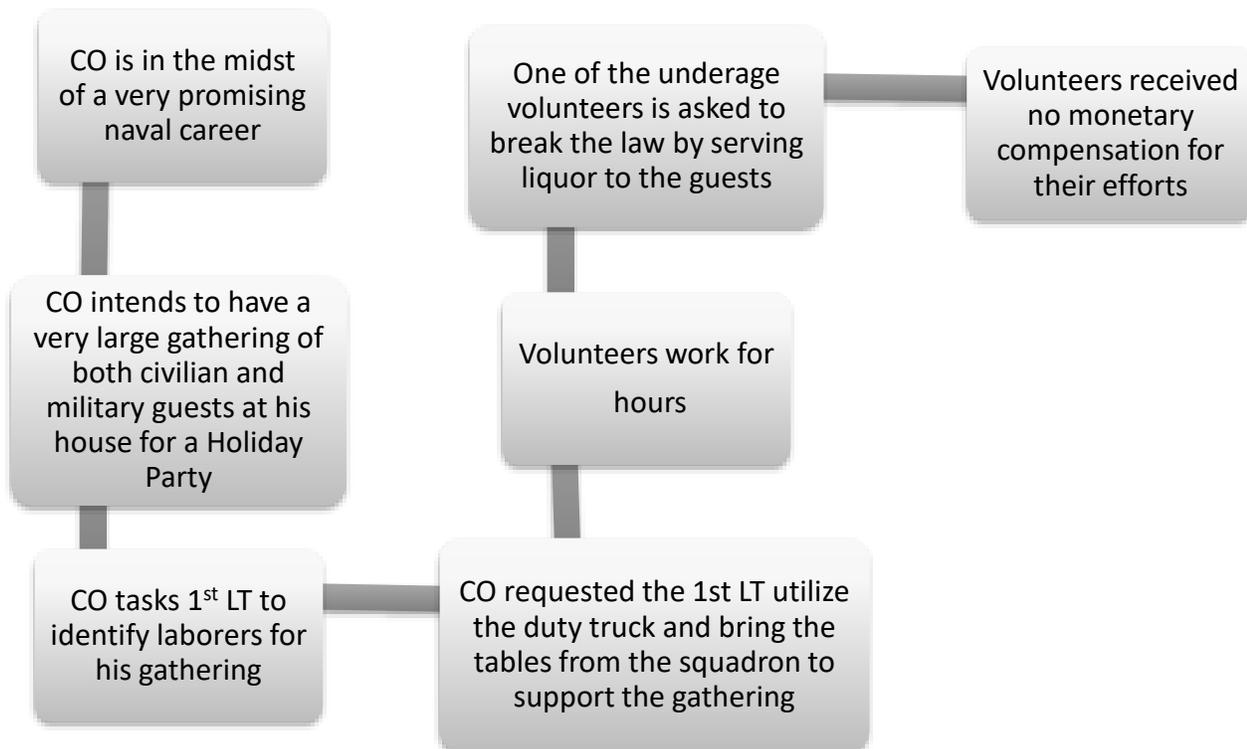
Findings:

1. The Commanding Officer (O-5) was near the end of an outstanding tour that featured a combat deployment. He was well respected and his fitness reports in command were termed very, very competitive.
2. The command had missed the previous year's Christmas due to deployment. The CO wanted to have a large gathering to celebrate the joyous season at home.
3. The CO had many friends throughout the civilian community. While the XO, several wardroom officers and their spouses were invited to the party, it was not a ready room function and the majority of invitees were the CO's neighbors.
4. The CO asked his first lieutenant if he would locate three Sailors to volunteer and attend the function at his home. The Sailors would help in the preparation and clean up. The CO further requested that they wear Cracker Jack uniforms. The first lieutenant recalled that the CO said, "I will make it worth their time."
5. The day prior to the party, the CO realized he needed extra tables. He requested the first lieutenant utilize the duty truck and bring the tables from his office, the XO's Office and Admin to his house.
6. The three Sailors arrived early accompanied by a first class petty officer who was to supervise them.
7. The four Sailors supported the party throughout the evening. At one point the CO asked one of them to help tend bar. The Sailor had limited expertise as he was only 18 years old; nevertheless, he served up drinks admirably throughout the evening.
8. The party continued until midnight. The four Sailors had the kitchen

- and home cleaned up and looking shipshape by 0100.
9. The CO and his wife thanked the Sailors for their work and helped load the tables onto the duty truck.
 10. The first class petty officer was interviewed following the incident. He remarked that when the Sailors got into the truck for the ride back to base they were surprised that the CO had not paid them. He had not even acknowledged them during the party.
 11. The CO did not offer to pay, tip or remunerate these sailors for their superior voluntary efforts during the hours of work at his home.
 12. A disgruntled Sailor reported the incident to higher authorities via the "Hotline."
 13. An investigation ensued and the CO was awarded a Letter of Admonition at NJP for demonstrating poor judgment in the usage of Navy personnel and equipment, along with improper command character and integrity.
 14. The CO later stated that he had attended functions at flag officers' quarters and the presence of uniformed Sailors impressed him and the other guests. He stated that he was unaware of how the flag officers had compensated the Sailors for their time.

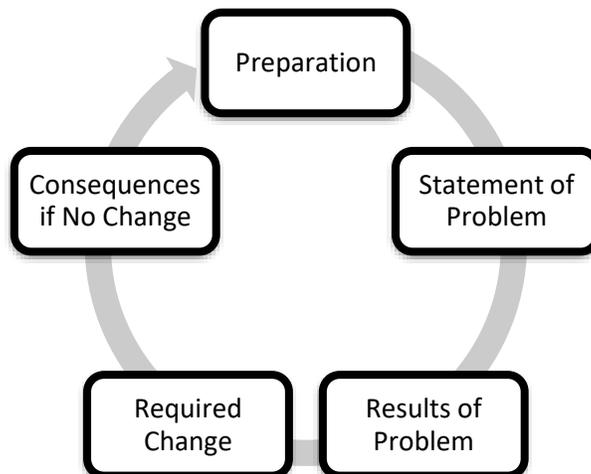
Facilitation Questions:

1. Diagram the thought-to-action chain for the CO.
2. Where does the CO go “wrong?”
3. Discuss the CO’s disregard for normal protocols when hosting a party of this type?
4. Have you ever observed a similar situation whereby a senior seems to expect special treatment from subordinates? Is this due to a sense of entitlement?
5. Should the XO have said something?
6. What was the first lieutenant’s responsibility?



Social Constructive Confrontation Discussion:

1. The first opportunity for constructive confrontation is internal. In this case, the O-5 would benefit from a constructive confrontation with himself. He is having issues with his ego and his status as a naval officer in his community. He also needs to think about how his actions will be perceived by his squadron and his seniors.
2. A next opportunity for confrontation might come from a friend or colleague. These “on-lookers” often know about or strongly suspect instances of misbehavior. In this case, the XO would have been in a position to best offer frank advice to his skipper. While awkward and difficult, junior officers in the squadron could have offered concerns. Have you ever been in such a situation? Approaching a friend or co-worker in such a situation would be very difficult and you would have to be sure that real, negative consequences were likely. Approaching a senior would be even harder. Using the case study, your own observations, or a hypothetical example, how would you realistically handle such a confrontation? Look at the wheel below for a template.



Preparation:

1. Put yourself in the position as a colleague and you were concerned about the behavior you see developing. What does this step mean to you? How would you prepare? In what setting would this type of confrontation best take place?

Statement of Problem:

1. What is the problem (or likely result) of the misbehavior? What problem is it for you? What problem is it for the unit, etc.?
2. How would you state this to your colleague/friend?
3. What would you be listening for and how might you refute?

Results of Problem:

1. Using the example, what are the likely results or negative outcomes from the problem and how would you state that to the friend?
2. Listen.

Required Change:

1. What change in behavior do you want to see? How would you state that?
2. Listen.

Consequences If No Change:

1. Hopefully, by this point in the confrontation, you are having a discussion and not a shouting match. The understanding of consequences would be something that both of you agree to vice you listing them

Case Conclusions:

1. What main points did you take from this case study?
2. What are your concerns as a facilitator with this case study?