

MEMBERSHIP HANDBOOK



U.S.S. INDEPENDENCE
NCC-75029



This handbook is dedicated to the memory of

Admiral Albert "Armageddon" Santiago Jr.

The finest diplomat ever to roam the multiplayer servers of *Star Trek: Bridge Commander*.

"With the first link, the chain is forged. The first speech censured, the first thought forbidden, the first freedom denied, chains us all irrevocably." Those words were uttered by Judge Aaron Satie, as wisdom and warning. The first time any man's freedom is trodden on, we're all damaged."

-Jean Luc Picard



Ship Communication

USS Independence – Captain Marc Wagner

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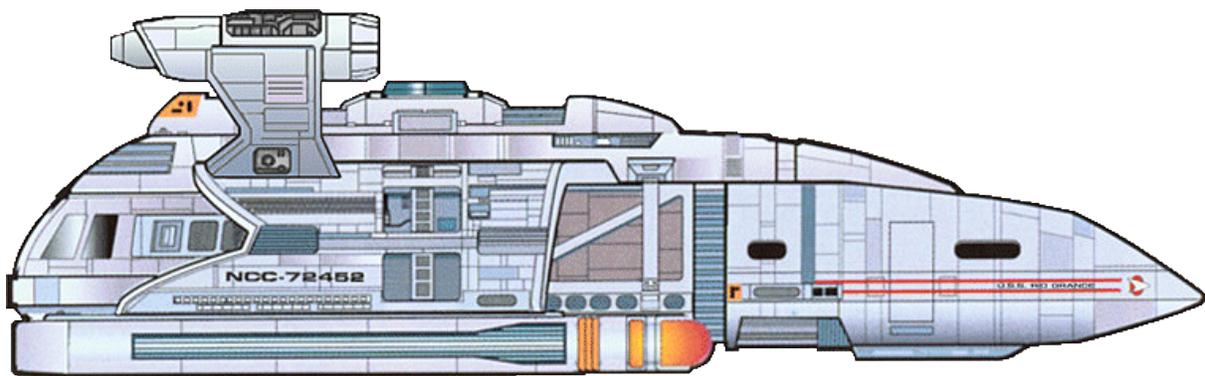
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Preamble

We the members, in order to form a more perfect party, establish good times, ensure hospitality, provide for community, promote service and understanding, secure the blessings of diplomacy, for ourselves and for all camaraderie, do ordain and establish this ship handbook for the Sacramento STARSHIP *USS INDEPENDENCE*.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to improve the lives of those around us by upholding the ideals and sprit of Star Trek and to be a living testament to the goodness found within each of us.

History, Name and Ship

Welcome to the *USS Independence*! We are a Star Trek based Science Fiction fan club formed by folks who want to have a good time enjoying the universe of Gene Roddenberry's vision in all its many forms. We are a very diverse group and welcome anyone who loves Science Fiction, regardless of race, creed, nationality, gender, politics, sexual orientation or ability differences. Our City of Charter is Sacramento, California.

We choose the name *INDEPENDENCE* because we feel that the founding principles of this country – that all people deserve inalienable rights – are important to us all. The ideals of the United Federation of Planets are similar in this respect. These rights should be upheld to the highest degree and our ship personifies that.

Motto

I have sworn on the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man.

-Thomas Jefferson

Logo

Our ship's logo was designed for Star Trek Online by Thomas Marrone, a Content Designer at Cryptic Studios. He gave us permission to use a modified version of the one used in the game. His personal website can be found at <http://portfolio.thomasmarrone.com>.



Ship

Code of Conduct

The *USS Independence* adopts the Membership Goals given in the STARFLEET Membership Handbook:

- To praise in public and critique in private;
- To never assume, but always verify;
- To be the first to praise and the last to criticize;
- To not willfully cause negative or unproductive confrontations;
- To strive to be part of the solution, not part of the problem.

Official Communications

Official communications are defined as the email chain and the Ship Communications Board, hereafter referred to as Comms Board, the Basecamp 3 app (used by the Command Staff) and any other such medium used for official communication between members of the ship for the purpose of ship's business. These communication points are not mutually exclusive, but both are binding. Our Comms Board can be found at: <http://www.ussindependence.net/communications-1>

Meetings

The USS Independence will hold its general meetings at the Sacramento Public Library, 5605 Marconi Ave, Carmichael, CA 95608, unless otherwise stated in the official communication method. In addition, there may be special events, parties or away missions during the month. There will also be opportunities to participate in volunteer community service projects on a bi-annual basis. These special events will always be announced in the

preceding meetings, by phone from the Chief of Operations or through notices on our website and social media pages.

Order of Meeting

Meetings of the *USS Independence* will proceed accordingly:

1. Social/Set up period
2. Call to order
3. Announcements
4. Presentation of certificates and awards
5. Reading of any correspondence
6. Divisional reports
7. Presentation of guests
8. Miscellaneous matters
9. Audio/Visual viewing or special presentation
10. Auction
11. Call to adjourn
12. Social/Cleanup period

The order of business may be altered at any time by the decision of the CO/XO or by a majority vote of the present membership. From time to time, an online venue may be used, in order to attend the meeting. Present is defined as physical, phone or visual video presence provided by modern technology, such as Skype.

In the case of any medical or other emergency, the meeting will be immediately interrupted and either canceled, or postponed until the situation has been resolved. It is the responsibility of all members to bring any emergency to the attention of the Commanding Officer or meeting chairperson.

Voting Procedure

The standard voting method used during meeting will either be by secret ballot, or a show of hands when approved the present membership. In case of division of the present assembly, each vote may be registered by roll call and entered into the minutes.

Matters put before the Ship concerning the bestowal of honor or the infliction of discipline will be handled by the Senior Staff.

Membership

Types of membership:

You may join the *USS Independence* in several different capacities. All members should, after a suitable period of time, make a departmental preference. These are the three categories:

Senior Officer: A **Commissioned Officer** (see below) who acts as one of the administrative members of the ship. They are the head of their chosen department and are required to wear an authorized style of uniform. They also are required to attend no less than nine (9) General Meetings within a twelve (12) month rolling period.

Commissioned Officer: An active member is one who decides to fully participate in the Ship by attending meetings, receiving rank and taking a position within the Ship command structure. These ranks and positions are granted at the CO's discretion based on the ship's outlined rank advancement guidelines. Active members receive all club communications via the magazine or email.

Cadet Corps: Members of the Cadet Corps are those members that are of the ages from birth through 17 years old.

Non-commissioned Crew Member: A civilian crew member is one who wants to participate in the club activities, events, attend meetings and receive the Ship communications, but who chooses not to participate in the advancement of rank or position within the ship. They may wear a uniform to all functions, however, they are not eligible to receive ranked positions.

Dues Structure

There are no official scheduled dues to participate in the *USS Independence*; however, any out of pocket expenses for meetings, events and away teams are equally split between the members present at each event. Any costs for Ship materials will be discussed with the membership, prior to publication, then divided again equally by all members. A member that has chosen to participate in a function and for whatever reason is a no-show, will forfeit their monetary contribution to the event.

Uniforms

Uniforms are an important part of being a member of the *USS Independence*. We welcome you to wear a uniform or costume from THE NEXT GENERATION, DEEP SPACE 9 and VOYAGER era. If you have a costume/uniform, we encourage you to wear it. We only ask that you respect our dedication to Trek and wear the correct insignia for your rank and department while "aboard ship," in whatever uniform you wear. At times, the Commanding Officer will specify appropriate attire for any meeting or event. It is requested that you properly respect these uniform specifications.



Departmental Colors



COMMAND / CONTROL
Commanding Officer
Executive Officer
Flight Control
Communications
Strategic Operations



SUPPORT
Security
Engineering
Operations



SCIENCES
Science
Medical
Morale Officer
Counselor
Hospitality
Recruitment

Rank Insignia



O-11 Fleet Admiral



O-10 Admiral



O-9 Vice Admiral



O-8 Rear Admiral (Upper Half)



O-7 Rear Admiral (Lower Half)



O-6 Captain



O-5 Commander



O-4 Lieutenant Commander



O-3 Lieutenant



O-2 Lieutenant, Junior Grade



O-1 Ensign



E-10 Senior Master CPO



E-9 Senior CPO



E-8 Master CPO



E-7 Chief Petty Officer



E-6 Petty Officer 1st Class



E-5 Petty Officer 2nd Class



E-4 Petty Officer 3rd Class



E-3 Crewman



E-2 Crewman Apprentice



E-1 Crewman Recruit

Communication Badge



The official “communicator badge” is the one that first appeared in “Star Trek: Generations” and has been used with every uniform since.

Chain of Command

Within the Ship, any qualified member may hold positions.

1. The Ship Chairperson, also known as the Ship Commanding Officer (CO), is first in command and plays an extremely important role in the day-to-day operations of the Ship. COs serve as the leaders and administrators, may be involved with organizing Ship activities, administering policy and developing Ship projects and operations. The CO serves at the pleasure of the ship's crew. The CO administers the ship's funds, appoints all Departmental Chiefs and approves departmental crew appointments based on their recommendations. The CO is responsible for recruitment and discipline aboard the ship. Ship members should expect their CO to be familiar with the ship's policies, operations, current events and should recognize the CO as a resource for information and issue resolution. COs have the authority to grant promotions to their Ship members, up to and including the grade of O-5 (Commander), and may demote members within those same grades. The CO will hold a minimum rank of Captain (O-6).

2. The Ship Vice Chairperson, also known as the Ship Executive Officer (XO), is second in command of the ship and is appointed by the CO. The XO is responsible for assisting the CO with ship operations by overseeing the Senior Staff and is responsible for the minutes of the ship meetings, unless another has that responsibility. The XO communicates directly with the CO. In the event the CO is incapacitated, the XO will assume command until relieved of said duty by either the CO, or the Senior Staff. The XO will hold a minimum rank of Commander (O-5).

Departmental Chiefs: There are several departments within the ship, each with a Chief Officer and various crew staff. The Departmental Chief will appoint members to posts within his/her department, with approval of the CO & XO. All department heads are required, by the handbook, to make a report worthy of publication on the Facebook Group or email on a monthly basis. If two reports are missed consecutively, or four in a 12-month period, said person will be removed as head of that department unless prior authorization from the CO or XO has been given. Aboard the *USS Independence*, the Departmental Chief positions are as follows:

3. Second Officer: Will assist the XO with management of the day-to-day operation of the Ship and assume any administrative duties the XO determines are required. They will monitor the Facebook community, Twitter account, and any other social media as assigned by the XO. They will be responsible for keeping them up to date daily. They will be our point of contact with media outlets and businesses in efforts to promote and gain support for the ship. They should be knowledgeable in the duties of the CO and XO so they may assume those duties should either or both be incapacitated.
4. Chief Medical Officer: The CMO is responsible for keeping the ship's first aid kit. While present on away missions, or any official function, the CMO will maintain medical treatment instructions of all members involved. They handle personnel matters on the ship and are responsible, through the Ship's Counselor and Morale Officer, for the on-boarding and orientation of all new members.
5. Chief Operations Officer: Will report to and assist the XO in any ship-wide communications or event coordination. Ensures all members are notified about events and meetings. Originates the Phone Call Tree. Acts as ship's photographer during meetings and events as needed.
6. Chief of Security: Will provide and maintain ship security as needed. This person is responsible for any security detail organization for a major event or public gathering. During meetings, they will be the last member out of the room and will make sure it is secure and any alarms are set and keys are returned to the facility.
7. Chief Communications Officer: Will assist the CO/XO with management of email communication with the crew and management of automated reminders of meetings and events through the use of Remind.com..
8. Chief Engineer: Will provide technical assistance as needed. This includes setting up meeting/event spaces and dismantling them. They will assist with prop making sessions in order to create stock to sell for funding.
9. Chief Science Officer: Will provide scientific assistance as needed. This person may present to the crew on various aspects of Treknology and other such areas of study. Serves as Editor-In-Chief of the ship's magazine.

Ranks and Status

All members of the ship have the opportunity to advance in rank. To attain and advance in rank, the crewmember would then decide if they wish to be a fully active member, by participating in Ship functions and gaining responsibility to the Ship. At this point you are assigned a position aboard the ship. This serves as a guideline only as all promotions are subject to the Commanding Officer's digression.

Active Ranks are as follows:

ENLISTED		OFFICER		FLAG	
GRADE	RANK	GRADE	RANK	GRADE	RANK
E-1	Crewman Recruit	O-1	Ensign	O-7	Rear Admiral 1
E-2	Crewman Apprentice	O-2	Lieutenant, JG	O-8	Rear Admiral 2
E-3	Crewman	O-3	Lieutenant	O-9	Vice Admiral
E-4	Petty Officer 3	O-4	Lt Commander	O-10	Admiral
E-5	Petty Officer 2	O-5	Commander	O-11	Fleet Admiral
E-6	Petty Officer 1	O-6	Captain		
E-7	Chief Petty Officer (CPO)				
E-8	Senior CPO				
E-9	Master CPO				
E-10	Senior Master CPO				

ENLISTED RANKS

All members enter the crew as a Crewman Recruit. Progression through the Enlisted chain is at the discretion of the Department Head to which they report. Promotions are made through nomination by the Department Head to the Executive Officer.

OFFICER RANKS

Officers are members who consistently participate in Ship functions and exhibit a desire to become more involved in Ship functions. Progression through the Officer chain is at the discretion of the Commanding Officer and fall subject to time-in-grade requirements unless position dictates otherwise. Promotions are made through nomination by a Department Head or the Executive Officer to the Commanding Officer.

- Ensign (ENS): Qualifies for commission from the CO through service and dedication to the ship and has been a member of the Ship for at least 6 months.
- Lieutenant, Junior Grade (LtJG): Qualifies for commission from the CO through service and dedication to the ship and has held the rank of Ensign for at least 1 year.
- Lieutenant (LT): Qualifies for commission from the CO through service and dedication to the ship and has held the rank of LtJG for at least 2 years.
- Lieutenant Commander (LTC): Qualifies for commission from the CO through service and dedication to the ship and has held the rank of LT for at least 3 years.
- Commander (CMDR): Qualifies for commission from the CO through service and dedication to the ship and has held the rank of LTC for at least 4 years.
- Captain (CAPT): Qualifies for commission from the Senior Staff through service and dedication to the ship and has held the rank of CMDR for at least 5 years.
- Cadet (CAD): For ages 1-17 only are also granted.

FLAG RANKS

Flag Officers represent the longest serving and most honorable members of The Ship. Progression through the Flag chain (including the rank of Captain) is at the discretion of the Senior Staff and falls subject to time-in-grade requirements. Promotions are made through nomination by a Senior Staff member with a second by another member during a staff meeting. Promotions are confirmed with a 2/3 majority vote by the Senior Staff.

- Rear Admiral (Lower Half) (RA1): Qualifies for commission from the Senior Staff through service and dedication to the ship and has held the rank of CAPT for at least 3 years.
- Rear Admiral (Upper Half) (RA2): Qualifies for commission from the Senior Staff through service and dedication to the ship and has held the rank of RA1 for at least 1 year.
- Vice Admiral (VADM): Qualifies for commission from the Senior Staff through service and dedication to the ship and has held the rank of RA2 for at least 2 years.

- Admiral (ADM): Qualifies for commission from the Senior Staff through service and dedication to the ship and has held the rank of VADM for at least 3 years.
- Fleet Admiral (FADM): Qualifies for commission from the Senior Staff through service and dedication to the ship and has held the rank of ADM for at least 5 years. This rank may also be granted by special dispensation to a ADM who “retires” from duty on the ship due to age, medical complications, or other debilitating factors but remains an active member.

Membership Creed

1. Each member has the right to be informed of all Ship meetings and events and to participate in these activities (allowing for space limitations when they apply, guests must be approved by the CO).
2. Each member has the right to pursue his or her choice of rank path, to advance according to that path and to hold positions aboard the ship, according to the requirements of that path.
3. Each member has the right to vote on all motions put before the Ship as deemed necessary by the Senior Staff.
4. Each member has the duty to uphold the basic tenets of the Ship and to respect the will of the Ship, when voted on and approved.
5. Each member has the right to voice their opinions and concerns in a direct and honest manner, providing logic to back up their statement.
6. Each member has the duty to behave in a forthright and respectful manner to their fellow members, to respect their concerns & choices and to generally promote a supportive & courteous environment.
7. Each member has the sole responsibility to maintain all of their financial obligations to the Ship in a timely and courteous manner.
8. Each member has a right to privacy. No member will give out any information (e.g. telephone number, address, e-mail, etc.) to an individual outside of their fellow members, without prior permission from that member. Exception to this is granted to the CO and XO for event and announcement use.
9. Each member has the duty to represent the Ship in an honest and forthright manner in any functions that they attend.

Electronic Communications

The primary communication point for all non-paper published documents will be the Ship’s Communication Board. This may be found by pointing your browser to: <http://www.ussindependence.net/communications-1>. You must be registered on these boards, as the group is closed to all non-Ship members. Any guests that are subscribed to this group must be approved by the CO/XO and will be moderated by the CO/XO and the Chief of Communications.

The *USS Independence* also maintains a community page on Facebook at:

<https://www.facebook.com/Star.Trek.Independence>. This page is open to all persons and it is recommended that all members “Like” this page to keep up to date.

We also have a Twitter feed at <https://twitter.com/USSIndependenc1> which will be used for up to the minute updates at events and meetings.

These groups contain electronic documents, photos, polls, Ship calendar and discussions.

Our Ship also has a web site that will be updated periodically at: www.ussindependence.net

Away Missions

Several times a year, the ship may send away teams and participate in away missions of special importance (or, in other words, field trips!!!). Some trips include going en masse to book signings, conventions or exhibits, etc. While the main goal is to enjoy ourselves, there are some inherent responsibilities to maintain the safety and well-being of the away team participants. The primary responsibility falls to the away team leader, who has been appointed by and reports directly to the Executive Officer. If any problem should occur, the leader will contact the XO immediately, to inform him/her of the status of the mission and provide any help or solutions needed. The away team leader should not feel embarrassed to contact the CO if there is a problem. The leader should always put the safety of the team first, above all else. Membership sign-up sheets for away teams will be provided at meetings and on the Communications Board. Sign-ups will be on a first come, first served basis with three alternate positions available. In the event of a time constraint, a random poll of the membership will be

conducted. Final responsibility for any conduct, or action taken by any member of an away team is the sole responsibility of the individual(s) involved, not that of the Ship.

Service Projects

The *USS Independence* organizes regular service projects each year. Although a special opportunity may come up at any time, we generally plan our projects as follows:

November: Canned Food

The members nominate and vote to choose the particular group to receive the goods. Each project will be announced and confirmed at least two months in advance. All members are encouraged to participate.

Annual Awards

The *USS Independence* chooses to create its own rewards program. The awards are for a calendar year period and are awarded at the December general membership meetings. Nominations for awards are given by the candidate's Department Head to the Executive Officer for selection each November. Recipients receive a plaque with the ship's seal for their accomplishment.

There are three tiers of awards, GOLD, SILVER, and BRONZE:

GOLD LEVEL

- **Officer of the Year Award:** This award is reserved for officers who hold the rank of O-1 and above. This award is given to the individual who best demonstrates outstanding direction, a consistent level of guidance for fellow members and leadership in the Ship, through both word and action. The officer of the year also demonstrates consistent conduct in accordance with the philosophy of Star Trek and supports the series' vision of a positive future through community service and scholastic accomplishment (where appropriate), in addition to participation in Ship functions.

SILVER LEVEL

- **Star Cross Award:** This award is given to the individual who best displays, through his/her individual contributions, consistent support for and contribution to the *Independence*, as well as a consistent level of direction as appropriate.
- **Captain's Choice Award:** This award is given to an officer who is selected by the Commanding Officer for his/her outstanding personal and professional growth within the ship.

BRONZE LEVEL

- **Warp Speed Award:** This award is given to those who demonstrate support for the ship by means of recruitment, encouragement of other members, and consistent support for the Ship.
- **Legion of Honor Award:** This award is given to those who demonstrate their dedication to the ship through their actions and participation. They consistently show loyalty to the ship and its well being.
- **Certificate of Merit:** This is a certificate which acknowledges a member's commitment to the ship and recognizes their loyalty and hard work. (This award is given to as many members as the XO sees fit. Recipients do not receive plaques for this award.)

Financial Requirements

Members are required to pay their fair share of any events, prior to participation in any said event. If by the due date of an event their obligations are not in compliance, then an alternate will be given the opportunity to participate. Any additional charges incurred by the Ship due to a bounced check will be paid by the owner of that check, prior to participation in future events. Additionally, all Ship privileges of that member will be suspended, until such time as the Ship is made whole. Any fees for PayPal transactions will be paid by the payee and added to any costs. PayPal is the preferred method of payment.

Members are also required to be in good standing with the parent organization and its International and Regional events.

If a member, for whatever reason, chooses to not participate in a function and has paid monies to that function, it is assumed that purchases and guarantees have been made that are not refundable.

Revocation of Membership

The Ship's Commanding Officer may revoke the membership of any member that may have outstanding debts to the Ship or are in violation of Ship policy. Notification will be made in writing to that member or by means of the official communication methods.

Membership in Other Groups/Organizations

Members are encouraged to participate in other organizations outside of the ship as they see fit. In order to preserve the integrity of the ship, the following limitations apply for all members of the ship:

Ship members who run or participate in other organizations are prohibited from:

- Using ship resources to recruit or advertise for the outside organization. These resources may include but are not limited to:
 - Ship meetings/events
 - Ship social media sites (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Meetup, etc.)
 - Ship email
 - Ship newsletters
 - Ship press releases
 - Ship website/message boards
- Advertising their organization as being part of or sponsored by the ship without permission
- Using ship meetings/events as a "piggyback" for an outside organization's event (also known as "event crashing") unless invited by the ship (i.e. scheduling an event for the outside group to attend the ship's event/meeting)

Members of outside organizations are welcome to attend ship functions if they intend to join the ship but they are bound by the same guidelines as stated above.

Expulsion of a Member

The Senior Staff, present at any scheduled general meeting, may expel a member for any offense which directly violates the person, property or dignity of any individual human being or pet, which seriously compromises the safety, harmony or the reputation of the Ship and its crew. Expulsion guidelines and procedures are outlined in the Conflict Resolution Policy of the Ship. The *USS Independence* reserves the right to refuse any new or renewal member application, for any reason, with the agreement of the Command Staff, given just cause to that applicant in writing.

Removal of the Commanding Officer

In the event that the crew are unhappy with the actions or leadership of the sitting Commanding Officer or it is determined by the Senior Staff that the actions or leadership of the sitting Commanding Officer are having a significant negative impact on the Ship and/or its crew, they may take action against the CO in accordance with the Ship's Conflict Resolution Policy. In open meeting of the Senior Staff, an officer may motion for the CO to be placed under Command Probation with specific reasons outlined for the basis on this motion. This probation will be overseen by the XO. Another officer must second the motion and a vote of no less than 2/3 majority of the Senior Staff in favor must pass to carry the motion. The CO will then be given no less than 30 days to correct the issues outlined in accordance with Ship policy. During this probationary period, all decisions made by the CO must be approved by the XO. At the conclusion of the probation period, the Senior Staff will evaluate the probationary terms and determine if those terms have been satisfied. They may vote, with no less than 2/3 majority in favor, to end the probation. Should the terms not be satisfied, they may vote, with no less than 2/3 majority in favor, to remove the CO from the position or to grant an extension on the probation.

Members with Violent Histories or Sex Offenders

If a member is found to have a felony conviction against them for violence or sexual offence, they will be immediately removed from the ship and will be banned from attendance at all ship functions. We cater to children and cannot take a risk on their safety.

Financial Reporting

The Commanding Officer is responsible for providing to the Ship an annual financial report each January for the previous year and/or as requested by the Senior Staff.

Internet

The ship owns and pays for the domain www.ussindependence.net

Web

All sub-domains and web pages are considered intellectual property of the *USS Independence* and its Commanding and Executive Officer. All personal art, unless commissioned (paid for) and released in writing, are considered on loan from the creator. The creator may revoke use at any time in writing.

E-mail

All e-mails using the domain xxx.independence75029@gmail.com are the property of the *USS Independence* and its Commanding Officer. These e-mails are to be used for official Ship business, unless permission is given by the Commanding Officer for personal use. Proper signature usage should be followed. Rank, Name, Position, and Ship URL should be included.

Facebook Groups and Pages

All Facebook contents are public domain. The Commanding Officer has the right to revoke or refuse membership to the group of the *USS Independence*.

USS Independence NCC-75029 **Conflict Resolution Policy**

Why do we have conflict?

Conflict in small, personal organizations like ours usually arises from one of five different kinds of situations.

Different Needs

The first is when members have different needs, objectives or values. If the members involved are mature enough to recognize the problem and to reach a compromise, this kind of conflict can be the least troublesome and the most rewarding. It's especially useful in broadening people's viewpoints!

Different Perceptions

The second is when members have different perceptions of each other's motives, or the meaning of each other's words or actions. This can range from simple misunderstandings to a complete lack of trust. Again, if the members involved are mature adults, the problem can usually be solved if each member explains his/her point of view in a reasonable and intelligent manner (and then gets on with business as usual!!).

Different Expectations

The third is when members have different expectations of results. This kind of conflict is best addressed before it has a chance to get started. That's why it's always best to clearly identify what results are expected from a project before we begin working on it.

Personality Clashes

The fourth is when two or more members are unwilling to work through issues: to collaborate or to compromise. This is usually the result of a basic personality clash and may require the intervention of either the Commanding Officer, or Ship's Counselor. If the squabbling members still cannot effectively work together, the Commanding Officer may need to remove them from the project concerned with an oral warning.

Immature Members

Finally, the fifth situation is when we have a member who is immature and won't take no for an answer. This will probably require the intervention of the Commanding Officer and/or Ship's Counselor and an oral warning. Next, after receiving a written reprimand, the offending member will be given a probation period of not less than three months; but if he/she does not mend his/her ways, then the Commanding Officer has only one recourse: the member must be removed with due process. People like these can ruin this experience for everyone around them and any member's first duty is to preserve the harmony of the ship.

How can I avoid conflict?

Conflict is inevitable. It will happen. But, it is important to recognize the difference between positive conflict and negative conflict and to understand how to deal with negative conflict when it occurs.

Positive Conflict

The hallmark of positive conflict is an obvious willingness on the part of those concerned: to discuss their differences calmly and rationally, to respect their differences as individual human beings and to compromise so that each party gets something that they want (this is called a win-win situation). Positive conflict should not be avoided. In fact, it's a very healthy thing. Positive conflict breeds respect for diversity, which is the foundation of successful win-win interaction with others. It helps each of us to broaden our own viewpoint and to remind ourselves that we do not have a monopoly on creative input. However, negative conflict quite often masquerades as positive conflict. Immature individuals sometimes learn to get their own way by using the "What's the matter, afraid of a little positive criticism?" line as a weapon. So, it's important to be able to distinguish between the two.

Negative Conflict

Negative conflict usually results from either a personality clash, or an immature member. It may result from differences of need, perception and expectation; but, when it does, there's usually a personality clash or an immature member escalating the situation. The hallmark of negative conflict is stubbornness or the lack of active listening. If one or more members insist on replacing an equal discussion of opinions with a one-sided barrage of demands, refuse to respect the viewpoints of others, continue to refer to others' ideas in insulting or demeaning terms, refuse to compromise with their fellow members and insist on getting everything their own way, then you've got negative conflict!!

How do I deal with negative conflict?

If the situation is not yet severe, or is just beginning to get started, attempt to resolve the problem by speaking directly to the member(s) involved. If you feel that this is a little out of your league, you must first ask the Ship's Counselor to step in and help resolve the situation in your place. However, if the situation is seriously compromising the harmony of the Ship (or it appears likely to in the near future) then, through the Ship's Counselor, it must be reported to the Executive Officer. The XO will try to defuse the situation and reason with the parties involved. If they are unwilling to listen, the XO, with the Ship's Counselor present, will report the problem to the Commanding Officer. The Commanding Officer has the authority to call the members "before the mast" and to discipline them, when necessary.

How does the Commanding Officer deal with negative conflict?

How the Commanding Officer deals with negative conflict depends on whether the situation is a personality clash or an immature member.

Personality Clashes

Personality clashes are usually caused by unresolved animosity. This could be the result of insult or injury, real or imagined, on the part of one or both of the parties involved. If left unresolved, the animosity will grow into full-fledged hostility. At this stage, the situation becomes extremely dangerous to the Ship, since our membership will begin to polarize as each of our members unconsciously chooses sides. Such a situation must be dealt with quickly and decisively. The Commanding Officer, with the Ship's Counselor present, will meet with both parties together and require each of them, in each other's presence, to voice his or her grievance. Then, the Commanding Officer will require each party to apologize for those words or actions which were inappropriate on their part. Require them both to work together, suggesting that if they can't succeed together, they will both fail! When they realize they're in the same boat, hopefully they'll come to their senses!! However, if this approach is not successful, the Commanding Officer may have to remove the offending members from the project(s) they were working on with an oral warning.

Immature Members

Most people don't realize it, but having an immature member is one of the most dangerous situations in which an organization like ours can find itself. This is especially true since many immature people are, nevertheless, quite clever!! When you think about it, this makes a lot of sense. Someone who has managed to reach physical maturity, without having to develop any emotional maturity, is probably very ingenious at those tricks which are the hallmark of the immature member: making "suggestions" which are, in fact, barely concealed demands; stating "opinions" as if they were undeniable fact, having neither professional knowledge of the subject at hand, nor any ability to back those opinions with hard evidence or solid logic; camouflaging as "positive criticism" remarks which are actually attempts to demean or ridicule opposing ideas; forcing each "discussion" into a win-lose situation with him/herself as the winner and using the "member's right to speak" as a cover for bullying the Ship into doing things his/her way.

An important note: sometimes an immature member will attempt to make his/her attacks seem like they are merely one-half of a personality clash. This is a diversionary tactic and seeks to make a reacting victim look like an initiator of hostilities. It is very important to understand the difference between these two situations.

But the cleverest, and the most dangerous of all in the immature member's arsenal is the trick of accusing the accuser. The immature member cannot afford exposure. Once the organization begins to see these games for what they really are, they lose their effectiveness and their abuser becomes an object of amusement, rather than of power. This is intolerable to the immature member and he/she must do whatever is necessary to focus the organization's attention on another member, ideally the very one that is making the accusation. The immature member will attempt to convince the Ship that the accusation is, in and of itself, an act of hostility and will accuse

his/her accuser of playing precisely those tricks mentioned above. He/she does this by confusing the difference between an unjustified attack and an act of self-defense. The immature member will try to make others think that these are the same thing. They are not!!! No one has the right to commit an unjustified attack on another person. But everyone has the right to self-defense, to whatever extent is necessary to end such an attack and to prevent it in the future. The Ship reserves that right, too! The Commanding Officer will, of course, give the member the chance to "mend his/her ways."

Resolution of the conflict

First, the member will be given an oral warning. If that is not effective, the member will be given a written reprimand. At this point, the member is on probation and temporarily removed from his/her post for no less than 30 days. If the immature member still refuses to change his/her behavior, then the Commanding Officer has the authority and the responsibility to permanently expel such a member after written notice was given. In situations where the offense is of an urgent nature, as in cases of sexual misconduct, the Commanding Officer has the authority to immediately suspend the member until the Senior Staff can convene to make a final decision.

Disclaimer of Inclusion

This Conflict Resolution Policy applies to all primary, secondary and attendees of the *USS Independence* and its functions. Ignorance of this policy does not preclude responsibility to this policy.

Handbook and Policy Certification

This is to certify that the *USS Independence* NCC-75029, has adopted this handbook and Conflict Resolution Policy and affirms that it is binding upon itself, subject to future amendment, the Ship Commanding Officer, in conjunction with those named below, dated this First Day of February, 2017. This is the 6th Edition of the handbook since the Ship's creation in 2014.

Marc Wagner
Commanding Officer

Rachel Wagner
Executive Officer

David Whitford
Chief Operations Officer

Robert Roberson
Chief Security Officer

Darla Keys
Chief Communications Officer

Bret Lonsway
Chief Science Officer

Michael Sundahl
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Laura Moore
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