Creating an Inclusive Culture: Seafarers — study guide

An inclusive culture is built by allies — people who use their position to make room for others. This guide covers what allyship is, and what it is not.[1]

What allyship is

- Allies **centre and include** those who are otherwise silenced or marginalised.
- Allies **seek to understand** how others face oppression.
- Allies relate to others by **listening** to them and **believing** in their experiences.
- **Allyship is about action** — it is something you do, not something you are.

What allyship is not

- Allies do **not** expect others to show them what it is like to be oppressed.
- Allies do **not** relate to others by explaining how they, too, have faced injustice — that centres the ally instead of the person affected.
- Allies do **not** focus on the pain they feel in response to someone else's oppression.
- Allyship is **not** about status.

Putting it into practice

The pattern is simple: listen, believe, learn, and act. An ally learns from the people affected rather than asking them to educate or perform their experience, and turns understanding into behaviour that includes and protects others.

Key facts to remember

- Allyship = action, not status.
- Ally: centres and includes the marginalised; seeks to understand their oppression; listens and believes.
- Ally does not: expect others to demonstrate oppression; compete with their own story of injustice; focus on their own pain.
- Understanding comes from the people affected — then it is turned into action.

Sources

1. Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (as amended) — provisions on the elimination of harassment and bullying and on a safe and respectful working environment.

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