

# Customs, Courtesies, and Traditions: “Naval Nonsense” Written Case Study

**Facilitator:** Reading the Case Study twice often ensures that participants are prepared to discuss the issues.

**Facilitator’s Summary:** Creating a positive environment fosters *esprit de corps*. A leader shapes the environment in which the leader and others operate. A positive climate that is established will positively affect those within it. *Esprit de corps* is a characteristic that is reflected by maintaining courtesy through due consideration for our subordinates. Due to the lack of courtesy for the subordinates, *esprit de corps* on the ship dwindled after the captain placed a statue containing nudity in the wardroom.

## Notes:

- Creating a positive environment fosters *esprit de corps*.
  - How did the captain violate tradition by placing the statue in the wardroom, a common area?
  - How did his placement of it affect *esprit de corps*?
  - What effect did his discourtesy, his willingness for others to be uncomfortable in a traditionally “safe place,” have on morale in the organization?
  - If the captain were aware of the discomfort, how could he have addressed it and maintained tradition?
- Are there spaces that, in your organization, are traditionally safe places for community or fellowship?
  - How do you, as a professional, shape your environment?
  - How does your organization create a positive climate to foster *esprit de corps*? Share with the group how the unit’s morale affects you.
- What other customs and traditions were affected when the statue was secretly removed from the wardroom?
  - What has precedence – custom or regulation?
- Army Values are reminders of traditions, which bind us.
  - If something disturbed your group’s traditional safe place, what Values would be important?