



PRICING

FOR CONTRACT AND GOVERNMENT PROFESSIONALS

September 2022

The Future of Pricing

Meet This Year's Honorees

Leading from the CFO's Office

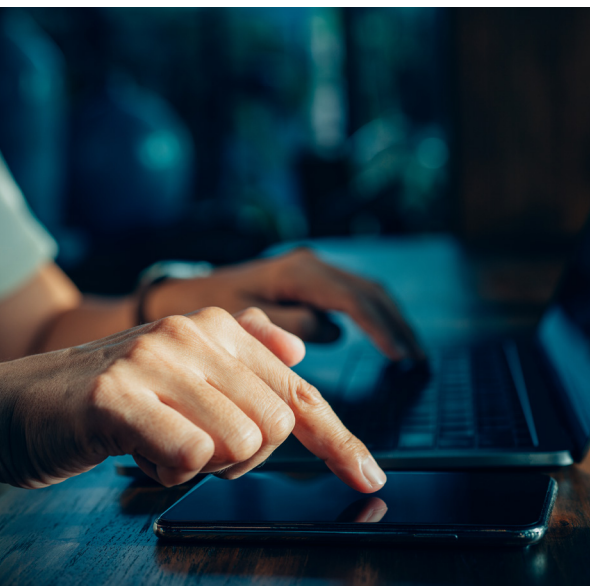
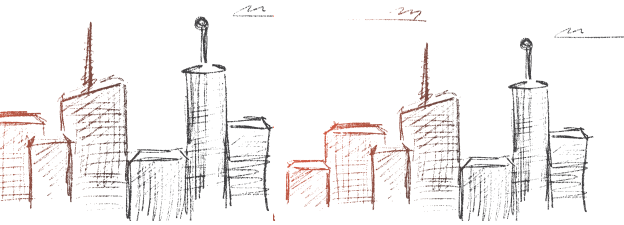
by Tom Reid

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by Kirk Donnan

Pricing Development Edition

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PHASE LLC is an 8(a) certified Joint Venture between PACE LLC and Horizon Industries, Limited. Together, PHASE has over three decades of experience providing IT and Management consulting services to the U.S. Federal Government and select commercial clients. We focus on the business objectives and needs of our clients, delivering a full life-cycle of support from business strategy analysis, business system development and deployment, and business operations consulting. For government clients, we also provide acquisition support and acquisition training services.

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We place our customers' missions first and believe our own success will follow. PHASE builds excellent multidisciplinary teams that work together, contributing unique perspectives which maximize client results. PHASE's culture ensures that each employee is constantly learning and acquiring new skills to continually improve the client experience.



CMMISVC /3



CMMIDEV /3



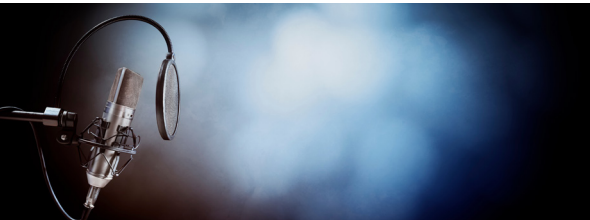
Major Customers Include WHS, DLA, DOL and DHS.



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561110, 541513, 541614, 611420

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Final Words





Dear readers,

Throughout this edition, we recognize the many initiatives that organizations across federal government are focusing on to support and impact the workforce. As this issue specifically speaks to development, evolution, and growth, I'd like to take this opportunity to announce our own internal change here at ProPricer.

After more than 35 years, the creator of ProPricer and founder of Executive Business Services, Inc.(EBS), Joseph Shurance has decided to step down as Chief Executive Officer, bringing myself on as the company's new CEO. He will still have an active presence here at EBS and will serve as council on our Board of Directors.

The products and projects started many years ago have put us in a prime position to further advance our mission and vision as a company. Our team will continue to invest in our products to better serve our customers' growth and success. As CEO, I plan on leading the development and execution of long-term strategies that will keep our products at the forefront of proposal pricing software.

I am grateful for this leadership opportunity that Joe, this team and community have entrusted me with, and invite those to engage with the opportunities that we provide for education, training and efficiency.

I look forward to seeing you at our GCP Summit, in a webinar or online forums.

Sincerely,

John Yapaola, CEO

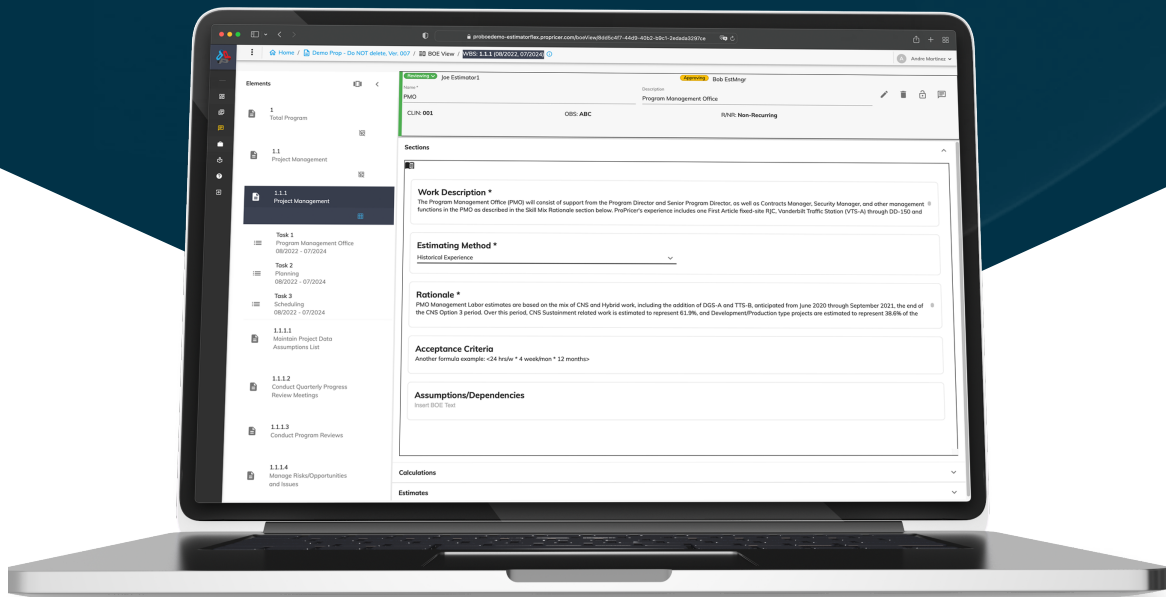
Executive Business Services Inc., makers of ProPricer

BOE Pro

ENSURING DATA INTEGRITY FOR FLAWLESS EXECUTION

Introducing BOE Pro™ from ProPricer.

This new platform significantly reduces the effort required to standardize your BOE templates, create efficient workflows, and track estimate data as it changes. BOE Pro also ties all of your proposal's estimates back to the BOE narrative, streamlining the data review process and ensuring the integrity of your estimates.



PRICING

FOR CONTRACT AND GOVERNMENT PROFESSIONALS

M A G A Z I N E

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Take a look at our
2022 Line Up



brought to you by

UPCOMING WEBINARS



Developing Leaders in Pricing

*Marsha Lindquist,
Granite Leadership Strategies*

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28TH, 2022
11 AM PT / 2 PM ET

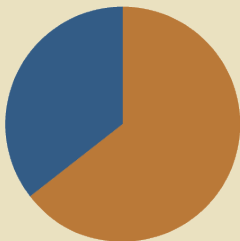
How to be a Master Negotiator

*Heather Teed & Jack Bland,
EOP Consulting*

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26TH, 2022
11 AM PT / 2 PM ET

Pricing Development and Leadership Survey

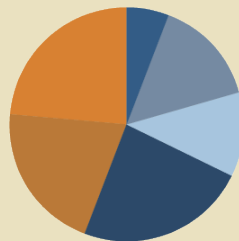
Does your organization have a leadership or mentor program?



■ Yes - 64.71%

■ No - 35.29%

On a scale of 1 to 5, how supported do you feel by your leadership team?



■ Not supported - 5.88%

■ Somewhat supported - 11.76%

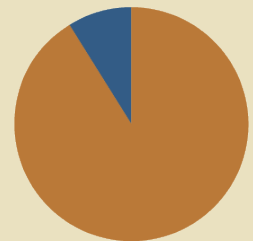
■ Neutral - 14.71%

■ Very supported - 23.53%

■ Extremely supported - 47.50%

■ I hold a leadership position

Do you feel you have adequate training opportunities for your position?

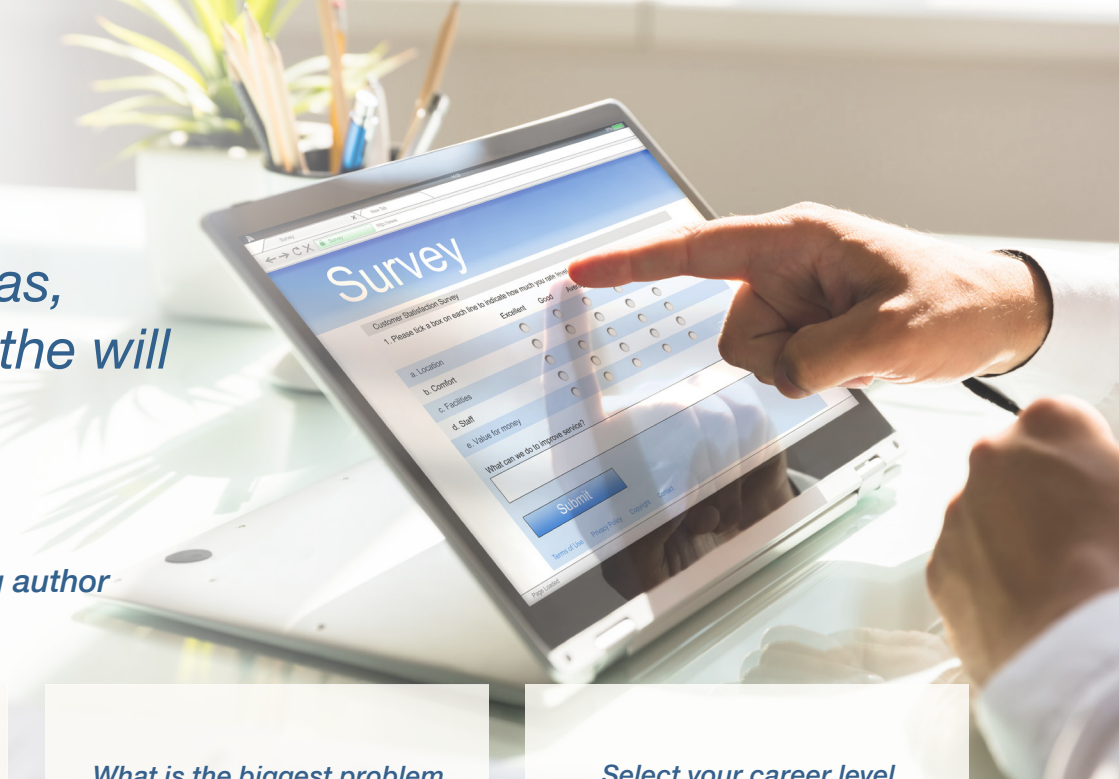


■ Yes - 91.18%

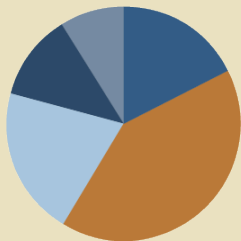
■ No - 8.82%

*“There’s
no shortage
of remarkable ideas,
what’s missing is the will
to execute them.”*

SETH GODIN,
Entrepreneur and best-selling author

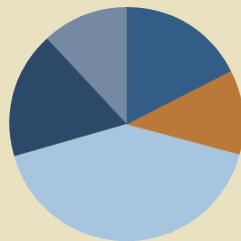


*In your opinion, what is the
number one characteristic that
defines a good leader?*



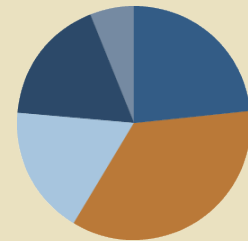
- Competence & Knowledge - 17.65%
- Character - 41.18%
- Communication - 20.59%
- Compassion - 11.76%
- Commitment - 8.82%

*What is the biggest problem
facing pricing and procurement
professionals today?*



- Lack of leadership - 17.65%
- Lack of training - 11.76%
- Lack of workforce - 41.18%
- Difficulty keeping up with technology and trends - 17.65%
- Other - 11.76%

Select your career level



- Associate / Non-Management - 23.53%
- Manager / Lead - 35.29%
- Director - 17.65%
- C-Suite - 17.65%
- Other - 5.88%

Industry News

THE 21ST CENTURY SILENT WAR: CHINA'S RAPID DEFENSE ACQUISITION.

"China can move money inside the U.S. within twenty minutes inside our own markets. They can buy up tens or dozens of small innovative startups with technologies of their choosing. Make sure the founder is rich for the rest of their lives. Take that IP and give it to Chinese companies and lock DoD out of it."

– Maj. Gen. Cameron Holt

The top military general responsible for all contracting relating to the acquisition of weapon systems, logistics, and operational support for the Air Force addressed conference attendees at ProPricer's annual Government Contracting Pricing Summit in June, and delivered an alarming overview of China's strategic maneuverability of its rapid defense acquisition.

In his keynote address, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition Maj. Gen. Cameron

Holt presented a startling reality of the 'great power competition' and the ominous threat of the Chinese military acquiring new equipment "five to six times" faster than the United States. He said, "In purchasing power parity, they spend about one dollar to our 20 dollars to get to the same capability". Then later surmised, "We are going to lose if we can't figure out how to drop the cost and increase the speed in our defense supply chains."

Holt urged audience members to pay

attention to the types of tools China uses, referencing the severe nature of the great power competition, and cited China's deep understanding of U.S. fractures in the economic and government sectors.

To combat China's rapid defense acquisition, Holt urged the U.S. needs to increase the speed of defense supply chains. According to Holt, U.S. acquisition faces three obstacles in what he described as the "21st-Century Silent War".



Barriers to the current U.S. procurement model include:

- “Wartime footing” – perceiving and communicating an existential threat.
- Slow and micromanaged Cold War resource system of appropriations.
- Perverse incentives: execution and business model.

“In our free capital market system, as the defense industry has become smaller and smaller, relative to the full industrial weight of America, and as the barriers to entry have become higher and higher, we are at a place where the business model and the incentives for business have gotten us off track with the imperatives with what this 21st-century war demands of us. And we must find a way to align our profit motivations, our free capital market motivations with the national defense strategy in a way that demoralizes and influences their behavior.” Said Maj. Gen. Cameron Holt.

Holt contended that our current procurement system dates from the Cold War security environment with different threats and challenges. He warned, “The U.S. defense acquisition process will continue to fail to move as quickly and responsively as it needs to if there is no reform.”

Editor’s note: As of the printing of this publication, Maj. Gen. Cameron G. Holt is now retired, and last served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition for the United States Air Force. Maj. Gen. Alice W. Treviño now serves as the acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition for the United States Air Force.

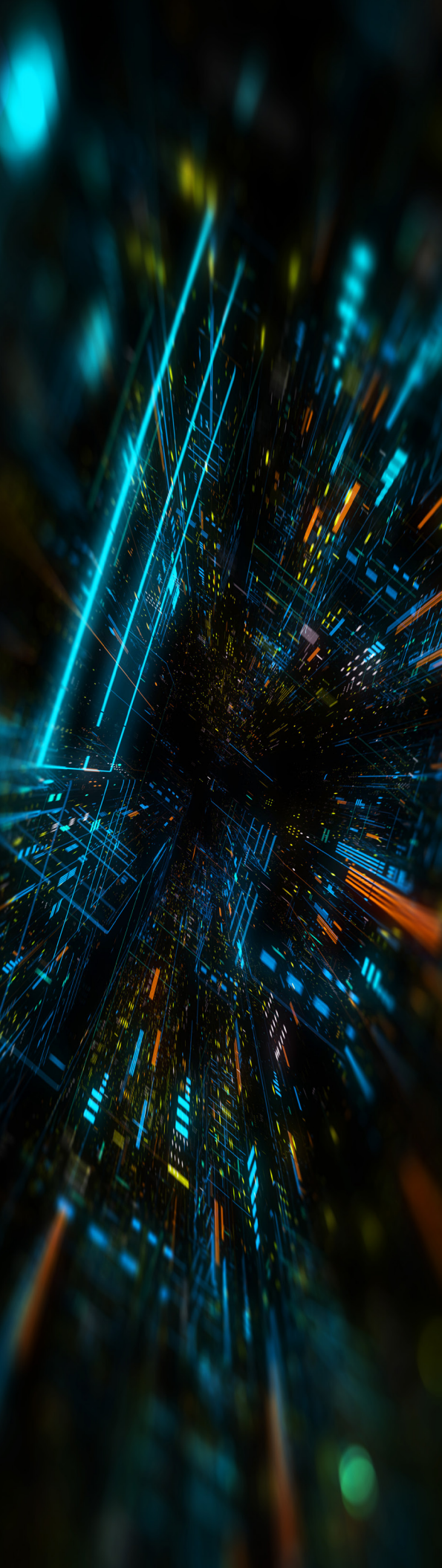
[https://www.thedrive.com/the-war-zone/china-acquiring-new-weapons-five-times-faster-than-u-s-warns-top-official?utm_campaign=Social%20Engagement%202022&utm_content=214315805&utm_medium=social&utm](https://www.thedrive.com/the-war-zone/china-acquiring-new-weapons-five-times-faster-than-u-s-warns-top-official?utm_campaign=Social%20Engagement%202022&utm_content=214315805&utm_medium=social&utm_source=linkedin&utm_channel=lcp-17961750)

[source=linkedin&utm_channel=lcp-17961750](https://www.thedrive.com/the-war-zone/china-acquiring-new-weapons-five-times-faster-than-u-s-warns-top-official?utm_campaign=Social%20Engagement%202022&utm_content=214315805&utm_medium=social&utm_source=linkedin&utm_channel=lcp-17961750)

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/catch-china-getting-new-weapons-faster-us-203462>

BILLS, BILLS, BILLS: DOD GUIDANCE ON INFLATION AND EPAS

In May, the Defense Department released financial relief guidance for contracting officers provided to defense contractors working on fixed-price contracts. The adjustments may reflect fluctuations in actual labor or material costs or specific labor or material costs indexes, but dissuade contracting officers from permitting adjustments under the Changes clause in FAR based solely on inflation. The memorandum was signed by John Tenaglia, Principal Director of Defense Pricing and Contracting. He disclosed, “The challenges presented in this period of economic uncertainty



require us to employ appropriate solutions to protect government interests and ensure the continued health of the defense industrial base to support our mission. To the extent those solutions include the use of the FPEPA (Fixed Price with Economic Price Adjustment) contract type or inclusion of an EPA clause, COs must work with contractors to ensure EPA clauses provide appropriate risk mitigation while being fair to all parties to the contract.”

Increased performance costs have abraded profit margins for contractors under fixed-price contracts not typically subject to price adjustments. However, contracting officers may make an equitable adjustment to a fixed-price contract in cases covered by the standard Changes clause under Federal Acquisition Regulation 52.243-1 or similar adjustment clauses. It also provides contracting officers with salient recommendations when drafting new solicitations and contracts utilizing EPA clauses.

****Note that the new guidance depends on the contract type the CO is performing under.***

The White House Office of Management and Budget is set to issue new inflation estimates this quarter due to the expected rise in inflation in fiscal year 2023.

MODERNIZING FEDERAL ACQUISITION

The AGILE Procurement Act is a Senate-inspired bill seeking to advance government innovation through innovative procurement capability. Pursuant to the U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, the proposed legislation mandates the Office of Management and Budget’s Office of Federal Procurement Policy and the General Services Administration to modernize the ability of the federal government to purchase commercial technology and provide specific training

for information and communications technology acquisition.

Under the legislation, an introduction to a new pilot program encourages career-minded professionals, including those from the private sector, veterans, and military spouses, into government contracting. The bill also aims to reduce barriers for businesses, including small businesses, to government contracting.

<https://smallgovcon.com/uncategorized/department-of-defense-unveils-plan-to-address-effects-of-inflation-on-contracts/>

<https://www.insidegovernmentcontracts.com/2022/06/dod-releases-guidance-on-inflation-and-economic-price-adjustments-for-fixed-price-contracts/>

<https://federalnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/DPC-Guidance-on-Inflation-and-EPA-25-May-2022.pdf>

<https://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/articles/2022/8/3/pentagon-releases-inflation-guidance-to-industry>

GSA: BACKEND PROCUREMENT SYSTEMS TO RECEIVE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION WITH COMET

In August, GSA’s Chief Information Officer, David Shive, announced plans to expand its CIO modernization and enterprise transformation (COMET) contract for the digital transformation of backend procurement systems. In addition, GSA saw good business results with Federal Acquisition Systems (FAS) COMET task orders. Thus, the agency added eight innovative small businesses to COMET in December.

Some initial 12 awardees grew into mid or large-size businesses from work on the blanket purchase agreement (BPA), mergers and acquisitions.

In 2019, GSA's CIO and FAS awarded twelve COMET blanket purchase agreements: four to small businesses and eight to large companies. At the time of these award selections, former GSA commissioner Alan Thomas stated:

"COMET will allow us to put some great tools in the hands of our acquisition workforce. This is the contract vehicle we'll use to enhance FAS' enterprise-wide IT requirements. Through it, we will execute on our promise to deliver a contract acquisition life-cycle management system and better manage the data in our catalog of offerings. We'll also use COMET to modernize our fleet management and personal property management capabilities."

<https://www.fedscoop.com/gsa-expanding-comet-bpa/>

<https://www.gsa.gov/blog/2019/10/11/-fas-takes-big-step-forward-with-systems-modernization-through-comet-awards>

PERATON'S CEO ON 'MISSIONS OF CONSEQUENCE' AND THE PARALLELS OF CONNECTEDNESS

In an interview with the Federal News Network in July, Peraton CEO Stu Shea discussed how his company managed services contractors through the pandemic, and what steps were needed to navigate the work-life integration to focus on 'Missions of Consequence.'

"When we set up the company (in 2017), we wanted to focus on those missions that were vital and critical, regardless of administration. And regardless of the nuances of budgetary priorities, right. So, if you think about areas like space, intelligence, or cyber, these are sustainable missions, regardless of whether or not there's a democrat or republican in the White House or control of Congress. The other thing is within those markets, we focused on the things that were most vital in those



markets," said Shea.

In 2017, Peraton became the new name of the former Harris Corporation, which was acquired by Veritas Capital. The name Peraton reflects "a construct of the prefix per, which means thoroughly, and the word imperative, reflecting the importance of its customers' missions" and a "shared mission to protect and promote freedom around the world," stated the company.

In the interview, Shea described Peraton's strategy that enabled the continuity of their 'Missions of Consequence'. Their agile culture provided employees a space to thrive while contributing to projects of national importance. Shea noted the importance of:

1. Shifting the focus towards the whole—the important things outside the realm of individualism.
2. Creating an agile work environment framed around remote access with freedom and flexibility to accommodate challenges to employee schedules and home life.
3. For employees in sensitive areas or classified work, facilitate safety as a top concern with the flexibility to operate different types of shift work with customers.
4. Involvement in managing and mitigating the pandemic alongside the government.

CONNECTEDNESS IS A STICKING POINT.

Shea says, "We do the very best we can to create a very sticky environment...We work very much on the side of retaining [those] employees by paying attention to what they do by continuing to offer them opportunities to do something new and different or broadening in their background."

Shea believes instability with government budget prioritization and continuing resolutions are neither good for our citizenry nor the American way. He says, "It puts at risk the way that we have set up our programs as a nation to acquire capabilities to protect our nation, to provide us our intelligence readiness, our military support infrastructure, and our adversaries know that. So we have to make sure that we stay focused on always delivering, kind of like the marathon as opposed to the sprint. I can't do a sprint every year. I have to be in a marathon, which means I have to be resilient against perturbations. But I have to focus on making sure that we maintain a stable workforce and our deliveries, and then Congress will do what Congress does. We just have to manage through that."

<https://federalnewsnetwork.com/acquisition/2022/07/how-procurement-looks-from-the-point-of-view-of-the-ceo-of-a-major-contractor/>

<https://wtop.com/business-finance/2021/12/fast-growing-it-contractor-peraton-moving-to-new-hq-in-reston/>

Industry Events

- ➡ 16th ACM Conference on Recommender Systems
- ➡ 2022 Air, Space, and Cyber Conference
- ➡ Indiana Digital Government Summit
- ➡ Creating Positive Change: An Approach to Leadership in Tumultuous Times
- ➡ 2022 WAEPA Federal Summit and Annual Member Meeting
- ➡ Women in Leadership – A Discussion about Opportunities, Hurdles, and Benefits
- ➡ 10th Annual Development Conference
- ➡ Deltek ProjectCon
- ➡ FUN with the FAR; Season 9
- ➡ San Diego CyberSecurity Conference
- ➡ Q4 Deltek Ajera Customer Town Hall
- ➡ Effective Use of the COSO Framework (16 CPEs)
- ➡ Government Contract Management Symposium
- ➡ FutureCon Virtual Western Conference
- ➡ Pennsylvania Digital Government Summit
- ➡ 2022 DoDIIS Worldwide Conference



Sep 18, 2022	Virtual
Sep 19, 2022	In Person / Virtual
Oct 6, 2022	In Person / Virtual
Oct 13, 2022	Virtual
Oct 20, 2022	In Person / Virtual
Nov 3, 2022	Virtual
Nov 14, 2022	In Person
Nov 15, 2022	In Person
Nov 16, 2022	Virtual
Nov 16, 2022	In Person
Dec 1, 2022	Virtual
Dec 1, 2022	In Person
Dec 5, 2022	In Person
Dec 7, 2022	Virtual
Dec 8, 2022	In Person / Virtual
Dec 12, 2022	In Person / Virtual

Prevent Government Agency Employee Turnover and Quiet Quitting

By Kirk Donnan



Like your private sector counterparts, Federal agency leaders have difficulty keeping talented people today. The Office of Personnel Management (OPN) reports that at-will separations made up nearly 60% of Federal employee departures in recent years. And the actual numbers have grown by almost 25% year over year, from 2019 to 2022.¹

In 2021, Federal employees 60 and older left their jobs at the highest rate—17%—though most retired. However, the next highest leave category—those employees under 30—is a red flag. More than 9% of them quit in 2021.

Add to this the relatively new phenomenon of quiet quitting, where employees limit their work to an eight-hour-day, five-day-a-week schedule—nothing more, nothing less. Quiet quitting is surfacing in government, so it's time for agencies to adopt new strategies for boosting staff retention, motivation, and morale.^{3,4}

How can you meet the challenges of government agency employee turnover and quiet quitting head-on? We've discovered six ways to make a big difference by consistently implementing relatively small changes:

DISCOURAGE QUIET QUITTING THROUGH INCENTIVES

Of course, long-term government workforce trends tell us that new employees may not remain with the same agency their entire careers. But to increase ROI for each agency and prevent employees from slipping into a quiet-quitting mentality while they are with you takes some initiative.¹

First, communicate to employees that their growth is one of your top priorities. These are not just one-off training or conference opportunities. It's best to map out a development system that spans an entire year, then revise it for each subsequent year.

Also, recognition incentives can go a long way to help an

employee who feels ignored.

These can be in the form of micro-incentives when the employee reaches each milestone in a project or a more significant incentive at the end of a particularly grueling assignment. Either way, keeping your employee motivated and appreciated is essential.

And remember: Anytime an employee cancels their voice in an agency, they're depriving themselves and the agency of changing things for the better. Making employees comfortable enough to voice their concerns consistently is key—before they get to the quiet quitting stage.⁴

IMPROVE WORK/LIFE BALANCE

While many Boomer and Gen-X agency executives still subscribe to a workaholic mentality, younger government managers and workers signal work/life balance as their top priority, according to Deloitte's 2022 Global Gen Z and Millennial Survey.⁴

Also, female employees exited agency jobs last year at a slightly higher rate than men, with 6.4% quitting or retiring. This attrition also points to a lack of work/life balance. What can you do? Here are a few areas where younger people and women would like to see advances:

- An indefinite continuation of a hybrid work setup
- Remote working where and when possible
- Schedule flexibility to accommodate childcare
- Respect for the evening and weekend hours.²

Employee burnout is a result of high-pressure environments and heavy workloads. Many in government feel unable to take time to regroup, recharge, and re-ignite relationships with their families. A fix here: Publicly encourage taking time off and model the action for your employees.³

HAVE AND COMMUNICATE A VISION

Often, people come to agency jobs because they want to be involved in changing the world by making a difference through public service. But they often need reminders of how critical they are to accomplish this.

It's crucial not only to state your agency's mission clearly and often but also to craft a mission for your department that logically cascades down from the umbrella mission.

On almost a daily basis, communicate the impact an employee has on your overall agency and department vision. Emphasize how their work adds value to the mission of the group. Cultivate a sense of purpose and pride. Lift morale through encouragement. Create a desire for employees to grow within an agency, so they can experience firsthand how their achievements impact the team, agency, warfighter, or other constituent beneficiaries.³

BE POSITIVE AND TRANSPARENT

A recent study by the Society for Human Resource Management reveals that nearly 60% of agency employees leave their jobs due to disappointment with management.

It's obvious, but it bears repeating: Positivity in all aspects of communication increases teamwork, boosts loyalty, and augments productivity. How you can improve positivity:

- Implement an open-door policy
- Practice two-way communication
- Be present and listen when employees talk
- Communicate that you're learning from your subordinates as much as you teach.³

Lastly, when leadership excludes employees from decision-making, they conclude what they think isn't valued. And rightly so. When possible, be upfront about your decisions and those of the agency. When employees feel included in architecting an agency's framework, they often develop a sense of unity.³

BE EVEN MORE SELECTIVE IN HIRING

If you're currently losing people left and right, it's tempting to fill open positions as fast as you can. But in actuality, this is the time to carefully screen and assess candidates to ensure they're the top-most talent you can find.³

Identify the traits of your most successful long-term employees, and hire to match those characteristics. Some we've identified:

- High emotional intelligence

- A solid ability to hear other viewpoints
- A desire to innovate wherever possible
- Consistent empathy
- Willingness to mentor juniors.³

Recruiting the most qualified candidates to fill your roles dramatically increases the odds of retaining those people. But once you've hired them, build a high-performance culture, so they don't stagnate. A part of this is designing exciting development plans, as well as making available easy-to-use performance management systems like Oracle Performance Management.¹

UPLEVEL YOUR TECHNOLOGY

Keeping valuable employees also depends on keeping your technology stack up-to-date. Frustration mounts when employees negotiate dated systems and old applications during their day-to-day work.

On the contracting proposal front, solutions that allow for fluidly analyzing a variety of proposal submissions from various vendors on a contract is your best bet. Out on the market, there are platforms that help you avoid creating electronic costing models for each contractor, saving time. Other benefits of proposal software:

- Creates digital communication channels between your people and contractors during proposal evaluation
- Streamlines fact-finding and negotiation processes
- Develops an instantly organized view of proposal cost and pricing data through an integrated database architecture
- Modifies proposal rates and tables at the level of your choice
- Provides a lens through which to compare multiple versions of a proposal to the original.

Keep your people. Attract new blood. Better technology isn't the only solution, but if you ask any millennial or Generation Z employee, they'll tell you it's critical to job satisfaction.

Sources

1. **OPM.gov Article: Services for Agencies - Workforce & Succession Planning**
2. **Government Executive: These Are the Agencies Federal Employees Are Leaving at the Highest Rates**
3. **Management Concepts Blog: Strategies to Reverse High Rates of Turnover Within Federal Agencies**
4. **Time Article: What is Quiet Quitting? Employees Say It's Just Setting Boundaries**



THE FUTURE

OF PRICING AND PROCUREMENT

AWARD

PRESENTING THE FUTURE OF PRICING HONOREES

As we reflect on this past year, there is no doubt that government agencies and companies persistently work to overcome the multitude of challenges that are continuously presented throughout the industry. For the second year, The Future of Pricing Awards celebrates individuals that have made an extraordinary impact in the fields of pricing and procurement.

Pricing Magazine is proud to highlight ten individuals across industry and government who have demonstrated these achievements. Across all levels, these individuals represent innovation, ambition, and resilience.

As we continuously move forward and adapt to this technologically driven society, we hope that this year's nominees can embody a source of inspiration, empowerment, and motivation for teams nationwide. Mostly, we hope these individuals are people whom you can connect with to extend conversations of their practices and mindset shifts.



SCAN ME

LEADERSHIP



Jeremy Neas
Kellogg, Brown and Root (KBR)

Mr. Neas is presently working to bring regulatory consistency across three separately acquired pricing departments by leading the implementation of ProPricer, rewriting the estimating system manual, developing a robust training program, and standing up a universal proposal repository. Mr. Neas has over two decades of DoD and Finance experience and is currently the Director of Pricing in the Science and Space Division at KBR, Inc. As a US Air Force veteran, he believes the mission comes first and is constantly amazed by the many outstanding daily heroes that make it happen.



Soraya Correa
President & CEO, Soraya Correa & Associates, LLC

As the former Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Chief Procurement Officer and Senior Procurement Executive, Ms. Correa was responsible for the implementation of the unique acquisition policies, regulations, and standards of the agency. Ms. Correa is recognized as a transformational leader improving business processes and supporting the continued development and growth of the acquisition workforce. Today, Ms. Correa runs an independent consulting firm providing advice and assistance to professional associations, industry, and academia on procurement matters. Ms. Correa is a Fellow at the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA), a Senior Advisor to the American Council for Technology and Industry Advisory Council (ACT-IAC) and serves on the Board of Advisors of the National Contract Management Association (NCMA).



Rochelle Overstreet
National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

Rochelle Overstreet is the Director, Enterprise Pricing Office Director at the NASA Headquarters Office of Procurement. Ms. Overstreet is an energetic and creative visionary known for her talent in developing transformative improvements to the contract closeout process. In addition, Ms. Overstreet's exemplary expertise in developing and implementing innovative business solutions enables mitigation strategies and efficiencies across operations. An analytical change agent with over 18 years of diverse procurement experience magnifies her drive and tenacity in the procurement space. Ms. Overstreet received her B.S. in Mathematics from Texas Southern University and completed her MBA at Texas Women's University.



Donald Shannon
Donald E. Shannon LLC dba The Contract Coach

Mr. Shannon retired as an USAF Aircraft Maintenance Officer following 23 years of service and has since acquired 30-years' experience as a government contracts manager. He offers consulting services through his business, The Contract Coach, in the manufacturing, R&D, and aerospace. His specialties include project management (PMP), a contract and proposal management (CFCM, CPCM, Outstanding Fellow) and pricing (CPT). He is also an avid researcher and writer with frequent contributions to NCMA's CM magazine, the Journal of Contract Management and Pricing Magazine. Mr. Shannon is a frequent presenter at ProPricer's CGPS and NCMA National events. His credentials include a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration from Saint Leo College and a Master of Science in Logistics Management from the Air Force Institute of Technology.



Jamie Curry
United States Air Force (USAF)

Jamie Curry is a digital transformation powerhouse with over 25 years of leadership and supervisory experience. As a Supervisory Price/Cost Analyst, she manages, leads and innovates a pricing section that supports a surging portfolio for next-generation weapon systems, including nuclear weapons, hypersonic missiles and bombs in development, test, production and support services which spans across four (4) Air Force Centers and the United States Special Operations Command. She is also a College Adjunct Instructor with over 16 years of curriculum experience in Human Resource Management, Retail Sales, Personnel Development and Business & Computer Technology.

UP AND COMING



Brandon Marwah
IDEMIA

Brandon has more than ten years of pricing and financial analysis experience and leads the Cyber Missions and Defense Solutions Pricing team at IDEMIA. His responsibilities range from providing strategic pricing guidance, developing PTW (Price To Win) scenarios with the support of the Continuous Improvement team, and supporting extensive proposal efforts (100M to 2B). Additionally, Brandon has a solid mastery of the ProPricer platform, having set up and integrated three large companies into the ProPricer environment. He has trained over 100+ analysts and estimators in utilizing the tool.



Luke Shattuck
Lockheed Martin Corporation

Luke Shattuck is currently a Pricing Analyst for Lockheed Martin. He began his career as a Financial Analyst, honing his process improvement and financial analysis skills. Before Lockheed Martin, Luke served as an Infantryman with the Army National Guard. He dedicated himself to protecting our nation's communities and supporting active duty military forces responding to threats abroad and humanitarian disasters. He hails from the UCF College of Business and recently earned an MBA from the Florida Institute of Technology in July this year.



Sarah Hughes
GE Aerospace

After graduating from Virginia Tech with a BS in Information Technology, Sarah began her career at GE Aviation, taking part in an intensive IT Leadership Program, immersing herself in varying disciplines such as Network, Middleware, Supply Chain (RFID Technology), and CRM. Her expertise in Contracts, Quoting, Order Management, Advanced Pricing, and Finance (AR/GL/Inventory/Costing) has led her to her current role as GE Aviation's Technical Product Manager - Engine Fulfillment. Sarah delivers extensive business process knowledge to drive business value providing results in a short time.



Zachary Cooper
Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA)

Zachary Cooper graduated from Robert Morris University with a Bachelor of Science in Economics in 2017. After graduating college, Zachary began a career as a Contract Specialist at Naval Sea Systems Command in Washington, DC. Throughout his time at NAVSEA, Zachary has assisted in the procurement of billions of dollars in awards for a multitude of programs. Further, he is an advocate for evaluating and coordinating more efficient processes and systems across his command. Looking to continue developing his acquisition and leadership skills, Zachary earned his Master of Science in Contracts Management degree from Naval Postgraduate School in May 2022.



Katy Barker
CohnReznick, LLP

Katy has worked as a Subcontract Administrator for over seven years, most of her career supporting the DoD. She now guides companies that are in the process of setting up federally compliant Business Systems. Katy also reviews the company's current Business Systems and provides insight on how to improve existing systems. In addition, she has extensive knowledge of Federal Acquisition Regulations and supports DCMA and DCAA audits. Katy is a Certified Federal Contract Manager.



PROPRICER

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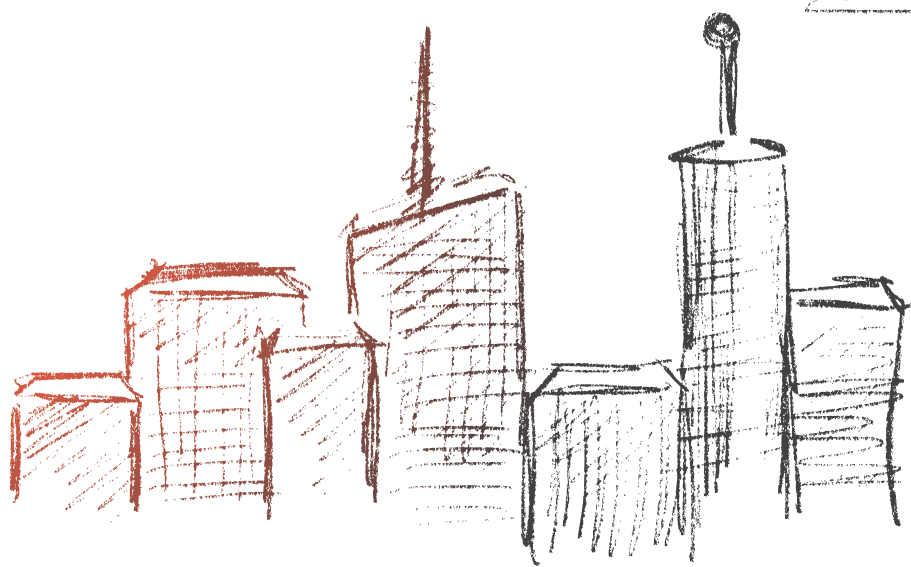
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Leading



from the CFO's Office

Tom Reid,
Founder,
Certified Contract Solutions, LLC.



Tom Reid is founder and chief problem solver with Certified Contract Solutions, LLC. He has written several books on contracting and leadership and is currently building a training platform with classes covering both areas of study. With more than two dozen published articles, he holds both a JD and Masters in Public Administration, is a licensed attorney (Texas), CPCU, Fellow in NCMA, and has held numerous leadership roles in business, charities, and other organizations. He can be reached at **www.Ask-Tom-Reid.com**.

When finance/accounting is your primary competency, leadership development will help you more than anything else to significantly increase that competency. When you have reached a certain level of technical competence in your field, what is next? How can you find new and better ways to apply that competence? The answer will help you prevent burnout and will give you new vistas to becoming the best possible version of yourself.

COMPETENCE

Focus for a moment on your competence in your field of finance and accounting. Perhaps you are in pricing, or an actuarial, or a CPA, or a CFO. Maybe you are an accounting clerk or a billing clerk. No matter; your competence in your chosen field is a critical mastery on your personal leadership journey.

When you look within major companies, the CEO had a path that led him or her to the C-Suite. Southwest Airlines once elevated their general counsel to the CEO position. In an industry as heavily regulated as airlines, there is some sound logic in that.

Many of our defense companies are headed by engineers, whether aerospace, civil, robotics, or otherwise. Demonstrated competence in their chosen field is a good indicator that, with further development in leadership, they stand a good chance of contributing more broadly for the entire operation.

An important aspect to note – the successful ones did not wait until they were offered a leadership position. They had already assumed the role of leader and, coupled with their specific competence, it was what made them stand out to those who do the promotions.

WHAT IS A LEADER?

What makes a leader? If you read the current literature, you will see a lot of things that allegedly “make” you a leader. There are the five habits, the seven things, and even the ONE thing. They are not all wrong – they are incredibly incomplete. Unfortunately too many organizations are not prioritizing leadership development. For many leadership development is a process of checking a box and keeping records of “butts-in-seats”. It is no secret that doesn’t seem to be working. Part of being a leader is self-identifying and starting your personal leadership journey in your own way and at your own pace.

We have copious amounts of literature, college degrees, think tanks, programs, certificates – just so much on the topic of leadership you would think we have this whole “leadership thing” figured out. Then we look around in

business and industry, charities and religions, and politics and government. What do we see? So many non-leaders filling leadership positions and damaging the next generation of leaders.

PERSONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

In an extensive study of leadership we identified 229 elements of leadership. Failing to master any one of them can derail your leadership journey and could affect your entire career! This derailment might be permanent. It can show its impact on your career, and possibly your personal life, for a long time. It can be hard, or in some cases **impossible, to recover.**

Your personal leadership journey will, all by itself, be among the most challenging and difficult paths you choose. It will not be easy. There is no easy leadership journey. It will, however, be very much worth it because it will move you along in a defined and structured manner on your personal journey to become the best possible version of yourself.

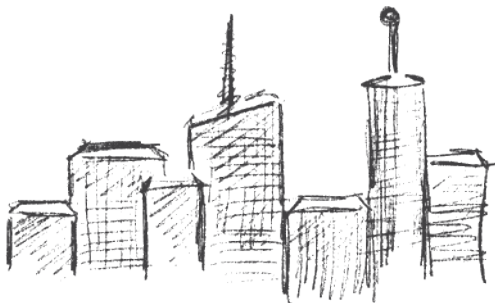
These 229 elements are conveniently aligned under the five major headings of Character, Competence, Compassion, Communication, and Commitment. You can see the whole breakout at www.sustainedleadershipwbs.com/wbs. Print it out. Laminate it. Keep it handy for references. More

Character,
Competence,
Compassion,
Communication,
Commitment.

importantly – identify those elements where you might need some improvement!

YOUR LEADERSHIP JOURNEY STARTS WITH COMPETENCE

All of this is to encourage you to prepare yourself to be a leader and not just a figure head. Proper leadership development will mold you into someone who can sustain their position because you will have worked hard to make yourself the best possible version of you.



"Similarly, if you cannot truly commit to a vision – a big hairy audacious goal – then you cannot frame a vision of where you believe things should be headed and entice others to join you."

While people of poor character occasionally find their way to the corner office, they typically can't last. Their lack of ethics or honesty will eventually catch up to them.

A poor communicator cannot get their vision expressed well enough to gather a following (the definitive criterion for being a "leader"!)

A person in an influential position who never develops a sense of compassion, who views employees as "human resources" to be consumed and tossed aside, will also find their leadership journey shortened and perhaps eliminated. We see it in the news almost every week.

Similarly, if you cannot truly commit to a vision – a big hairy audacious goal to borrow a phrase from Jim Collins - then you cannot frame a vision of where you believe things should be headed and entice others to join you.

Yes, these other four major topics carry a lot of impact for your leadership journey and should not be ignored. Today we will focus only on competence. First, you might ask, competence in what?

WHAT IS COMPETENCE?

Many positions require a college degree. We can debate the utility of some degree programs, and the current system that causes students to begin their professional career deeply in debt does seem to have significant drawbacks. So why require the degree? If you have been to college, and I make no distinction here among private, public, state, community, ivy league, or online programs, you know that it took hard work, dedication, proof of what you have learned through tests, papers, projects and oral defense, to ultimately gather enough credits to demonstrate competence.

The same can be said for the various certification programs that apply in our field of government contracting. You must prove you can master the material. That is a good policy. A college degree or earning a certificate is no small accomplishment for anyone. It shows some level of competence, achievement, and self-improvement. Every profession also has its continuous learning requirements. There is no resting on your laurels.

LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY

Beyond those professional competencies, it can certainly be persuasively argued that leadership itself is a unique discipline and requires a level of competence in its own right. This includes 229 diverse elements. Not just a few habits or "secrets."

Among the elements in Sustained Leadership WBS are competencies in finance and accounting. Every person in a leadership role should understand how the entity makes its money or gathers donations or collects taxes. It is clear how few people know how the entity for which the work gathers the funds to pay their salary. Seriously. Do an informal survey and you will see exactly this point. What becomes clear is that everyone in a leadership role needs some fundamentals in finance and accounting.

The field is large – huge even. Government cost accounting is different than GAAP-qualified accounting. International accounting is different still, and tax accounting often seems to need a legal degree to go with it. Those who are well versed in any of the varied “number crunching” disciplines will always be in demand.

Then what? The most helpful pursuit will be in developing your leadership quotient.

BUILD A TALENT STACK

If you are a fan of the Dilbert comic strip, then you are familiar with the name Scott Adams – Dilbert’s creator. What many people do not know is that he has written several extremely helpful books and has a daily podcast where he discusses current events, ways to think about them, and how to be persuasive. He is also a trained hypnotist.

In his book, *How to Fail at Almost Everything and Still Win Big: Kind of the Story of My Life*, he presents several brilliant ideas. One of them is the need to build a “talent stack”. On his Locals platform, subscription only, he has hundreds of mini-lessons covering an array of subjects that will, if studied seriously, improve your talent stack.

“The idea of a talent stack,” he states, “is that you can combine ordinary skills until you have enough of the right kind to be extraordinary. You don’t have to be the best in the world at any one thing. *All you need to succeed is to be good at a number of skills that fit well together.*” (Emphasis in original).

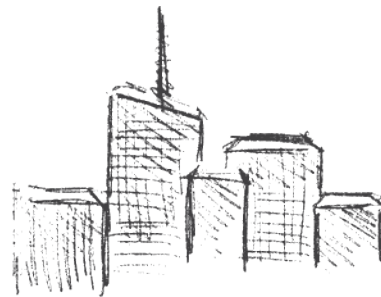
It doesn’t really matter how exceptional you are in any one thing. There will always be someone better than you. The question isn’t about being the best at everything; the question is how to make yourself the best possible version of you – uniquely combining skills and talents only you have.

AN EXAMPLE

Let me share a personal application of this concept that happened long before I was aware of who Scott Adams was. I was climbing my way up the corporate ladder through the legal side of the house. Even as a young attorney, since I was the only lawyer on staff for my business units, I was automatically on the “senior staff” and had to attend all the mind-numbing meetings. In every one of them the “eyechart viewgraph” would go up on the screen. The room would immediately divide into two camps. On one side were the ones who pulled up their chairs close to the screen and started asking questions about the numbers. The rest of us would break to get coffee or pay dues for the coffee we’d already had.

One day, I noticed something. All those “number nerds” who had been studying the eye charts were getting promoted. Others were not.

Having spent the first three years of my college career as a pre-med student, I understood enough calculus to determine a one molar solutions (curiously NO ONE has ever ask me for such a calculation the rest of my life!) Numbers didn’t intimidate me; I simply had no appreciation for their importance. I had been advised in legal investigations to “follow the money.” I understood compound interest and how paying the minimum on your credit card balance would



"Every person in a leadership role should understand how the entity makes its money or gathers donations or collects taxes."

ensure you never paid it off. I did not understand business finance and economics.

I began a self-study of the topic until one day I was asked to teach a National Educational Seminar for the National Contract Management Association (NCMA) on the topic of contract finance. My self-study continued, to the ridicule

of some of my fellow lawyers who reminded me that such efforts were for CPAs.

THE PROMOTION

During the closure of a DOE facility, the general manager came to me and informed (NOT asked) me that I was to become the General Counsel AND the Director of Business Operations. She noted that I understood the numbers better than anyone else on her staff, I had a great relationship with the customer, and the business team was already functioning well. We had very talented and capable people. What was needed was a leader.

When that operation ceased, I took my plant closing benefit and started looking for the next opportunity, which turned out to be "Vice President, Finance and Accounting" for a major subsidiary of a significant defense contractor. You might reasonably ask, "What were they doing putting a lawyer in charge of finance and accounting?" Most of my team of over 200 did not even know I was a lawyer by formal training and licensing.

MORE TALENT STACK BUILDING

I went on to write four books about contracting, (including the "numbers" parts), and ultimately wrote Sustained Leadership WBS. Why? Because I had intentionally built a talent stack to provide myself with the best opportunities for personal development, organizational contributions, and because of my view that we had too many non-leaders in leadership roles. I owed it to those who had helped me, to do what I could to fix the clearly broken leadership development and selection process.

We can all immediately help in this regard by ceasing to call people "leaders" who merely hold a leadership position.

In Sustained Leadership WBS under the major heading of "Competency," one of them deals directly with finance and accounting. Forty-eight of them deal with the other critical components of general leadership competence.

THE LESSON

Here is the lesson. Be good at something. If finance and accounting is your choice – great. We need people who are really good at that. If it is related such as pricing, cost accounting, bookkeeping, tax accounting, or any of the other finer disciplines – also great. To reach a real pinnacle

of your career, however, broaden your talent stack. You now have 229 to consider.

You will never be completely proficient in all of them, but there should be enough to spark your interest and make you a constant learner so that when the opportunity crosses your path you are prepared to accept the new role and sustain it. With time and effort your talent stack will get large enough to allow you to make another move to keep your creative juices flowing and keep you motivated to build your talent stack while holding on to other key talents. In other words, you can create your own career "luck."

You can lead from any role. Organizations need leaders at all levels. Focusing only on the top of the organizational chart is a gross error. Leadership development must extend to the depths of the organization. The pipeline must be constantly filled with more developing leaders. Over time, you will become equipped to participate in the development of others, even though you might have been perceived initially as "just a numbers person."

THE SECRET LEADERSHIP MEETINGS

I know this because for so long, I was "just a lawyer." I still am! And ... I'd like to think a very good one. I am also a business owner, an educator, a prolific reader, an author, an expert witness in government contracting, and many other things just as I am sure you are. The one I'm most proud of, having mapped out and followed my own personal journey – is a leader, which means that I am still learning, still developing, and still growing. I hope you will craft your own personal leadership journey and then pursue it. Perhaps I will soon see you at one of our (not-so) secret meetings!





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**INTRO TO
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**REPORTING
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**WHAT-IF
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7 TIPS

I learned

after working from home for 10 Years



When I started working for GDMS I had three young kids and a long commute. From the very beginning, they allowed me to work flexibly, with some portion of my day remote. The summer my boys were 13 and 16, I asked permission to work remotely 4 days a week and only go in one day. My boss's answer was "As long as the business needs are being met, I don't care where you sit". As the summer was coming to a close, I realized I loved working remotely and felt it made me more productive and gave my life balance. In life, if you don't ask, you don't get. So I asked, and it was granted. So now for over ten years, I've worked remotely and love it.

Here are my tips on how to stay sane and maintain a work life balance. I can't say I'm always successful at all of this, but it is what I strive for.

1

ESTABLISH YOUR DINACHARYA "DAILY ROUTINE"

How you start your day is key to everything. If you just hang out in your PJs all day - it's easy to start to feel depressed. Trust me, been there - done that.

If you have never heard of it - Dinacharya is an Ayurvedic term (the sister science of yoga) that simply means "Daily Routine" and for most is a morning routine. Get up each day and do your morning routine.

When you don't have to leave the house, it's easy to get lazy and to fall into bad habits. Working remotely should give you more time in your day and not less. Now is the time to add good habits, and break bad ones.



Ruth Pauly
Pricing Systems Lead,
GD Mission Systems

Ruth Pauly has almost 30 years of experience in the defense industry. After graduating from college with a degree in accounting, she started her career at FMC (now BAE) in the finance department performing contract closeouts. This led her to pursue her certification in government contracts and obtain her Certified Professional Contracts Manager (CPCM) designation. Progressive finance, contracts, and subcontracts management positions made up the rest of Ms. Pauly's ten-year career at that company while completing her Master's in Business Administration.

Ms. Pauly also became a trained facilitator, then returned to the defense industry and went to work for General Dynamics Advanced Information Systems. For seven years, she worked in the Contracts department (both as a Subcontracts Administrator and as a Contract Administrator), working on all aspects of contracts. She was also a cost volume lead on major proposal efforts. In 2011, Ms. Pauly took on the role as the Pricing Systems Lead for GDAIS (now GD Mission Systems) in charge of pricing process improvements, system updates, troubleshooting, audits, tracking, documentation, and pricing announcements. Alongside of providing training to all levels of management.

Make a list of the habits you had when you went into the office and keep doing the good ones.

Examples of things that can be on the list are:

- Start your day with gratefulness
- Eat a healthy breakfast
- Work Out
- Shower
- Get dressed
- Floss
- Meditate

One of my favorite morning habits is to follow my joy for 15 minutes. When I say "Joy" I mean: read, draw, paint, move - something that you love to do and that makes you happy.

Something that gives you energy. Set a timer, and go do it.

A good start for your day begins the night before. Having a mindset when you go to bed on what you plan to do when you awaken can really help set the stage for success.

Keep your morning list short.

Making a list of 20 things can be overwhelming and won't be sustainable. One idea is to have a short list of things that you do every day, and then a list of rotating things that you do periodically to keep your daily list manageable.

I tried to do some research on what it takes to form or break a habit. There seems to be a lot of conflicting data out there. I've concluded that for each of us, it's likely different. How

deeply embedded something is will impact your ability to change.

When you think about it, there are lots of things that you already do out of habit, things you didn't even realize were habits.

My sister-in-law picks one good thing to do each year for her New Year's resolution - and this eventually becomes a habit. One year she added flossing regularly. I think that was a wonderful idea, but why wait for a new year to add something new or good to your routine.

Most likely, all of us have jobs that have goals and schedules, and many times we are the ones that create those. Why don't we do that for ourselves? Create a list of good habits we want to embrace, and develop a planned implementation schedule. We're good at charts and graphs - put it on the wall and commit to yourself.

I was recently at the Government Contract Pricing Summit hosted by ProPricer and Mary Major from Deltek had the perfect comment. "No one else will invest in you, more than you can into yourself."

2

DEFINE YOUR "SPOT" – AND STICK TO IT

Have a location that is your office – aka. your "spot". When you are in your "spot", you should be working. This will also help define a difference between working and not working. This "spot" doesn't necessarily need to be a different location, either. Your "spot" can be two different chairs, two different rooms, different computers, anything. This should be something that defines what you are doing.

I'm unusual, because I don't like working at a desk. Instead, I prefer to work from a chair with my laptop on my lap. When I went into the office, I tried all different types of ergonomic strategies to make a desk more comfortable. None of them worked. Working from home gave me the flexibility to try other solutions.

My Father always sat in a recliner and worked, so I had seen that model work successfully for years. He built a special "desk" that he put across the armrests and had his computer sit on. Before I was a remote worker, I did go into the office, but always worked a few hours from home in the evenings. Those hours, I always did from a chair and not a desk.

Of course this model has evolved over time. When I first started working remotely, I had two different chairs, they were actually in the same room, but each had a different view of the room. My family could easily tell if I was working

or not depending where I was sitting. Once I started working from home full time, I got a special chair that I just love that I always sit in now, so my "spot" is now the computer I'm using.

Since the pandemic ,my husband also works from home. His "spot" is a real desk with 3 monitors.

Find out what works for you, and communicate with those around you what you need from them to make your "spot" work.



3

BE IN CHARGE OF YOUR KITCHEN

Don't forget to eat. Don't over-eat or drink. I've had both issues. It's easy to get absorbed into your "job" and forget to come up for air. **Don't do this.** Take a break and eat meals. Make sure you take time to feed yourself healthy food and drink water.

Just because the kitchen is steps away, it doesn't mean you should eat more than you normally do (or drink more coffee). This should be an opportunity to eat more healthily because you can control the quality of the food you have available.

I love eating healthy and having fun with food. My most recent favorite food goal is to have color in my meals. As many colors as possible. I try to have meals that are fast and fresh. Things that are colorful with lots of flavor and easy. Planning out your meals and snacks in advance really helps you be successful. Things like, homemade pizza on a cast iron skillet piled with tons of veggies, mason jar salads and instapot meals tossed together in the morning. Don't forget those wonderful leftovers from the day before. When I plan my meals for the week, I purposely make enough to have leftovers for lunch.

Sitting and having a nice meal is a great way to take a breather and have something to break up the day.

Find the things that work for you. Many grocery stores sell great pre-made salad meals that are very colorful. These are great go-to's if you are not a cook, short on time or traveling.

4

BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE LIKE IT'S PART OF YOUR JOB DESCRIPTION

Sometimes, the best way to be productive is to step away and move around. Don't forget to get up and walk around once in a while during the day. Stand and do your job if you can. If you have a phone call, and don't need your computer, walk around during the call.

Get some fresh air when it's nice outside. You can even set up your office outside if it's possible. Take a break and do something physical, like doing yoga or lifting some weights. Anything helps.

My daughter goes on a walk each day with her dog. She told her boss she was going to do this, and blocked her calendar. Now her dog expects it and bugs her to go. This is a great idea.

Don't underestimate the power of "gifting" to yourself. Set some crazy goal that you get something you want when you do something. Maybe you only get to watch your favorite show if you work out. You get to buy something on amazon after x # of something...anything to make you motivated and gets you going.

Work to schedule the things that are most important to you. You will be more productive and happier, trust me.

5

PLAN A CLEAR END TO YOUR WORK DAY

Make sure you have a plan to transition away from work.

How will your day end? What will you do? Where will you go? When? How will you shut that computer down?

I used to go to a yoga class. I had a set time I needed to be there so it was easy to end work, eat dinner, and leave the house.

Starting with the pandemic, going to yoga was no longer an option. Instead, I do yoga on my own, go on a walk or do something fun I enjoy. I find I'm more successful if I "schedule" it.

I've also found that I'm spending more time in the kitchen cooking meals with more people home all day and eating more. Good thing cooking is one of my hobbies.

Having a plan for when your day will end, and what you will do away from work can help you transition. I get it. We have jobs we love, doing things we enjoy doing, and it's hard to leave. Having other things that force us to change focus and do them, creates a balance you did not realize was missing.



6

DO NON-WORK ACTIVITIES

Having a balance in your life between work and other activities will make you a more effective employee. Oftentimes the things you enjoy doing can help to relieve stress, and then allow more ways for your brain to process information so you can be more effective when you are at work.

Remember to do activities you enjoy outside of work. Take time for your hobbies or develop some new ones. Reach out and call people. Working from home does not mean you no longer need people. You may actually need more connections since you don't have those accidental water cooler chats anymore.

I have a list of people that I view as important to my life. When I have time - I look at that list and give one of them a call. It's so wonderful to catch up with someone that I have not talked to in awhile. I find it gives me perspective to see what is happening in other peoples' lives. My favorite time to call someone is when I'm out walking my dog. I'm alone, out doing something good and I can give that person my full attention (ps - my dog does not care).

I also took the pandemic to develop new hobbies. We live in an age where it is so easy to learn almost anything. I decided I wanted to learn acrylic painting. I went on you tube, googled beginning acrylic painting and watched a ton of videos. Now I've painted hundreds of things and include painting as one of the "joy" things I do when I have a moment.

7

ENHANCE TOMORROW'S PRODUCTIVITY – STARTING THE NIGHT BEFORE

Please remember, the end of the day is as important as the beginning. I recommend that you plan a way to unwind at the end of the day. Getting



a good night's rest will make your next day so much better.

Please, spend a few minutes thinking about the next day as you get ready for bed. What are you going to do and eat? Is there anything you can do now to make tomorrow better? Things like meal prep, programming your coffee maker and laying out our clothes can help.

I like to have a "meditation moment" and reflect back on my day.

You can truly meditate anytime, anywhere, in any position. Meditation is taking a few moments to quiet your mind. Allow yourself to not think and be present with yourself. Set a timer if you need help with how long you will do this.

I also like to give myself a pat for those things I'm happy about for my day and create a plan for the next day to be better. Each day is a gift. Don't spend time dwelling on the things that did not go well. Learn from the past, be grateful for the now, and look forward to the future.

If you want, you can journal and add notes. As long as this activity does not cause distress and keep you from sleeping.

I heard once of a "worry tree". You leave your worries there and pick them up again the next day - but in between - they stay on the tree, not with you. Up to you on how you unwind and ready yourself for sleep - but do it.

I don't recommend trying to incorporate all of this at once. Instead, take a few of these ideas and start to incorporate them a little each day. Circle back once in a while to see if there is more you can do to support your good habits. Maybe create your own implementation schedule.

So in summary:

- 1) Establish your *dinacharya*
"daily routine"
- 2) Define your "spot" - and stick to it
- 3) Be in charge of your kitchen
- 4) Be physically active like it's part of
your job description
- 5) Plan a clear end to your work day
- 6) Do non-work activities
- 7) Enhance tomorrow's productivity -
starting the night before



Attendees at the 2022 Government Contract Pricing Summit had the opportunity once again to hear from leaders in government contracting, representing both industry and government. Plenary session speakers at the 2022 event included Joy White, Executive Director, Space Systems Command and Head of Contractor Activity U.S. Space Force, Major General Cameron Holt, Deputy Assistant Secretary Contracting, Department of the Air Force, David Cade, Vice President of USGS Business Transformation at The Boeing Company, and John Tenaglia, Principal Director, Defense Pricing and Contracting (DPC) within the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), U.S. Department of Defense.

Augmenting the general sessions were two leadership panels that discussed next generation pricing solutions and agile solutions during uncertain times. The panelists were offering perspectives from both industry and government and represented organizations such as Deltek, NASA, ProPricer, US Army, US Space Force, NAVWAR, and Raytheon Technologies.

Two overarching themes emerged at this year's GCP Summit: The serious threat from US adversaries and the undeniable need to increase speed to contract on as many fronts as possible.

"I think that military deterrents and great power competition is all about competitive acquisition systems. Which one

is faster, which one is cheaper, which one can achieve overmatch the soonest", according to Major General Holt.

"And I think the lack of understanding that China may have about what we are really capable of doing provides tremendous deterrent value against war. And so what you all are engaged in matters", Gen Holt added.

There was a consensus presented in numerous sessions that its time to realize the true adversaries the United States is confronted with don't come from within the aerospace and defense community, with what can be petty conflicts stemming from issues surrounding government procedures and industry profits. Our real adversaries exist outside our borders, from nations singularly focused on disrupting our infrastructures from any angle available to them.

Joy White from US Space Systems Command added, "It's absolutely critical that we are able to defend all the things we're doing in space and protect it against our adversaries".

On the subject of next gen technology and the need to improve speed and efficiencies, Karla Jackson, Deputy Chief Acquisition Officer and Assistant Administrator for Procurement, NASA offered, "One of the things that we're interested in at NASA is to determine what commercial pricing models exist that we could leverage? What work is being done in that area, so that we don't have to go and create something from scratch".

The need to increase efficiencies in the acquisition process was noted by several presenters. “We can't just wait until the requirement's done in the acquisition strategy. Strategy is approved, but we're just waiting to issue our RFP. We've got to get involved upfront, be plugged in, understand what we're buying and work upfront to collaborate with the contractors”, observed Natalie Riedel, Director of Contracting, Space Systems Command, U.S. Space Force.

“We need contractors' input. We need your help. Respond to our draft RFPs, provide those comments and then provide good solid proposals so we can move quickly”, Reidel added.

Improving efficiencies in acquisition processes can't be accomplished without addressing any component that impacts speed to contract. Reidel emphasized, “Number one is speed. We've got to go fast in this environment. It's absolutely critical. And so we've got to partner together to make sure we can move quickly and also have that acquisition discipline.”

Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Procurement, Megan Dake, commented, “We actually try to really understand the behaviors of industry, so we can have better relationships and so we can build better business deals.”

Michael Weaver, Director of Corporate Strategy at ProPricer, added an important insight to the discussion. “We need to streamline the integrations between whatever you're using for earned value or whatever you're using for proposal pricing, whatever's being used by the SMEs to put the BOEs together and make sure that management has the ability to see everything from the big picture.”

The 2023 GCP Summit promises to continue these important discussions with the community that can actually bring these desperately needed improvements to fruition. Network with your colleagues and industry leaders at this one-of-a-kind event. So, make plans to join us in person and be a part of that community that is changing the government contract pricing landscape for the better. We'll see you in San Diego, CA on June 20-22, 2023!

Together for the mission,
The GCP Summit Team

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CONTINUING EDUCATION
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Media



Federal News Network is the key source of breaking news, information, and analysis on the topics that matter most to federal agency managers, policy makers, and contractors. We cover the federal government and those who do business with the government, concentrating on workforce, management, defense, technology, contracting, policy, and pay and benefits issues.

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EOP Consulting offers a unique, personalized approach to strategic cost and pricing, business operations and management, business development, and training solutions for federal contractors and commercial organizations. With an average of over seventeen years of pricing strategy and analytical experience, the EOP team excels at assisting our clients with the most complex problems and can provide the highest caliber of service.

5

QUALITIES OF GREAT STRATEGIC PRICING

About the author:

Marsha Lindquist is an experienced price proposal manager & contracts professional. She is an expert in cost proposal management, development & pricing strategy. Marsha has built a tradition of quality consulting to Government contractors for over 30 years. She has wide-ranging experience with Government contracting firms—mostly scientific & high technology companies.

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1

Value

The strategic pricing is timely and addresses, in a compelling way, the issues that your customer finds particular gnarly. Imagine that your customers see many contractors and reads many proposals from your competitors. How will you stand out from the rest? By providing a strong value proposition to their most pressing hot button. You must convince them what sets you apart from your competition and what VALUE your strategic pricing solution offers them. Otherwise, it is just waving your arms.

2

Clear Strategy

The pricing strategy must be clear, powerful, and reveal the answers to the hidden patterns or relationship that the customer has been seeing or is challenged by. In other words, offer them more than just a low price. Otherwise, what you offer will be viewed through a commodity – minded set of eyes rather than a deal that brings them true value.

3

Practical Solution

The strategy answer must have pragmatic value to the customer. Not just a great low price. If in the end, the customer gets a cheap delivery without solving their pains, then they just got a cheap price and still have those pains. Aren't you in this to solve their menacing distress? So, to do this, you must provide evidence of your practical solution, while making it simple and elegant. What worries you customer, is usually solved by you with a simple solution.

4


Clarity

Your strategic pricing must also be realistic and practical, have a robust foundation on which it is based, and monetized in a clear way to the customer. Doing a lot of arm waving or confusing the customer will only cloud their thinking and delay choosing you. Some people do not think it is important to demonstrate the value the customer is saving or getting in dollar terms. How else will they know what good pricing they are getting if you do not tell them?

5

Fit

Lastly, your strategy must have a natural audience. If what you offer to the customer is of no interest to the group, it will just be glossed over, tossed out, or ignored. Make sure the community you are providing great strategic pricing to is the right audience for what you are offering.



Every great strategic pricing has five qualities that set it apart from all the rest. Bring home each one of these in your strategic pricing approach, and you likely will nail it.

**GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS:
RETAIN TOP TALENT
AND STAY
COMPETITIVE**





In March of 2020, the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic plagued the world. Many businesses in the U.S. shut down or had their employees work from home, which drastically changed the landscape for how work was performed. According to a CNBC report, most employees are quitting their jobs for higher compensation. Compensatory factors driving employees to look for work include: “health benefits, job security, flexible work arrangements and retirement benefits,” according to the report.

Several key factors for employers to attract the right workforce are more flexibility on teleworking for employees, and competitive compensation plans for recruiting and retaining top talent. Federal agencies are more frequently including FAR 52.222-46 (Evaluation of Compensation for Professional Employees) in solicitations to ensure professional employees are compensated fairly. The government is looking to make sure that the contractor will “offer an uninterrupted high-quality work. The professional compensation proposed will be considered in terms of its impact upon recruiting and retention, its realism, and its consistency with a total plan for compensation. Supporting information will include data, such as recognized national and regional compensation surveys and studies of professional, public and private organizations, used in establishing the total compensation structure,” according to the provision.

One of the issues that organizations face is finding the right talent while maintaining a competitive edge when putting together proposals to win new work. Employees are looking for a workplace where they feel valued, have resources to be able to do their job, have a healthy-work life balance, and are provided access to growth opportunities. The current employment environment is employee-driven where employees are more inclined to find different work if they feel their needs are not being met in their current environment.

DESIGN COMPENSATION PLANS TO ATTRACT TALENT

In today's environment, a compensation plan needs to not only meet the needs of employees, but it will also need to demonstrate adequate handling given the current environment. It should address base pay, benefits, and incentive compensation.

- **Salary surveys:** Remote work allows employers to attract employees from areas outside of the company's location, which means that a total compensation package must be competitive with employers nationwide. A market pricing study can aid in determining how salaries compare to those in the market. Salary survey tools or professional service companies that specialize in different locations can aid in matching job positions with the industry to provide a basis for base salary plus bonus costs. Choosing salary surveys that represent the market is crucial in evaluating the competitiveness of pay.
- **Benefits value studies:** Studies are also available to evaluate the value of the benefits offered to employees. Like salary surveys, a benefits value study compares an organization's benefits to the benefits offered by benchmark entities. **Many employees are looking for benefits beyond standard insurance, paid time off, and retirement plans.** With the increasing prevalence of employees working from home, they are looking for reimbursement for common office expenses such as monitors, office supplies, and high-speed internet. Another popular benefit is student loan assistance. The CARES Act of 2020 has offered some student loan assistance through suspension of loan payments, however, many workers are looking for some form of continued assistance with reducing their loan balances. A benefits value study can help to also assess value from the employee's perspective and include employee contributions.
- **Incentives:** Incentive compensation or bonuses can relate to a wide variety of areas, such as new hire sign-on bonuses, retention bonuses, and merit increases. Referral bonuses are also being used to help companies acquire talent and reward employees. Often incentive compensation and flexible pay programs are tied to company performance. Performance goals and rewards should be defined and documented so that it is clear to employees what criteria must be met to receive a bonus. Bonus programs are beneficial because they help to increase employee performance and retention. In general, employees that feel valued are more productive employees.

IMPACT ON BUSINESS

Providing additional incentive compensation to employees to retain top talent can be an overall positive impact to an organization's turnover as well as profits. Organizations need to think about the impact that some of these additional costs may have on the indirect rates and, in turn, on the estimates provided when putting a proposal together to win new work.

Organizations should review their business system policies and procedures, and make updates accordingly to account for the changes that have been made due to increased benefits for employees to support a telework environment. Expenses for occupancy and IT related costs shift from those that support infrastructure at a commercial office building to the dwelling that employees occupy and, in turn, could affect the indirect rate used to calculate total cost when putting together a proposal.

An example of what this might look like is when an organization has an IT service center that is allocated on the base of headcount to overhead and G&A. Let's assume there are three IT staff to support the organization. With the change in telework, the IT staff has now doubled to account for the change in IT infrastructure to support VPN/Firewall/increased security measures to support remote work. Updates to policies and procedures also need to be coupled with an increase in IT security training. These costs will impact the pool costs of an IT service center, and the amount that is allocated to the overhead or G&A rates they support, which could result in an increase in the indirect rates applied.

Completing impact analyses as done in the example above to account for additional benefits given to employees is recommended for an organization to understand how the increased inflation costs of working remotely, and costs for retaining talent, have affected the organization.

SUMMARY

As employers adjust to a new style of work with remote work and unconventional employee benefits, one thing remains the same: The government continues to procure a large amount of goods and services. President Biden released a nearly \$6 trillion federal budget proposal for Government Fiscal Year (GFY) 2023. As of July 15, 2022, over \$360 billion in contracts have been awarded in GFY 2022, with 80% of the awards being large business dollars, leaving approximately \$73 billion in small business dollars. Contractors should be prepared to go beyond acquisition regulations to help ensure they attract and retain the best work force possible with desirable compensation plans, flexible work programs, and training. A strategically designed compensation plan will help employers maintain the appropriate workforce to successfully perform on government contracts.

\$6
trillion

The infographic is set against a light gray background with a subtle pattern of white and gray squares. It uses a top-down flow: a large dollar amount at the top, followed by a downward arrow, then a more specific amount, followed by two diagonal arrows pointing to two separate categories. All text is in a clean, sans-serif font, with the dollar amounts being significantly larger than the descriptive text.

Federal Budget for 2023



\$360
billion
in contracts



\$287
billion
for large
business



\$73
billion
for small
business



Theresa Gonzalez,

Manager, Government Contracting, Global Consulting Solutions, CohnReznick

Theresa Gonzalez, MBA, MSM has over 15 years of experience in the government contracting industry and has supported various organizations ranging in revenue size from \$15M to \$13B. Her experience covers many areas including incurred cost submissions, indirect rates, budgeting, forecasting, estimating, and contract administration. Throughout her career, Theresa has been a strategic consultant to C-Level executives providing the data and analysis to aid in both strategic and tactical decisions, regarding the overall financial health of the organization. She has also educated and trained Program Managers on how to understand the health of their respective programs, their gross margin and net profit, and the direct impact to the company's financial statements.

Education

- Colorado Technical University, Masters of Business Administration and Masters of Science Management
- University of Colorado Colorado Springs (UCCS), Bachelor's degree, Finance / Information Systems

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Caitlin Lewis,

CPA, Manager, Government Contracting, Global Consulting Solutions, CohnReznick

Caitlin Lewis is a manager within CohnReznick's Government Contracting Practice. She has over 15 years of experience of government contract audit experience. Prior to joining CohnReznick, Ms. Lewis was a Defense Contract Audit Agency (DCAA) auditor for more than 10 years. She worked with DOD to advise on cost allowability, allocability, reasonableness, and compliances. She has extensive knowledge of Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), Cost Accounting Standards (CAS), and Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS). In her current role, Ms. Lewis conducts audits for a variety of clients that include government contractors and government agencies.

Education

- Indiana University Bloomington, Master of Business Administration
- Santa Clara University, Bachelor's degree, Accounting

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Jennifer Hanks

*Chief Executive Officer,
MMC Consulting*



Richard Hanks

*Chief Operating Officer,
MMC Consulting*



Jennifer and Richard Hanks are partners in every sense of the word. The married couple run two businesses, are raising three daughters and have one goal: to increase the quantity and quality of small business participation in federal contracting.

Jennifer is a past president of the National Contract Management Association (NCMA) Tysons (VA) chapter, an NCMA Fellow and graduate of its leadership development program. She has served as a contracting officer for USAID as well as program manager supporting GSA – Jennifer understands federal acquisitions. Now as the CEO of MMC Consulting, she provides acquisition, program, and human capital management support to federal, local, and commercial clients.

Richard Hanks is a reformed investment banker/ commercial banker/real estate developer turned entrepreneur. In those previous roles, he was involved in nearly \$2.5 billion of transactions. Richard is a graduate of the Chicago Booth School of Business with an MBA in finance and entrepreneurship. Richard joined MMC in 2020 to provide strategic and operational support. He quickly realized there was an unmet need to help other small businesses to successfully transition and scale into federal contracting.

Peer to Peer Interview



Pricing Magazine: Tell us a little bit about your day-to-day responsibilities, specifically what's your role in helping companies reach their full proposal potential?

Jennifer: Our day-to-day roles are a little crazy. As small business owners we are responsible for every aspect of the business. I am responsible for service delivery, ensuring that our clients (both government and industry) receive the highest level of service of their investment in MMC. I also lead our training and professional development programming with a particular focus on 1102s, CORs and third-party contracts and business development professionals.

Richard: Yes, Jennifer is the brains of MMC. Combined we have two decades of federal contracting experience; two of those are mine. However, I am responsible for building the firm's operational platform - ensuring we are properly equipped to support and grow with our partners. Whether the opportunity is a 2-month consulting agreement to perform an organizational assessment or providing 20 FTEs on a 5-year, \$700 million contract, clients will know MMC can perform with excellence.

Jennifer: When a prime provides their subcontractor an opportunity to be an active participant in the proposal development, we are a high-value contributor to the overall effort. In those situations, we deliver in various roles; we start by providing compelling narratives that support their win themes and using my background as a former CO to ensure that their proposal is compliant.

I am initially focused on the narrative: how are we going to meet the buyer's needs? The ones included in the solicitation and the unwritten ones that can be the compelling difference. As a small business, we sometimes have an easier path to gather additional market intelligence. When we do, we incorporate that intelligence into the win themes. Once we have a potentially compelling story, I switch into compliance mode. Using my understanding of solicitation development and the importance of addressing all evaluation criteria, I ensure our response is both technically compliant and potentially award winning.

Richard: My background is in finance, so I tend to focus on the pricing proposal. Both the actual budget and the pricing

narrative. First, I assess whether the pricing matches the proposed deliverables. Then I support the drafting of the pricing proposal to ensure they match the technical narrative and fully explains the “why” behind the numbers. As Jennifer said the technical is her domain, but where I can add value to that section, I will jump in and offer my two cents.

PM: Tell us about some of your key priorities during the pre-award stage?

Jennifer: During pre-award, we focus on relationship management, market intelligence, and team building. The combination of those factors helps determine what opportunities we pursue. It could mean supporting the incumbent or building a compelling team to compete against them. We also use agency forecasts and expiring contract lists to determine capture strategy as well as build and maintain our pipeline.

Richard: The ability to develop strong teams speaks to the importance of nurturing relationships overtime, so you can reach out to partners based on an understanding of their capabilities. This allows us to quickly move to solutions development.

PM: Jennifer and Richard, you promote yourselves as small business advocates. What does that mean in the context of the federal marketplace generally, and as it pertains to large prime contractors?

Jennifer: We believe that small businesses are a major part of the federal supply chain and can play a larger role in the federal government’s service delivery. From Executive Order 13985, 14036 and the PRICE Act of 2021, it is clear the Biden Administration sees the value of having stronger more competitive small businesses in the marketplace.

Richard: Prime contractors must be committed to mutually profitable partnerships with smalls. But this is a two-way street: small businesses must prepare themselves for success. In addition to my role at MMC Consulting, I am also executive director of The FedPROPEL Institute (www.fedpropel.org). FedPROPEL is a federal contracting accelerator program to help small businesses excel in the federal marketplace.

Jennifer: Through FedPROPEL we use my knowledge and network as a former CO (contracting officer) to provide access to premier business development support to “accelerate” their growth. This allows them to better support the government directly as well as assist primes in meeting their utilization requirements.

Richard: Our goal is to help 10,000 small businesses become elite federal contractors by 2030.

Jennifer: 10,000? Richard keeps raising the bar. However, our relationships with various agencies and partnerships with NCMA and others create a unique path forward.

PM: Another hot topic is synergy and collaboration between government and industry. What are some key impacts that businesses can do to enhance and evolve their collaboration efforts?

Jennifer: It is interesting you ask as I wrote a paper and published an article in the Contract Management magazine on this a decade ago. At the time, the OFPP released a “myth-busters” memo (Addressing Misconceptions to Improve Communication with Industry during the Acquisition Process, Feb 2, 2011) on the topic. They have released several “Mythbusting Memo” updates since, so it remains relevant.

As small businesses advocates, we focus realized impact: the intersection of small business goals/ utilization plans and actual awards. For some primes, utilization plans are aspirational. However,

most firms really want to provide opportunities for impactful small business engagement. To the extent we can create a pathway for firms to identify, vet and engage with small businesses in an effective and meaningful way, this can lead to greater utilization and small business growth.

PM: *From each of you, what is one thing you enjoy the most in the government contracting industry?*

Jennifer: I am a policy nerd with an eye towards helping the government maximize its investment of taxpayer funds. On occasion, this means purchasing a good or service at the cheapest price. However, most times meeting the mission involves delivering the most impactful solution to a problem. Whether that is supporting our warfighter in the theater of combat, families in need after a disaster, or improving education and health outcomes for children and seniors, we are here to help agencies and our prime partners deliver.

Richard: : Not sure I can add much to that from the MMC perspective. From the FedPROPEL side, we want to help leverage the federal government's purchasing power to stabilize and grow the American middle class; the fabric of our society. Supporting small businesses is the key to this. Each time we help a firm transition into the federal market, develop a subcontracting teaming relationship or win a prime contract, we are creating entrepreneurial wealth and supporting community development. That's why we're here.

PM: *Any final thoughts or anything you are looking forward to for the remainder of 2022?*

Richard: First, thank you for allowing us to be a part of ProPricer's interview series. As small business owners and advocates, we are very excited about the future. 2022 presents a great opportunity for new firms to enter the federal market and be successful. We have heard from large primes, and many are looking for high quality partners, and we want to be part of that relationship building.

Jennifer: And on the MMC front, we are poised for substantial growth. Last year, we invested in our operational infrastructure, and we now have the organizational capacity to match our technical expertise. Now our focus is building a pipeline to activate those investments. By year-end we hope to have multiple contract vehicles in place that allows our clients to engage with us faster, and our certifications completed (8(a), EDWOSB and HUBZone) so they can meet their utilization goals.

We think that FY23 is going to be a big year for Team MMC and the clients we serve.



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Government pricing and contracting community members,

The value of your daily contributions is immeasurable. Thank you for being dedicated to the security of our nation - this edition is for you. Domestic unrest and global uncertainty demand experts with your skills, sharpened through years of personal and professional development. You selflessly and tirelessly give each day. Again, we thank you.

The article "Developing Pricing Leaders of the Future" (Pricing Magazine, September 2021) highlighted the reality of threats against the United States and its interests. Adversaries are determined to undermine and dominate the U.S. at home and overseas. Threats are sophisticated, digital, and borderless; they involve geopolitical influence and economic, technological, and information dominance. The evolution of cyberwarfare commands execution with unparalleled speed. National response requires a highly trained, motivated workforce of critical thinkers and experts focused daily on professional proficiency, execution excellence, and threat dominance.

This leads to the question, are experts born or made? Consistent and overwhelming evidence shows that experts are made. They recognize the need to hone their craft. Superb performers plan for years the skill of proficiency to engage in the deliberate, persistent practice. In the words of Aristotle, "Excellence is an art won by training and habituation. We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then is not an act but a habit."

This edition fosters our collective pursuit of professional excellence. Continue to seek development opportunities and share what you learn with others. "If you can't explain it simply, you don't know it well enough." - Albert Einstein.

Professional development matters! We welcome your contributions to future editions.



James Malloy Jr.

*Professor of Contracting Management and Learning Director
Defense Acquisition University*



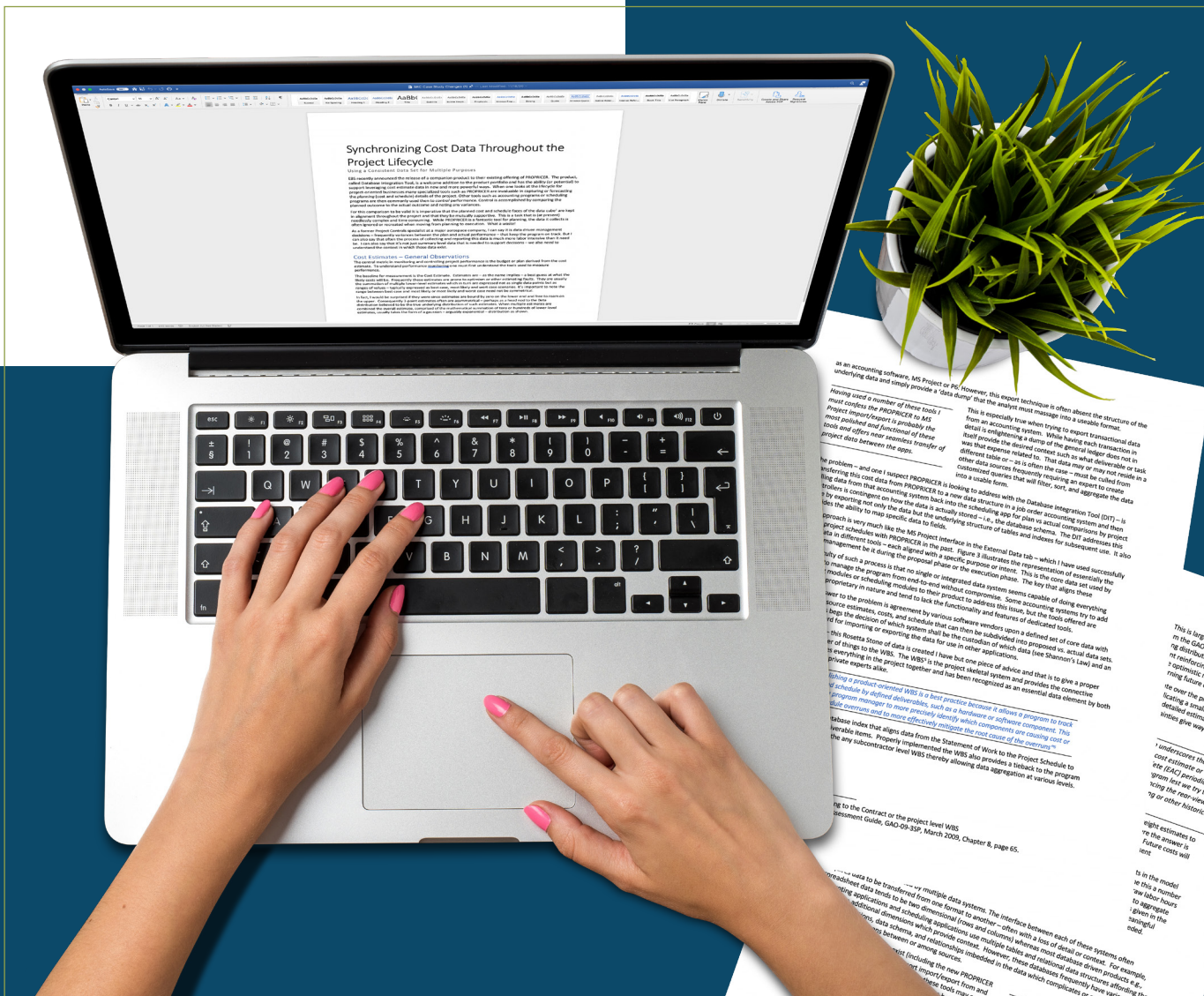
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/james-malloy-840224108/>

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