

I teach leadership internationally for the International Atomic Energy Agency. I am in Nice, France teaching a school for the next 2 weeks. I am considered a leadership expert due to my learnings from Capt Rish. Tomorrow I present my favorite anecdote about Robert's leadership, and I will be choked up telling the story. He had a deep deep impact on the person I am today, and I lead people in a similar supportive and empathetic manner. I will do my best this week in telling my sea stories of Robert so others can learn from them.

**So I was on one of my first qualified watches as Officer of the Deck on the USS James Madison, and in the middle of the night a fire occurred in a ventilation system in the missile compartment. I did as I was trained and sounded the general alarm, and donned an emergency breathing mask, as did everyone. I began taking the ship to periscope depth while others were fighting the small fire. Smoke filled the control room, and Robert came running into the control room after awakening from a dead sleep. I was happy as I figured he would take over....but he didn't. He stood behind me and said nothing. After 90 minutes or so, everything returned to normal, and we were back at our previous depth. He left the control room without saying a word. I was stunned. He came back about a half hour later, deep into the night, with an index card with a bunch of writing on it. He proceeded to tell me everything that I could have done a little better. Then he left to go back to bed. At the 6am turnover, I asked him how come he didn't take over? He said that the fire was the perfect training opportunity, and that had I not done things right, he would have fixed me, and if I screwed up too much, he would have taken over. He said the index card was about becoming excellent, and that I stayed within the guardrails...BUT he owed me the center of the road. I learn much about letting people fail a little bit is OK...but never let them fail totally.**

**Don Jackson**

**Former Lieutenant USS James Madison**

**Around 1988**

