

Life After Yachting: From Yacht Captain To Founder Of OceanWave Monaco

Former Superyacht Captain and co-founder of *OceanWave Monaco* crew training academy, Mark has taken the time to share his Life After Yachting experience with crew members in need of inspiration.



About Mark

With over 30 years of experience in the yachting industry, I worked my way up from deckhand, all the way to Captain. Now shore-based, I have a passion for helping crew to achieve the highest potential within their yachting careers. I am qualified to train in a wide range of disciplines, and I am currently teaching Powerboat Level 2, PWC , Food Safety Level 2 and 3, as well as being a fully qualified assessor for the Ship's Cook Assessment course. I also regularly teach STCW on behalf of other training schools.

How long did you work as crew? What was your role on board? and what yachts did you work on?

30 years. From Deckhand, all the way up to captain. First 5 years on sailboats, however, I soon realised that unfortunately there was more money working on Motorboats.

When did you leave the Superyacht industry and why?

I haven't really left the Superyacht industry, after a career based around dealing with owners' requests onboard, my business partner and I took the opportunity to use our experience to help crew by creating OceanWave Monaco. Happily, this also allowed me the freedom to spend more time with my family and get to see my daughter growing up.

Prior to leaving, did you plan an exit strategy as to what land-based job you'll transition to?

Yes. The most important lesson I learned as yacht crew that's stuck with me to this day is that you're never too old to learn.



What is your current job role and where are you based?

I am one of the directors of OceanWave Monaco, but not so important that I don't still train. The aim of OceanWave Monaco crew training academy is to:

- To provide a conducive environment to learning for Superyacht crew
- To provide confidence to the candidate to exceed their expectations
- To adapt to different learning techniques and skills

- And most importantly, we provide a fun and enjoyable environment for learning!
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Can you tell us more about OceanWave Monaco and how the concept around the business came about, as well as the name?

We are a yacht training company based in Monaco, however, we also have our main classroom in Antibes, as this is the centre of yachting. We also do a lot of onboard training.

Myself, and my business partner, Duncan Biggs, saw an opportunity to fill a gap that other maritime training providers were not filling, which was onboard training, either daytime, evening, or weekends, to fit in with a yachts schedule. We had also worked out that it is sometimes cheaper for a yacht to fly us in when training multiple crew on the same subject, as opposed to the vast expense of sending lots of crew to a training facility. Obviously, this only works for certain training courses.

What is the most important lesson you've learned since starting your own business? and what is the most valuable skill you learned on board

that helps you in your job now?

Try not to get too stressed, you only have one life. The importance of being able to communicate and being open and truthful.

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What was the hardest struggle you faced since leaving the industry?

The money. Going from a yachting wage to running a business.

Did you always know that you wanted to start your own business in the Superyacht industry?

No. To use one of those awful phrases, it came 'organically'. If you could go back to the start of your career, would you change anything? I.e, financial choices, ways you would have enhanced your cv, extra courses, and so on. Yes, I'd go down the engineering route. You get rotation, roughly the same salary as the captain but with none of the stress apart from keeping the engines going.

What does success mean to you?

Knowing our candidates come away from our training being inspired and fulfilled by our courses.

Where do you see Ocean Wave Monaco in the next 5 years?

That is a very good question, what with Covid, the war in Ukraine, and energy prices soaring, it's been a challenging few years, but we've sustained our standards and commitment throughout. Hopefully, we will still be providing amazing courses in the future. We're already growing as a team and this will enable us to reach more candidates, provide more courses and help more crew reach their potential.

Lastly, can you share 3 pieces of advice for crew members thinking about their life after yachting.

Use yachting to your benefit, just like yachting uses you.

- Get on the property ladder as soon as you can. (It took me far too long to realise that.)
- Put half your salary away, pretend to yourself that you only get paid half of what you do, and save the rest. You'll be surprised at how it can accumulate a nice little nest egg, or it can give you that cushion and security when looking for your next job.
- Relax, it's only yachting. If you're not enjoying the

boat you're on, leave. Life is too short, it's not worth being unhappy in a job that you don't like.

For more information on OceanWave Monaco, [click here.](#)