



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
THE MASTER CHIEF PETTY OFFICER OF THE NAVY
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

Reflecting upon numerous conversations with you, my fellow Chiefs, and the resounding voices of Sailors at all levels throughout the fleet, I have come to realize the expectations of a Chief Petty Officer may have become somewhat muddled. Please allow me to offer some clarity on this subject... It's in the Creed. The Creed states, *"More will be expected of you; more will be demanded of you."* These words and others contained in the Creed reminds us of our responsibilities as technical experts, continuous learners, coaches, decision-makers and communicators.

All of us, from the most junior Chief to the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy must be focused in our collective effort to become an even stronger more capable and resilient force by centering ourselves on the CPO Creed and our Navy Core Values to meet the expectations of our Officers, Sailors, families and peers.

Over the last year, I have traveled thousands of miles around the globe, visiting hundreds of organizations across every warfare community and speaking with tens of thousands of Sailors. It's immensely humbling to witness their commitment and listen to their stories. Nothing is more heartening than seeing first-hand what our Sailors are doing and having honest conversations about what we can do better as a Navy. These young minds have so much to offer. They truly are the most talented force we have ever had. We only need to be sure to listen and reinforce our support. So, as you are conducting quarters, walking the deckplates and engaging in social media, remember our actions will either reinforce or weaken our core attributes of initiative, integrity, accountability and toughness throughout our ranks. Keeping in mind, *"challenge is good; a great and necessary reality which cannot mar you – which, in fact, strengthens you."* Bettering our Navy is going to take the whole team. Therefore, every Chief must approach each day and every interaction — in person or on social media — with even the most junior of Sailors with an open mind; being receptive to the concerns, questions and ideas.

As we embark on this new year, we must be more focused than ever on leading forward in our efforts to strengthen enlisted leader development for all ranks, tackle destructive behaviors even in our own ranks, and eliminate unnecessary burdens that distract us from our warfighting priority.

Additionally, based on your feedback and that of our Sailors, we need to do a better job of ensuring information flows between the strategic, operational and tactical levels. It's just as important for those on the deckplates to understand what's going on at the strategic level, as it is for those at the strategic level to understand the perspective from the deckplates. This duality is critical for our Navy's continued success. We need to improve in our ability to interpret higher echelon information and make it relevant to the Sailors operating on the deckplates. This requires a multi-pronged communication approach from NAVADMINS to all-hands calls and from emails to Facebook posts. However, while Sailors are connected online we must ensure they do not become disconnected from leadership.

The heartbeat of communicating with our Sailors remains the Chief! Stand-up in front of them and educate your Sailors on what's going on in the Navy. Challenge the communication model. If you believe you are not receiving information that is being brought to your attention by your Sailors, reach

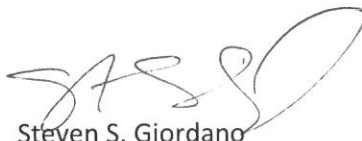
to the next level for guidance. Do not accept the "I don't know" answer. *"Ask the Chief is a household phrase."*

We must not even for a second forget the incredible privilege it is to serve our Navy as Chief Petty Officers. It is a privilege that must be earned every day. We are the technical experts, the mentors, and trusted advisors. As Chiefs, your words and actions must not waver from our abiding loyalty to the Navy, our Core Values, and the ideals that Chief Petty Officers stand for. Being forever mindful *"trust is inherent with the donning of the uniform of a Chief."*

On April 1, 2018, we will celebrate our 125th anniversary. It's been a strong 125 years of making our Navy run as its backbone, but we have plenty to learn. Learn from the mistakes, capture our successes, and share insights. We must continue to engage, develop and challenge ourselves to be better. It's what we do as Chiefs! *"Your performance has assured us that you will wear the hat with the same pride as your comrades in arms before you."* That's how we will strengthen the Navy this year and every year – from the sea floor to space.

Ultimately, we're seeking to continuously shape our Navy to become safer, more lethal, and enable it to build stronger partnerships. The over thirty thousand active and reserve Chief Petty Officers who wear anchors are the conduits to making that happen. If you haven't done so yet this year, take time to read the CPO Creed carefully and reflect on its meaning. There are no greater words of influence than what's written in the Creed. It's timeless. Take a hard look at the Creed as you embark on 2018. Read it, understand it, and live by it. Separately, our daily duties, mission and challenges may be unique, but the Creed is the marrow that bonds us together into a unified backbone for the Navy.

I urge all of you to strive to be visible, confidently humble deckplate leaders, more authentic, competent and courageous in leading our Navy team forward every day. Challenge yourself and accept those of your Sailors! *"The exalted position you have now achieved - and the word exalted is used advisedly – exists because of the attitude and performance of the Chiefs before you. It shall exist only as long as you and your fellow Chiefs maintain these standards."*



Steven S. Giordano
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