



Mike Abrashoff

Former Commander, USS Benfold and Author, *It's Your Ship*
& Co-Owner, Aegis Performance Group

Mike Abrashoff is at the center of one of the most celebrated success stories in turnaround leadership.

At the age of 36, the Navy selected Mike to become Commander of USS Benfold - at the time, the most junior commanding officer in the Pacific Fleet. The immediate challenges that faced him were staggering: Exceptionally low morale with unacceptably high turnover. Few thought that this ship could improve. In many ways, USS Benfold was actually an extreme example of the same problems facing many organizations today.



The solution was to establish a system of management techniques that Mike calls The LeaderSHIP Roadmap™. At the core of his leadership approach on Benfold was a process of re-defining leadership and replacing command and control with commitment and cohesion, and by engaging the hearts, minds, and loyalties of workers - with conviction and humility. "The most important thing that a captain can do is to see the ship through the eyes of the crew." According to Mike, The LeaderSHIP Roadmap™ is a principle that empowers every individual to share the responsibility of achieving excellence. "It's your ship," he was known to say. His former sailors to this day still remind him of it.

By every measure, these principles were able to achieve breakthrough results. Personnel turnover decreased to an unprecedented 1 percent. The rate of military promotions tripled, and the crew slashed operating expenses by 25 percent. Regarded as the finest ship in the Pacific Fleet, Benfold won the prestigious Spokane Trophy for having the highest degree of combat readiness.

Mike recounted the leadership lessons from his turnaround of USS Benfold in *It's Your Ship*, a New York Times and Wall Street Journal Best Seller, with over 800,000 copies sold to date.

Prior to commanding USS Benfold, Mike served as the Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, the Honorable Dr. William J. Perry. He also helped draft the air defense plan for naval forces in the Persian Gulf in 1990, coinciding with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait; and served as the Executive Officer of the Cruiser Shiloh, where he deployed to the Persian Gulf in support of United Nations sanctions against Iraq.

Currently, Mike is co-founder of Aegis Performance Group, a talent management and leadership development consulting company whose focus is helping organizations take the tools and tactics used on USS Benfold back to their individuals and teams.



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Professional Experience:

- Bestselling business author, *It's Your Ship* and *Get Your Ship Together*
- Professional Keynote Speaker
- Co-Founder, Aegis Performance Group (APG)
- Chief Executive Officer, Agent Science Technologies, Inc. (ASTI)
- United States Naval Commander, Commanding Officer USS Benfold (1997-1999)
- Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, Dr. William Perry, 1994-1997

Business Books:

- *It's Your Ship* (2002) - Wall Street Journal & New York Times Best Seller
- *Get Your Ship Together* (2005)
- *It's Our Ship* (2008)
- *It's Your Ship* 10th Anniversary Edition (2012)

Education:

- B.A., Political Science, United States Naval Academy (1982)