

MCPON's 2008 CPO Induction Guidance

“Chief Petty Officers are first and foremost deckplate leaders charged with developing Sailors and enforcing standards.”

My fellow Chiefs, as we approach Induction, you'll find the enclosed document is very similar to my previous guidance. I'm proud of the way you conducted yourselves last year and I believe the Chiefs we brought into our Mess earned their places among us.

Before we begin this year's Induction, I want to stress that one of the most critical elements is ensuring our Selectees realize that there is nothing easy about being a Chief Petty Officer. Selectee Training will emphasize that, but we must do more to ensure we don't water down the process.

I expect that when those anchors are placed on the collars of our newest Chiefs, there is no doubt in their mind that they earned them through a process that challenged them, tried them and required all of their effort. Just as being a Chief is hard, Induction should be as well.

Induction was built on Initiation. It is the means that we use to prepare our Selectees to enter our Mess and, like Initiation, creates trust and then acceptance.

Those Initiated CPOs who have gone before us left a remarkable legacy of leadership. They were strong, uncompromising leaders who knew the importance of their role in the Navy. The Induction process is meant to do the same through slightly different means. However, the outcome must be the same and the passing down of our traditions and responsibilities from one generation of Chiefs to another must never change.

Command Master Chiefs, Chiefs of the Boat, Command Senior Chiefs and Command Senior Enlisted Leaders are charged with carrying out an effective Induction, and are responsible for the conduct of their Mess. Use the concepts of our Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles as the centerpiece of your training. The guidance prohibits any semblance of hazing or behavior that would taint the process or our Navy. Be forewarned. Those practices are not consistent with our Guiding Principles. Conversely, they betray the true intent--to develop Chief Petty Officers and unite us as a Mess.

Every CPO is expected to participate in Induction. I view the process of making ready our Selectees to enter the Mess as one of our most important responsibilities as Chief Petty Officers. Those who do not share this view should reconsider their place in the Mess.

Induction is central to who we are and is deeply part of our culture. It strengthens us, and a strong Chief's Mess benefits the entire Navy. I'm proud to be a Chief and I'm proud of the way we prepare new Chiefs to walk among us. Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to preserving the traditions of this Mess.

Mission

Provide leadership to the Enlisted Force and advice to Navy leadership to create combat-ready Naval Forces.

Vision

A senior enlisted force that serves first and foremost as Deckplate Leaders committed to developing Sailors and enforcing standards; remains responsive, aligned and well-connected to both Leadership and Sailors; and conducts itself in a consistently professional, ethical and traditional manner.

Guiding Principles

Deckplate Leadership – Chiefs are visible leaders who set the tone. We will know the mission, know our Sailors, and develop them beyond their expectations as a team and as individuals.

Institutional and Technical Expertise - Chiefs are the experts in their field. We will use experience and technical knowledge to produce a well trained enlisted and officer team.

Professionalism – Chiefs will actively teach, uphold, and enforce standards. We will measure ourselves by the success of our Sailors. We will remain invested in the Navy through self-motivated military and academic education and training and will provide proactive solutions that are well founded, thoroughly considered, and linked to mission accomplishment.

Character – Chiefs abide by an uncompromising code of integrity, take full responsibility for their actions and keep their word. This will set a positive tone for the command, unify the Mess, and create esprit de corps.

Loyalty – Chiefs remember that loyalty must be demonstrated to seniors, peers and subordinates alike, and that it must never be blind. Few things are more important than people who have the moral courage to question the appropriate direction in which an organization is headed and then the strength to support whatever final decisions are made.

Active Communication – Chiefs encourage open and frank dialog, listen to Sailors and energize the communication flow up and down the chain of command. This will increase unit efficiency, mission readiness, and mutual respect.

Sense of Heritage - Defines our past and guides our future. Chiefs will use heritage to connect Sailors to their past, teach values and enhance pride in service to our country.

This guidance outlines what is acceptable and what is not. It is every Chief's responsibility to read this document and become familiar with its contents.

Thank you for your dedicated efforts in this important phase of CPO leadership development, and for your year-round commitment to who we are and what we do.

Joe R. Campa, Jr.
Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy

Guidance for Chief's Induction

1. Conduct of Induction

a. Preparation. Every member of the Mess must be involved and engaged. Detailed planning and clear communication of Induction standards of conduct is critical to a strong Chief's Mess. Every Chief must fully understand those standards and be held accountable. I'm very pleased with last year's Induction and that is a tribute to Chiefs stepping up, taking charge and stopping potential problems before they got out of hand.

b. Command Involvement. Induction is designed to prepare a Selectee to walk the deckplates as a Chief Petty Officer. Induction must not be conducted at the expense of our mission or our Sailors. I expect Command Master Chiefs to brief their Commanding Officers and ensure mission readiness does not suffer due to Selectee training.

c. Spouse Involvement. Establish a connection with the Selectee's family. Mutual understanding of the process will enable the Selectee to devote the requisite time and energy toward becoming a strong Chief Petty Officer. Include the family in your planning and make a concerted effort to educate them on the process and goals of Induction. Also include spouses of deployed Selectees in any event to which family members are invited.

d. Training Topics/Materials. The training material provided last year by the Center for Naval Leadership will be used again this Induction. The CPO Selectee Training provides modules that incorporate the CPO Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles. If you require another copy of the course material, contact CMDCM Bob Chenier at CNL: robert.j.chenier@navy.mil, or download it off NKO. As you develop your command training, link key training points back to the MV&GP.

e. Heritage. Induction is a time of year we should be re-connecting with the history and traditions of our service and our community. It is more than educating our Selectees through memorization and book reports. The term heritage implies something deeper than that. It signifies discussion and true understanding of the sacrifices made by our predecessors and the Chiefs who have laid the foundation on which we thrive today.

2. Pre-planning Considerations

The conduct and quality of CPO Induction will determine the future success of our newest Chiefs. The quality of the training is an indication of our commitment to our Mess, our Sailors and our Navy. Consider the following recommendations when constructing your 2008 CPO Induction plans.

* Our first priority is mission accomplishment. The Mess must consider various ways to mitigate impact on work centers and the command.

* Be aware of ethnic, cultural and/or religious sensitivities of Mess members and Selectees and schedule accordingly.

* ORM. Conduct Operational Risk Management for all training evolutions.

* Fund raising should be limited to the direct costs for the professional development of the Selectees, and not as a means to raise funds for the Mess. Fund raising time will not exceed training time. Examples of direct costs:

- PT Uniforms - Shirts
- Pinning Ceremony
- Khaki Ball expenses
- Training Activities
- CPO Spouse events

* Consider community relations activities as they are often beneficial elements of team-building skills.

* Involve spouses. Give them a schedule annotating events they are invited to attend.

* Plan a Khaki Ball or Dining Out to celebrate the successful conclusion of Induction.

* Engage every Chief in the process. For those who fail to engage, remind them of the difference between a Chief and an E7.

* Brief your Commanding Officer on the training plan and gain approval. Then brief the wardroom. An informed wardroom can provide substantial support.

* Other service/nation E7's through E9's may fully participate in Induction with the approval of the cognizant Fleet/Force/Numbered Fleet/Region Command Master Chief. Full participation throughout the entire process, from the day of notification through the pinning ceremony, is required. Communication among Senior Enlisted Leadership is essential.

3. Notification

This is an important aspect of Induction and sets the expectations of the Selectees, spouses, Chief's Mess, crew and wardroom.

* Do not notify Selectees or publish the selection list until the Commanding Officer or OIC is informed.

* Ensure each non-Selectee is appropriately notified, counseled and given a Career Development Board (CDB). Follow-on CDBs can go into greater depth.

FTS Reserve personnel and those Reservists on active duty will begin their Induction process with their Active Duty counterparts. Drilling Reservists may begin upon notification of their selection with the permission of the Reserve Force Master Chief.

4. Sponsor Assignment/Responsibilities

Sponsors play a critical role and are the key to the success of the Induction process. It is critical that CMCs take the time to match the right Sponsor with the right Selectee.

Each Selectee should have a primary and alternate Sponsor. Under no circumstances will a Selectee attend any training event without their primary or alternate Sponsor present. The assignment of Sponsors is a responsibility that rests with the CMC and the Mess. Selectee preferences should not be the driving factor in Sponsor assignment. Any Sponsor who appears to lose steam during the Induction process will first be counseled, and then fired if a course correction is not made immediately.

I also expect Sponsors to serve their traditional roles as caretakers and brokers of truth for their Selectees, who must realize that when their Sponsor gives them guidance it is truthful and in their best interests.

5. Involvement of Spouses During Induction

“Guidelines for CPO Spouses,” is a publication written for and by CPO spouses and is an excellent tool to help family members understand their new Chief’s role and responsibilities. CMCs should make this available to all Selectees’ family members. Although an outstanding resource, “Guidelines...” should complement a personal brief by the CMC, not replace it.

Regional CPO Spouse Briefs/Course should be made available to include information and awareness briefs as appropriate.

6. Physical Fitness Training

PT should be group-oriented, regularly scheduled and started at a slow pace, building intensity through the Induction. Group PT builds camaraderie and a strong sense of esprit-de-corps among the Selectees and with the Chiefs.

Physical fitness activity planning tools can be obtained by emailing Kelly.powell1@navy.mil or mike.bruner@navy.mil. Additionally, CDs can be ordered at

<http://www-nehc.navy.mil/hp/fitness> and other resources will be made available on Direct Line.

Selection-board eligible First Class Petty Officers should be counseled on the physical rigors of Induction and advised that they should start working out well before selection board results are released. Emphasize to them that if they are close to being out of body fat standards, they should fix that problem now.

Charge Books

Charge books are a traditional staple of the Induction process. Memories of their experiences will fade, but the wisdom, wit and guidance imparted on the pages of this book should stay with our Selectees forever. I encourage CMCs and Induction Committees to incorporate heritage and some of the charge book traditions of the past when you give direction to our Selectees regarding the crafting, design and content of these keepsakes.

Mass-produced copies of charge book entries have some value, but nothing replaces the effort and thought that goes into a hand-written passage in a charge book, placed there in the presence of each individual Selectee.

The Charge Book was originally conceived out of necessity. During World War II, COs were authorized to advance “deserving and qualified” Sailors to Chief Petty Officers. Determining who was “deserving and qualified” could be difficult for the CO. The situation also presented challenges to Sailors who sought advancement to CPO:

- How best to prepare?
- How to plan and track preparation?
- How to best display your qualifications?

The original charge books were created as a result of those challenges.

Chiefs began to direct First Class Petty Officers to prepare themselves to assume the additional responsibilities by recording the details of those responsibilities.

Much had to be learned directly from communicating with the Chiefs themselves. Along with the technical aspects of their ratings, the Chiefs talked about leadership, accountability, supporting the Chain of Command, and other professional subject matter.

The Chiefs often used personal experiences to illustrate how something should or should not be done. These conversations needed to be written down to study later.

This collection of notes and study material eventually was called a “Charge Book” by some perhaps because:

- First Class Petty Officers who kept them were the Chiefs’ “charges” for professional development; and/or
- Entries included authoritative instructions or tasking of a directive nature called “Charges”

The Charge Book was not intended for entertainment or a vehicle for hazing.

Chiefs used the Charge Book throughout the remainder of their careers as a diary to record the knowledge and wisdom they obtained from fellow CPOs.

Training Recommendations

Do:

*Select/create activities which support and teach our Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles.

*Have Selectees learn a part of our history and present it to the Mess. That education can be derived from books recommended by the Command Master Chief or personal conversations with our veterans and retired Chief Petty Officers.

*Conduct training and activities in a group format.

*Use the imagination, creativity, and initiative in your CPO Mess to design the final day’s event that challenges and welcomes the new Chiefs.

*Remove members from the events who are not following established guidelines.

*Communicate that participation in the final day’s event is limited to active or retired Initiated/Inducted Chiefs and retired CPOs. The Mess may invite their Commanding and Executive Officers.

Do not:

*Compromise your professionalism at any time. Steadfast devotion to our Guiding Principles will ensure all events support, enhance, and test the training provided during Induction.

*Use props of the past at any venue or place a Selectee in a situation that degrades the process.

*Do not force or allow Selectees to eat or drink food or liquids for any reason other than energy or a scheduled meal.

*Do not tolerate physical abuse of any kind.

*Do not allow cross-dressing or any sexually explicit behavior at any time during any Induction event.

*Do not allow the consumption of alcohol during or prior to any training event. The responsible use of alcohol is acceptable at Command Sponsored (Commanding Officer approved) social events. No training will be conducted where alcohol is present. CMCs/SELs must be present at these events.

Battle Stations

In the past couple of years a large number of commands followed a variation of the Battle Stations model as part of the culmination of Selectee training. New Chiefs were challenged to accomplish more as a team than they ever could as a group of individuals.

A “Battle Stations” type event is clearly dependent on the location, platform, and operational tempo of the command. It is up to the incredible imagination, creativity and initiative that are found in each and every CPO mess to design a demanding process that challenges and welcomes new Chiefs, and emphasizes the fundamental Guiding Principles which direct our actions.

CPO Academies

CPO Academies are proven, effective forums for standardized training that can serve to support the Induction process. I support any initiative that strengthens our ability to give our Selectees the tools they will need to lead Sailors. However, I stress that CPO Academies are neither required nor mandatory. They cannot replace the responsibilities of each CPO Mess. CPO Academies can expand on, reinforce and complement individual Mess training and can be particularly beneficial to small commands by widening the experience foundation. But there is no such thing as a “finishing school” for Chiefs.

*CPO Academy type training and requests for overnight event(s) must be vetted through the applicable Force or Region Command Master Chiefs for approval.

Pinning Ceremony (Tuesday 16 September 2008)

This is the most memorable event in any Chief’s career and demands careful planning. Each command should construct a ceremony that is unique to their location, traditions and circumstances.

Responsibilities

Command Master Chief/Chief of the Boat/Command Senior Chief/Command Senior Enlisted Leader. Each command's senior enlisted leader, CMDCM/COB/CSC (or in their absence, the most senior MCPO, SCPO or CPO) is responsible and accountable for the conduct of the CPO Induction. As I stated earlier, you will not abdicate your responsibilities to a CPOA—you must be involved.

Teaching and training the Selectees is one of the most important responsibilities a Mess has – it is the legacy of the Mess and it establishes the foundation upon which future generations of Chiefs will perform. The 1918 edition of the Bluejacket Manual provides a timeless goal:

“The tone of the ship, the tone of the service itself must come more directly from the Chief Petty Officers than from any other group of people in the Navy. You have the standard; live up to it...”

Specific responsibilities include:

- *You are responsible for the effective, dignified, and professional (safe) conduct of all aspects of the CPO Induction.
- *Be present during all activities associated with CPO training.
- *Demand maximum participation from your CPO Mess in all activities throughout Induction, not just the last day.
- *Actively mentor and guide your sponsors, ensure they are engaged from the beginning to the end.
- *Conduct periodic "how-goes-it" interviews with every Selectee and their spouse.
- *Plan annual leave outside of Induction. As Mess leaders you must attend all events. If not present, your designated representative must be placed in charge of the event.
- *Brief your Chiefs on SECNAVINST 1610.2. This will give you the appropriate focus and perspective on what is/is not appropriate.
- *Rather than list a series of specific prohibited practices which, though contrary to our Guiding Principles, were often performed to “create a rites of passage” to becoming Chief, use your judgment, uphold the Guiding Principles and do what you know is right and the Selectees will be appropriately Inducted.
- *This will be the only document governing the manner in which we carry out Induction. There should be no competing guidance. If you have questions, contact your Fleet, Force, Numbered Fleet and Region Command Master Chiefs; or contact me directly.

To all Chief Petty Officers:

This is our process. I value it, but I'll caution you; do not cross the line we all know exists. Common sense should guide you. Police one another and keep the safety of our future Chiefs in mind at all times. I will not tolerate mistakes made through ignorance or disregard for the Navy's policy on hazing.

I firmly believe that an effective Induction process is one that presents challenges to our Selectees like they have never faced. It should be difficult. Following Induction, all Chief Petty Officers must feel the sense of unity and accomplishment known only to those of us who walk the deckplates as Chief Petty Officers.