



Coming from a family history of seafarers – my father went to sea and I carried on the tradition myself – I can say that seafaring as a profession has come a long way. You were perceived as strong because you were going to sea to face all the challenges it brings, but behind the macho image, you have a vulnerability as a human being. It was expected of you to just suck it up and get on with the job, but you still feel unhappy, you feel sad, you feel stressed no matter how much of a brave face you are putting on.

This macho perception came from the outside but it was also within the mindset of seafarers – ‘I can’t talk about this; it will show weakness and they will think I am a misfit’. As we have evolved and learnt more about mental health, we are understanding that it is OK to say you are not OK and to seek help. We need to create an environment where mental health is considered just as important as physical health. A good mind means a good body.

Prioritising seafarers and their wellbeing should become part of the fabric of a company. For shipowners, the risk is out at sea and seafarers are a very important part of the team. At Campbell Shipping, we put people first. Our seafarers leave their own families behind when they go to sea, but they become part of our family. Our desire to support them does not come from ESG; it comes from within, and from our passion and commitment to our crew.



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We wanted to do something ground-breaking which would have a real impact, so we created the new position of Chief Culture Officer. We hired a trained psychologist and certified life coach; someone from outside of the industry who understands the human mind. We did not want him to sit somewhere at the end of a telephone; he would sail on the ship with the seafarers and be that person next to them to talk to when they finish work.

Our Chief Culture Officer has sailed on eight ships now, spending anything from five to 15 days with the crew and providing counselling, one-to-one coaching and team-building exercises. He remains in touch with the crew one-to-one even after sign-off. Everything is kept confidential between him and the individual crew member. This initiative has been very well accepted by our seafarers.

We also recruited a full-time nutritionist earlier this year who is based in our office and works with the ship's cook and mess committee on board to ensure the crew is receiving healthy and

balanced meals. In addition, she has free one-to-one consultations with seafarers, their partners and their families, providing guidance on things like weight loss and managing diabetes through diet. Physical and mental health are closely linked – we are what we eat, after all – and this initiative complements the service provided by our Chief Culture Officer.

We want to send out a message to the industry that a role like our Chief Culture Officer's should be mandatory under the STCW, especially for cruise ships which have hundreds or even thousands of crew on board. They have a doctor on board, so why not a trained psychologist too? People need face-to-face support and someone to talk to if they are feeling down.

To conclude, Campbell wants to play a thought leader to inspire the marine industry that it is time to increase our efforts in the mental wellbeing of seafarers. Such efforts and investment are highly desired and deserved, and we can do this with actual face-to-face connection where rubber meets the road.