

How to be a Popular Crew



Dave Robson

*Everything you need to know to be
welcomed on board again and again*

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CHAPTER ONE

WHAT'S IN A CREW?

"You can't get the crew these days."

This moan has been a familiar mantra in my yacht club ever since I can remember, even though we have a list of members, the majority of whom do not have their own boats but who desperately want to get afloat. And I gather the story is the same in many other yacht clubs throughout the land and beyond.

Not only that, but often I hear a body of the non-boat owning club members who see themselves as potential crew members complaining that they never or rarely seem to get to go out on other members' yachts. Why not? Because they don't get invited.

So we have the paradoxical situation where skippers are crying out for crew and going sailing short handed, while others who want to go sailing but don't have boats are left ashore. Thinking further about this, it occurred to me one evening when in conversation with two friends and fellow boat owners, that most weekends we skippers actually compete with each other for the same tiny handful of individuals from our membership pool for people we want to invite to crew on our boats. In other words, suitable crewing candidates constituted a tiny elite.

So what's the cause of this crazy situation?

The painful truth that became apparent as soon as I started probing was that the vast majority of the available members simply have not got the qualities that most skippers are looking for in their crew, though this, I believe, is mainly due