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SEA4SHORE

Seafarers Experience Appealing For Shore

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Case Studies

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Case Study 1 - Chief Officer on Chemical Tanker

Previous Role at Sea:	Chief Officer on Chemical Tanker
Years of Experience at Sea:	10
Current Role Ashore:	Maritime Field Expert
Country:	Latvia

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

The primary motivation behind my transition from working at sea to a shore-based career was family-related, specifically the decision to have children. It became clear that maintaining a pregnancy safely onboard a chemical tanker was not feasible due to extended sea passages and limited access to medical care, including necessary visits to doctors. Additionally, my husband is also a seafarer, which presented further challenges as it was essential for one of us to be home with our children at all times.

Initially, we attempted a rotation system, alternating contracts between us to ensure one parent remained home. However, this arrangement proved unsustainable, particularly in terms of professional advancement. Extended periods away from active sailing often negatively impacted career progression opportunities, as many shipping companies tend to view prolonged absences—such as a year off—as detrimental. Upon returning after such a break, one's career progression often resets, making it challenging to advance or retain previously held positions.

Consequently, transitioning to a shore-based career was necessary, not only to ensure stability and safety for my family but also to provide greater continuity and advancement opportunities in my professional life.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

The key challenges I faced transitioning from a seafaring profession to a shore-based job primarily involved the geographic distance between my home and available maritime shore-based workplaces. Most suitable job opportunities were located within a radius of 60-150 kilometres from my residence, resulting in daily commutes of at least an hour each way by car. At the time, maritime shore positions rarely offered remote working options, making this daily commute a significant obstacle.

To overcome this challenge, I chose to work in spare part logistics marketing, a role that allowed me to work remotely. Additionally, I took on a part-time lecturing role at the Latvian Maritime Academy, teaching the Maritime Cargo Transportation course twice per week. This arrangement enabled me to effectively balance my professional responsibilities with the need to care for my young children.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?



Yes, my current position at RTU Latvian Maritime Academy required additional specialized training and qualifications. Specifically, I completed a Liquid Cargo Simulator Instructor's course, which provided comprehensive training in the effective use of simulator training for students. Additionally, I underwent a two-week instructor's course that focused on pedagogical methods for optimal classroom performance and effective knowledge transfer to students.

For my responsibilities in logistics marketing, additional training was necessary in database utilization to efficiently manage and analyse relevant data.

The skills and knowledge I acquired during my time at sea, particularly in my role as a Chief Officer, have proven invaluable in my current shore-based position. On a day-to-day basis, skills such as time management, document management, and technical proficiency are essential. Additionally, my expertise in cargo operations—specifically cargo gear management, safe delegation of tasks, cargo tank inspection routines, and overseeing the loading and discharging processes across different ship types—has been highly beneficial, particularly in my role teaching maritime students.

Furthermore, my familiarity with safe working practices, proactive utilization of user and instruction manuals, and commitment to continuous self-learning have significantly contributed to my effectiveness in a shore-based role. My ability to develop and supervise maintenance plans, comprehensive understanding of maritime rules and regulations, and knowledge of pollution prevention practices have also proven critical to successfully transitioning and thriving in a shore-based career.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

In my assessment, job opportunities available for seafarers transitioning to shore-based careers are quite abundant and diverse. Seafarers possess a broad range of skills and knowledge applicable across various sectors, not limited to maritime-specific roles. Their expertise can be valuable in technical, business, and construction departments, among others. However, transitioning often requires additional training, education, or certification to align these skills with specific industry requirements. Additionally, seafarers should remain open-minded and actively consider global employment opportunities, as their skillsets are highly transferable and sought-after internationally.



Case Study 2 - Deck Cadet On Tanker

Previous Role at Sea:	Deck Cadet On Tanker
Years of Experience at Sea:	1
Current Role Ashore:	Head Of Competence Assessment Class, Registry of Seamen of Latvian Maritime Administration
Country:	Latvia

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

I have only been at sea as a trainee (Deck cadet), twice. Already during my first internship for Latvian Maritime Academy, I realized that this career path was not for me. It was difficult to be away from family and friends for 4–5 months. At the time, internet access abroad was very limited, and when I returned home, I felt like an “alien” — unaware of everything that had happened during those months.

The hardest part was accepting that by choosing a career at sea, I would miss many important events — family and friends' gatherings, birthdays (even my own), concerts, and other significant occasions.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

In the beginning, it was difficult to find a job. I wanted to stay in the maritime field, but with only trainee experience, I was not of much interest to the industry. I worked for two years in a logistics company, and afterward, I received an offer to work at the Latvian Maritime Administration.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

I have successfully completed the GMDSS General Operator’s Course for a second time, as part of my commitment to maintaining up-to-date knowledge of maritime communication procedures and international safety regulations.

The knowledge of maritime conventions gained both at school and at sea has proven valuable in my work. The practical experience I acquired helps me communicate more effectively with active seafarers, who are now my clients.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

I believe that there are sufficient opportunities available, and having sea-going experience generally does not pose an obstacle when seeking shore-based employment. The challenge may lie in the limited variety of options, but it is important to recognize that the maritime industry itself is not an extensive field — the most common paths tend to lead to positions in training centers or crewing companies. However, it is also entirely possible to transition into a different sector altogether!



Case Study 3 - Ship Electromechanic

Previous Role at Sea:	Ship Electromechanic
Years of Experience at Sea:	6 years
Current Role Ashore:	Lecturer at Maritime Academy
Country:	Latvia

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

I wanted to try teaching students and sailors in addition to working at sea and gain new experience in land-based work. Teaching has interested me since my student years. I have not completely replaced my seafaring profession with a land-based one; I am still considering working at sea in the future to maintain my qualifications.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

The main challenge was transitioning from a seafarer's salary to a stable land-based salary.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

I had to complete instructor evaluator courses, and I also finished my Master's degree. I believe having a Master's degree is an advantage when applying for a position at a land-based company related to maritime affairs. A Master's degree is also required for working at a university.

The practical skills I gained working as a ship electromechanics are the most useful to me, which include knowledge about the ship's systems and mechanisms, as well as their operation, repair, and the related documentation. Knowledge of maritime affairs in general is also very valuable.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

There are job opportunities, but one needs to evaluate the field they will work in and the salary. You can work on land as a superintendent, ship operator, or cruise officer. In companies related to ships, there will be more opportunities to earn a higher salary. A lot also depends on the position held on the ship. Occasionally, there are vacancies in ship companies' offices where work experience on a ship is required. Unfortunately, the demand on land is not as high as for work on ships. If someone wants to fully leave the maritime industry, they will need to learn something at an educational institution, like "BUTS," to obtain the necessary certificates, etc.



Case Study 4 - Officer of watch, 3rd officer

Previous Role at Sea:	Officer of watch, 3 rd officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	20.5 months
Current Role Ashore:	Deputy Director of the Seafarers' Register at the Maritime Administration
Country:	Latvia

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

The decision to make a change at that moment was driven by changes in the shipping company I worked for – the ships I was working on were sold. I was faced with a choice: change companies and stay on the ships I had been working on; stay with the current company but be assigned to different ships, or try shore-based work.

The main reasons were:

1. Health issues;
2. Reluctance to do physically demanding work (I worked on container ships, where, during cargo handling operations, even the watch officer has to do physically strenuous tasks), and not wanting to work 4 months with constant sleep deprivation (the working hours in the ports were 6 hours on, 6 hours off, meaning six hours of work and six hours of rest, where in such a rotation, it was possible to get a maximum of 4-4.5 hours of continuous sleep. The sea voyages on the ships I worked on (feeder vessels) were short, so the work schedule was mostly 6 hours on, 6 hours off);
3. Longing for family and friends.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

Finding a suitable job where I could apply my skills and competencies. There aren't that many good and open vacancies in the maritime sector. Also, while working at sea, I hadn't explored all the shore-based opportunities, so I took the first available job offer. With the knowledge I have now, I would definitely value my skills and experience more and would look into other job offers.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

No additional qualifications were required, but there were criteria that needed to be met for my candidacy to be considered, including having a seafarer's professional qualification, work experience at sea, and in-depth knowledge of seafarer training and certification issues.



However, over time, I have, of course, supplemented my professional knowledge by attending conferences and participating in various "soft skills" development courses, etc.

All the professional skills and knowledge, as well as the experience of working and living on a ship, are very useful. In my current position at the Seafarers' Register, all the professional skills and knowledge I gained at sea are necessary, as our daily work involves developing, coordinating, and updating educational and course programs for seafarers, among other tasks. Additionally, my knowledge is valuable when advising seafarers on various educational, internship, and certification matters, as they know they are speaking with someone who understands the specifics of working on ships, is familiar with the peculiarities of operating different vessels, and so on—not just the dry requirements of regulations.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

Compared to European countries, where there are many different maritime organizations, large and developed ports, numerous ship-owning companies, ship management companies, etc., I would say that the opportunities are not as diverse as one would hope. Unfortunately, the salary also does not attract seafarers to shore-based jobs, especially those with management-level experience. For example, maritime educational institutions always need people with sea experience and professional knowledge, but unfortunately, the salary is so low that it cannot attract seafarers. Some seafarers find work in foreign companies, and modern working methods allow them to perform their jobs remotely, with occasional travel to the workplace in another country. However, if a seafarer chooses to start a shore-based career in the maritime industry, they can initially find simpler and less well-paid jobs, and over time, they can climb the career ladder.



Case Study 5 - 2nd officer

Previous Role at Sea:	2nd officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	2.4 years
Current Role Ashore:	Operations manager at shipping company
Country:	LATVIA

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

The main reasons for this decision were the opportunity to be with my family and friends, and a stable, well-paid job offered by MSC. Another reason was the chance to try the ship agent's job when starting at MSC, which was one of the roles I wanted to try while studying at LJA.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

There weren't really any challenges. After working at sea, the office environment felt like a vacation. If anything, I missed the free time that the typical sailor's vacation (2-3 months long) provided.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, the company's internal training, regarding cargo specifics and container loading programs used daily. I had experience working on tankers. The specifics of container cargo and terminal operations for containers are very different from the specifics of tankers. Luckily, working with containers is simpler, and the principles of ship stability do not differ. Most of it, however, was learned practically, and the work experience at sea made it much easier.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

I do not consider opportunities for seafarers to be easy, sufficient, or diverse on land. It might be easier for mechanics, but there are not many opportunities for ship officers, and they must accept that many of the skills acquired at sea will be useless, and a lot will have to be learned from scratch. The higher the position held on the ship and the older the person gets, the harder it is to adapt and find work on land. One must have very strong motivation and also a wide range of offers to find the right one. And, of course, the difference in salary. One has to accept lower income, a lower quality of life, and shorter vacations.



Case Study 6 - Master (above 3000 BT)

Previous Role at Sea:	Master (above 3000 BT)
Years of Experience at Sea:	23 years
Current Role Ashore:	Harbour master
Country:	Latvia

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

- The pension system for Latvian seafarers is not properly organized, meaning Latvian seafarers working on foreign-flagged ships only pay income tax, while the state social security contributions and other pension savings are paid voluntarily by the seafarers themselves, unlike the systems in other EU countries.
- The desire to spend more time with family (being at home every day), as seafarer contracts are relatively long, ranging from 2 to 6 months away from home (while being at sea on the ship).
- Career opportunities and growth for shore-based work.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

- The maritime academy education document is required to obtain a seafarer's work diploma and other documents for working at sea, while for shore-based work in the maritime industry, additional university education documents are relevant, at least a Bachelor's degree or preferably a professional Master's degree in a specific field, such as RTU Transport Systems Engineering, University of Latvia Law, etc.
- There are very few good, relevant job vacancies with adequate salaries.
- Shore-based work has a completely different job specification, much lower pay, but an easier work schedule (typically from 08:00 to 17:00, only on weekdays). On the other hand, a ship captain works 24/7, without days off.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

- A lot of knowledge had to be gained regarding Latvian legislation, specifically mastering Cabinet of Ministers regulations related to the maritime sector.
- Preparation of official correspondence, sending it out, as well as legally correct communication with Latvian ministries and other maritime sectors and specialists.
- Document management systems.



Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

In Latvia, there are very few good, relevant vacancies with adequate salaries (especially for those who have been Top 4 officers).

A seafarer can find a shore-based job, but the longer they have spent at sea (10 or more years) and the higher their salary on the ship, the more difficult it is mentally to step out of the so-called comfort zone and dare to start almost from scratch.



Case Study 7 - Officer of the watch

Previous Role at Sea:	Officer of the watch
Years of Experience at Sea:	-
Current Role Ashore:	Vessel traffic controller
Country:	Latvia

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

My husband and I were working on different vessels, and we decided that one of us had to stay working ashore.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

The main challenge was to find a suitable land-based job as there are not so many vacancies available for seafarers.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, I needed to obtain the certificate of VTS operator; the training took place in Danish straits.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

There are jobs on shore that sailors can do as well, but jobs that are specifically for people with a maritime education — ones that can't be done without it — unfortunately, are few.



Case Study 8 - Officer of the watch, 3rd officer

Previous Role at Sea:	Officer of the watch, 3 rd officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	-
Current Role Ashore:	Export sales specialist at shipping companies
Country:	Latvia

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

I wished for stability and also due to family life. While at sea, there are many things you cannot control. Contracts tend to be longer, and the time on land is shorter.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

Initially, it was definitely the salary, which, when starting the job, was not high.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

No, I did not need any special training.

Since my current profession is also related to the maritime industry, the specific terminology and deeper understanding of the maritime sector, which I gained at the Maritime Academy and while working on ships, definitely give me an advantage. Also, I would mention stress resilience, which was developed while working on a ship.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

I would say that there are always opportunities, especially now when there is a demand for workers. However, I think it depends on the individual. If an employer is looking for a shore-based employee with a foundation in maritime knowledge, former seafarers should not have problems finding jobs in sectors such as logistics, crewing, ports, etc.



Case Study 9 - Master on chemical tankers

Previous Role at Sea:	Master on chemical tankers
Years of Experience at Sea:	23 years
Current Role Ashore:	Marine superintendent
Country:	Latvia

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

The primary reason for transitioning to a shore-based role was to achieve a better work-life balance, particularly the opportunity to be consistently present with my family. Life at sea, while rewarding in many ways, came with long periods away from home, making it difficult to participate in family life and engage in personal interests, such as sports activities. I also felt a strong desire to expand my professional horizons by gaining experience onshore and viewing the maritime profession from a broader perspective. After many years at sea, the routine had become repetitive, and I recognized the need for a new challenge—one that would allow me to apply my seagoing knowledge in a different context, contribute to the industry in new ways, and continue growing both professionally and personally.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

There are few vacancies available for seafarers with master experience. Most superintendent vacancies are not officially published; thus, it is of essence to have a wide network of acquaintances.

Relating to the office work, it turned out to be difficult to be and sit at the office the whole day. Moreover, commuting to the office takes time, which is overall time-consuming. Office environment is somewhat different from the working environment on the ship.

The salary is another challenge - it is challenging to obtain the same salary also on a shore-based job.

A huge disadvantage is the lack of long holidays, which usually were 6 weeks long after 6 weeks of working. With the office work, the only holidays are the weekend days and 4 weeks a year.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

There was no formal or specialized training required for the role itself. However, a thorough understanding of the company's internal processes, operational routines, and management systems was essential. Much of this was acquired through on-the-job experience, internal briefings, and close collaboration with colleagues across other departments.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore



In my opinion, while there are certainly job opportunities available for seafarers transitioning to shore-based roles, the availability and diversity of these roles can vary depending on factors such as rank, specialization, industry demand, and geographic location. Senior officers—especially those with experience on specialized vessels like chemical tankers—often have a clearer path to roles such as marine superintendent, HSQE officer, technical manager, or vetting inspector. However, for junior officers or ratings, the options may be more limited without further education or certification. One has to search for the possibilities.



Case Study 10 - 3rd officer

Previous Role at Sea:	3rd officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	6 years
Current Role Ashore:	Recruitment manager
Country:	Latvia

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

My decision to transition from working at sea to a shore-based career was motivated by several factors, both professional and personal. One of the main reasons was the desire for a better work-life balance. I wanted to spend more time with my family and be present in everyday life, which is something the maritime lifestyle made very difficult. Life at sea, while exciting and challenging, often meant being away from family and friends for extended periods, which became increasingly difficult over time.

In addition, I wanted to apply and develop my knowledge and experience in a different context – onshore. After spending years at sea, I had accumulated technical, organizational, and communication skills, and I became interested in how these skills could be utilized in shore-based roles.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

During the transition from a seafaring career to a shore-based role, one of the main challenges I faced was adapting to a very different work environment. Life at sea is highly structured, with a clear hierarchy and defined responsibilities, whereas shore-based work tends to involve more office dynamics, cross-departmental collaboration, and often less predictability in daily tasks. This required me to adjust my communication style and learn how to explain my knowledge in a way that made sense from a shoreside perspective.

A significant part of the transition was also psychological – shifting from a rotation-based lifestyle to a regular, long-term daily work routine.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, I enhanced my knowledge in recruitment processes, interview techniques, and human resource management principles. While I had a good foundation in maritime operations from my time at sea, working onshore—especially in recruitment and training—required a deeper understanding of administrative and regulatory aspects.

Before starting my current role as Recruitment Manager at LAPA Ltd, I pursued an MBA degree to strengthen my knowledge in business management, leadership, and human resources.



During my time at sea, I developed a range of skills and knowledge that are highly relevant and valuable in my current position as a Recruitment Manager at LAPA Ltd.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

In my opinion, job opportunities for seafarers transitioning to shore-based careers are gradually expanding, but they are still somewhat limited and vary depending on factors like rank, experience, additional qualifications, and location.

There are certainly career paths available—particularly in areas like crewing, ship management, technical inspection, marine surveying, training and education, and maritime administration. Seafarers with strong operational backgrounds and good communication skills can add significant value in these fields.

I believe there is potential for growth in this area, and more support—such as structured transition programs, partnerships with maritime companies, or government incentives—could make a big difference in helping seafarers integrate into the maritime shore-based workforce



Case Study 11 - Deck Officer

Previous Role at Sea:	Deck Officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	-
Current Role Ashore:	Marine, aviation and cargo underwriter
Country:	Latvia

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

A career change was considered already during my studies at the Latvian Maritime Academy, with the understanding that the time would eventually come to settle on land. Therefore, with the anticipation of a growing family, there was little doubt about which direction to take, and I began studies at the Faculty of Law at the University of Latvia.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

There was a lack of understanding from shore-based employers regarding my professional skills, as a university degree in ship navigation didn't mean much to those working on land. Gaining a legal education was the first stepping stone towards further professional development.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

The insurance industry requires knowledge of economics and experience in the financial sector. In this regard, a brief period working at a bank proved valuable—an opportunity I was offered thanks to my legal education.

Entering the insurance field—specifically in the area of marine and cargo insurance—my direct understanding of maritime cargo transport, national and international port regulations, and day-to-day operations on ships and in ports became invaluable experience to share with colleagues.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

The rank achieved at sea plays an important role, as senior officers enjoy significantly more advantages. In terms of opportunities, those with a maritime education alone will find more vacancies available for technical specialists—particularly graduates of marine engineering programs. Much depends on the individual's ambition, willingness to grow,



Case Study 12 - Electro-technical Officer (ETO)

Previous Role at Sea:	Electro-technical Officer (ETO)
Years of Experience at Sea:	Cadetship+Officer position ~ 1+4=5 years
Current Role Ashore:	Technical Project Coordinator at System Engineering and Assurance Department (TPC at SEA)
Country:	Latvia

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

I truly loved working at sea and my role onboard. The reason I moved ashore is quite simple - I married another seafarer. Since we were with different companies and held different positions, coordinating our schedules became a real challenge, therefore we had to choose who would keep working at sea and who would take a shore-based role. At that moment, it made more sense for me to make that transition. Honestly, I don't think I would have left sailing for any other reason. But out of all the possible scenarios, this is the one that came to be.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

There were many challenges. First of all, finding a job. Back when I was studying and graduating from the maritime education institution, we were told it would be easy to find a job, both at sea and ashore. In reality, getting my first position onboard was a serious challenge. I'm still deeply grateful to the company that believed in me back then. But finding a good shore-based job - one that I could enjoy as much as life at sea - turned out to be an even bigger challenge. I faced dozens of rejections, mostly because I lacked prior experience ashore. Honestly, I still can't fully understand it. How can someone in this industry think, that a seafarer, who takes full responsibility for a vessel, manages and coordinates every aspect of their department, adapts quickly to changing conditions, and I could go on with the list, is somehow not capable of handling a role in... put any shore-based maritime company? Looking back, my mistake was focusing only on maritime-related positions. It took me some time to realize that companies outside the maritime sector can actually be very open and welcoming as well.

As for the personal challenges. Adjusting to the regular office schedule 5:2, 8-5 - working from Monday to Friday, from 0800 to 1700 was tough. Sitting at a desk all day was a big change. I also missed having direct access to the latest maritime regulatory updates, innovations, technologies, all other things you're constantly exposed to onboard. And then, there was the mental shift - transitioning from thinking, acting, and being a seafarer to seeing things from the other side of the industry.



As an ETO, I worked on 4-month contracts, with 2-3 months off in between. We sailed both short and long voyages. I worked across the ship - engine room, deck, bridge, accommodation - you name it. The work was both physical and mental, and no two days were ever the same at sea.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Project management training (I completed it as a professional development program before joining RB Rail AS. It's also worth noting that I already held two Master's degrees when I started in RB Rail AS). While no additional specific training was required, a general understanding of sectors like construction and rail was necessary. But as I mentioned earlier - a seafarer can learn and adapt to absolutely anything.

Beyond technical and engineering knowledge and skills, the most valuable skills I transferred from sea to shore would be managing both human and material resources, cultural awareness, strong communication, self-discipline, attention to detail, and a natural drive to optimize and innovate.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

Thinking of Latvia, and especially maritime-related job opportunities, unfortunately, the possibilities for seafarers ashore are not enough. The maritime sector here is quite slow-moving, and initiating change is difficult. On a global scale, however, there are many opportunities available for seafarers in transition to shore-based careers. I would strongly encourage others to take advantage of those, as international experience and expertise can later be brought back to benefit Latvia.

As I mentioned earlier, there are also many possibilities outside the maritime sector for those with a maritime education and seagoing experience. I personally know people who have successfully moved into IT, safety, banking, energy, and other industries, both in Latvia and abroad.



Case Study 13 - Officer of the Watch

Previous Role at Sea:	Officer of the Watch
Years of Experience at Sea:	3
Current Role Ashore:	Manager/Researcher
Country:	Türkiye

Why did you leave the job at sea?

I already considered to create a stable career before my journey at sea. Because so much was said that it is not a sustainable career for many reasons even if you like to do. Sea life is so demanding both physical and mental toll of working onboard. Life at sea is not just about navigating and managing a vessel—it’s about dealing with high-pressure situations, unpredictable weather conditions, long shifts, and the constant responsibility of ensuring safety on board. While I thrived in this environment for many years, I began to notice the exhaustion creeping in. The physical strain, combined with long working hours and limited rest, made me reconsider how sustainable this lifestyle was in the long run.

Beyond the lifestyle challenges, I also felt the need for career growth and professional diversification. While I had climbed the ranks onboard, I wanted to expand my expertise beyond ship operations and explore roles that allowed me to contribute to the maritime industry from a different perspective. I decided to do further study after my cadetship complete with full bursary attained.

Financial stability and long-term security also played a role in my decision. Working at sea can be financially rewarding, but it often comes with uncertainty—contracts end, industry changes affect job availability, and there’s always the question of what happens when you can no longer work on board. I wanted to secure a position that provided long-term stability, benefits, and a retirement plan that didn’t rely on me being away from home for most of the year.

Ultimately, my decision to leave was not about walking away from my passion for the maritime world, but rather about finding a way to stay connected to the industry while achieving a better balance between my professional and personal life. The sea will always be a part of who I am, but transitioning to a shore-based role has given me new opportunities to grow, contribute, and build a future where I can enjoy both my career and my time with family.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

After spending years working at sea, I realized that while I loved my career, I wanted to use my knowledge and experience in a different way—one that allowed me to stay connected to the maritime industry while also gaining stability and a better work-life balance.

One of the biggest reasons for my decision was career development. While working on ships gave me extensive hands-on experience, I started to feel that my career progression had reached a plateau. I wanted to challenge myself in new ways, develop additional skills, and explore opportunities that would allow me to contribute to the industry from a different perspective. I saw that many experienced seafarers



were making the transition into maritime consultancy, fleet operations, training, and regulatory roles, and I realized that my expertise could be valuable in these areas as well.

Another major factor was stability. Life at sea is unpredictable—not just in terms of daily operations, but also in terms of job security. Contracts end, shipping companies restructure, and industry demands change. I wanted a career where I could plan for the long term, build a stable professional life, and have a clear pathway for growth without constantly worrying about my next contract or the impact of global shipping fluctuations on my employment.

Perhaps the most personal reason was the need for a better balance between my professional and personal life. Working at sea had been an incredible journey, but it also meant months away from home, missing family milestones, and feeling disconnected from life on land. I wanted to be more present for my loved ones and build a routine that allowed me to enjoy both my career and my personal life. Unlike onboard roles that require long shifts and unpredictable schedules, a shore-based job gave me the chance to have regular working hours, weekends off, and the ability to plan my time more effectively.

Ultimately, my decision to move ashore was about leveraging my experience in a new and meaningful way. It wasn't about leaving the maritime world behind—it was about evolving within it, taking on new challenges, and continuing to play an active role in shaping the industry while also building a future that gave me both professional fulfillment and personal happiness.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

Transitioning from a life at sea to a shore-based career was far from easy. While I was confident in my maritime expertise, I quickly realized that working on land presented a completely different set of challenges—both professional and personal.

One of the biggest hurdles was the shift in work environment and culture. At sea, everything is structured, hierarchical, and routine-driven. Decisions are made quickly, and there's a strong sense of teamwork because your crew becomes your second family. Onshore, however, the work culture is completely different. The pace can be slower, decision-making often involves multiple departments, and office politics play a much bigger role than they do onboard. Adjusting to a corporate setting, where meetings, long-term planning, and bureaucracy are a regular part of daily operations, was a significant change for me.

Another major challenge was translating my skills and experience into shore-based roles. While I had years of hands-on expertise in maritime operations, not every employer understood how those skills could apply to an office or managerial position.

On a personal level, adjusting to life on land was challenging. For years, I was used to the structure and discipline of ship life, the crew, and the excitement of traveling to different places. Suddenly, I found myself working regular hours in an office or port environment, without the same level of adventure and movement.

Despite these challenges, I approached the transition with patience and determination. I sought mentorship from other seafarers who had successfully made the switch, continuously worked on improving my skills, and adapted to the realities of the shore-based workforce. Over time, I found my place



in the industry, using my maritime background to add value in a different way. Although the process wasn't easy, it was ultimately rewarding, and I'm now able to contribute to the industry in ways I never imagined while still staying connected to the world I love.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, transitioning from a sea-based role to a shore-based career required me to take additional courses and training to bridge the knowledge gaps between ship operations and corporate or managerial roles on land. While my maritime experience gave me a strong foundation in leadership, problem-solving, and crisis management, I quickly realized that shore-based jobs demanded a different set of skills, particularly in business, regulatory compliance, and digital technologies.

Soft skills were another important aspect of my transition. On a ship, communication is clear and direct, with a strict chain of command. In a shore-based environment, however, communication styles are different, with more emphasis on collaborative decision-making, presentations, and negotiations. I took a business communication course to refine my ability to present ideas, lead meetings, and work effectively with cross-functional teams.

Overall, the additional courses and training I undertook played a crucial role in making my transition smoother. They not only helped me gain confidence in a new work environment but also ensured that I could apply my maritime expertise effectively in a shore-based role. While my experience at sea was invaluable, continuous learning and upskilling were necessary to successfully integrate into the corporate maritime sector.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

Transitioning from a career at sea to a shore-based role is a significant step, and while it comes with challenges, it also opens doors to new opportunities for growth and stability. If you're considering making this move, here are some key insights based on my own experience that can help you navigate the transition smoothly.

1. Start Planning Early

One of the biggest mistakes seafarers make is waiting too long to start planning for their shore-based careers. The maritime industry is evolving, and the demand for certain shore-based roles can change rapidly. Even if you're still working at sea, start exploring potential career paths, required qualifications, and industry trends well in advance.

2. Identify Transferable Skills

Many seafarers underestimate the value of their experience at sea. The skills you develop onboard—crisis management, leadership, problem-solving, teamwork, and decision-making under pressure—are highly valuable in shore-based positions. The key is to translate these skills into terms that shore-based employers understand. For example:

- If you were a Chief Officer, highlight your risk management and leadership skills.
- If you worked in engineering, emphasize your problem-solving and technical expertise.



- If you were involved in vessel operations, showcase your logistical planning and compliance knowledge.

3. Choose the Right Shore-Based Career Path

There are multiple career paths available for seafarers coming ashore. Some of the most common options include:

- **Researcher:** Like me! Maritime industry needs seafarers on the shore side!
- **Fleet Management & Ship Operations** – Roles such as Port Captain, Marine Superintendent, or Vessel Manager.
- **Maritime Logistics & Supply Chain** – Positions in port operations, freight forwarding, and cargo management.
- **Maritime Education & Training** – Teaching at maritime academies or conducting training programs.
- **Maritime Law & Compliance** – Roles in regulatory compliance, classification societies, or government agencies.
- **Technology & Digital Shipping** – Opportunities in AI-based fleet management, remote monitoring, and cybersecurity.

Understanding your strengths and interests will help you select the right career path that suits your expertise and long-term goals.

4. Be Ready to Upskill and Learn New Things

While your maritime experience is valuable, many shore-based roles require additional skills and qualifications. You may need to complete courses in areas like:

- Project Management & Leadership
- Maritime Law & Compliance
- Logistics & Supply Chain Management
- Finance & Business Administration
- Digital Fleet Management & Data Analysis

Taking these courses while still working at sea (through online platforms or short certifications) can make your transition much smoother and more competitive.

5. Build a Strong Professional Network

Unlike in the seafaring world, where promotions are based on certifications and experience, getting a shore-based job often relies on networking. Start connecting with people in the maritime industry through:

- **LinkedIn** – Follow industry leaders, join maritime groups, and engage with discussions.
- **Maritime Conferences & Events** – Attend industry gatherings to meet professionals from different sectors.
- **Former Colleagues & Shipmates** – Many seafarers who have already transitioned ashore can provide insights and job leads.

A strong professional network will increase your chances of finding the right opportunities and help you understand industry expectations.

6. Be Patient & Flexible

Shifting to a shore-based career isn't always immediate. Unlike onboard jobs, where promotions follow a structured path, the shore-based job market can be competitive and unpredictable. You may need to start at a lower level before working your way up. The key is to be open-minded, adaptable, and willing to learn.

7. Mentorship & Guidance



Seek out mentors who have already transitioned ashore. Their experience can provide valuable insights on what to expect, what mistakes to avoid, and how to navigate the process effectively.

Final Thoughts

Leaving the sea doesn't mean leaving your maritime career behind—it means evolving within the industry in a new way. While the transition can be challenging, with proper planning, skill development, and networking, it is possible to find a rewarding and fulfilling career ashore.

The maritime world is changing, and there is a growing demand for experienced seafarers in shore-based roles, leadership positions, and technological advancements. If you're considering this move, take the time to prepare, learn, and network—your future on land can be just as exciting as your time at sea.



Case Study 14 - Master

Previous Role at Sea:	Master
Years of Experience at Sea:	12 Years
Current Role Ashore:	Marine & Operation Superintendent
Country:	Türkiye

Why did you leave the job at sea?

I decided to step ashore in order to spend more time with my family and pursue a more stable lifestyle. While I valued my seafaring career and the experiences it provided, I felt it was the right time to transition to a shore-based position where I could apply my maritime knowledge in a different capacity.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

I decided to take a job ashore to spend more time with my family and to further develop my career on the shore side of the maritime industry. I believe this transition will allow me to grow professionally while maintaining a better work-life balance.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

The main challenge I faced during the transition was financial adjustment. Since earnings at sea are generally higher, it was difficult at first to adapt to a shore-based income, especially because entry-level shore positions often do not match the lifestyle standards one is used to. As a result, I had to rely on my savings to manage this period. Additionally, it took time to gain the necessary experience and move into a more suitable position ashore, which came with its own set of challenges.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, I took several additional courses and obtained relevant certifications to support my transition ashore. I completed a new university degree in Business Administration. I also received training in DPA (Designated Person Ashore) and Internal Auditor, as well as Practical Root Cause Investigation. Additionally, I completed occupational health and safety courses and earned certifications in this area. The maritime industry requires continuous learning and development, and I believe there is no limit to improving oneself. I am still participating in various trainings to enhance my knowledge and skills.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

I would not recommend starting a shore-based career without gaining sufficient experience at sea. In my opinion, working at least two years as a Chief Officer provides the essential operational knowledge and leadership skills needed ashore. After building a solid foundation at sea, seafarers can pursue the necessary trainings and certifications to make a successful transition to shore-based roles.



Case Study 15 - Oceangoing Chief Officer and SDPO

Previous Role at Sea:	Oceangoing Chief Officer and SDPO
Years of Experience at Sea:	12 years
Current Role Ashore:	Marine Superintendent
Country:	Türkiye

Why did you leave the job at sea?

I have over 10 years of experience on many different types of ships. At first it was nice but as the years passed, I felt I was getting tired. As nice as it is it is also tiring, stressful and tiring. I decided to leave this one ship.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

The reason I chose a job ashore is, as I said, because I felt tired on the ship, and since I'm a seafarer, I couldn't do any other job, so I chose a job related to the maritime sector ashore again.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

No matter how experienced a seafarer we are, when coming ashore, of course, they also want land experience. Many companies are looking for land experience. That's why I had difficulty finding a job ashore, yes, it's true, I struggled, but even though it was difficult, I still managed to find a job. Like this, of course, when you suddenly move from sea to shore... even though it's maritime, even though it seems the same... the roles ashore are very different, very separate. It's difficult in the first stage, of course. There's an adjustment period.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, courses are necessary. I took these courses, that's correct. Now that I work as a deck inspector at a tanker company, they asked for some courses from me to be able to work as an inspector. I attended these courses. That's right, courses are necessary.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

Of course, I would advise young colleagues to gain land experience alongside their sea experience. Because after a certain age, they will also agree with me and most likely want to come ashore, especially those who get married and start a family. They want this even more. Because the sea is nice when you are single, but it becomes quite difficult after marriage. There's also that aspect of the job, of course. I didn't mention it, but there's also that part.



Case Study 16 - Chief Officer

Previous Role at Sea:	Chief Officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	8 Years
Current Role Ashore:	HSEQ Manager
Country:	Türkiye

Why did you leave the job at sea?

I finalised my sea career due to family reasons. I altered my career direction to office jobs when we decide to have a baby with my wife.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

I decide to take a job ashore due to not to miss any part of my kids growth.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

It was hard to find a job opportunity in my resident city. Most of the shore jobs on maritime business were in İstanbul.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

You need additional courses and trainings if you want a successful career on shore. You need to stand out among your competitors.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

They should have courage and they should be determined on their decisions. Also, they should choose a path and get necessary certificates and trainings. Lifelong learning and growth are the key for a career journey on shore.



Case Study 17 - Master Mariner

Previous Role at Sea:	Master Mariner
Years of Experience at Sea:	8
Current Role Ashore:	Operation Manager, DPA/CSO
Country:	Türkiye

Why did you leave the job at sea?

I decided to leave my seafaring role to pursue new career opportunities ashore, aiming for personal growth and to take on different professional challenges aligned with my long-term aspirations.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

I chose to work ashore to utilize my maritime experience in a new capacity, contribute strategically to the organization, and achieve a better balance between work and personal life.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

The primary challenges involved adapting to a new working environment, acquiring additional skills relevant to office-based tasks, and adjusting to a different rhythm outside the ship’s operational setting.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, I undertook relevant courses such as ism internal auditor course, ISO 9001:2008/2025 auditor course, marine superintendent training, ecdis instructor course to ensure a smooth transition and enhance my competence in my new role.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

My advice would be to remain open-minded and motivated to learn new skills. Transitioning off the ship requires patience and flexibility, but it can lead to valuable growth and new career opportunities.

Nevertheless, get your hands dirty in ballast tanks, cargo tanks, cargo holds and do the inspections in person whilst you are onboard.



Case Study 18 - 2nd Officer

Previous Role at Sea:	2 nd Officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	Total 4 years
Current Role Ashore:	Manager
Country:	Türkiye

Why did you leave the job at sea?

I began my career with a shipping company office internship shortly after completing school. What attracted me to that role was its hybrid structure—it offered the opportunity to spend part of the year working in the office and the other part on the company-operated ships. This arrangement gave me valuable exposure to both operational and technical aspects of the industry, and I saw it as a strategic choice for long-term career growth. Over time, I realized that the shore-based component offered greater learning potential, stability, and broader responsibilities, which led me to fully transition into a shore-side role.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

My decision to take a job ashore was driven by a desire for broader professional development and long-term career stability. While working at sea provided valuable technical and operational experience, I was increasingly drawn to the strategic and regulatory aspects of the maritime industry, which are more accessible in shore-based roles. Additionally, working ashore offered better work-life balance and the opportunity to contribute to safety, compliance, and industry standards from a different perspective. I saw it as a natural progression that would allow me to apply my sea-going experience in a more impactful way.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

Since my role from the beginning involved both sea-going and shore-based responsibilities, the transition was smooth for me. I was already familiar with the office environment, workflows, and expectations, which made the shift to a full-time shore position more of a natural progression than a significant change. As a result, I didn't encounter any major problems during the transition.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

I did not require formal external courses or certifications for the transition, as the company provided all the necessary training and support internally. The staff guided me through the processes, systems, and responsibilities on the shore side, which ensured I was well-prepared and confident in my new role.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

For seafarers thinking about transitioning ashore, my advice is to start building awareness of shore-side operations while still at sea. Try to understand the commercial, regulatory, and technical aspects beyond shipboard duties. If possible, look for hybrid roles or short-term assignments in company offices to ease the transition. Shore-based roles can offer greater stability, broader career options, and the chance to contribute to the industry in new ways. Most importantly, don't hesitate to seek guidance—many companies are willing to support motivated seafarers who want to grow their careers ashore.



Case Study 19 - Master Mariner on Suezmax Tankers

Previous Role at Sea:	Master Mariner on Suezmax Tankers
Years of Experience at Sea:	15+ years
Current Role Ashore:	Fleet Operations Manager & Designated Person Ashore (DPA)
Country:	Türkiye

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Leaving the sea was not an impulsive decision but part of a long-term career plan I set while preparing myself for life at sea. Even during my years onboard as an officer and later as a Master, my goal was always to transition to a shore-based management role. I have always believed that becoming a Master Mariner is essential to truly understand ship operations and effectively contribute to a shipping company at the management level. Once I had gained sufficient sea experience and commanded vessels with confidence, I knew it was time to apply that experience ashore, where I could make a broader impact.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

Taking a shore-based job was a deliberate and well-considered step in my career plan. From the early stages of my maritime journey, I envisioned a long-term path that would include gaining operational experience at sea and eventually transitioning into a management role ashore. I strongly believe that a well-rounded maritime professional—especially one in a senior shore position—should first have practical experience onboard, ideally up to the level of Master or Chief Engineer.

After many years at sea, including serving as Master, I felt I had accumulated the technical knowledge, leadership skills, and situational awareness necessary to add value in a strategic, shore-based capacity. I wanted to contribute to the industry from a broader perspective—overseeing safety, compliance, budgeting, fleet operations, and helping shape company policies.

Working ashore allows me to apply my seagoing experience in a way that improves the efficiency and safety of vessel operations, supports crews, and aligns commercial objectives with regulatory requirements. It’s a different kind of responsibility, but one that I embrace with the same level of dedication and professionalism I had onboard.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

Professionally, the transition went quite smoothly. Thanks to a solid sea-going record and positive references, I received offers from a few reputable companies as soon as I was ready. The real challenge, however, was on the personal side. Life at sea and life in an office are vastly different. As seafarers, we’re used to a structured and somewhat isolated environment. Adapting to a metropolitan lifestyle—managing daily commutes, fixed office hours, and balancing social obligations—took some time. Time management and discipline were key in maintaining a healthy work-life balance, especially during the initial period of adaptation.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?



Absolutely. While sea experience forms a solid foundation, certain shore-based roles require additional qualifications. Some courses are mandated by the IMO or national maritime administrations, while others are strongly recommended for compliance, safety management, and commercial awareness. I completed several of these both before and during my transition. In particular, training in ISM Code implementation, risk management, internal auditing, and ship management software proved invaluable. I also pursued academic studies—such as an MSc in Shipping Operations—to bridge the gap between practical experience and managerial competence.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

First and foremost, define your long-term career objective. Transitioning ashore is not something to try on a whim—it requires commitment, adaptability, and patience. Shore-based roles can be more demanding than life at sea, especially mentally and emotionally. If you've been at sea for many years, the shift in dynamics—especially reporting to superiors daily despite once holding the highest rank onboard—can be humbling.

Masters and Chief Engineers, in particular, may find it more challenging because they go from being the final decision-makers to being part of a team with oversight. But if you plan your transition wisely, acquire the necessary skills, and maintain the same level of discipline and professionalism you had at sea, the rewards are significant. You'll continue contributing to the maritime industry in a meaningful way, just from a different vantage point.

Also, never stop learning. Stay updated with industry developments, build your professional network, and invest in continuous professional development (CPD). That mindset will set you apart.



Case Study 20 - Oceangoing Unlimited Master

Previous Role at Sea:	Oceangoing Unlimited Master
Years of Experience at Sea:	16 years
Current Role Ashore:	Marine Pilot
Country:	Kuwait

Why did you leave the job at sea?

After a certain point in my professional maritime career, I realized that I was no longer growing or learning as I used to. Between 2007 and 2023, I worked on almost every type of tanker—from 5,000-ton chemical tankers to 165,000-ton crude oil tankers. Although this gave me a wide range of experience, I came to see that, academically and professionally, the ships were no longer offering me anything new.

Despite changes in cargo, routes, or crew, the nature of the work remained fundamentally the same. This repetitive cycle made me feel that I had reached a plateau in terms of learning and development. I wanted to apply my knowledge and experience in a broader, more dynamic environment—onshore—where I could continue to grow and contribute in new ways.

That realization was the key reason I decided to leave life at sea and pursue new challenges on land.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

I decided to take a shore-based job in order to apply the knowledge and skills I had gained at sea, and to achieve greater stability in my family life. In addition to these reasons, financial factors also played a role. Overall, the main motivation was to combine my maritime experience with a more balanced and sustainable lifestyle on land.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

I didn't encounter any major problems during the transition. Since I moved from ship captaincy to a maritime-related shore-based role at Marin, it was already a natural extension of my previous responsibilities. This type of work is part of our profession, so the shift felt quite smooth and familiar. I experienced no significant difficulties adapting.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, there were some additional requirements. For example, I needed to complete a pilotage-related certification and obtain an English language proficiency certificate. These kinds of supplementary courses are often necessary for shore-based maritime roles, depending on the specific job function.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore



My advice would be to gain substantial sea experience before making the shift ashore. For deck officers, I recommend working as a captain for at least 1.5 years after obtaining your command license. For engine officers, serving as a chief engineer for at least 3–4 years across different engine and turbine types is valuable. Without this solid foundation, much of the hands-on knowledge and skill from sea life may not fully transfer to shore-based roles.

I also believe it's important not to stay at sea for too long. Repeating the same type of trade on the same kind of vessel can limit your personal and professional growth. Diversifying your ship experience and planning your career early on can help ensure a smoother, more fulfilling transition to life ashore.



Case Study 21 - Oceangoing Master

Previous Role at Sea:	Oceangoing Master
Years of Experience at Sea:	20+ years
Current Role Ashore:	Founder & General Manager at ISM Maritime Company and Consultant Services
Country:	Türkiye

Why did you leave the job at sea?

I decided to leave my career at sea primarily due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. During that time, I had to stay onboard for an extended period—about ten months—which was mentally and physically exhausting. This experience made me reflect on my priorities in life, especially the importance of family and life on land. With young children and the challenges brought by the pandemic, I realized that being present for my family was becoming more essential than continuing my seafaring career.

Additionally, after reaching the highest rank in my profession as a captain, I felt that I no longer had a clear goal or motivation to continue at sea. The lack of new challenges, combined with the monotony of life at sea, contributed to a sense of fatigue and disinterest. I also felt that the satisfaction I used to get from my job was diminishing.

Considering all these factors—prolonged time away from home, the emotional impact of the pandemic, having already achieved my professional goals, and a growing desire to be with my family—I made the decision to transition to a life and career on land.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

I decided to take a job ashore because I felt it was time to be more present at home, especially since my children are still young. Beyond being a captain, I realized the importance of also being a father. I wanted to be involved in their lives and support my family in a more direct and consistent way.

Additionally, life at sea had become quite monotonous over time. I was looking for a fresh challenge in a different environment—something that would keep me motivated while also allowing me to enjoy my work. A shore-based job offered me the opportunity to stay engaged professionally while also having the time and stability to be there for my family. The main reason was to maintain a healthy family life and be the father my children need.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

The main challenges I faced during the transition from sea to shore were related to adaptation. Life and work on board are based on a clear structure, discipline, and a defined chain of command. Tasks, shifts, and responsibilities are organized and consistently followed. On shore, however, I observed that many



companies lack such structured systems. Workflows tend to depend heavily on the personal management style of whoever is in charge, which can lead to inconsistency.

Another major challenge was the disconnect between shore-based staff and seafarers. In some companies, I noticed a lack of understanding and respect for maritime experience. Individuals with little or no sea time were often in positions where they gave instructions to experienced captains, which led to frustration and inefficiency.

Additionally, there was internal competition and office politics among staff ashore, where people focused more on protecting their positions than on teamwork. This environment was very different from the cooperative mindset required on board a vessel.

I also noticed that many companies prioritize cost-saving over operational quality. There were cases where inexperienced staff were preferred because they were cheaper, and experienced professionals were seen as overqualified or temporary, especially if they had a seafaring background.

Ultimately, the differences in mindset, structure, and work culture between sea and shore created an environment where adaptation was difficult and professional contribution was often underappreciated.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, additional training is definitely needed when transitioning from sea to shore. The maritime industry includes a wide range of shore-based roles such as ship management, brokering, operations, technical management, classification and flag compliance, among others. Although seafarers may have encountered these areas during their careers at sea, the shore-side perspective and procedures are often quite different.

To ensure smooth adaptation, it is essential to receive basic professional training in relevant areas. Understanding the shore-based documentation, procedures, checklists, and compliance requirements requires a different approach than the operational mindset used on board. Seminars, certification programs, or orientation courses led by experienced professionals are very helpful.

Moreover, continuous professional development is important. The industry evolves with new regulations and technologies, so ongoing education—such as in-house training sessions, refresher courses every 6 to 12 months, and internal audits—helps shore staff stay updated, improve efficiency, and correct operational errors. In summary, while seafarers bring strong practical and operational knowledge, they also need to supplement it with procedural and documentation-focused training to succeed ashore.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

My first and most important advice to seafarers considering a career ashore is to complete their seagoing career to the highest possible rank—such as Chief Engineer or Master—before making the transition. Achieving senior positions at sea ensures they acquire a deep level of operational, managerial, and crisis-handling experience, which forms a strong foundation for a successful shore-based career.



Switching to a shore role without having completed a full career at sea may leave significant experience gaps that are hard to compensate for later. Unlike the vessel, where practical execution is the focus, shore-based roles require strong knowledge in documentation, legal procedures, contracts, and regulatory compliance. Seafarers are often underprepared in these areas and may find themselves struggling under the administrative demands of shore-based work. Therefore, continuous self-education—through courses, seminars, remote university programs, or even in-company training—is vital.

It's also important to understand that working ashore presents a different kind of pressure. The stress is often more constant and less predictable than onboard, and the freedom and autonomy found at sea are typically absent. Seafarers must adapt to new environments, new communication dynamics, and a more hierarchical and bureaucratic system.

Moreover, the transition can be more challenging for those coming from high-quality shipping companies or long voyages compared to those from short sea or coastal operations, due to the variance in standards and exposure. Thus, every seafarer's transition path will be different depending on their previous experience.

In my own case, after reaching the highest rank and experiencing the repetitive nature of shipboard life, I realized that I needed a new challenge and a different environment. Starting from scratch with a new company on land taught me invaluable lessons about business, management, and adaptability—insights I wouldn't have gained at sea. It also made me realize how important family, stability, and planning are for long-term satisfaction and success.

Lastly, I advise seafarers to be patient and resilient. Shore careers require a different kind of learning curve, but with dedication and a willingness to grow beyond your comfort zone, the transition can be both fulfilling and successful. Combining sea-based experience with shore-side competence will not only make you more effective but also uniquely valuable in the maritime industry.



Case Study 22 - Chief Mate / DPO (Dynamic Positioning Operator)

Previous Role at Sea:	Chief Mate / DPO (Dynamic Positioning Operator)
Years of Experience at Sea:	6 years
Current Role Ashore:	Marine Section Leader (Master Unlimited II/2) - V.Group
Country:	Türkiye

Why did you leave the job at sea?

It is enough time I have spent at sea, away from home and family and friends.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

To be closer to my home family friends. To sleep in my own bed and stay socialized.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

Connections and network are important factors to find shore side jobs.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Not really but it depends on the job. To become DPA, it is required to have ISM Internal auditor DPA course.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

To prepare themselves with relevant courses and achieve the highest competency such as Master or Chief Engineer prior moving to shore side career.



Case Study 23 - Master

Previous Role at Sea:	Master
Years of Experience at Sea:	10
Current Role Ashore:	Superintendent
Country:	LITHUANIA

What motivated you to transition from working at sea to a shore-based career? What were the main reasons for this decision?

After years at sea as a captain, I wanted more stability for my family and a better work-life balance. Moving to a shore-based job allowed me to use my maritime experience in a new way while staying closer to home.

What were the key challenges you faced during the transition from a seafaring profession to a shore-based job?

I took a job onshore to have more stability, spend more time with my family, and apply my maritime experience in a different way. It was a chance to continue my career in the industry while enjoying a better work-life balance.

What were the key challenges you faced during the transition from a seafaring profession to a shore-based job?

One of the main challenges was transitioning from a seagoing mindset to a shore-based work environment. Finding a role that matched my experience and skills took time, and I had to adapt to new workflows, regulations, and corporate structures. Networking and continuous learning helped me make the transition successfully.



Case Study 24 - Master

Previous Role at Sea:	Master
Years of Experience at Sea:	30
Current Role Ashore:	Lecturer
Country:	LITHUANIA

What motivated you to transition from working at sea to a shore-based career? What were the main reasons for this decision?

Before I left the job offshore, I had been working on board different ships for more than 30 years. When I turned 59 and began to have health problems, I decided to look for work onshore.

What were the key challenges you faced during the transition from a seafaring profession to a shore-based job?

There were no challenges of finding a career ashore. During my 30 years of work on ships in various positions, I gained a lot of experience, so I was offered a job at the Lithuanian Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre. Moreover, I was offered a job as a lecturer at the Lithuanian Maritime Academy. Before I started to deliver lectures at the Lithuanian Maritime Academy for many years, I had been a Mentor for Cadets and young Colleagues.

What were the key challenges you faced during the transition from a seafaring profession to a shore-based job?

As I transitioned from a seafaring career to a shore-based role, I took on the position of instructor at a maritime training centre. This shift presented a new and meaningful challenge: effectively communicating my practical knowledge and professional experience to course participants. It required not only a deep understanding of maritime operations but also the ability to present complex concepts in a clear, structured, and engaging manner. Over time, I developed strong instructional skills and a passion for teaching, which allowed me to contribute to the professional growth of future maritime specialists.



Case Study 25 - Master

Previous Role at Sea:	Master
Years of Experience at Sea:	17 years
Current Role Ashore:	Director at Lithuanian Maritime Academy
Country:	LITHUANIA

What motivated you to transition from working at sea to a shore-based career? What were the main reasons for this decision?

From a young age, I was drawn to professions that combined adventure, responsibility, and technical skill—particularly aviation and maritime work. Ultimately, it was the sea that captured my interest. In 1971, I enrolled at the Klaipėda Maritime School, which marked the official beginning of my seafaring journey. Growing up in a rural area, I saw a career at sea as a gateway to broader horizons—both literally and figuratively. The maritime profession offered not only the promise of personal and professional growth, but also the opportunity to explore the world, engage with diverse cultures, and take on challenges that demand discipline, adaptability, and strong decision-making. This path has shaped my character and laid the foundation for a lifelong commitment to the maritime field.

What were the key challenges you faced during the transition from a seafaring profession to a shore-based job?

I have accumulated over 17 years of professional maritime experience, during which I held various high-responsibility positions, including serving as the captain of one of the largest vessels operating at the time. In addition to my duties as a shipmaster, I also assumed the role of company director, overseeing both operational and strategic management aspects. Following Lithuania’s restoration of independence, the national maritime fleet faced significant challenges. The infrastructure and organizational systems were not yet adapted to function within the framework of international maritime standards. Many fleet-related institutions were on the verge of bankruptcy and unable to sustain operations in the new economic and geopolitical environment. Recognizing the evolving circumstances and the urgent need for restructuring within the sector, I made the decision to transition my career ashore. My aim was to contribute more effectively to the modernization of maritime operations from a land-based perspective and to apply my leadership and maritime expertise in broader organizational and developmental contexts.

What were the key challenges you faced during the transition from a seafaring profession to a shore-based job?



The transition from sea to shore required significant psychological adjustment. Life and work onshore followed a markedly different rhythm and structure compared to the dynamic and often unpredictable routine at sea. As a ship captain, I held a position of clear authority, symbolized by my epaulettes and supported by established hierarchies aboard the vessel.

However, in a shore-based role, particularly in an instructional or administrative setting, authority had to be expressed and earned in different ways—through communication, collaboration, and the ability to adapt to new organizational cultures. This required a shift not only in professional mindset but also in interpersonal approach, as I had to integrate into a more structured, civilian work environment while maintaining the core leadership skills developed at sea.



Case Study 26 - Master

Previous Role at Sea:	Master
Years of Experience at Sea:	10
Current Role Ashore:	Manager at Company OJ CREW
Country:	LITHUANIA

What motivated you to transition from working at sea to a shore-based career? What were the main reasons for this decision?

First of all, I reached career maximum at sea quite fast, and I felt that at this point, there is no drive to reach something more at sea. Another huge aspect is that I wanted to create something bigger and that will serve other people, in other words, to make a positive impact to my society in Lithuania, to create jobs and opportunities.

And lastly, for sure, it is my family. I wanted to be home with my family, my 3 boys that we are growing together with my wonderful wife Maria.

What were the key challenges you faced during the transition from a seafaring profession to a shore-based job?

I would say you need to go out of your comfort zone of higher salaries (in the beginning) and the luxury of having 4- 6 months of vacation per year. The rest is solely up to the individual.

What were the key challenges you faced during the transition from a seafaring profession to a shore-based job?

Yes, and no :) I have a 2nd university education - a master's degree in business management. However, I have done it already while I was successfully running my own business.



Case Study 27 - Master

Previous Role at Sea:	Master
Years of Experience at Sea:	10
Current Role Ashore:	Lecturer at Lithuanian Maritime Academy
Country:	LITHUANIA

What motivated you to transition from working at sea to a shore-based career? What were the main reasons for this decision?

The desire for job variety prompted me to change from working at sea to working on shore, and it is also important to consider that working at sea requires “iron” health. Over the years, you never know when health problems may arise, so it is worth changing from working at sea to working on shore in a timely manner.

What were the key challenges you faced during the transition from a seafaring profession to a shore-based job?

There were no difficulties when switching to working on shore, because my new job was also related to the maritime sector.

What were the key challenges you faced during the transition from a seafaring profession to a shore-based job?

Improvement is necessary in any job. Changing from working on ships to working on shore is no exception. While working on shore, to obtain a university education, I had to study additionally. In addition, improving my qualifications is a continuous process that takes place both through self-development and through formal training.



Case Study 28 - Master

Previous Role at Sea:	Master
Years of Experience at Sea:	10
Current Role Ashore:	Lecturer
Country:	LITHUANIA

What motivated you to transition from working at sea to a shore-based career? What were the main reasons for this decision?

Main reason: my age, I have finished working at sea, when I was already 62 years old.

What were the key challenges you faced during the transition from a seafaring profession to a shore-based job?

Present work is nearly the same as at sea, there is not much difference, of course at sea You are on board some vessel, there You are ashore, but the academy is like a big ship with very large crew members on board.

What were the key challenges you faced during the transition from a seafaring profession to a shore-based job?

Yes of course, maybe not qualification, just to remember theory, of course, it was necessary to take some books or other editions. After one Year working in the academy, I found in my folder "LAJM students" more than 6000 files (today more than 10000 files). Plus, some folders "Books" today consist of 3408 files.



Case Study 29 - 2nd Officer

Previous Role at Sea:	2nd Officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	11
Current Role Ashore:	
Country:	LITHUANIA

What motivated you to transition from working at sea to a shore-based career? What were the main reasons for this decision?

First - I received a good and interesting offer that matched my qualifications from the employer. Second - considering my age, I had to plan to start a family.

What were the key challenges you faced during the transition from a seafaring profession to a shore-based job?

There were no special challenges, maybe the salary decreased a little, but I was able to adapt, because the offered work was interesting and connected with the sea.

What were the key challenges you faced during the transition from a seafaring profession to a shore-based job?

I had to finish my knowledge in the field of pedagogy, for assessors and additional qualifications "GOC for GMDSS".



Case Study 30 - 2nd Engineer

Previous Role at Sea:	2 nd Engineer
Years of Experience at Sea:	2
Current Role Ashore:	
Country:	LITHUANIA

What motivated you to transition from working at sea to a shore-based career? What were the main reasons for this decision?

- My professional maritime career path has started in 1983 when I've joined scientific research fishing ship "Korfu" team and participated in research race investigating efficiency of newly installed electric fishery equipment. The reason of my personal participation in this race was simple – I was the author of the idea and designer of the equipment "Kastytis-2" which has been produced under supervision of Electric fishery laboratory in Klaipeda. The results of equipment testing in Central Atlantic were recognized as very successful and it seemed that my maritime career could be long and bright. Unfortunately, it turned out that soviet regime structures supposed me as "not fully loyal". It happened after my refusal to cooperate with KGB structures. So, despite of successful results of my research, any perspectives of my seafarer's career became very limited – it wasn't allowed for me to visit any foreign port. A few times I've been invited to participate the beginnings of races of "Korfu" for setting and testing "Kastytis-2" equipment in Baltic Sea and after I've used to be left in Klaipeda port. Later, in 1985 on basis of my research I've successfully defended doctoral degree dissertation in admiral Makarov maritime academy in St.Petersburg.

The main motive to leave the sea was inspired from outside, as I explained above, so I switched to scientific research and came back to my hobby – sailing. Since 1989 I have a sailing yacht captain diploma and actively sailing until now. Since 2018, I am teaching as associate professor in Lithuanian Maritime Academy.

What were the key challenges you faced during the transition from a seafaring profession to a shore-based job?

When I decided to switch to a shore-based career, for me it was quite natural, from one side there were unremovable circumstances explained above, from the other, I successfully continued my activities as scientist-researcher, not much changing field of study.

What were the key challenges you faced during the transition from a seafaring profession to a shore-based job?

Of course, teaching as associate professor in Lithuanian Maritime Academy requires a lot of improvement of my qualifications. Especially in the field of modern maritime technologies used today. This I acquire during practical internships-races organized by Lithuanian Maritime Academy. Also, I am glad to recognize that my hobby helps me to keep maritime spirit.



Case Study 31 - Senior Officer

Previous Role at Sea:	Senior Officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	3 years
Current Role Ashore:	Technical IT support Specialist
Country:	LITHUANIA

What motivated you to transition from working at sea to a shore-based career? What were the main reasons for this decision?

After nearly a decade working at sea as a Officer, I made a conscious decision to shift my career from shipboard operations to shore-based roles. The primary motivation behind this change was the desire to build a more balanced life on land—one that allows more time with family and a consistent routine that is hard to maintain while working offshore.

Another key reason was personal development. I felt that after many years in the same maritime position, my growth had plateaued, and I was seeking new challenges and opportunities to expand my skill set. I wanted to learn something entirely new and step out of my comfort zone.

What were the key challenges you faced during the transition from a seafaring profession to a shore-based job?

What made this transition especially challenging was the need to start over. While onboard I held a senior position with a strong salary and responsibilities, moving ashore meant proving my value from scratch in a new environment. That’s why I believe such transitions should be done gradually. It’s not about suddenly quitting the sea—it’s about preparing yourself for the shore.

While still working onboard, I began learning new skills that could open doors to new career paths. I enrolled in a six-month Front-end Development course at CodeAcademy, where I gained valuable IT knowledge in programming and web technologies. This not only expanded my technical skill set but also boosted my confidence in working in the tech industry.

As a result, I was able to land a position as a Technical IT Support Specialist at StormGeo, a company that provides digital services for the maritime sector. My background as a Navigational Officer proved to be a strong advantage, as I could easily relate to the needs of shipping clients while also understanding the IT systems we support.

In parallel, I also joined Novikontas Maritime Training Center as an instructor, where I now teach Radar/ARPA and ECDIS courses. Throughout my maritime career, I always enjoyed mentoring new crew members and interns onboard. Sharing knowledge and helping others grow has always been important to me, so stepping into a teaching role felt like a natural extension of my experience and interests.

Changing careers is never easy—especially when transitioning from such a specific and demanding profession as seafaring. But the key is not to be afraid. The most important thing is to keep learning, reflect on your strengths, and recognize the unique experience you’ve gained at sea. Identify where those strengths can be valuable ashore, and gradually invest in your personal development. With time and



intention, it is absolutely possible to find meaningful shore-based roles that align with your interests and values.



Case Study 32 - 2nd officer

Previous Role at Sea:	2 nd officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	10 years
Current Role Ashore:	Instructor
Country:	LITHUANIA

What motivated you to transition from working at sea to a shore-based career? What were the main reasons for this decision?

My experience at sea provided me with a great deal of valuable knowledge. It is a very rewarding feeling to be financially recognized for work done at sea. After gaining such experience, I received an offer from the company Boskalis to become a shore-based instructor for future seafarers of the company. Since this aligned with my family needs and my desire to change the direction of my career, I ended my career at sea.

What were the key challenges you faced during the transition from a seafaring profession to a shore-based job?

Since I had a very good working relationship with my employer and truly trusted him, the offer I received was first and foremost a source of joy for my family. However, working onshore required me to develop a completely different set of skills than those used at sea.

What were the key challenges you faced during the transition from a seafaring profession to a shore-based job?

The most important thing was to discover within myself the qualities of a teacher and the desire to work with young people. Since this path did not intimidate me, the transition was relatively smooth.



Case Study 33 - Chief Officer

Previous Role at Sea:	Chief Officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	17 years
Current Role Ashore:	VTS operator
Country:	Croatia

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Family reasons
 Frequent departures/arrivals
 Constant adjustment to new colleagues (crew members)
 Increasing influence of office staff on the professional part of the nautical job

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

Family reasons
 Known working hours and workdays
 Less stress related to climate changes/biorhythm
 The possibility of a broader range of maritime professions

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

Lack of recognition for experience, seniority, and knowledge/practices gained on board and with shipping companies. A reluctance to accept new ideas and suggestions, insisting on continuing the old way of working, even though it is outdated.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

If they decide to work on land, they need to give themselves time to adjust. Many things will be denied to them, but they



Case Study 34 - 2nd Officer

Previous Role at Sea:	2 nd Officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	6 years
Current Role Ashore:	Crewing manager
Country:	Croatia

Why did you leave the job at sea?

When an unexpected but good opportunity for a shore-based job came up, I decided to take it and see if I could adapt to that kind of lifestyle.

After securing housing and sorting out my finances while working at sea, I decided to make the move to land and continue a “normal” life at home.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

What attracted me was that I am very flexible, the people I work with are very approachable, and the work atmosphere is of a high standard.

Additionally, working on shore allows me to be present at various events and gatherings at home, something I was unable to do while working at sea.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

Fortunately, shore-based jobs found me, so I didn’t have any problems when it came to searching for one.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

No.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

The offshore career is an ideal career for personal growth and learning to appreciate the “small things,” but in the long run, it takes more than it gives. I advise everyone to start sailing, but for a reasonable period of time.



Case Study 35 - Master

Previous Role at Sea:	Master
Years of Experience at Sea:	14 years
Current Role Ashore:	MRCC coordinator
Country:	Croatia

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Family and medical reasons.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

As a shipping agent, keeping in touch with the seafarers and ships in general as well as the job's dynamic nature.

As a VTS and MRCC coordinator job safety, less stress.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

No.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, a licence for a shipping agent, licence for ISM auditor, specific VTS operator courses.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

Before making the decision to cross to a shore-based career give it a good thought and have a conversation with.



Case Study 36 - Chief officer

Previous Role at Sea:	Chief officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	10 years
Current Role Ashore:	Crewing manager
Country:	Croatia

Why did you leave the job at sea?

There was a certain level of saturation, and I lost motivation.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

A somewhat familiar environment, the job is related to education and previous work experience at sea/aboard. The crucial factor, however, was the "normal" working hours compared to life on a ship.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

Honestly, no, because my job is within the organization where I had previously sailed. However, I'm sure I would have faced many challenges had I started looking for a job on land on my own.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Briefly, no—the job I'm doing on land is somewhat related to working on a ship, or rather my previous work experience.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

I believe that more and more opportunities are opening up for seafarers/former seafarers to find a job somewhat related to their profession, and new generations should keep this in mind—that one day they will be able to find a job on land. Of course, the salary on land can hardly match the salary at sea, but if someone decides to look for a job on land, I believe they are not motivated solely by the salary.



Case Study 37 - 3rd Officer

Previous Role at Sea:	3 rd Officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	7 years
Current Role Ashore:	Marine Quality Assurance Specialist
Country:	Scotland, UK

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Lack of advancement, stagnation in the job, and a desire for new experiences.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

The job on land, in the UK, at that time (over 5.5 years I went through 4 promotions) was offered to me since I had mentioned I was planning to change the direction of my career. The job was completely different from sailing and provided an opportunity for development in new directions—at the time, my focus shifted toward safety, which is now a significant part of my work.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

I had no problems finding employment in the UK, as my previous education and experience were sufficient. However, when trying to find a job in Croatia (before moving to the UK), a common response was the lack of experience or required certificates.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

No additional training was needed prior to employment. However, ongoing training is a regular part of the job for professional development (e.g., Optimoor mooring analysis, Company Security Officer, various management courses, Internal Auditor, Lead Auditor, etc.).

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

My advice: Give it a try and don't limit yourself—if possible, don't restrict your job search to one location or one area. Growth is always possible in any direction, and regardless of the initial job on land.



Case Study 38 - 2nd Officer

Previous Role at Sea:	2 nd Officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	8 years
Current Role Ashore:	Maritime training centre and lifelong learning
Country:	Croatia

Why did you leave the job at sea?

I found working 4/2 contracts exhausting; I was rarely at home and didn't have time to secure proper living conditions for when I disembarked. During my time off, the company would usually require me to undergo additional training at centers in the Netherlands.

I wanted to balance my life and live an ordinary, everyday life without excessive stress. On board, I was constantly tired and sleep-deprived due to regular watches and a large amount of extra work as a third or second deck officer (fire team leader, boat commander, pest manager, conducting induction training for new crew members, etc)

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

Because of the possibility of going home every day, engaging in hobbies, and following some standardized daily routines.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

First and foremost, there are too few job opportunities offered to former seafarers. Depending on their time at sea, it becomes increasingly difficult for seafarers to find work on shore later on. One needs to constantly stay up-to-date with modern job market demands that are relevant to former seafarers.

Paradoxically, the more sea experience one has, the harder it becomes to "shift" into a shore-based job. Also, transitioning from a high-ranking position in the ship's hierarchy to a lower-ranking shore-based job can be challenging.

The issue of lower income wasn't much of a problem for me, as I was prepared for it. I didn't face employment difficulties on shore because I knew what I wanted at that particular moment, and accordingly, job opportunities started to open up for me. I believe I disembarked at the right time and that I'm capable of managing life on shore.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

I continuously worked on improving myself. Among other things, I completed a Supplementary Pedagogical and Psychological Education program at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, lasting



two semesters, where I passed 14 subjects related to teaching in schools. I also attended seminars, courses, and training programs to successfully transition to working on shore.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

Have no fear - there will always be some job available on shore. It might not be ideal at first or in line with your expectations, but through continuous self-improvement and refining the specific skills you need, you'll gradually grow into your new role.

When disembarking for good, you'll generally face a lack of support from those around you. People who have never sailed will often think you're better off at sea, especially in terms of finances and income. But you alone know your reasons. You know the advantages best. No one can make that decision for you.



Case Study 39 - Chief Officer

Previous Role at Sea:	Chief Officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	9 years
Current Role Ashore:	Assistant professor/Lecturer
Country:	Croatia

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Due to the challenges of the separated life on the ship and family reasons, namely the birth of my second child.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

Opportunities for personal development, sharing knowledge with others, exploring, and using new and emerging technologies.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

Besides education in maritime studies and direct activities related to maritime affairs, primarily in the public sector, there were relatively limited employment opportunities, at least at the time of transitioning to land (2012).

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, additional psychological and pedagogical education for working in schools and a PhD at my current workplace.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

Think in a timely manner about employment opportunities on land, and if necessary, further educate yourself to adapt to the expected job. If possible, save a portion of your salary that will allow for a longer stay on land if it's not possible to find a job immediately after finishing work on the ship. Proactively search for future employment before ending your career at sea. Maintain and expand a network of people working on land or those who have decided to work on land.



Case Study 40 - 2nd Officer

Previous Role at Sea:	2 nd Officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	4 years
Current Role Ashore:	ITF Inspector
Country:	Croatia

Why did you leave the job at sea?

A job at sea requires a lot of sacrifice and separation from family. As a seafarer, I didn't have to worry about financial problems, but what kind of quality of life did I have? Not much. My contract was three months on the ship, two months at home, but it always ended up being three and a half to four months, a month and a half at home, you arrange for vacation, and then something unexpected happens, and they don't send you home, and everything falls apart. You come home, your wife works, you have nothing to do, and you can't wait to return to the ship. Between finances and life, I chose quality of life. That's the main reason I left the ship.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

When I decided to leave my job at sea, my main goal was to find a job related to my profession and to stay somewhat connected to ships. This job provided exactly that. I remained connected to ships and, even more importantly, to seafarers. This job gives me the opportunity to help seafarers in need, and that's what attracted me most to this position.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

The only problem I encountered when getting a job on land was the Tax Administration. I had already been working on land for two years, yet the tax authorities still had me listed as a seafarer,

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, I had to complete a three-week course in London, and after that, two courses on the MLC 2006 convention at the ITC ILO in Turin.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

If they decide to change careers, they should go ahead and be brave. It might not be easy to find exactly



Case Study 41 - 2nd Officer

Previous Role at Sea:	2 nd Officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	5 years
Current Role Ashore:	Quality assurance manager
Country:	Croatia

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Due to the demotivating environment on the ships, long absences (6-month contracts), and losing touch with family and friends.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

Staying within the profession—daily work/communication with ships, visits to ships for inspections, audits, short navigations on one hand, while on the other hand, the opportunity for creative office work, attending training and seminars, expanding knowledge about maritime affairs and the profession, etc.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

In my case, the job offer came through private channels for a specific position/job.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, several of them.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

Regarding a land-based career when the employer is a shipping company, ship manager, classification society, etc., they should carefully consider before making a final decision:

- Their motivation to work on land for a lower salary compared to the salary on the ship.
- Whether they can truly handle working every day for at least 8 hours and being available outside working hours and on weekends/holidays.
- Whether they can accept frequent and unexpected travel to different parts of the world.
- Whether their family members are truly aware of and accept the new circumstances that come with working on land (e.g., fewer days off, potential interruptions of annual leave due to unexpected business obligations, etc.).
- Whether they are ready to perform tasks even when they do not fully agree with them and when they come from people with less professional experience who hold a higher position.



Case Study 42 - Master

Previous Role at Sea:	Master
Years of Experience at Sea:	14 years
Current Role Ashore:	Marine Pilot
Country:	Croatia

Why did you leave the job at sea?

I decided to change my then job at sea because the job offered to me on land, at home, was a new challenge and a career advancement.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

Besides the previously mentioned career advancement, the new job also offered a good balance between work and free time, along with solid compensation for a land-based job.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

Personally, I didn't encounter any problems when seeking employment.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, I took an additional course and passed the pilot exam at the Port Authority.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

I would advise them that if they have the opportunity to work on land in a field they can see themselves in, they should take the opportunity and gain additional experience. This new experience will certainly enrich their knowledge, and they can potentially build an even more successful career than if they stayed only on the ship. So, if a person has ambition, they should listen to and believe in themselves because the maritime industry can offer various opportunities, both at sea and even more so on land. Of course, many factors come into play, such as family, finances, position on the ship, etc., but the most important thing is the "moment," and therefore, it requires a dose of courage, vision, a clear goal, and I would advise them.



Case Study 43 - Second Officer

Previous Role at Sea:	Second Officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	4
Current Role Ashore:	Flag State Surveyor
Country:	Spain

Why did you leave the job at sea?

The main reason is because of the working conditions. On the other hand, what made me make the final decision is the impossibility of having a family reconciliation and making the decision to be a mother.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

To be able to have a family balance and a better quality of life based on my current priorities.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

The biggest problem was taking time to study completely, without having any income, in which I had to study all the maritime regulations in their entirety. Preparing the public opinion for the current position I hold requires a lot of knowledge and a lot of dedication, the work experience in the sector helps, but it is not everything.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

For the position I hold I need to study a lot of national and international regulations of all types of ships, as well as pollution conventions, etc...

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

My best advice may be to be well informed about the many jobs offered on land, since there are endless possibilities related to the sector, both in public and private entities. There are many jobs offers ashore with greater labor consiliency and salary similarity than on board, which according to which the personal situation of each person is an extra. Setting a goal be a great option.



Case Study 44 - Cadet

Previous Role at Sea:	Cadet
Years of Experience at Sea:	1
Current Role Ashore:	HR & HSE
Country:	Spain

Why did you leave the job at sea?

I didn't like seeing in others what I would become.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

It was better for my professional and personal future.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

There were no problems.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

I didn't need any training to find a job. But I did need training to develop professionally within the company.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

Patience and a lot of training



Case Study 45 - Chief Mate

Previous Role at Sea:	Chief Mate
Years of Experience at Sea:	7
Current Role Ashore:	FLAG STATE, PSC
Country:	SPAIN

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Low salary, unfinished journeys, no connectivity on board; unhealthy diets, etc.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

I decided to be a flag state and work at the Ministry of transport.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

We need to be assisted to prepare a national test to become a civil servant.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Training courses and economical resources will help to achieve a satisfactory transition.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

They should try to learn as much as possible on board, to manage different loading equipment, propulsion equipment, scrubber, pitch propeller, becker rudder, port procedures, Marpol procedure, GMDSS equipment; read all instruction manuals, ask to the shipmaster and officers. Lear difference languages when they are travelling to other countries, Pay attention the details and differences of the vessel.

All these items help to be an excellent professional ashore.



Case Study 46 - Chief Engineer and Naval Architect

Previous Role at Sea:	Chief Engineer and Naval Architect
Years of Experience at Sea:	6
Current Role Ashore:	Technical Manager
Country:	Spain

Why did you leave the job at sea?

The reason for leaving the work at sea was not a premeditated thing. During a period on board, the company asked me to carry out work in a shipyard for a new build. Once finished, I continued working from shore.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

Well, as I previously mentioned, it was not a premeditated decision. From my point of view, as Chef engineer and Naval Architect, ashore based works can be not that monotonous. As you can be involved with many different things related with sea side.

From new building, shore assistance on operations and new technologies research.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

When you are at shore, you have to be aware that your job is there, maybe in an office or in a workshop. When you are coming from onboard, your first thing in mind when the ship has a problem, is to pick your stuff up and go onboard as fast as you can.

But probably, you can be more useful if you remain at shore, preparing the spare parts, looking for any further information or whatever you cannot do from onboard.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

You need to be more familiarized with management resources.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

Working periods ashore are not the same as the ones onboard, when you are onboard, you working hours are restricted, and once your embarkation period is finished, you will have longer vacation.

When you are at shore, your working periods are restricted too, but you do not have same longer vacation as.



Case Study 47 - Marine Engineer Trainer

Previous Role at Sea:	Marine Engineer Trainer
Years of Experience at Sea:	One year
Current Role Ashore:	Civil Servant
Country:	Spain

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Because when I started my internship, the female engineers were not well regarded on board.

The treatment I received on board was often demeaning.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

Working in a hostile environment and being away from my family and friends 24/7 was extremely tough, which led me to look for a job ashore.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

It wasn't a problem because I started my professional life ashore.

My problem was not being able to do the job I had studied for and that I also loved.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

The great thing about this career is that you're always learning. Learning begins every day.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

Onboard training involves a wealth of learning, not only in the world of engineering and technology, but also in teamwork and coexistence.

Therefore, I recommend our future seafarers spend time on board to develop their personal and professional skills.

This experience will open many doors for them on land.

It's a career with many possibilities



Case Study 48 - Chief Engineer

Previous Role at Sea:	Chief Engineer
Years of Experience at Sea:	4
Current Role Ashore:	Flag State Surveyor
Country:	Spain

Why did you leave the job at sea?

I had to leave my previous job at sea because we were notified by the shipping company that the charter contract was going to end and they were going to fire all the crew members. On top of that, the embarkation and vacation system make it impossible to have a proper work-life balance.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

I decided to go for a public sector job through a competitive exam to have reasonable working hours and job stability, which is hard to achieve in private companies, even though the salary is lower in the public sector.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

The transition from being on board to securing a public servant position was not easy, as it required many months of study and almost full dedication to the competitive exam process. Therefore, I had to stop working and go without income while the selection process and various exams took place. Once I passed all the exams and the public servant training course, the transition was very satisfying.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, of course, I needed a lot of preparation and study time to obtain the job I currently have, including a very extensive syllabus of maritime regulations and administrative law.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

The advice I would give to a seafarer who is onboard would be to spend the minimum time possible at sea to achieve their goals and, once these goals of professional experience or maritime professional qualifications are achieved, to promptly seek a job on land, either in the private or public sector. This is because, currently, the working and salary conditions while being onboard are highly degraded and do not compensate for the personal and family effort that a person must make to have reasonable living conditions.



Case Study 49 - Bridge Officer

Previous Role at Sea:	Bridge Officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	6
Current Role Ashore:	Technical Department
Country:	SPAIN

Why did you leave the job at sea?

I left my job at sea after six years because I wanted to gain experience and understand the company's operations from a shore-based perspective. I truly enjoyed my time working on board, where I learned a great deal, but I decided to transition to a land-based role to expand my knowledge of other aspects of maritime transport and experience the industry from a different point of view.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

I decided to take a job ashore because, after six years of experience working at sea, I felt the need to expand my knowledge and explore the maritime sector from a different perspective. I have always been passionate about the maritime world and truly enjoyed life at sea, where I gained essential technical and operational skills.

However, I also wanted to better understand management and logistics from a shore-based perspective, getting involved in strategic decision-making and operational planning. This transition has been very positive, as I believe I have learned a lot ashore and my knowledge has grown significantly.

Additionally, I am very happy to be part of the Technical Department team, where we handle a wide variety of tasks and always have ongoing projects that are dynamic and different. This keeps me motivated to continue learning and growing within the company.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

The transition process was smooth and enjoyable since I remained within the same company. This made the change easier, as I was working with familiar colleagues who were always supportive and helped me throughout the process. Their guidance and assistance allowed me to adapt quickly to my new role and responsibilities.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

No, I did not need any additional courses or training for the transition.



Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

This question is very personal and depends on each individual. For those who enjoy sailing, I would obviously advise them to continue doing so, as it is a unique and enriching experience. However, for those who are interested in making a change and understanding the operations of the maritime sector from shore-based departments, I would recommend considering that transition. This option can provide a new perspective of the sector, allowing them to acquire new knowledge and develop skills that complement their experience on board.



Case Study 50 - Master

Previous Role at Sea:	Master
Years of Experience at Sea:	15
Current Role Ashore:	Technical department
Country:	Spain

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Because is a sacrificial job, and my life is changing to a one position where I need to stay more near from my family.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

It's the same response than the previous question

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

Nothing, because I don't change the company

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

No

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

My opinion is that the career on a ship has very different opportunities and benefits when you are young, however when the familiar situations are changing is more difficult to stay at the see.

For career ashore it's important to find one job where you can make the thinks than you like independent of the necessity of the new courses or training.



Case Study 51 - 1st Engineer

Previous Role at Sea:	1 st Engineer
Years of Experience at Sea:	4-5
Current Role Ashore:	PQHSE for FiS - Production Quality Health and Safety Manager for Fleet in Service Area
Country:	Spain

Why did you leave the job at sea?

I am a Marine Engineer, and I truly enjoy working on board ships. I was employed as a First Engineer in a Chemical tankers reputable company with a good salary and with a permanent seafarer employment agreement (contract). However, as a woman, I understand that having a family while working at sea would be very challenging.

Therefore, my plan was to gain as much experience and knowledge as possible by sailing with experienced colleagues and then seek a good job ashore once I have acquired this expertise.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

There were several reasons that, despite my love for working on board ships and my plan to sail for at least two or three more years, led me to take a job ashore. To sum up, I decided to move ashore for the following reasons:

1. My direct family was suffering a lot when I was away for long periods, as they received very few updates from me due to complicated communications at that time.
2. Working ashore would provide a more stable lifestyle and the opportunity to start a family.
3. The job offer from a Recognized Organization (RO) as a surveyor was excellent and allowed me to develop my career while staying involved in the maritime field, which I love.
4. It was also an opportunity to learn more and grow professionally by helping people on board and staying in contact with the ships and the maritime business.
5. I like challenges, and changing from a stable job at sea to starting work as a surveyor was a significant challenge for me, as I was one of the first women working as a surveyor worldwide and, for many years, the only one in Spain.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

During my transition from a career at sea to a job ashore, I encountered several challenges, though I wouldn't consider them problems. Here are some of the key challenges:

1. Adjustment to a New Routine: Moving from the dynamic and often unpredictable life at sea to a more structured and stable routine ashore was sometimes difficult and even boring. The change in daily activities and environment required adaptation.
2. Loss of Camaraderie: Life on board ships involved close-knit relationships with colleagues. Transitioning to a job ashore meant losing that sense of camaraderie and adjusting to a different social dynamic, although I was fortunate to meet very good colleagues and friends in the new job.



3. Skill Transfer: While many skills gained at sea were valuable ashore, there was a need to learn new skills or adapt existing ones to fit the requirements of the new role.
4. Emotional Impact: Leaving a job I loved was emotionally challenging. The sense of loss and the need to find new sources of fulfillment were significant.
5. Family and Social Adjustments: Balancing family life and social relationships was challenging, especially after being away from home without communications for long periods. Reintegrating into daily family life and social circles required effort and patience.
6. Professional Identity: Shifting from a well-established role at sea to a new position ashore, where I was the new one, impacted my professional identity. It took time to feel confident and recognized in the new role.
7. Financial Considerations: While the new job offered stability, there were financial adjustments, especially since the salary and benefits differed from the previous position. Initially, I lost money mainly due to taxes and the cost of living ashore, whereas on board, everything was included (accommodation, food, medical assistance, etc.).

These challenges were part of the journey, and overcoming them helped me grow both personally and professionally.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, I did need additional courses and training for the transition. In fact, I spent more than two years on training and acquiring the necessary knowledge to perform the job as a surveyor. Here are some of the areas where I focused on enhancing my skills:

1. Surveying techniques: since my new role as a surveyor required specific knowledge and skills, I took courses related to surveying techniques and standards to ensure I was well-prepared. I also went on board as a trainee with experienced colleagues for a few months.
2. Regulatory compliance: understanding the regulations and compliance requirements in the maritime industry was crucial for the new job. I attended training sessions and workshops to understand and learn about the Recognized Organization and the International rules and regulations.
3. Communication skills: effective communication was also essential in my new job, especially when transitioning to a role that involves interacting with various stakeholders from around the world thus, I did some communication skills courses.
4. Technical updates: the maritime industry is constantly evolving, so had to stay informed about the latest technological advancements and best practices by attending seminars and reading industry publications.

Fortunately, my new company provided me with all these additional courses and training, helping me adapt to my new role. They wanted to ensure that I could perform effectively and confidently the job as a surveyor.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore



Transitioning from a career at sea to a job ashore can be a significant change, but with the right approach, it can be a rewarding experience. Here are some pieces of advice for seafarers considering this transition:

1. **Plan ahead:** start thinking about your transition early. Identify the skills and qualifications you will need for your desired shore-based role and begin acquiring them while still at sea.
2. **Seek training and education:** Invest in additional courses and training relevant to your new career. This could include management, communication, regulatory compliance, and technical updates. Many companies offer training programs to help with this transition.
3. **Network:** build a network of contacts in the maritime industry and beyond. Attend industry events, join professional organizations, and connect with colleagues who have already made the transition. Networking can open doors to new opportunities and provide valuable support.
4. **Adaptability:** be prepared for a change in routine and environment. Life ashore is different from life at sea, and it may take time to adjust. Embrace the new challenges and opportunities that come with this change.
5. **Maintain maritime connections:** If you love the maritime field, look for roles that keep you connected to it, such as surveyor, port operations, or maritime consultancy. This can help ease the transition and keep you engaged in a field you are passionate about.
6. **Focus on personal growth:** Use this transition as an opportunity to grow both personally and professionally. Take on new challenges, learn new skills, and strive to improve yourself continuously.
7. **Consider family and lifestyle:** Think about how the transition will impact your family and lifestyle. A shore-based job can offer more stability and allow you to spend more time with loved ones, but it also comes with its own set of challenges.
8. **Financial planning:** Be aware of the financial implications of the transition. Shore-based roles may have different salary structures and benefits compared to sea-based roles. Plan your finances accordingly to ensure a smooth transition.
9. **Stay positive:** Keep a positive mindset throughout the transition. There will be challenges, but with determination and a proactive approach, you can overcome them and find success in your new career.
10. **Seek support:** Don't hesitate to seek support from colleagues, mentors, and professional organizations. They can provide guidance, advice, and encouragement as you navigate this transition.

Remember, do not be afraid of the changes as with the right preparation and mindset, it can lead to new and fulfilling opportunities.



Case Study 52 - Engineer Officer

Previous Role at Sea:	Engineer Officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	4
Current Role Ashore:	Deputy Director
Country:	Spain

Why did you leave the job at sea?

Similar working conditions ashore and at sea; and also, family circumstances.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

See previous answer.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

No particular problems other than getting used to the new job, its level of demand in terms of economic results, which made me realize that I had to enhance my economic background and skills.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Not really but I took a master in Shipping Business to address any possible knowledge gaps.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

Be ambitious in terms of career aspirations, working conditions and future development. Well trained seafarers are of great value particularly for the shipping industry (and also other industry sectors) ashore.



Case Study 53 - Captain

Previous Role at Sea:	Captain
Years of Experience at Sea:	15 years
Current Role Ashore:	Pilot and Advisor
Country:	Spain

Why did you leave the job at sea?

I left the job at sea to combine family and work life more efficiently and consequently be able to spend more time with my family.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

I decided to take a job ashore to be able to have more time for myself and for my family.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

I encountered no relevant problems at all during my transition.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, I achieved a pilotage certificate and took part in pilotage courses before I executed the transition.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

The experience and knowledge obtained at sea are key to getting a job ashore.



Case Study 54 - Master

Previous Role at Sea:	Master
Years of Experience at Sea:	20
Current Role Ashore:	CEO- Operations Manager
Country:	Greece

Why did you leave the job at sea?

I left the job at sea after obtaining my degree as a master in 1976. My career had evolved significantly since I started as a cadet in 1963, and I had gained extensive experience and qualifications, including a 1st class master degree and degrees in shipping from prestigious institutions. The transition to a shore-based role was a natural progression in my career, allowing me to apply my knowledge and skills in a different capacity.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

The decision to take a job ashore was driven by the opportunity to continue my career growth and take on new challenges. After serving as a watch officer, governor of a minesweeper, and obtaining my degree as a master, I saw the potential to contribute to the company in a more strategic role. Working ashore allowed me to be involved in chartering, ship insurance, ship loans, shipbuilding, and other critical operations, which were essential for the company's success.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

The transition from sea to shore presented several challenges. One of the main difficulties was adapting to a different work environment and the nature of the tasks involved. While at sea, the focus was on the operational aspects of managing a ship, whereas working ashore required a broader understanding of business administration, management, and collaboration with third parties. Additionally, decision-making under time pressure and facing problems with diplomacy were skills that needed to be honed further in the new role.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, additional courses and training were necessary to ensure a smooth transition. I completed several relevant training programs, including:

- ISM Auditor
- ISPS Code - Company Security Officer
- DNVPS - Quality of Bunkers
- Seminars from USCG Officials

These courses helped me acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to excel in my new role ashore.



Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

For seafarers considering a career ashore, my advice is to be prepared for a significant shift in responsibilities and work environment. It is crucial to acquire relevant qualifications in shipping, business administration, and management. Hard work under pressure and a genuine passion for the industry are essential. Additionally, developing strong communication skills, intelligence, flexibility, and diplomacy will be invaluable in navigating the challenges of a shore-based role. If you are committed to continuous learning and adapting to new challenges, a career ashore can be highly rewarding.



Case Study 55 - Master

Previous Role at Sea:	Master
Years of Experience at Sea:	11
Current Role Ashore:	Lecturer in Maritime Academies
Country:	Greece

Why did you leave the job at sea?

After a successful 11-year career at sea, during which I progressed from cadet to master, I felt it was time to apply my experience in a new way. Coming from an island and being influenced by seafarers, my initial goal was to serve at sea, but over time, I wanted to contribute to maritime safety and education by training the next generation of sea officers. Teaching allowed me to share practical knowledge that could one day save lives, which became a strong motivation for leaving active seafaring.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

I decided to take a job ashore because I wanted to use my practical experience and qualifications to help prepare future sea officers for the challenges and responsibilities of maritime life. Teaching at the school for life-saving appliances in Aspropyrgos allowed me to stay connected to the maritime industry while enjoying a more stable routine and the satisfaction of seeing my students benefit from my experience.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

One of the main challenges during the transition was shifting from the dynamic, hands-on environment of a ship to the structured setting of a classroom. There were occasional communication gaps, as some students did not immediately understand the practical importance of what they were learning. Adapting teaching methods to make theory relevant and engaging was a key part of overcoming these issues.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, after graduating from the maritime academy and gaining sea experience, I attended several specialized seminars on rescue operations, fire prevention, tanker safety, and Ro-Ro vessel safety. These courses were essential not only for career progression at sea but also for equipping me with the knowledge and credentials necessary to teach safety procedures and life-saving techniques ashore.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

- Leverage your sea experience: Practical knowledge gained at sea is highly valuable in shore-based roles, especially in training, safety, or managerial positions.



- Pursue relevant training: Additional courses in safety, management, or teaching can ease the transition and expand your career options.
- Be prepared for a different work environment: Ashore jobs often involve more routine and less immediate problem-solving than life at sea, but they offer stability and the chance to make a lasting impact. Explore alternative paths: A career in the merchant marine opens doors both at sea and ashore, including roles in education, safety management, and quality assurance.
- Seek information and mentorship: Talk to professionals already working ashore to understand the advantages and challenges of various roles before making the transition.

This approach ensures that your maritime background continues to benefit both you and the wider industry, whether you remain at sea or choose a new path ashore.



Case Study 56 - Master

Previous Role at Sea:	Master
Years of Experience at Sea:	9
Current Role Ashore:	Operations manager
Country:	Greece

Why did you leave the job at sea?

After nine years of sea service, I was presented with the opportunity to transition ashore when the head of the operations department proposed that I work as a port captain. Having completed a 13-month contract as a master, I felt it was the right time to take on new challenges and contribute to the company from a different perspective. The move allowed me to leverage my practical experience and continue my professional growth in a shore-based role

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

I decided to take a job ashore because I wanted to apply my hands-on maritime experience to the broader management and operational aspects of shipping. The role of port captain, and later operations manager, enabled me to influence company policies, ensure regulatory compliance, and support vessels from a strategic position. It also offered the chance to develop new skills, work closely with a diverse team, and maintain a better balance between my professional and personal life.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

The transition from sea to shore posed several challenges. Adapting to a new work environment and schedule was demanding-especially the shift from the structured life at sea to the dynamic and sometimes unpredictable nature of shore-based operations. There was also a need to quickly become proficient in company policies, ISPS regulations, and communication with various stakeholders. Managing stress and maintaining self-control in a fast-paced office environment required patience and adaptability.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, additional training was essential for a successful transition. I participated in courses on loss prevention, safety and quality management, internal auditing, risk management, pollution prevention, and stress management.

These programs helped me bridge the gap between shipboard operations and the broader responsibilities required ashore, ensuring I could effectively contribute to the company's goals.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

For seafarers thinking about moving ashore, my advice is to be persistent, patient, and dedicated to continuous learning. Practical sea experience is invaluable but be prepared to develop new skills and adapt



to different professional demands. Maintain a balance between your career and personal life, and don't hesitate to pursue additional training. Even if you are unsure about a shore-based career, gaining at least a year of sea service will give you a solid foundation for any role in the shipping industry.



Case Study 57 - Master

Previous Role at Sea:	Master
Years of Experience at Sea:	11
Current Role Ashore:	Designated Person Ashore / Company Security Officer
Country:	Greece

Why did you leave the job at sea?

After sailing onboard bulk carriers for 11 years, I became well-acquainted with the concerns and perspectives of seafarers. My decision to leave the sea was driven by a desire to seek new challenges and contribute to a different capacity, particularly in areas where I could bridge the gap between seafarers' needs and the requirements of flag and class authorities. This transition allowed me to apply my practical experience to shore-based management and safety roles.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

I decided to pursue a shore-based career because I wanted to focus on the implementation of the International Safety Management (ISM) Code and other regulatory frameworks, which are critical for the safety and compliance of shipping operations. Moving ashore offered the opportunity to take on responsibilities such as Designated Person Ashore (DPA) and Company Security Officer (CSO), where I could have a direct impact on safety systems, regulatory compliance, and the overall improvement of company procedures, both onboard and in the office.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

The transition from sea to shore presented several challenges. The main difficulty was adapting to the different nature of office work, where problems cannot always be solved with the knowledge and practices gained at sea. The work environment ashore demands new skills, such as regulatory interpretation, communication with authorities, and the ability to manage and audit safety management systems. Additionally, the responsibility and legal accountability associated with the DPA and CSO roles can be both strenuous and stressful, especially when facing incidents or audits.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, additional training was essential for the transition. To become a DPA and CSO, I had to obtain specific certifications, including auditor accreditation. Ongoing professional development is also required training in areas such as the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), risk assessment, and incident investigation is necessary to stay current with evolving regulations and best practices. Continuous learning ensures that I remain effective in my role and up to date with industry standards.



Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

For seafarers contemplating a move ashore, it is important to understand that the challenges you will face in an office environment are different from those at sea. Success requires developing new skills, such as regulatory compliance, safety management, and effective communication with both crew and upper management. Be prepared to learn from more experienced colleagues and to adapt your approach to problem-solving. Building strong interpersonal relationships and maintaining an interest in new technologies can greatly assist in making the transition smoother. Above all, strive for excellence-AIEN ARISTEVIN (“always strive to excel”)-and you will find satisfaction and success in your new career path.



Case Study 58 - Master

Previous Role at Sea:	Master
Years of Experience at Sea:	22
Current Role Ashore:	Master Mariner – Internal auditor
Country:	Greece

Why did you leave the job at sea?

I transitioned from working at sea to a shore-based position mainly because the company suggested it as a natural progression in my career. After many years sailing-from cadet to captain-I was offered the opportunity to become an internal auditor. This role allowed me to continue contributing to ship operations and safety but from a different perspective. It was also a chance to apply my extensive experience in a new way, focusing on compliance with SOLAS and ISM regulations without being directly involved in daily ship operations

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

Taking a shore-based job as an internal auditor was a logical step after a long career at sea. The company encouraged me to pursue this role, providing training and certification opportunities. It allowed me to leverage my knowledge and experience gained on board to ensure ships operate safely and according to international regulations. Additionally, working ashore offers a more stable lifestyle, which is important as one advances in their career and personal life.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

The transition from sea to shore work was relatively smooth, but it did require adjusting to a different working environment. At sea, you are directly involved with the ship’s operations and crew, while as an auditor you must maintain an objective and somewhat detached stance. It was important to learn how to conduct audits without creating tension or appearing confrontational. Also, adapting to the pace and nature of shore-based work, which involves more administrative tasks and coordination, was a change. However, my sea experience helped me understand the practical realities on board, which made the transition easier.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, I underwent specific training and seminars to prepare for the auditor role. These were organized by classification societies such as ABS and DNV, as well as the Greek Training Center for Officers of the Merchant Marine (KESN). The training focused on the implementation of the ISM Code and audit techniques rather than theoretical knowledge, teaching me how to conduct audits effectively and objectively without exposing or alienating the crew. This training was essential to bridge the gap between seafaring experience and the requirements of the auditing profession.



Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

My advice to seafarers thinking about moving ashore is first to gain solid experience at sea, whether on the deck or engine side. Practical knowledge is invaluable and will give you an edge in shore-based roles like auditing. Once you have enough experience and are settled in your personal life, consider taking specialized seminars or training courses related to the shore job you want. It's important to be objective and maintain professionalism when dealing with crews or colleagues. Also, be aware that shore jobs may offer lower pay than captancy at sea, so plan your financial and family situation accordingly. Lastly, keep an open mind and be ready to adapt your skills to new challenges-you'll find that your seafaring background is a strong foundation for a successful career ashore.



Case Study 59 - Lieutenant Commander in the Merchant Navy

Previous Role at Sea:	Lieutenant Commander in the Merchant Navy
Years of Experience at Sea:	8
Current Role Ashore:	Commander of Coast Guard / Director of Coastal
Country:	Greece

Why did you leave the job at sea?

I left the job at sea primarily because the seafaring profession is very demanding and hard. After gaining some experience as a Lieutenant Commander in the Merchant Navy, I realized that a shore-based career could offer more stability. The opportunity to join the Coast Guard presented itself as a natural progression, especially since I had heard that with previous sea experience, one could transition to the Coast Guard. This transition was also influenced by personal circumstances and the desire for a different work-life balance while still staying close to maritime affairs.

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

I decided to take a job ashore because it offered a chance to use my maritime knowledge in a broader management capacity. Working ashore in the Coast Guard and later in the Ministry allowed me to contribute to managing the coastal shipping network of Greece, which is a complex and critical task given the country's many islands and diverse needs. The shore-based role also allowed me to engage in policy, coordination, and problem-solving that impacts many stakeholders, including local communities and private shipping companies. It was a career move that promised professional growth and the opportunity to serve the maritime sector in a different but equally important way.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

The transition from sea to shore was not without challenges. One major issue was adapting to the administrative and political aspects of maritime management, which differ significantly from life at sea. The job requires delicacy and sensitivity to balance conflicting interests among island communities, shipping companies, and passengers. Also, the workload can be intense, with long hours and the need to handle urgent issues that arise even outside office times. Adjusting to this new pace and type of responsibility took time and required developing new skills in management and negotiation.

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, additional training was essential for the transition. I attended the Naval Cadet School for 1.5 years, which provided advanced training beyond my sea experience. Later, I had the opportunity to attend the first maritime traffic controller school, which was crucial for understanding maritime traffic management from a shore perspective. I also regularly participate in seminars on administrative and operational topics



to stay updated and improve my skills. This continuous training ensures I can effectively manage the complex coastal shipping network and respond to challenges.

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

I would encourage seafarers to consider a shore-based career without hesitation. The Coast Guard and maritime administration offer diverse opportunities, including environmental protection, maritime traffic control, security, and policing. A background in seafaring is a strong foundation for these roles. The progression from shipboard roles to shore management can be very rewarding and challenging, providing a unique journey that combines practical maritime experience with strategic and policy responsibilities. It is a career path that can be fulfilling and offers the chance to make a significant impact on maritime transport and safety.



Case Study 60 - Merchant Navy Officer

Previous Role at Sea:	Merchant Navy Officer
Years of Experience at Sea:	9
Current Role Ashore:	Commander of The Coast / Operations Officer
Country:	Greece

Why did you leave the job at sea?

I left the job at sea after serving as a midshipman and captain of a rescue vessel because I was selected to work in the Coast Guard's operations room. This transition was a natural progression after gaining experience at sea and completing training in search and rescue. The operations room role allowed me to coordinate search and rescue missions more effectively from shore, leveraging my maritime knowledge to support those in danger at sea

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

I decided to take a job ashore because the Coast Guard recognized my capability to manage operations centers during non-working hours. Being in charge of two operations centers-the Coast Guard's operations center and the ESSED's single search and rescue center-gave me the opportunity to oversee and coordinate critical operations, ensuring smooth and efficient responses when others are off duty. This role also allowed me to contribute to society in a broader way by coordinating rescue efforts and other maritime operations from a central point

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

The main challenges during the transition included adapting to the demands of working in a high-pressure control room environment, especially the stress of coordinating operations remotely and staying alert during late-night shifts. Communication can be difficult because we often deal with people from different nationalities and cultural background and varying levels of English proficiency, including "weekend captains" who may not speak English well. Ensuring clear understanding of orders and maintaining flexibility with contingency plans were essential to overcoming these difficulties

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, additional training was necessary. My initial training was in Search and Rescue while serving on a rescue boat, but to transition ashore, I received further training overseas in the UK alongside officers from the Maritime Coastal Agency of Great Britain, focusing on coordinating search and rescue operations. Also, entering the Coast Guard required passing written and physical exams, followed by an academic year at the Maritime Cadet School and onboard training on merchant navy ships to gain a comprehensive



understanding of naval operations. Continuous training is essential to handle the complex responsibilities in the operations room

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If you love the sea and have experience sailing, do not hesitate to consider a career ashore in the Coast Guard. It is advisable to gain practical sea experience first, as it helps you understand the realities of maritime life, which is invaluable in coordinating rescue operations. Also, be prepared for a demanding but rewarding job that requires patience, composure, and excellent communication skills. Get informed about the work in the operations room and, if possible, observe or learn about the role to see if it suits you. The satisfaction of helping people in distress and contributing to society is immense



Case Study 61 - ISM inspector

Previous Role at Sea:	ISM inspector
Years of Experience at Sea:	2.5
Current Role Ashore:	Commander of the Coast Guard/ Operations Centre
Country:	Greece

Why did you leave the job at sea?

I transitioned from sea duty because after serving as a captain on vessels and conducting inspections, I found an opportunity to contribute to a broader operational role ashore. The operations center allows me to address all Coast Guard issues across the country, beyond just search and rescue, which provides a wider scope of responsibility and impact

Why did you decide to take a job ashore?

Taking a job ashore in the Coast Guard's operations center was a natural progression in my career. It offers a strategic role where I can utilize my maritime experience to coordinate and manage operations nationwide. This position also provides a different perspective on maritime safety and security, enabling me to support Coast Guard missions more comprehensively.

What were the problems encountered during the transition?

The transition required adapting from the hands-on, dynamic environment at sea to a more information and coordination-focused role ashore. It demands patience and a global view of Coast Guard operations, as well as staying constantly informed about legislation and international developments. Adjusting to irregular and sometimes long working hours at the operations center was also a challenge

Did you need additional courses or training for the transition?

Yes, the initial training was provided by the Naval Cadet School, and each new assignment includes familiarization with specific duties. Additionally, seminars and ongoing training help improve and upgrade knowledge to meet the multifaceted demands of the operation's center role

Advice for Seafarers Considering a Career Ashore

- Be patient and prepared for a different pace and style of work.
- Maintain a broad understanding of maritime operations and stay updated on relevant laws and international developments.



- Embrace continuous learning through training and seminars.
- Value the importance of supporting and helping citizens as a Coast Guard officer.
- Understand that irregular hours and long shifts may continue ashore, so be ready for that aspect as well.