

Army Acquisition Reform Newsletter



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PASS THE WORD

As a Contracting Officer, I can tell you that acquisition reform is the greatest thing since sliced bread. As a member of a contracting office, I have access to training on all of these wonderful changes. Contracting office personnel are not the true beneficiaries of acquisition reform. The customers of the contracting office are the beneficiaries. Who is passing the word to them?

About five years ago, I inherited the job of training our local Contracting Officer's Representatives (COR). I started out as a certified instructor teaching the Army Logistics Management College (ALMC) COR course. While this course covered a lot of important information, in my opinion it was not complete. A COR needed an understanding of basic contracting processes and procedures in order to better do their job. I put together a new COR class that included sections on acquisition strategies. It didn't take long for the word to spread. I had to start giving the class at least twice a year instead of the usual once a year. Not everyone signing up for the class was a COR. Now the attendees included test engineers and other technical personnel who were working with contractor employees on a daily basis.

This turned out to be a perfect tool for passing on the word about acquisition reform. I added some new units and took the class on the road. Last fiscal year I presented classes at Fort Huachuca, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Edgewood Arsenal, White Sands Missile Range, Dugway Proving Ground, Marine Corps Air Station – Yuma and, of course, Yuma Proving Ground. The class now consists of units on Contract and Agency Law, Teaming, Market Research, Performance-Based Statements of Work, Commercial Purchases, Acquisition Strategy, Contract Types, Contract Administration, Modifications, Surveillance, Terminations, Protests and Appeals and Government Furnished Property.

The class uses a variety of training methods to include lecture and exercises. It assists members of the acquisition workforce from the technical side by familiarizing them with contracting terms and giving them tools to use in preparation of their requirements. It also provides them with ideas for ensuring quality and awarding to best value.

Acquisition has been streamlined. Acquisition personnel have new responsibilities and authority. We need to make sure the word gets passed to our counterparts in the technical arena.

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