REPORT ON COMPETENCIES FOR THE CONTRACTING OFFICER'S TECHNICAL REPRESENTATIVE (COTR) JOB FUNCTION

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Preface

The Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI) is continuing the creation and application of a competency-based career development program in support of the Federal Acquisition Council. The work described in this report is the second step toward a uniform, results-oriented strategy to manage the acquisition workforce. (The first step was the identification of competencies for the Contract Specialist job function. For a full discussion of that effort, please refer to the "Report on Competencies for the Federal Acquisition Workforce: Executive Summary.") In partnership with SRA International, Windwalker Corporation conducted the interviews and focus groups used to identify critical COTR competencies and poll agency representatives for suggested training and development improvements.

The Federal Acquisition Institute thanks the many people who participated in COTR interviews and focus groups. Our gratitude also extends to those individuals across the federal government who support the vision of the acquisition professional as business leader. Special thanks to Interagency Procurement Career Management Committee (IPCMC) members for their support of this and complementary FAI efforts currently underway.

Gloria Sochon
Director
Federal Acquisition Institute

1. Incorporating Competencies into Career Management

In response to the evolving nature of acquisition work in the federal government, the Federal Acquisition Council recently formulated a strategic, governmentwide approach to career management programs for the acquisition workforce. Career management that hinges on consistent performance and training standards, best practices, and the creation of acquisition professionals who will serve as business partners requires a current understanding of the core capabilities necessary for acquisition professionals to possess throughout their careers.

To ensure these capabilities are developed throughout the acquisition workforce, the Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI) initiated a competency-based career development program in 1999 to help government agencies in managing acquisition professionals' work performance and career development. FAI's ultimate goal is to support an acquisition workforce in meeting the evolving business needs of all government agencies.

Successful application of this model hinges on identifying competencies for acquisition job functions and weaving those competencies into training and career development processes. During 2002 and 2003, competencies were identified for the Contract Specialist job function (i.e., the 1102 series). Those competencies provided the foundation for the current effort to identify and incorporate competencies into the career management of Contracting Officer Technical Representatives (i.e., COTRs).

As will be detailed later in this report, the COTR plays a unique, "linking-pin" function in the procurement process. In many cases, these individuals provide both technical and project management oversight during the contract lifecycle. Effective COTR performance is one of many factors that enhance the relationship between the contractor and government agency by adding value, fostering greater partnership, and promoting mutual attainment of business objectives.

Thus, identification of critical competencies that underlie effective COTR performance and using those competencies to guide training and development efforts can produce numerous benefits. Competency-based human resource

initiatives to serve the acquisition community will capitalize on a foundation that can be generalized across federal agencies and by extension, to state and local governments. Concentrating on those competencies common to COTRs across the federal acquisition community will contribute to a holistic approach to managing performance. Such an effort will facilitate the transition to a business-oriented strategy directing federal procurement and acquisition into the future. Associated benefits range from solidifying consistent language used in recruiting activities to generating reliable criteria for performance management and succession planning.

Immediately, however, knowledge regarding COTR competencies will be applied to education, training and development activities sponsored by FAI. Competencies will provide a consistent methodology for capability standards, which in turn will inform refinement of acquisition coursework and online resource materials. The daily impact of focused training will be increased synergy between individual competencies and those job requirements necessary for acquisition professionals to serve as business leaders.

1.1 Approach and Instrumentation

A multi-method approach was used to establish competencies for the COTR role. Telephone interviews and focus group sessions provided opportunities to collect both quantitative and qualitative information relevant to the COTR job function. First, a semi-structured interview guide was used to explore the major competencies characterizing the COTR role as well as key training and development needs of participating agencies. This interview guide was designed to elicit rich, detailed responses from participants. Second, a focus group protocol (with accompanying materials) was created to guide several sessions. Focus groups provided opportunities for vivid discussion, illumination of agency best practices, and compelling debate regarding issues surrounding COTR training and development. (See Appendix A for a copy of the Telephone Interview Guide and Appendix B for the Focus Group Competency Rating Form.)

2. Study Participant Demographics

In June 2003, FAI asked federal agencies to identify volunteers willing to participate in the COTR competency effort. FAI made a diligent effort to collect data from a wide range of agencies as well as from individuals with varied perspectives on the COTR job function. Individuals who serve as COTRs (currently or previously) as well as individuals holding positions within acquisition, procurement and program offices interfacing regularly with COTRs were asked to participate in one-on-one telephone interviews. Other individuals with a more strategic view of the COTR function (e.g., career acquisition professionals, program directors) were asked to participate in the roundtable focus group sessions. The following sections of this report review agency representation and present the demographic characteristics of interview and focus group participants.

2.1 Agency Representation

Table 2-1 displays the government agencies and corresponding number of participants represented in interviews and focus group sessions.

Table 2-1: Agency Representation: Interviews and Focus Groups.

Agency	Number of Interview Participants	Number of Focus Group Participants
SSA	4	3
DoD (Navy)	1	0
DoD (Army)	1	0
DoD (Air Force)	2	0
EPA	5	0
DOI (incl. NPS)	2	1
HHS	2	0
NIH	1	1
DHS/USCG	0	1
DOJ	2	1
DOC	6	1
IRS	2	2
OMB/EOP	1	1
STATE	1	0
DOE	1	1
NASA	2	0
VA	0	2
DOL	0	1
TOTAL	32	15

2.2 Interview Participant Demographics

The following demographic data were collected from interview participants:

- Grade/Pay Levels
- Job Titles
- Job Tenure
- Governmentwide Tenure
- Agency Tenure
- Government Agencies Worked
- Longest COTR Assignment (Years)

- Types of Contract Pricing Arrangements Handled
- Years in Acquisition Career Field
- Level in Acquisition Career Path
- Acquisition Specialty Area
- Type of Warrant Held

The following figures and table display summaries of each demographic characteristic for interview participants.

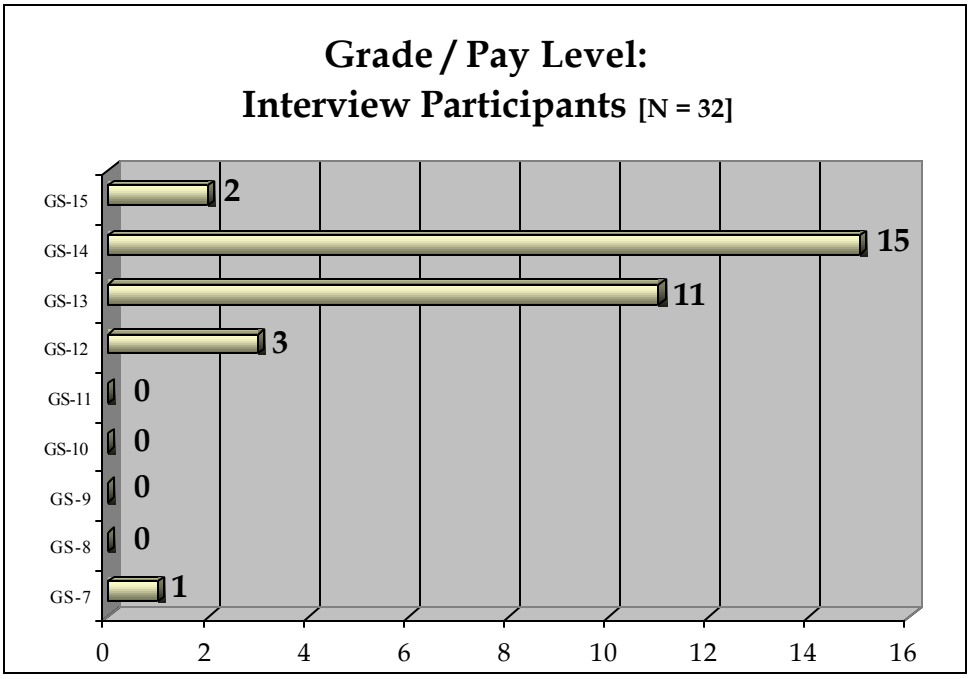


Figure 2-1: Grade/Pay Level: Interview Participants

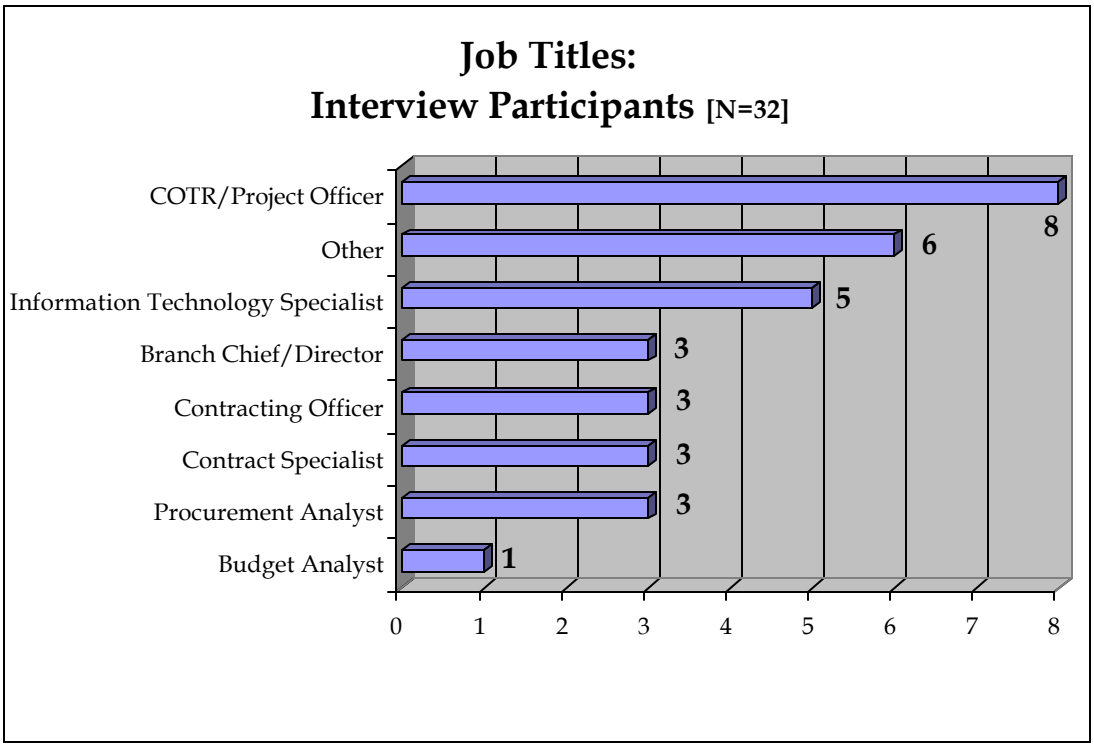


Figure 2-2: Job Titles: Interview Participants

Table 2-2: Interview Participant Demographic Data.

Variable	Value	N
Average Number of Agencies Worked	1.94 agencies	32
Average Job Tenure	5.64 years	32
Average Government Tenure	22.44 years	32
Average Agency Tenure	17.59 years	32
Average Length of COTR Assignment	4.96 years	25

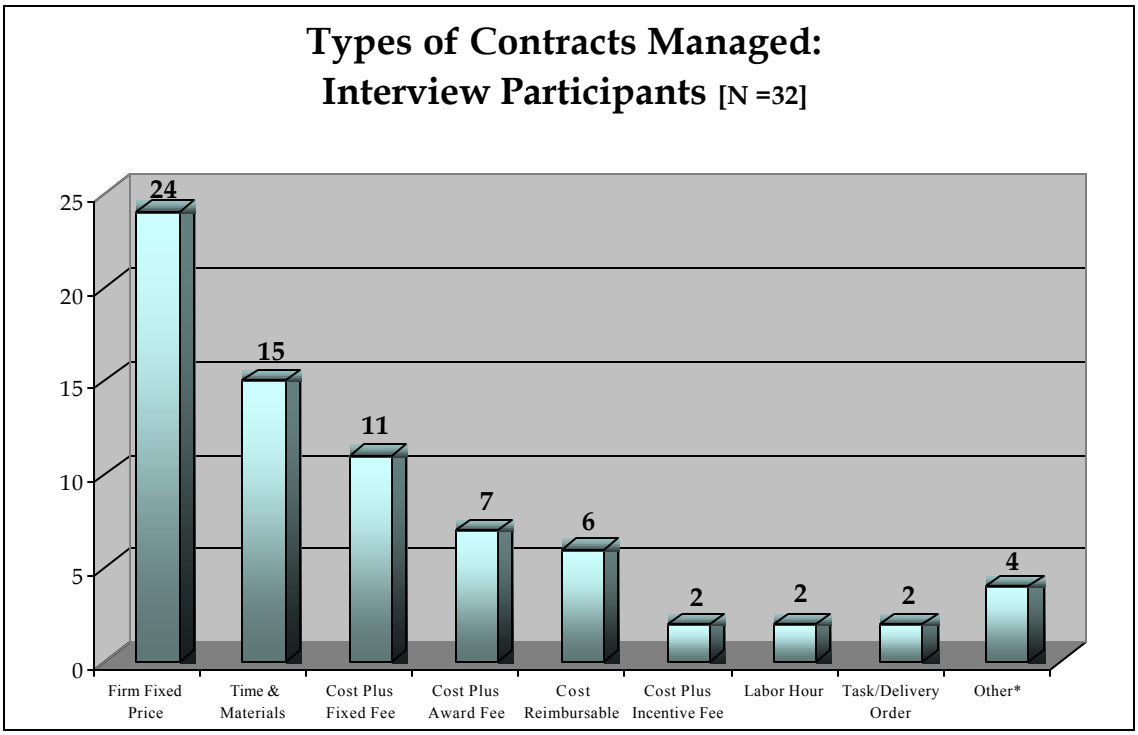


Figure 2-3: Types of Contracts Managed:
Interview Participants*

Interview participants were asked to list the types of contracts they have managed over the course of their careers. As the chart above indicates, firm fixed price contracts were the most frequently cited. Overall, most interview participants have spent a substantial portion of their careers within the acquisition career field. Of those interview participants who reported they affiliated themselves with that career field, the average number of years spent was 17.15 years [N = 20]. Figure 2-4 reflects, of those participants who had a formal acquisition career path in their organization, the majority was at the highest level.

* The following responses fell into the "Other" category: Blanket Purchase Agreements (2), Indefinite Quantity Indefinite Delivery (1), Small Business Set-Asides (1).

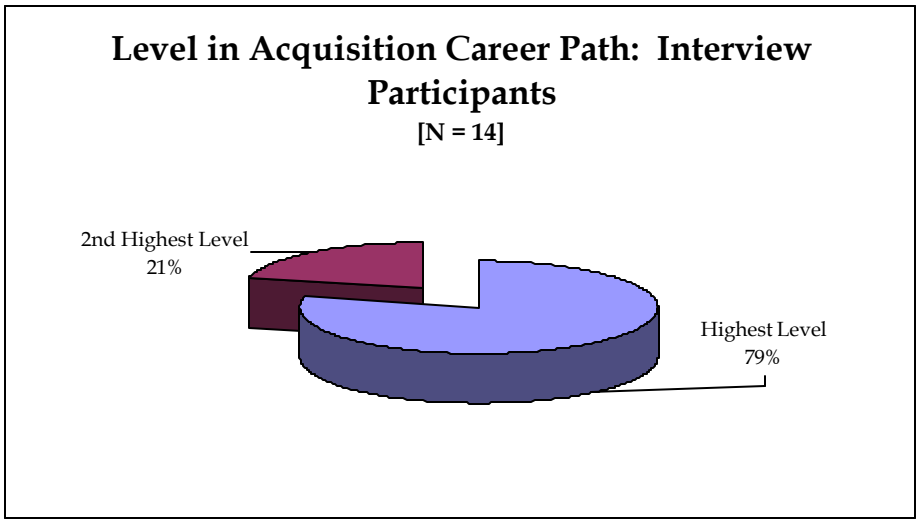


Figure 2-4: Level in Acquisition Career Path

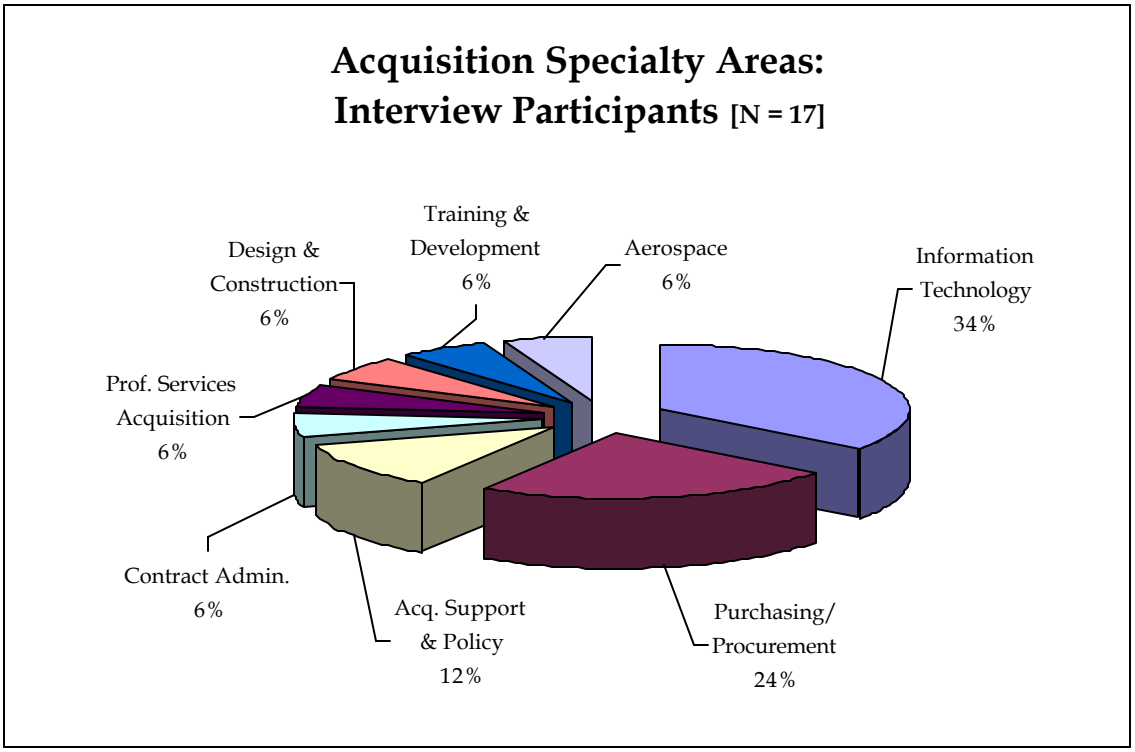


Figure 2-5: Acquisition Specialty Area: Interview Participants

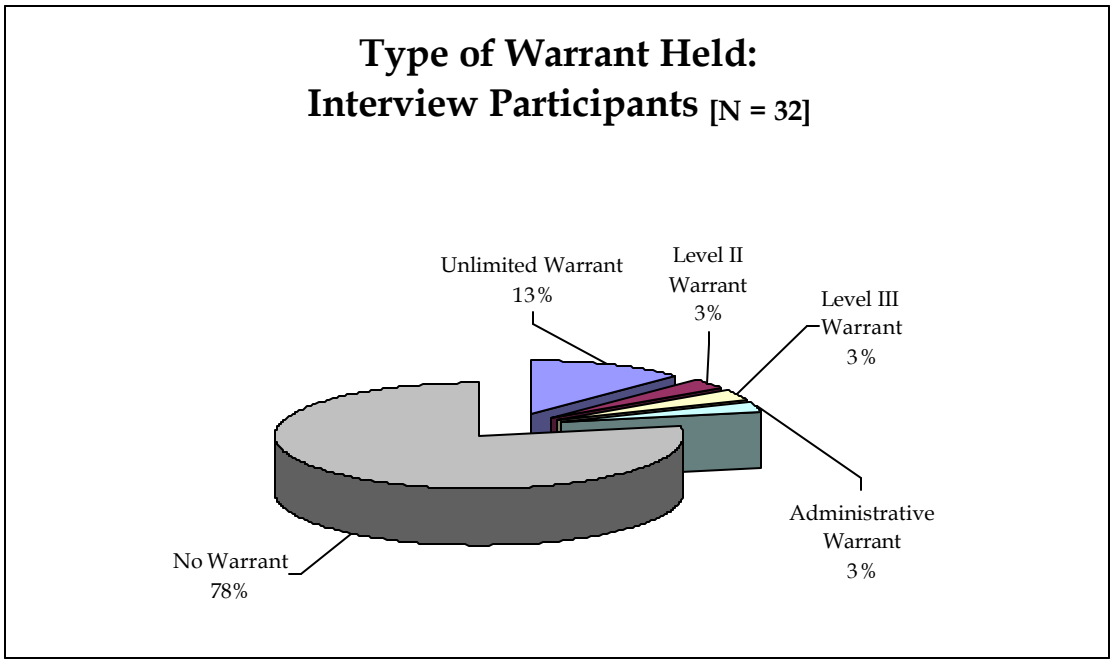


Figure 2-6: Type of Warrant Held:
Interview Participants

2.3 Focus Group Participant Demographics

The following demographic data were collected from focus group participants:

- Grade/Pay Levels
- Job Titles
- Job Tenure
- Governmentwide Tenure
- Agency Tenure
- Government Agencies Worked
- Longest COTR Assignment (Years)
- Types of Contract Pricing Arrangements Handled
- Years in Acquisition Career Field
- Level in Acquisition Career Path
- Acquisition Specialty Area
- Type of Warrant Held

The following figures and table display summaries of each demographic characteristic for focus group participants.

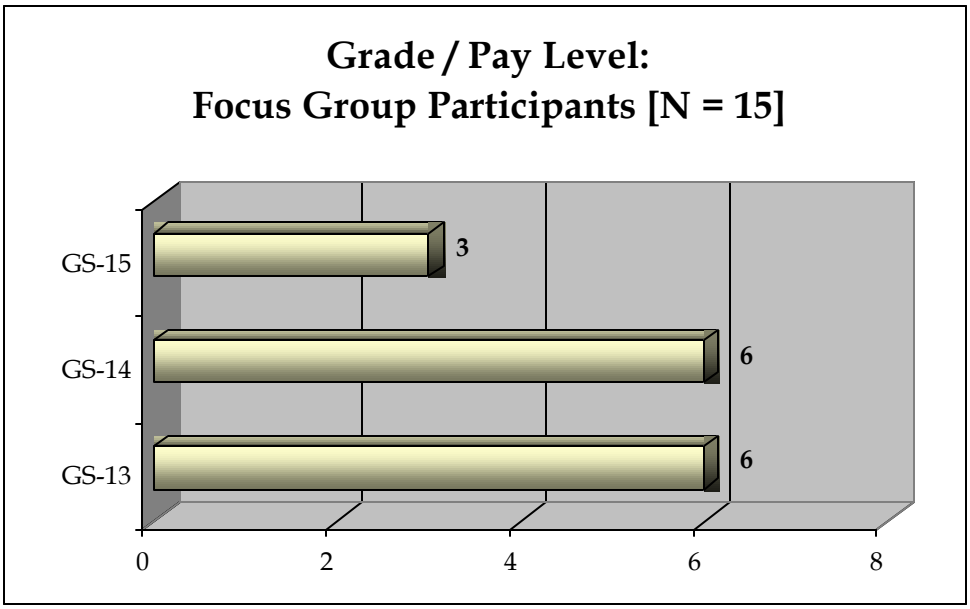


Figure 2-7: Grade/Pay Level:
Focus Group Participant

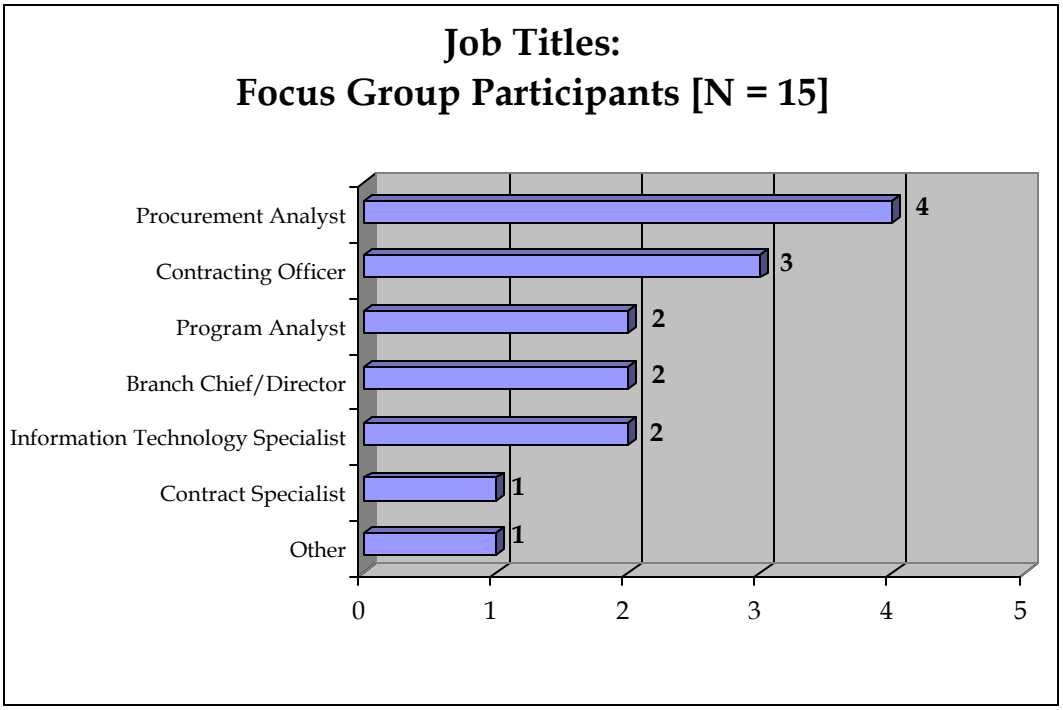


Figure 2-8 Job Titles:
Focus Group Participants

Table 2-3: Focus Group Participant Demographic Data.

Variable	Value	N
Average Number of Agencies Worked	2.67 agencies	15
Average Job Tenure	5.85 years	15
Average Government Tenure	26.20 years	15
Average Agency Tenure	13.23 years	15
Average Length of COTR Assignment	5.50 years	10

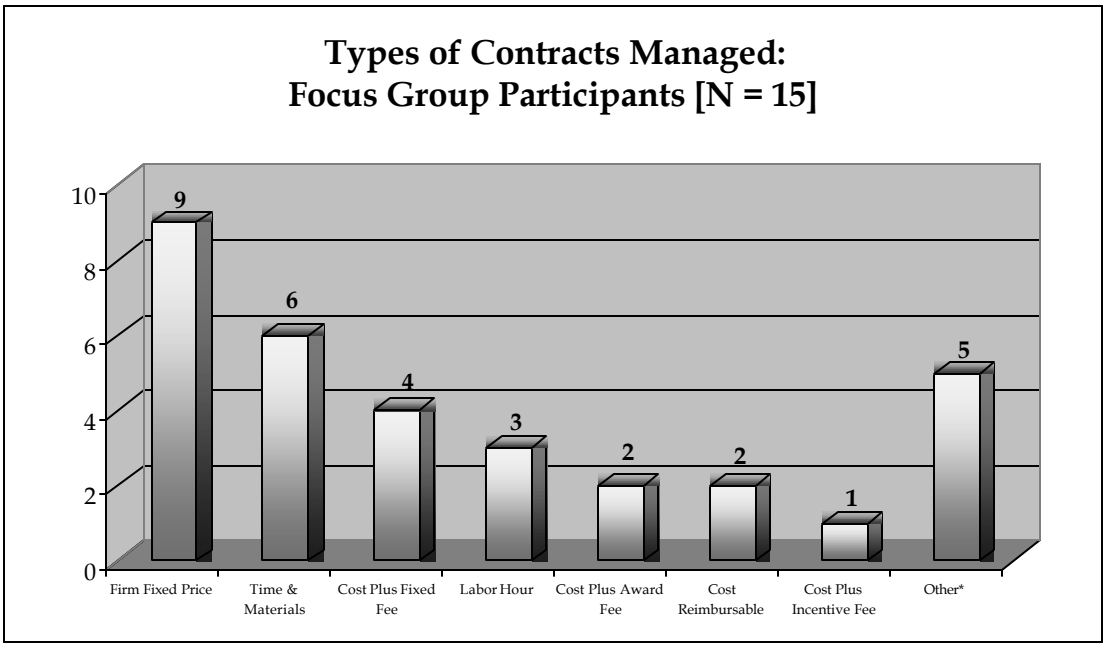


Figure 2-9: Types of Contracts Managed:
Focus Group Participants*

Focus group participants were also asked to list the types of contracts they have managed over the course of their careers. As the chart above indicates, firm fixed price contracts were the most frequently cited. Overall, most focus group participants have spent a substantial portion of their careers within the acquisition career field. Of those focus group participants who reported they affiliated themselves with that career field, the average number of years spent was 21.27 years [N = 11]. Additionally, of those eleven (11) participants who had a formal acquisition career path in their organization, all eleven (100 percent) reported attaining the highest level of their career path.

* The following responses fell into the "Other" category: Commerical Items Contract (1), Indefinite Delivery Cost Reimbursement (1), Performance-Based Services (1), Negotiated Commercial Acquisition (1), Level of Effort (1).

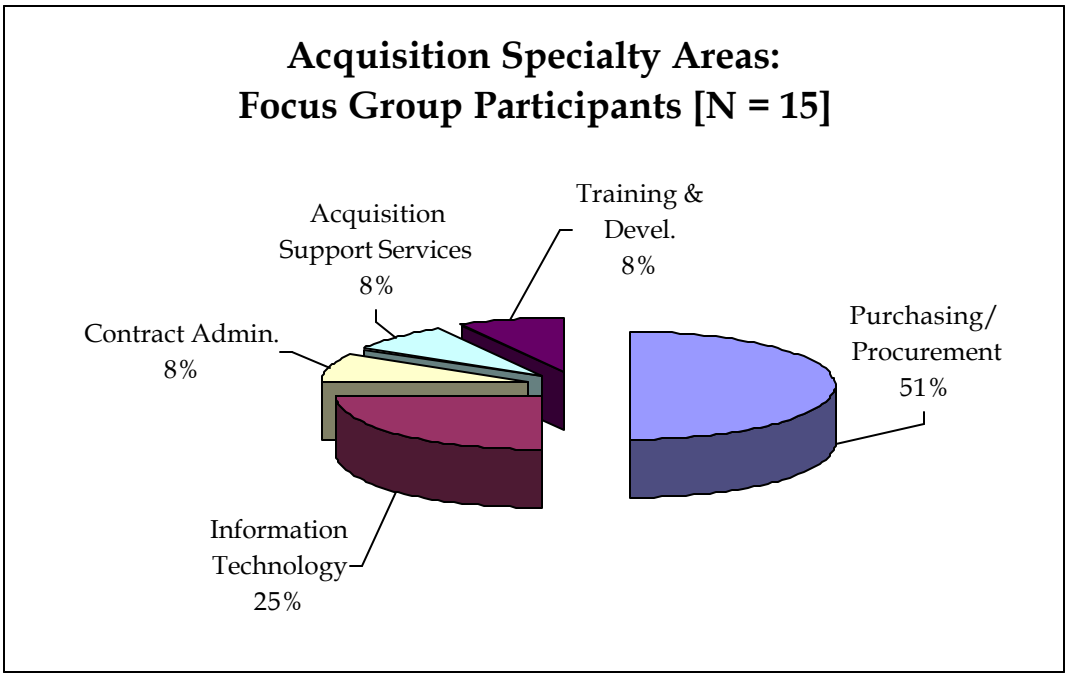


Figure 2-10 Acquisition Specialty Areas:
Focus Group Participants

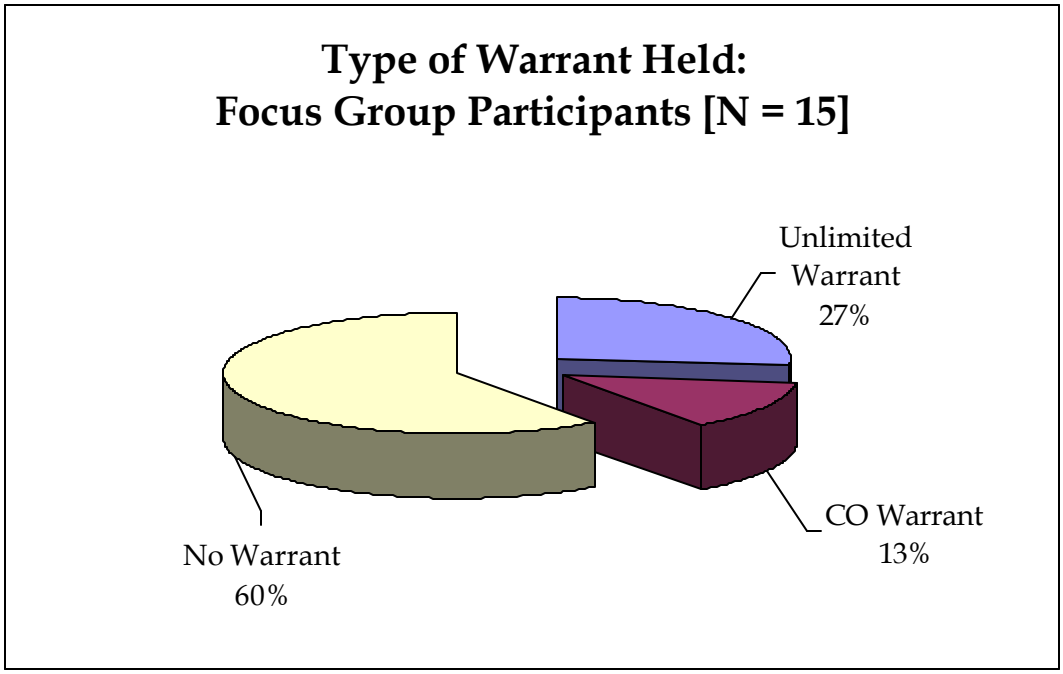


Figure 2-11 Type of Warrant Held:
Focus Group Participants

3. Most Important/Most Exhibited Competencies Identified

3.1 The COTR Job Function

Table 3-1 displays the labels used for the COTR job function in participating government agencies.

Table 3-1: COTR Labels Used in Participating Agencies.

Agency	COTR Label
SSA	COTR or Project Officer
DoD (Navy)	COR
DoD (Army)	COR
DoD (Air Force)	Quality Assurance Personnel
EPA	Project Officer
DOI (incl. NPS)	COTR
HHS	Project Officer
NIH	Project Officer
DHS/USCG	COTR
DOJ	COTR
DOC	COTR
IRS	COTR
OMB/EOP	COTR
STATE	COR
DOE	COTR or COR
NASA	COTR or ACOTR
VA	COTR
DOL	COTR

Aside from the differences in COTR label, the COTR role can be either a part-time or full-time responsibility. When a large contract exists with multiple work assignments, task orders, or delivery orders the COTR may be a full-time responsibility. Consistently across agencies and contexts, however, COTRs interface with several acquisition functions. Primarily, COTRs work with Contract

Specialist, Contracting Officer and Financial Representatives (from the contracting office), any work assignment managers or task/delivery managers, program office (also called customer) representatives, and vendor representatives. Sometimes multiple COTRs exist to serve a single project, a staffing composition requiring clear boundaries and task responsibilities similar to situations characterized by multiple task and/or delivery orders existing underneath one contract "umbrella." Another factor affecting the COTR job function is the physical distance existing between the Contract Specialist or Contracting Officer and the COTR. As one study participant stressed:

> *"The fact that the Contracting Officer and the COTR work in different physical locations has an impact for which folks must compensate!" (SSA employee)*

The unique nature of the COTR job function and its requirements will benefit from examination of those competencies that underlie effective performance in the role. Subsequent efforts to ensure key competencies are represented in training curricula and professional development activities will ensure fulfillment of those job requirements necessary for acquisition professionals to serve as business leaders. The next sections highlight those Professional Business and Technical competencies found to contribute to COTR performance.

3.2 Professional Business Competencies

Professional Business Competencies developed and verified for the Contract Specialist function provided the starting point for COTR competencies. (A truncated methodology was used in this effort, designed to parallel the prior method used to examine Contract Specialist competencies. For a detailed discussion regarding the prior methodology and a presentation of competency definitions, please refer to the "Report on Competencies for the Federal Acquisition Workforce" and the "Validation of Technical Competencies For the Federal Workforce.") Focus group participants were instructed to report critical incidents of effective and ineffective COTR behavior. A total of 35 incidents (17 effective incidents and 18 ineffective incidents) were generated. Each of the Professional Business competencies was rated on its importance and the degree to which it was exhibited in each incident.

The following rating scales were used*:

"Importance" Rating Scale	"Exhibited" Rating Scale
5 = very important 4 = moderately important 3 = of some importance 2 = of little importance 1 = not important	5 = exhibited to a great extent 4 = exhibited moderately 3 = somewhat exhibited 2 = slightly exhibited 1 = not exhibited

*Rating scales were exactly the same as those used in the prior Contract Specialist competency rating task.

Table 3-2 displays the average "Importance" and "Exhibited" ratings for Professional Business Competencies in *effective* contracting incidents.

Table 3-2. Average Importance and Exhibited Ratings for Professional Business Competencies (Effective Incidents).

Professional Business Competencies	Average Importance Ratings (effective incidents, N = 17)	Average Exhibited Ratings (effective incidents, N = 17)
Oral Communication	4.94	4.67
Decision-Making	4.63	4.31
Teamwork	4.56	4.53
Problem Solving	4.50	4.40
Attention to Detail	4.47	4.44
Reasoning	4.38	4.63
Flexibility	4.33	4.07
Interpersonal Skills	4.31	4.50
Self-Mgmt./Initiative	4.29	4.29
Integrity/Honesty	4.20	4.00
Planning and Evaluating	4.08	4.25
Reading	4.07	3.86
Influencing/Negotiating	4.07	4.06
Creative Thinking	4.00	3.73
Information Management	4.00	3.93
Customer Service	3.94	3.88
Stress Tolerance	3.80	3.93
Contracting/Procurement	3.67	3.73
Learning	3.62	3.64
Writing	3.36	3.20
Self-Esteem	3.31	3.92
Memory	3.14	3.08
Math Reasoning	2.06	2.29
Arithmetic	1.92	1.92

The ratings of importance of the competencies are high. Essentially, half of the competencies were rated *moderately* or *very* important, and exhibited to a great extent. Several competencies (e.g., Writing, Memory, Math Reasoning and Arithmetic) were rated as comparatively less important and were rated as having been exhibited comparatively less during effective incidents. Other competencies (e.g., Oral Communication, Teamwork, Problem Solving and Attention to Detail) were rated as the most important and were rated as having been significantly exhibited incidents of effective COTR behavior. Individuals were also asked to generate additional competencies as needed to describe effective COTR behavior. Six (6) of the fifteen (15) focus group participants (40 percent) requested that "Project Management" be added.

3.3 Technical Competencies

As with the Professional Business Competencies, the Technical Competencies developed and verified for the Contract Specialist function provided the starting point for COTR competencies. (For a presentation of competency definitions, please refer to the "Report on Competencies for the Federal Acquisition Workforce" and the "Validation of Technical Competencies For the Federal Workforce.") Each of the technical competencies was rated on its importance and the degree to which it was exhibited in each incident.

Table 3-3 displays the average "Importance" and "Exhibited" ratings for Technical Competencies in *effective* contracting incidents.

Table 3-3. Average Importance and Exhibited Ratings for Technical Competencies (Effective Incidents).

Technical Competencies	Average Importance Ratings (effective incidents, N = 17)	Average Exhibited Ratings (effective incidents, N = 17)
Effective Communication of Contract Requirements	4.00	3.33
Effective Performance Management	4.00	3.27
Strategic Planning	3.73	3.00
Detailed Evaluation Skills	3.71	3.27
Defining Business Relationships	3.63	3.50
Understanding the Marketplace	3.60	3.50
Effective Communication	3.60	3.57
Defining Gvmt. Requirements in Commercial/Non-Commercial Terms	3.53	3.21
Effective Negotiation Skills and Effective Analytical Skills	3.43	2.71
Effective Financial Management	3.29	3.53
Understanding Sourcing (Commercial/Gvmt. Practices)	3.07	3.60
Effective Award Resolution	2.86	2.79
Effective Resolution of Contract Termination and/or Closeout	2.79	2.00

The ratings of importance of the technical competencies were comparatively lower than the importance ratings regarding Professional Business competencies. Additionally, the ratings of the extent to which technical competencies were exhibited ranged from "slightly" to "somewhat" exhibited. Essentially, most of the technical competencies were rated around the mid-point of the five-point scales used. Although individuals were asked to generate additional competencies as needed to describe effective COTR behavior, no focus group participants generated additional competencies of a technical nature.

3.4 Conclusions

Evidence collected via focus groups contributes to the identification of Professional Business and technical competencies found to underlie COTR performance. Additionally, content analysis of telephone interview data can be combined with results presented above to arrive at a holistic conceptualization of the COTR role.

Focus group results indicate the following Professional Business and technical competencies to be important for the COTR job function:

Table 3-4. Key COTR Competencies Based on Focus Group Data.

Professional Business Competencies	Technical Competencies
Oral Communication	Effective Communication of Contract Requirements
Decision-Making	Effective Performance Management
Teamwork	Strategic Planning
Problem Solving	Detailed Evaluation Skills
Attention to Detail	Defining Business Relationships
Reasoning	Understanding the Marketplace
Flexibility	Effective Communication
Interpersonal Skills	Defining Government Requirements in Commercial/ Non-Commercial Terms
Self-Management/Initiative	Effective Negotiation Skills and Effective Analytical Skills
Integrity/Honesty	
Planning and Evaluating	

The interview content analysis results indicated how various competencies are tapped by COTRs during the three main phases of the procurement process. The following table presents those Professional Business and technical competencies used by COTRs throughout the procurement process.

Table 3-5. Use of Various Competencies During the Procurement Process.

COMPETENCIES	ACQUISITION PLANNING	CONTRACT FORMATION	CONTRACT ADMIN.
Professional Business Competencies			
Oral Communication	X	X	X
Decision-Making	X		X
Teamwork			X
Problem Solving	X	X	X
Attention to Detail		X	
Reasoning	X	X	X
Flexibility			
Interpersonal Skills		X	X
Self-Management/Initiative	X	X	X
Integrity/Honesty	X	X	X
Planning and Evaluating	X	X	X
Reading			
Influencing/Negotiating	X	X	X
Creative Thinking			
Information Management	X		
Customer Service			X
Stress Tolerance			X
Contracting/Procurement	X		
Learning			
Writing	X	X	X
Self-Esteem			
Memory			
Math Reasoning			
Arithmetic			
Technical Competencies			
Effective Communication of Contract Requirements	X	X	X
Effective Performance Management			X
Strategic Planning	X		
Detailed Evaluation Skills		X	X
Defining Business Relationships	X		
Understanding the Marketplace	X		
Effective Communication	X	X	
Defining Government Requirements in Commercial/Non-Commercial Terms	X		
Effective Negotiation Skills and Effective Analytical Skills		X	
Effective Financial Management			X
Understanding Sourcing (Commercial/Government Practices)	X		
Effective Award Resolution			
Effective Resolution of Contract Termination and/or Closeout			X

As Table 3-5 indicates, several competencies not rated highly via the focus groups emerge as important in describing COTR actions during the procurement process. For example, "Influencing/Negotiating" and "Writing" (both Professional Business competencies) were consistently referred to by interview participants as essential components of performing COTR responsibilities in all three procurement phases.

Therefore, taking into account information collected via focus groups and interviews, thirteen (13) Professional Business competencies and nine (9) technical competencies can be identified for the COTR job function, as follows:

Table 3-6. Key COTR Competencies.

Professional Business Competencies	Technical Competencies
Oral Communication	Effective Communication of Contract Requirements
Decision-Making	Effective Performance Management
Teamwork	Strategic Planning
Problem Solving	Detailed Evaluation Skills
Attention to Detail	Defining Business Relationships
Reasoning	Understanding the Marketplace
Flexibility	Effective Communication
Interpersonal Skills	Defining Gvmt. Requirements in Commercial/Non-Commercial Terms
Self-Mgmt./Initiative	Effective Negotiation Skills and Effective Analytical Skills
Integrity/Honesty	
Planning and Evaluating	
Influencing/Negotiating	
Writing	
Project Management	

Weaving these competencies into FAI-sponsored training and development activities as well as any FAI-related communication about the nature of contracting will contribute to focusing individuals and agencies on outcomes that relate to project success and the achievement of the government's mission. Developing and maintaining the optimal skill profile ensures that governmental goals are achieved. Additionally, selecting individuals with the necessary competencies results in a high-performing acquisition workforce with the interpersonal and technical competencies to succeed in a constantly evolving governmental climate.

4. Relationships mong COTR and Contract Specialist Competencies

Effective acquisition and procurement requires the combined efforts of multiple individuals, each assuming particular roles and responsibilities. As data collected from study participants indicated, the COTR job function requires a substantial range of knowledge, skills and abilities to be applied towards the goal of achieving a successful project outcome. The three facets of the COTR's role include being a technical information conduit, a contracting and regulatory liaison and a business partnership manager.

The following figure outlines key foci assumed by the COTR, the Contract Specialist (CS), as well as those points where overlapping focus exists.

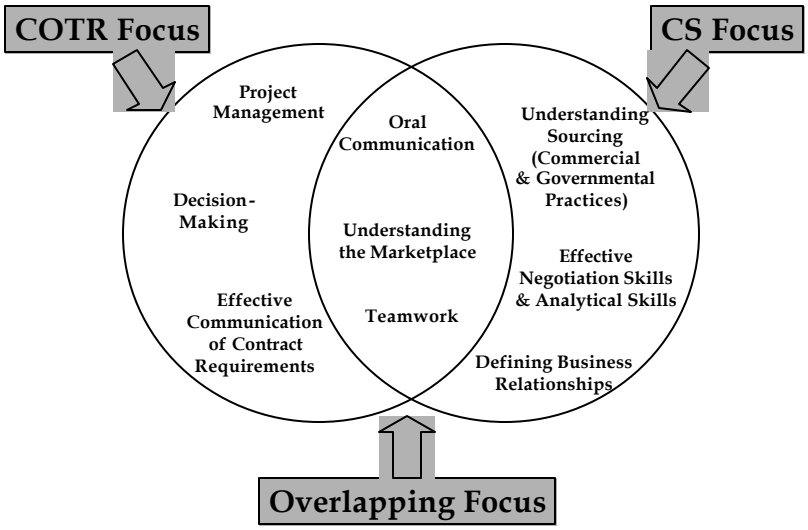


Figure 4-1. Relationships Among COTR and Contract Specialist Roles

Several competencies serve as overlapping focus for both roles. Of nearly all competencies, both COTRs and CS rely on Oral Communication to the greatest extent. The degree to which these parties deliver compelling oral presentations,

listen effectively, clarify information, and foster an open exchange of ideas, differentiates between successful and unsuccessful acquisitions.

Other competencies are focused on more by one role or the other. CSs concentrate on "Defining Business Relationships" while COTRs are expected to place more emphasis on "Effective Communication of Contract Requirements." As will be discussed in the next section, one suggestion for improving the acquisition/contracting environment is to view such differences in focus as more interdependent. Several study participants noted that contracting personnel (i.e., CS or CO) focus on acquisition forecasting and planning (activities where business relationships are defined). Comparatively less focus is placed on supporting the COTR's contract administration responsibilities (i.e., communicating contract requirements and other project management-related tasks).

To facilitate successful project outcomes, all stakeholders should team to accomplish a common purpose. Specifically, personnel from the contracting office (CSs or COs), the customer entity, the contractor entity and the COTRs must work in partnership. A solid relationship based on receptivity and focused on the customer will keep projects on target.

5. Suggested Improvements: Acquisition/Contracting & Personnel Training

According to study participants, three reform challenges confront the federal acquisition community. First, the narrow view of the COTR as administrator constrains these individuals' ability to influence and build partnerships across program and contracting offices. Second, COTR-related responsibilities are viewed as an afterthought and are not taken seriously, providing little encouragement or motivation from stakeholders. Furthermore, the increase in use of service-based contracts presents an ability gap, for technically-based contracts are managed effectively by technically competent COTRs while service-based contracts are comparatively under-managed. In the face of these challenges, interview and focus group participants offer a wide range of suggestions to improve the quality of both acquisition/contracting activities and personnel training. In the following two sections, these improvements are outlined and discussed.

5.1 Acquisition/Contracting Improvements

The following improvements related to acquisition and contracting are presented here:

- Modify Executive/Top Management Perceptions of Contracting
- Modify Contracting Offices' View of the Procurement Process
- Optimize the COTR Selection Process
- Clarify COTR Responsibilities Upfront
- Integrate COTR Responsibilities into Performance Management/Reward System

Modify Executive/Top Management Perceptions of Contracting

Several improvements address the need for an evolution in top management perceptions:

- Acknowledge the Criticality of Acquisition Workforce Planning. Account for current workforce trends largely due to the combination of increased contracting and large-scale attrition (e.g., via retirement) from the federal workforce.
- Educate about the Impact of Inserting Political Agendas into the Evaluation Process. When occurring during the pre-award stage, acknowledge how this limits the COTR's role of contributing to rating and decision-making. Ensure agency needs are incorporated into evaluation criteria instead of employing an "armchair" method outside of established criteria. Capitalize on how the use of quality pre-award evaluation criteria leads to the use of effective post-award/ongoing performance metrics. Publish case studies comparing positive and negative situations, thereby building knowledge of the links between political actions and consequences.
- Advertise any Change in the Load and Image of the COTR Position. Highlight how historically, the COTR never got any respect for doing a good job; the COTR role was treated like a collateral duty while in reality, the responsibilities overshadowed their regular duties both in demand and sometimes in degree of criticality. Effectively market how several agencies have altered the reputation of the position, thereby inspiring additional change.
- Circulate and/or Sponsor Publications and Research Studies that Reflect a Fresh Perspective on Contracting. (e.g., the June 2003 Government Executive magazine article by William D. Eggers and Stephen Goldsmith discussed with FAI July 22, 2003).

Modify Contracting Offices' View of the Procurement Process

Several study participants believe contracting personnel place comparatively less focus on contract award, contract formation, and contract administration due to their focus on acquisition forecasting and planning. There is a need to move away from the "throw it over the fence" mentality, a progression that might be aided via the following suggestions.

- Link Contracts, COTR and Program Side Early on in the Procurement Process. Relate planning to requirements development by encouraging contract personnel to inform COTRs about what acquisitions are ripe for pursuit.
- Persuade Contract Personnel to Help COTRs Assemble a Solid, Complete Solicitation Package. Move beyond the use of a "Deficient Procurement Request Form" (identifying where COTRs made mistakes) to the use of an

"Efficient Procurement Request Form" (spelling out what would make an acceptable solicitation package). Ensure contracting personnel provide concrete, consistent advice to COTRs.

Optimize the COTR Selection Process

Several ideas, if implemented, could contribute to a more effective COTR selection process:

- Nominate Individuals for the Entire Contract: Frequently, individuals are placed into the COTR role as part of a detail, an acting position or a leadership candidate job rotation. Not only do these individuals lack training, they leave before the contract ends and therefore do not, for the most part, contribute to consistency in COTR job performance across contracts and agencies. Agency leadership must understand the importance of appointing COTRs who they know can accompany the contract the full duration. Turnover must be decreased and damage mitigated by making more purposeful appointments.
- Time COTR Appointments Appropriately: Ideally, COTRs should be involved early in the procurement process when folks are considering and forming requirements. Too often COTRs are hurriedly assigned (i.e., even within two days in some cases). Study participants suggested an "audit" of instructions regarding COTR selection currently provided to Contracting Officers would be useful. It appears Contracting Officers are preoccupied with upfront planning and budget issues and view the actual award as almost an afterthought. The contract (or project) quality would be enhanced if the COTR were assigned earlier in the process.
- Move Beyond "Default Assignments:" Study participants shared many examples of instances where individuals do not have the expertise to perform well, are thrust into these positions without contextual support and subsequently hold a negative attitude about the position. One suggestion is to examine organizational groups, identify those groups that substantially utilize contracting, and in those groups maintain a "pool" of eligible COTRs (i.e., individuals who have received training and are eligible to be appointed). As the visibility and criticality of contracting increases in the future, the need for adequate, timely appointments will become more intense and proactive preparation for avoiding skill gaps would be very useful.

Clarify COTR Responsibilities Upfront

Several study participants request leaders at all levels more clearly communicate norms surrounding "what a COTR does in his/her work group" upon nomination. Furthermore, ongoing actions (i.e., demonstrated behaviors) and words (i.e., communicated attitudes) should reaffirm norms, *not* conflict with norms. It is acknowledged that COTR responsibilities can vary depending on the unit, work group, division or agency. Executive-level leaders, in partnership with

supervisors, must set expectations about the COTR role. Resources are wasted when individuals form assumptions about the role. Clear communication can reinforce a strong culture around contracting in any government agency.

Integrate COTR Responsibilities into Performance Management/Reward System

According to study participants, COTR responsibilities are not taken seriously due to the lack of a clear relationship between performing those responsibilities and an individual's performance appraisal. Participants stated that no mechanism currently exists to incorporate COTR responsibilities into formal performance appraisal forms. Additionally, COTR responsibilities are not rewarded on an informal basis, further contributing to the view of this role as a secondary responsibility, a "bothersome duty," or a function detracting from an individual's "real job." Alternatively, a combination of informal recognition programs and formal incorporation of a "COTR section" into individuals' performance appraisal forms will permit the role to attain the respect deserved.

5.2 Personnel Training Improvements

The following improvements related to personnel training are presented here:

- Modify Training
- Organize Training Modules by Type of Contract Pricing Arrangement
- Increase Visibility of Online Resources
- Provide Mentors for New COTRs
- Leverage Refresher Training to Facilitate Informal COTR-to-COTR Exchanges

Modify Training

Several comments from study participants offer ideas for potential training adjustments:

- Focus Training Content on Achieving a Successful Project. Current training does not promote applying contract requirements and one's knowledge of the contract lifecycle to achieve a successful project outcome. As one study participant noted:

  "Training was created so we don't fail, not so we will succeed." (NIH employee)

  One key characteristic of this focus on project results is the concentration on project management skills, educating future COTRs in how to document day-to-day technical directions between agency and vendor, how to monitor costs and how to remain focused on getting exactly what will fulfill the agency's mission.

- Include Job-Specific Examples. Nearly every study participant noted a need for more job-specific examples to be incorporated into training content. The current examples are too abstract for many individuals. Furthermore, discussions regarding regulations are experienced as laborious and not relevant to the individual's work. Modification of training content organization to permit substitution of agency-specific examples would increase comprehension, retention and application of training content.

- Increase Coverage of Key Topics. Three topics were mentioned by study participants:

  1. Parameters of the Government-Contractor Relationship – Unfortunately, contractors are driving decisions in instances where COTRs are not trained in the basics of this relationship. COTRs must be educated about the dangers of allowing contractors to drive decisions, write documents (like the SOW), or influence the specification of government needs. This should be an equal collaboration with the government having the final say and linkages to the agency's business objectives.

  2. Market Research – As one study participant stated:

     "They. . .have not trained anyone in [market research]...{P]eople think all market research is whether [the contract] can be in-house or from the market. We are way out of line here." (Air Force employee)

  3. Creating Technical Evaluation Criteria – As part of training, COTRs could use a step-by-step guide for creating evaluation criteria, including samples of excellent evaluation criteria organized according to various types of procurements and/or services. One participant suggested that FAI could offer an evaluation criteria bank.

- Make Training Materials More User-Friendly – According to study participants, new COTRs confront a large barrier in the course of training and their first days assuming COTR responsibilities. Materials received during training and on-the-job are incredibly difficult to use. Agencies must offer easier ways to navigate through the thick materials provided alongside training and COTR appointment. Some possible approaches include offering a "Frequently Asked Questions-Style Index," topic-driven tabs or section coding.

Organize Training Modules by Type of Contract

Several study participants complimented FAI's new issue-based modules (e.g., Market Research). Another suggestion reflected an interest in organizing modules by the type of contract pricing arrangement. Several study participants noted key differences in effective COTR tactics when operating within various pricing arrangements. Modules could be constructed to address contract categories addressed in regulations. Some examples of contract types are as follows:

- Fixed Price Contracts: Firm fixed price, fixed price with economic price adjustment, fixed price redeterminable, fixed price with incentive provisions*
- Cost Reimbursable Contracts: Cost, cost sharing, cost plus fixed fee, cost incentive provisions*

** Incentives may include award fee, incentive fee, or award term.*

Increase Visibility of Online Resources

Exceptional COTRs, according to study participants, get the right information and quickly apply it to whatever situation they confront. Key in facilitating this is individuals' use of online resources. Several study participants praised the FAI Online University (www.faionline.com) as an ideal information repository and "online meeting place" for COTRs across the federal government. Other agencies have begun to develop their own online repositories, complete with a Frequently Asked Questions section, examples of Statements of Work, market research primers, ethics advice, and cutoff dates for submitting certain paperwork. In one organization, an individual can enter the requisition number and see basic information about the contract. Resources devoted to increasing visibility of online resources will yield significant return in supporting the transfer of knowledge gained during training and reinforce on-the-job learning and the importance of skills currency.

Provide Mentors for New COTRs

Study participants acknowledge the inherent power when an experienced individual offers to teach or help out a less experienced individual. One possible mechanism for increasing COTR's learning and motivation is for an experienced COTR or a progressive Contract Specialist to serve as a new COTR's mentor. Such a relationship could begin immediately alongside the appointment and required

training. Agencies could have a rotating pool of eligible individuals willing to serve as mentors to ease matching. Study participants suggest that serving as a mentor should be rewarded in some capacity. The mentor and COTR could bridge the current gap between training and on-the-job performance requirements. Several activities could be prescribed, including:

- Review a sample job-specific statement of work to reaffirm knowledge gained in training
- Review sample evaluation factors (if COTR is to have a role in evaluation)
- Discuss 3-5 project management tips and tricks
- Discuss value of evaluating past performance for the group/agency

Several benefits could be realized from such mentoring, including increased COTR confidence and enhanced informal relationships across project teams and/or between program-contract offices.

Leverage Refresher Training to Facilitate Informal COTR-to-COTR Exchanges
Agencies have varying levels of COTR refresher training (i.e., continuing education) requirements. Some mandate a specific number of hours each year, while others offer the training informally. Consistently, however, study participants assert that most of what COTRs actually learn is on-the-job, after they have "gotten their feet wet." Good COTRs take what they heard in the classroom training and continue with on-the-job training. Therefore, refresher training and other informal information exchanges could significantly benefit COTRs. As one participant noted:

> *"Even if these exchanges involved complaining, that's fine! It helps for COTRs to learn from each other." (DOE employee)*

Refresher training and ongoing learning opportunities (e.g., lunchtime learning sessions) could be structured to facilitate such COTR-to-COTR relationship building. Refresher training could employ active learning, breakout groups, and opportunities for application within these events

6. Best Practices Discovered: A Summary

The following section presents those COTR and acquisition best practices discovered through the course of interviews and focus groups. Integrating these examples into training and development content used by current (and potential) COTRs and acquisition professionals will increase cross-agency information sharing and help build a community of like-minded acquisition business leaders.

Best practices relevant to the following topic areas are presented here:

- Elevating the COTR's Image
- Using a High Quality COTR Selection Process
- Including COTRs in the Acquisition Planning Phase
- Expanding the COTR's Role in the Competition Phase
- Offering Issue-based Training Modules
- Providing On-the-Job Assistance for COTRs
- Effective Relations Among COTRs and All Stakeholders
- Performing a High Quality Proposal Evaluation
- Useful Project Management Strategies
- Conducting Periodic Contractor Performance Reviews
- A Fresh Perspective on Modifications
- Compelling Contract Closeout Strategies
- Effective Project Management Training

Elevating the COTR's Image: Modifying the perception of COTRs across the federal government is a business necessity. Currently, many individuals holding COTR roles take their technical work very seriously and would probably take their COTR-related work seriously if this work function were valued like their technical expertise. Supervisors, directors, and SES-level leaders do not, for the most part, stress the importance and criticality of the COTR role. As one interviewee stated:

> *"There is a real dilemma because nobody wants to do this work. I love this work and think it is important. I see how really critical it is for my program to use great requirements and to avoid stop work orders!" (EPA employee)*

Motivational endorsements from individual contributors (such as the interviewee quoted above) could be integrated into materials distributed regarding the COTR job function. Additionally, directors and leaders could also receive such messages in their ongoing education regarding the changing nature of acquisition work.

Using a High-Quality COTR Selection Process: The timing of COTR selection and appointment is based on the needs of the contract project's customer group. Many customer groups feel they need a person in place during acquisition planning and so will provide a nomination letter (forwarded with the procurement package) that outlines the rationale surrounding a certain individual's selection as COTR. These rationales are based on the critical responsibilities of the job as well as key abilities and selection factors. Agencies could benefit from "tightening up" the selection criteria used. For instance, a key selection factor should be the person's level of interest in doing COTR-related work. As one focus group attendee suggested:

> *"One should ask, 'Does this person enjoy doing project management work or does one have to force it down their throat?' If the individual is interested in performing this work, then they will throw their weight behind the job. If the individual isn't interested, then they will only do the 'have-to's' – we can't have that mentality when COTRs are managing million dollar budgets and moving crucial projects forward that contribute to their agency's mission." (SSA employee)*

Other key COTR abilities essential to possess include attention to detail, methodical and willing to go through a process step by step (i.e., a process orientation vs. an outcome orientation), and knowledge of relevant products and services. One approach that has worked is to nominate a COTR who belongs to the customer group. Upon nomination, the COTR participates in training, and the Contracting Officer verifies his/her participation. All agencies should consider training to be a serious requirement. (EPA, SSA)

Including COTRs in the Acquisition Planning Phase: Although COTRs are not typically involved in the acquisition planning phase, an effective approach is to collect a standing team of COTRs who are consulted and provide input into the planning process. The Source Selection Technical Lead orchestrates this process, which results in lively discussion and brainstorming regarding what is going to happen in the future and where the agency wants to evolve in their products or services. COTRs' involvement in acquisition planning permits them to have a

bigger picture of how their specific contract might fit in as well as learn factual information that will inform their work throughout the length of contract. (DoD – Air Force)

Expanding the COTR's Role in the Competition Phase: Some agencies view the COTR as providing an instrumental role during the sourcing and competition phase of the procurement process. High quality contracts are produced when the COTR works in collaboration with technical representatives, has a solid rapport with the Contracting Officer, and makes it his/her mission to remain unbiased and concentrate on ensuring the agency receives a good product. Excellent COTRs leverage their unique role, seeing from three perspectives (i.e., acquisition, technical, and vendor) to resolve problems and avoid considerable "back-and-forth." (EPA)

Offering Issue-Based Training Modules: Across various agencies, training modules are cropping up that address everything from "How to Write a Exceptional Performance-Based Statement of Work" to "How to Write an Independent Government Cost Estimate" to "Reviewing Invoices." Individuals who move from one agency to another commonly bring a set of skills and resources to the procurement and contracting arena. When these individuals find a skills or qualifications gap or particular need, they transform their knowledge into mini-courses or roundtables to address those needs. Excellent performers write manuals and pass them throughout their divisions, and even make videos to continually educate geographically dispersed team members (e.g., TOPOs, DOPOs, WAMs, Technical Monitors). Such modules or training materials offer an excellent opportunity to expand and fortify COTR-related skills and share knowledge across agencies. (DOJ, EPA)

Providing On-the-Job Assistance for COTRs: Several mechanisms exist to help COTRs thrive when faced with new, unfamiliar tasks. Some agencies provide online "job aids" to assist COTRs in writing a statement of work or developing evaluation criteria. One excellent form of real-time assistance some COTRs receive is a highly visible, online Step-By-Step guide (complete with commentary and work samples). As the visibility of such resources increases, COTRs will become more likely to access helpful on-the-job tools and subsequently see quality of work improvements. (IRS)

Effective Relations Among COTRs and All Stakeholders: A dilemma occurs when agency leadership or program staff members view contracting work as an obstruction to getting the product or services accomplished. Unless one has a COTR who can expertly facilitate the process *and* a Contracting Officer who is very responsive, the program office becomes cynical. Sometimes agency leaders believe this situation is the norm because projects enter into the "stop work stage"

so often. However, if a competent COTR is in place who develops a solid relationship with a receptive Contracting Officer who sees the COTR as his/her customer, the reciprocity needed to push and get those things required to keep the project on target becomes present. (EPA)

Performing a High-Quality Proposal Evaluation: Excellent COTRs accomplish the following tasks to produce a high-quality proposal evaluation:

- Select a 3-5 "good" people and chair the technical evaluation committee. Possible individuals include: technical specialists, experts in the relevant industry from interest groups and/or states and other federal agencies, and contractors (with no voting power). Make sure at least one SME is included who knows exactly what is needed and can cut through the "buzz words" to assess true capability.
- Maintain excellent communication with the committee, relays concise and clear information to the Contracting Officer.
- Leads evaluation of past performance capability statements and oral presentations. Is strict in his/her use of an evaluation sheet with criteria that mirror the criteria included in the Request For Proposal. Keeps presentations and question/answer sessions focused by controlling the flow of the discussion, keeping comments concentrated on question content and thereby freeing the Contracting Officer to read body language and nuances.
- Collect evaluations, verify strengths and weaknesses are directly part of the evaluation criteria, and relay recommendations to the Contracting Officer.

Exceptional COTRs perform these functions and in so doing, strengthen his/her relationships with all parties, thereby contributing to the effectiveness of future procurement activities. (DOI, DOJ)

Useful Project Management Strategies: The most essential role the COTR plays is to ensure the government gets exactly what it needs, what it requires, and exactly what it pays for – using the "management by deliverables" method. In some agencies, the Post-Award Orientation (also called the Kick-Off Meeting) is more than a review of the requirements and objectives. It is leveraged as an opportunity to set ground rules for agency and contractor expectations, eliminate surprises and begin a process of bi-directional communication and continuous feedback. A sampling of useful project management strategies follow:

> <u>Constant Communication with Vendor & Contracting Office</u> - Great COTRs make site visits and are in constant contact with the vendor's Project Manager. These COTRs know about delays and foster open communication with their counterparts within the Contracting office. Excellent COTRs are "on-the-ground" and "hands-on" and, at any given

time, are able to tell Contracting personnel where the COTR is in the contract (i.e., can communicate the financial picture, delivery stage, and/or the overall level of vendor performance). Good COTRs give a two-week advance notice of issues to both vendors and Contracting personnel, especially problematic issues. Unfortunately, many COTRs have a tendency to keep things to themselves and only when the situation becomes very poor do they escalate. Then, it is too late and by not attending to it, the COTR has basically accepted the situation. Substantial importance is placed on constant informal discussions, not only exchanging required documents!

Methodical Record Keeping – High-performing COTRs keep records regarding any discussions, agreements, as well as the COTR's periodic assessment of contractors' performance level. Immediately after experiencing a significant event (good or bad), good COTRs document details of the event instead of waiting until they are tasked to prepare the monthly report or other formal documentation. Effective COTRs also use metrics to identify trends and facilitate projecting and forecasting improved performance measures.

Routine Financial Monitoring – It is essential for the COTR to understand the current status of funding. Tracking and paying attention to what funds have been spent, what resource hours have been allocated and what funding remains alongside the project schedule are essential responsibilities. Excellent COTRs view this as their responsibility and understand that while these tasks are outside their technical skill set, they are paramount to ensuring the project is effectively performed.

Air-Tight Invoices – High-performing COTRs inspect each invoice and verify the contractor billed for the correct activities and that the invoice has been generated accurately. In some agencies, a high-level representative from that customer group ultimately served by the contractor also periodically inspects invoices, thereby ensuring the owner of project results remains invested in the importance of such project management tasks. COTRs leverage their development of open communication to contribute to this task; early in the contract, good COTRs will sit down with the vendor and review the bill together each month. Several months into the contract, this is no longer needed because expectations and processes become air-tight. (DOJ, EPA, HHS, IRS, NIH)

Conducting Periodic Contractor Performance Reviews: In some agencies, evaluating contractor performance is an afterthought, accomplished only after the contract closeout when polled by another agency considering selecting that same contractor. Other agencies sponsor frank exchanges after the first six months of the contract and again at the close of year 1. Both the COTR and the corresponding vendor Project Manager ask key contributors to prepare an

evaluation. These evaluations are put side by side and reviewed via an in-person meeting. Especially in the beginning of the project lifecycle, any disconnects are revealed and frank discussion further supports the development of open communication. Such forums are found to be substantial and content-rich for the first meeting but by the second meeting many problems had already been pre-empted. Subsequently, annual reviews become adequate and the division did not experience delays or less than acceptable deliverables. Conducting periodic performance reviews was very valuable because the forum forced the discussion to occur and future problems to be avoided. On acquisitions of a highly technical nature, it might be necessary to bring in content experts to assist in assessing the quality of work performed. (EPA)

A Fresh Perspective on Modifications: Commonly, program and Contracting personnel view modifications despairingly. In some agencies, however, modifications are viewed as corrections, not mistakes. Many times, modifications are instances where one now has a *better* understanding of what is needed. Modifications are also opportunities for cost savings, not only increases in resource levels. A constant preoccupation with cost savings coupled with this new perspective on modifications will find opportunities where refreshing/modifying the contract can actually reduce contractor fees (e.g., in response to market-driven events, perhaps computer equipment can be purchased at a lower rate or in bulk). Exceptional COTRs adopt a fresh perspective about modifications and use them as another tool to ensure the government gets exactly what it needs. (DOI, SSA)

Compelling Contract Closeout Strategies: While policy and procedures outline numerous requirements involved in writing a contract award, comparatively little exists to mandate periodic evaluation or institutionalized accountability on the part of the contractor *and* those government employees who contribute to the contract/project. One excellent strategy to employ during the contract closeout stage is the "Post Mortem Forum." This discussion, attended by the contractor, the agency customer group as well as representatives from contracting or procurement, provides an opportunity for a review of major contract milestones, a documentation of key accomplishments and an identification of any barriers arising throughout the contract lifecycle. Ideas for how to increase the quality of the contractor-agency working relationship in the future are also generated. Convening such Post Mortems offer a great learning mechanism. It would benefit all agencies to include these sessions as a formal requirement, thereby demonstrating a results-orientation and affirming the importance of accountability. (SSA)

Effective Project Management Training: In some agencies, COTRs are required to take a fairly comprehensive project management curriculum. GSA offers these

training opportunities to other agencies as well, an interagency opportunity already capitalized on by some. Some anecdotal evidence exists of the benefits of such training (i.e., knowledge transfer to COTR assignments). (GSA/FTS)

Assessing COTR Competency Levels: Two methods may be used to evaluate a COTR's capabilities along the competency dimensions described in this report. The first method is the COTR Interview, a dialogue typically held between the Contract Officer and appointed COTR upon entry into the role of COTR for a given project or contract. Please see the COTR Training Blueprints for instructions on how to effectively conduct this interview. The second method for assessing COTR competency levels is an individual assessment, where the individual responds to structured questions or scenarios and his or her responses are analyzed to determine proficiency.

Appendix A. Telephone Interview Guide

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR COTR POSITIONS

INTRODUCTION. Hello, is this [*insert interviewee's name*]? My name is [*insert interviewer's name*] and I am calling to conduct our interview regarding the COTR job. Is this still a good time for you to speak with me?

I am supporting the Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI). We are implementing a competency-based career model to support the goal of an acquisition workforce that is capable of meeting the evolving business needs of all government agencies. Among other tasks, we are identifying competencies for the COTR job function and weaving those competencies into training and career development processes to be used by COTRs.

We have asked folks who are knowledgeable about COTR positions to help us identify those competencies involved in accomplishing COTR responsibilities. You should have received a document outlining the Steps in the Procurement Process prior to this interview. We will use that document as the foundation for our interview. Do you have that document? Please keep it handy and I will tell you when it is time for you to refer to it. *(If interviewee has not received the document, confirm interviewee has access to email and send a copy immediately. Also, ensure receipt before Section 2.)* We thank you in advance for your help!

This interview will take approximately 45 minutes to complete. All information you provide will remain strictly confidential. At no time will your responses be associated with your identity. We will only report aggregated data back to FAI.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

SECTION 1. I'd like to begin by learning a bit about you and your particular job.

1. Please describe the COTR role within your agency. What is it called? How does it interface with the other acquisition positions?

Q1	

2. What is your current grade/pay level?

Q2	

3. What is your current job title?

Q3	

4. How long have you been in your current position?

Q4	

5. How long have you been working for the Government?

Q5	

6. How long have you been with your agency?

Q6	

7. How many government agencies have you worked for?

Q7	

8. Have you ever had COTR responsibilities? If so, how many months was your longest assignment?

Q8a Y/N	
Q8b	

9. Please briefly describe the largest contract award/project you have managed.

Q9	

10. Please name the types of contracts you have managed (e.g., time and materials, fixed price).

Q10	

(If Interviewer is speaking with a COTR, skip to Section 2. If Interviewer is speaking to a Contracting Officer, Contract Specialist, or another person in the acquisition career field, continue with Question 11.)

11. How long have you been working in the acquisition career field?

Q11	

12. What level are you in the acquisition career path (e.g., I, II, or III)?

Q12	

13. What is your specialty area (e.g., Industrial/Contract Property Management, Purchasing/Procurement, Acquisition Logistics, etc.)?

Q13	

14. Do you have any certificates and/or warrants? If so, please describe and include the year awarded.

Q14	

SECTION 2. Now I'd like you to walk me through the procurement process and describe your role in that process. I'd like you to refer to the Procurement Process Chart we discussed at the beginning of this interview. Do you have that document in front of you? *(Interviewer to confirm Yes.)*

We will be walking through each step in the Procurement Process. I will be asking you to describe the COTR's critical responsibilities for each step. Please think about the actions effective COTRs take. Also, as you are describing parts of the job, I will be asking you to classify various actions as global or unique to your particular agency. That way FAI can build an understanding of what parts of a COTR's job are generalizable across agencies and what parts are unique to specific agencies.

(Interviewer to walk interviewee through each of the major "Steps." If interviewee discusses "Related Functions," interviewer is to collect more details. Interviewer is to remain aware of the elapsed time and balance the interviewee's interest in discussing details with the need to cover all stages of the procurement process.)

(Interviewer to document tasks/duties and corresponding information in the fields provided.)

15A. Let's begin with Phase I: Acquisition Planning.

Tasks/Duties	KSAOs	Global	Unique

15B. Now, let's move on to Phase II: Contract Formation.

Tasks/Duties	KSAOs	Global	Unique

15C. Now, let's move on to Phase III: Contract Administration.

Tasks/Duties	KSAOs	Global	Unique

SECTION 3. The last questions address your ideas about training and professional development COTRs receive. If you have served as a COTR yourself, think about the training and developmental activities in which you have participated. If you have not served as a COTR, consider the training and developmental activities COTRs receive in your agency.

16. Overall, would you say those activities were satisfactory or unsatisfactory?

Q16	

17. If answer to #16 is unsatisfactory, ask, "Please describe two specific things you believe would improve COTR-related training and development activities."

Q17 #1	
Q17 #2	

Appendix B. Focus Group Competency Rating Form

Please see the next several pages to view the rating form.

COTR Competency Rating Form

INSTRUCTIONS: Please refer to the handout displaying definitions for each competency when making your ratings. For each incident, rate the importance of each competency and the extent to which each competency was evident during that incident. When you have completed your ratings, return to the list of competencies from the first incident (below). Draw a circle around the 3 competencies that received the *highest* ratings across all of your incidents. Then, draw a box around the 3 competencies that received the *lowest* ratings.

EFFECTIVE INCIDENT #1

Professional Business Competencies	How important is each competency in this incident?					To what extent is each competency exhibited in this incident?				
	1 = not important	2 = of little importance	3 = of some importance	4 = moderately important	5 = very important	1 = not exhibited	2 = slightly exhibited	3 = somewhat exhibited	4 = exhibited moderately	5 = exhibited to a great extent
Oral Communication										
Decision-Making										
Interpersonal Skills										
Problem Solving										
Teamwork										
Reasoning										
Customer Service										
Reading										
Attention to Detail										
Contracting/Procurement										
Influencing/Negotiating										
Integrity/Honesty										
Planning and Evaluating										
Flexibility										
Self-Mgmt./Initiative										
Stress Tolerance										

EFFECTIVE INCIDENT #1 (continued)

Professional Business Competencies	How important is each competency in this incident?					To what extent is each competency exhibited in this incident?				
	1 = not important	2 = of little importance	3 = of some importance	4 = moderately important	5 = very important	1 = not exhibited	2 = slightly exhibited	3 = somewhat exhibited	4 = exhibited moderately	5 = exhibited to a great extent
Writing										
Creative Thinking										
Learning										
Self-Esteem										
Information Management										
Memory										
Arithmetic										
Math Reasoning										

Technical Competencies	How important is each competency in this incident?					To what extent is each competency exhibited in this incident?				
	1 = not important	2 = of little importance	3 = of some importance	4 = moderately important	5 = very important	1 = not exhibited	2 = slightly exhibited	3 = somewhat exhibited	4 = exhibited moderately	5 = exhibited to a great extent
Strategic Planning										
Understanding the Marketplace										
Understanding Sourcing (Commercial/Government Practices)										

EFFECTIVE INCIDENT #1 (continued)

Technical Competencies	How important is each competency in this incident?					To what extent is each competency exhibited in this incident?				
	1 = not important	2 = of little importance	3 = of some importance	4 = moderately important	5 = very important	1 = not exhibited	2 = slightly exhibited	3 = somewhat exhibited	4 = exhibited moderately	5 = exhibited to a great extent
Defining Government Requirements in Commercial and Non-Commercial Terms										
Defining Business Relationships										
Effective Communication										
Detailed Evaluation Skills										
Effective Negotiation Skills and Effective Analytical Skills										
Effective Award Resolution										
Effective Communication of Contract Requirements										
Effective Performance Management										
Effective Financial Management										
Effective Resolution of Contract Termination and/or Closeout										

EFFECTIVE INCIDENT #2

Professional Business Competencies	How important is each competency in this incident?					To what extent is each competency exhibited in this incident?				
	1 = not important	2 = of little importance	3 = of some importance	4 = moderately important	5 = very important	1 = not exhibited	2 = slightly exhibited	3 = somewhat exhibited	4 = exhibited moderately	5 = exhibited to a great extent
Oral Communication										
Decision-Making										
Interpersonal Skills										
Problem Solving										
Teamwork										
Reasoning										
Customer Service										
Reading										
Attention to Detail										
Contracting/Procurement										
Influencing/Negotiating										
Integrity/Honesty										
Planning and Evaluating										
Flexibility										
Self-Mgmt./Initiative										
Stress Tolerance										
Writing										
Creative Thinking										
Learning										
Self-Esteem										
Information Management										
Memory										
Arithmetic										
Math Reasoning										

EFFECTIVE INCIDENT #2 (continued)

Technical Competencies	How important is each competency in this incident?					To what extent is each competency exhibited in this incident?				
	1 = not important	2 = of little importance	3 = of some importance	4 = moderately important	5 = very important	1 = not exhibited	2 = slightly exhibited	3 = somewhat exhibited	4 = exhibited moderately	5 = exhibited to a great extent
Strategic Planning										
Understanding the Marketplace										
Understanding Sourcing (Commercial/Government Practices)										
Defining Government Requirements in Commercial and Non-Commercial Terms										
Defining Business Relationships										
Effective Communication										
Detailed Evaluation Skills										
Effective Negotiation Skills and Effective Analytical Skills										
Effective Award Resolution										
Effective Communication of Contract Requirements										
Effective Performance Management										
Effective Financial Management										
Effective Resolution of Contract Termination and/or Closeout										

INEFFECTIVE INCIDENT #1

Professional Business Competencies	How important is each competency in this incident?					To what extent is each competency exhibited in this incident?				
	1 = not important	2 = of little importance	3 = of some importance	4 = moderately important	5 = very important	1 = not exhibited	2 = slightly exhibited	3 = somewhat exhibited	4 = exhibited moderately	5 = exhibited to a great extent
Oral Communication										
Decision-Making										
Interpersonal Skills										
Problem Solving										
Teamwork										
Reasoning										
Customer Service										
Reading										
Attention to Detail										
Contracting/Procurement										
Influencing/Negotiating										
Integrity/Honesty										
Planning and Evaluating										
Flexibility										
Self-Mgmt./Initiative										
Stress Tolerance										
Writing										
Creative Thinking										
Learning										
Self-Esteem										
Information Management										
Memory										
Arithmetic										
Math Reasoning										

INEFFECTIVE INCIDENT #1 (continued)

Technical Competencies	How important is each competency in this incident?					To what extent is each competency exhibited in this incident?				
	1 = not important	2 = of little importance	3 = of some importance	4 = moderately important	5 = very important	1 = not exhibited	2 = slightly exhibited	3 = somewhat exhibited	4 = exhibited moderately	5 = exhibited to a great extent
Strategic Planning										
Understanding the Marketplace										
Understanding Sourcing (Commercial/Government Practices)										
Defining Government Requirements in Commercial and Non-Commercial Terms										
Defining Business Relationships										
Effective Communication										
Detailed Evaluation Skills										
Effective Negotiation Skills and Effective Analytical Skills										
Effective Award Resolution										
Effective Communication of Contract Requirements										
Effective Performance Management										
Effective Financial Management										
Effective Resolution of Contract Termination and/or Closeout										

INEFFECTIVE INCIDENT #2

Professional Business Competencies	How important is each competency in this incident?					To what extent is each competency exhibited in this incident?				
	1 = not important	2 = of little importance	3 = of some importance	4 = moderately important	5 = very important	1 = not exhibited	2 = slightly exhibited	3 = somewhat exhibited	4 = exhibited moderately	5 = exhibited to a great extent
Oral Communication										
Decision-Making										
Interpersonal Skills										
Problem Solving										
Teamwork										
Reasoning										

INEFFECTIVE INCIDENT #2 (continued)

Professional Business Competencies	How important is each competency in this incident?					To what extent is each competency exhibited in this incident?				
	1 = not important	2 = of little importance	3 = of some importance	4 = moderately important	5 = very important	1 = not exhibited	2 = slightly exhibited	3 = somewhat exhibited	4 = exhibited moderately	5 = exhibited to a great extent
Customer Service										
Reading										
Attention to Detail										
Contracting/Procurement										
Influencing/Negotiating										
Integrity/Honesty										
Planning and Evaluating										
Flexibility										
Self-Mgmt./Initiative										
Stress Tolerance										
Writing										
Creative Thinking										

Learning										
Self-Esteem										
Information Management										
Memory										
Arithmetic										
Math Reasoning										

INEFFECTIVE INCIDENT #2 (continued)

Technical Competencies	How important is each competency in this incident?					To what extent is each competency exhibited in this incident?				
	1 = not important	2 = of little importance	3 = of some importance	4 = moderately important	5 = very important	1 = not exhibited	2 = slightly exhibited	3 = somewhat exhibited	4 = exhibited moderately	5 = exhibited to a great extent
Strategic Planning										
Understanding the Marketplace										
Understanding Sourcing (Commercial/Government Practices)										
Defining Government Requirements in Commercial and Non-Commercial Terms										
Defining Business Relationships										
Effective Communication										
Detailed Evaluation Skills										
Effective Negotiation Skills and Effective Analytical Skills										
Effective Award Resolution										
Effective Communication of Contract Requirements										
Effective Performance Management										
Effective Financial Management										
Effective Resolution of Contract Termination and/or Closeout										

ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES THAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED:

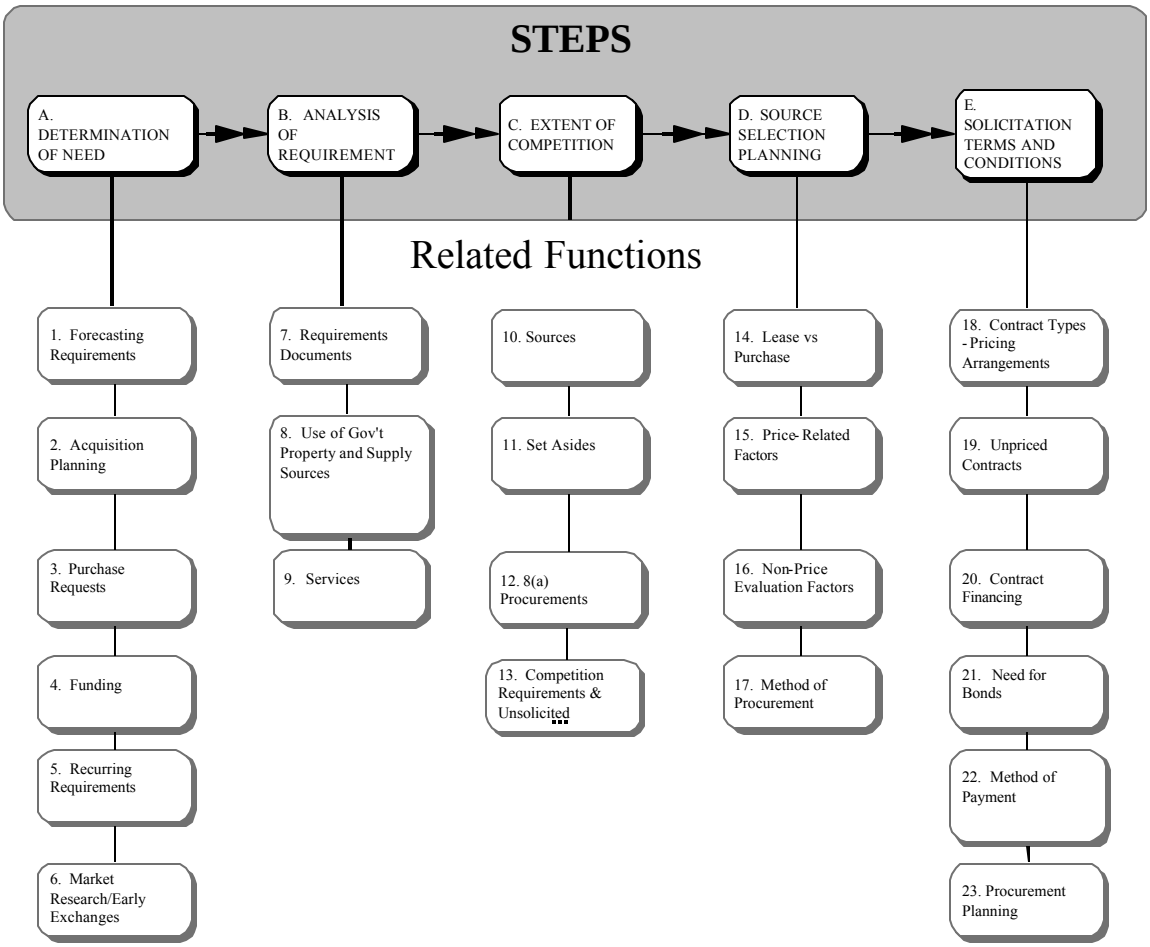
Competency	Description	Tasks/Duties Where Relevant

Appendix C. The Procurement Process

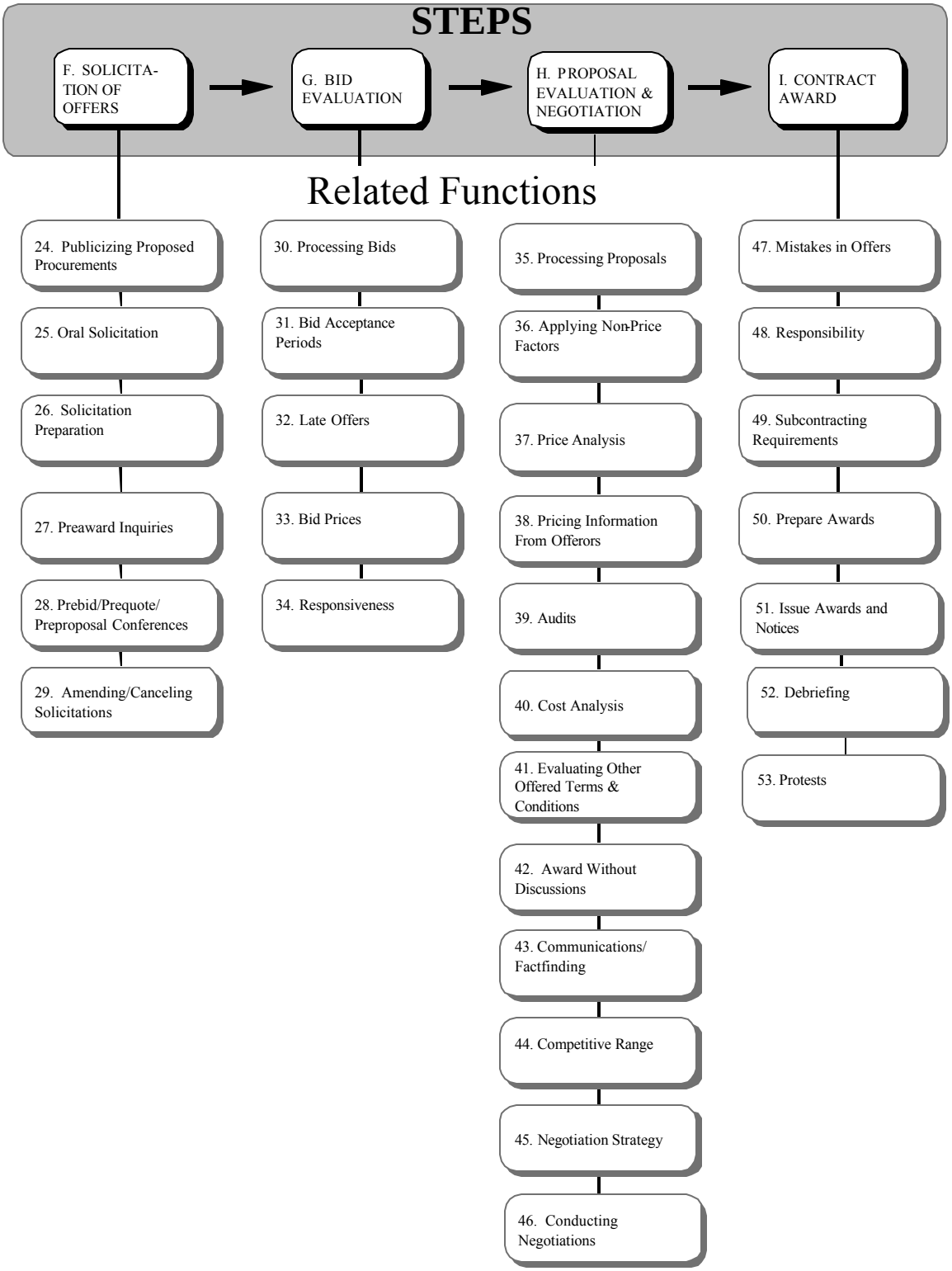
THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS

(Excerpt from FAI's 2002 Contract Specialist Workbook)

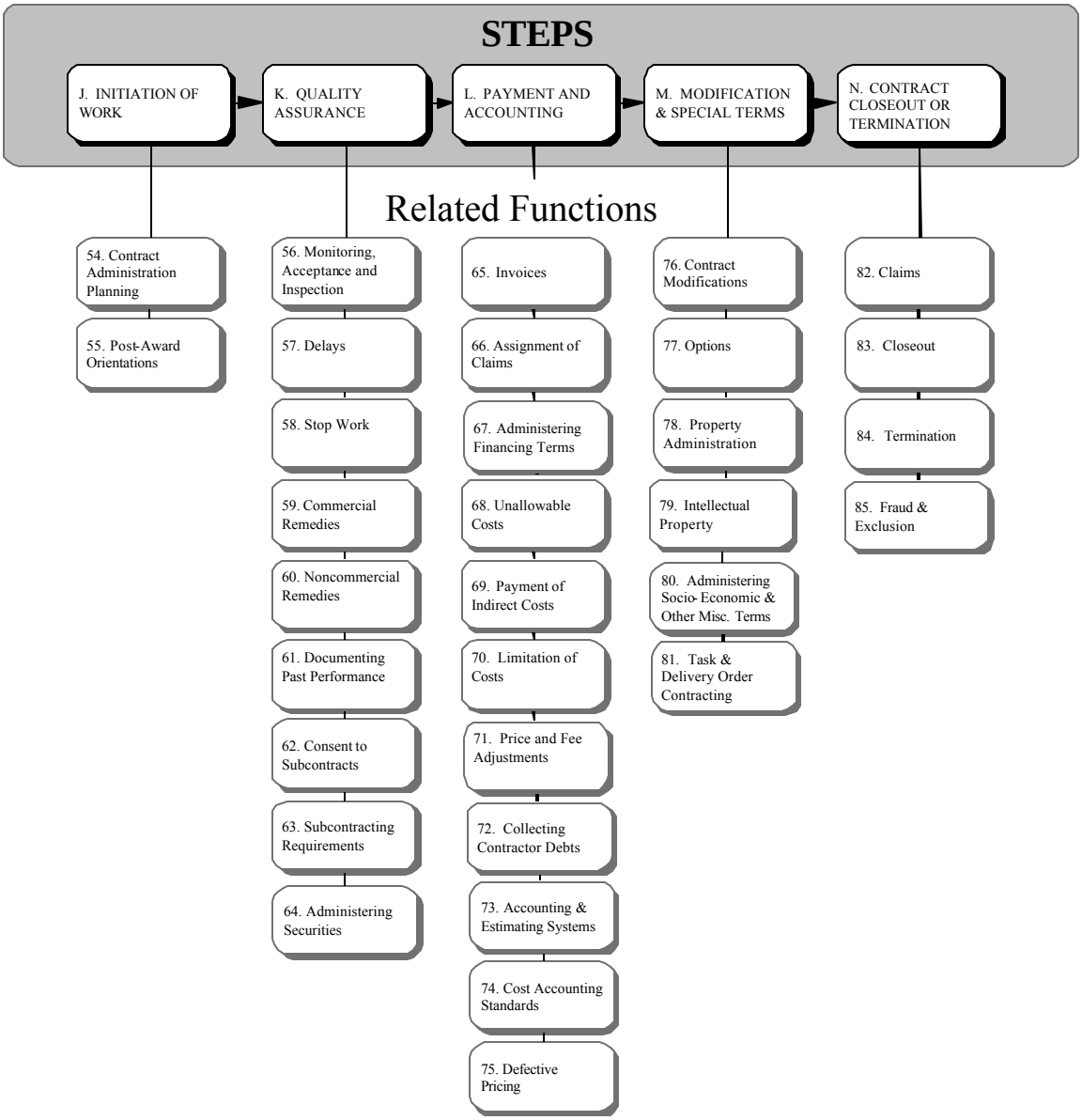
I. ACQUISITION PLANNING



II. CONTRACT FORMATION



III. CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION



Appendix D Average Importance and Exhibited Competency Ratings

Please see the next several pages to view competency ratings.

Table D-1 Average Ratings for Professional Business and Technical Competencies (Effective Incidents).

COMPETENCIES	Avg. Importance (N =17)	Avg. Exhibited (N = 17)
Professional Business Competencies		
Oral Communication	4.94	4.67
Decision-Making	4.63	4.31
Teamwork	4.56	4.53
Problem Solving	4.50	4.40
Attention to Detail	4.47	4.44
Reasoning	4.38	4.63
Flexibility	4.33	4.07
Interpersonal Skills	4.31	4.50
Self-Mgmt./Initiative	4.29	4.29
Integrity/Honesty	4.20	4.00
Planning and Evaluating	4.08	4.25
Reading	4.07	3.86
Influencing/Negotiating	4.07	4.06
Creative Thinking	4.00	3.73
Information Management	4.00	3.93
Customer Service	3.94	3.88
Stress Tolerance	3.80	3.93
Contracting/Procurement	3.67	3.73
Learning	3.62	3.64
Writing	3.36	3.20
Self-Esteem	3.31	3.92
Memory	3.14	3.08
Math Reasoning	2.06	2.29
Arithmetic	1.92	1.92
Technical Competencies		
Effective Communication of Contract Requirements	4.00	3.33
Effective Performance Mgmt.	4.00	3.27
Strategic Planning	3.73	3.00
Detailed Evaluation Skills	3.71	3.27
Defining Business Relationships	3.63	3.50
Understanding the Marketplace	3.60	3.50
Effective Communication	3.60	3.57
Defining Gvmt. Requirements in Comm./Non-Comm. Terms	3.53	3.21
Effective Negotiation Skills and Effective Analytical Skills	3.43	2.71
Effective Financial Management	3.29	3.53
Understanding Sourcing (Commercial/Gvmt. Practices)	3.07	3.60
Effective Award Resolution	2.86	2.79
Effective Resolution of Contract Termination and/or Closeout	2.79	2.00

Table D-2 Average Ratings for Professional Business and Technical Competencies (Ineffective Incidents).

COMPETENCIES	Avg. Importance (N =18)	Avg. Exhibited (N = 18)
Professional Business Competencies		
Oral Communication	4.56	3.18
Decision-Making	4.71	2.59
Teamwork	4.18	1.94
Problem Solving	4.00	1.94
Attention to Detail	4.33	2.43
Reasoning	4.24	2.20
Flexibility	3.20	2.07
Interpersonal Skills	4.50	2.38
Self-Mgmt./Initiative	4.07	2.71
Integrity/Honesty	3.71	2.50
Planning and Evaluating	3.86	1.64
Reading	3.69	2.38
Influencing/Negotiating	3.53	2.00
Creative Thinking	3.43	2.07
Information Management	3.71	2.21
Customer Service	3.94	2.63
Stress Tolerance	3.33	2.53
Contracting/Procurement	4.00	2.71
Learning	3.57	2.50
Writing	3.47	1.86
Self-Esteem	2.79	2.71
Memory	3.47	2.36
Math Reasoning	1.67	1.24
Arithmetic	2.07	1.64
Technical Competencies		
Effective Communication of Contract Requirements	4.27	2.33
Effective Performance Mgmt.	4.31	2.31
Strategic Planning	3.21	1.79
Detailed Evaluation Skills	3.64	1.71
Defining Business Relationships	3.44	1.56
Understanding the Marketplace	2.86	1.71
Effective Communication	4.06	2.25
Defining Gvmt. Requirements in Comm./Non-Comm. Terms	3.07	1.64
Effective Negotiation Skills and Effective Analytical Skills	3.14	2.00
Effective Financial Management	3.29	2.21
Understanding Sourcing (Commercial/Gvmt. Practices)	2.86	1.86
Effective Award Resolution	2.86	1.21
Effective Resolution of Contract Termination and/or Closeout	2.86	1.57

Appendix E Definitions of Key COTR Competencies

Please see the next several pages to view competency definitions.

Professional Business Competencies	Definitions
Oral Communication	Expresses information to individuals or groups effectively, taking into account the audience and nature of the information; makes clear and convincing presentations, listens to others; attends to nonverbal cues.
Decision-Making	Makes sound, well informed, and objective decisions; perceives the impact and implications of decisions; commits to action, even in uncertain situations, to accomplish organizational goals; causes change.
Teamwork	Encourages and facilitates cooperation, pride, trust; fosters commitment; works with others to achieve goals.
Problem Solving	Identifies problems; determines accuracy and relevance of information; uses sound judgment to generate and evaluate alternatives, and make recommendations.
Attention to Detail	Is thorough when performing work and conscientious about attending to detail.
Reasoning	Identifies rules, principles, or relationships that explain facts, data or other information; analyzes information and makes correct inferences or accurate conclusions.
Flexibility	Is open to change and new information; adapt behavior or work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacle; effectively deal with ambiguity.
Interpersonal Skills	Shows understanding, courtesy, tact, empathy; develops and maintains relationships; deals with difficult people; relates well to people from varied backgrounds; is sensitive to individual differences.
Self-Management/Initiative	Sets well-defined and realistic personal goals; displays a high level of initiative, effort, and commitment towards completing assignments in a timely manner; works with minimal supervision; is motivated to achieve; demonstrate responsible behavior.
Integrity/Honesty	Contributes to maintaining the integrity of the organization; displays high standards of ethical conduct and understands the impact of violating these standards on an organization, self, and others; is trustworthy.
Planning and Evaluating	Organizes work, sets priorities, determines resource requirements, determines goals and strategies; coordinates with other organizations, monitors progress; evaluates outcomes.
Influencing/Negotiating	Persuades others to accept recommendations, cooperate, or change their behavior; work with others towards an agreement; negotiates to find mutually acceptable solutions.
Writing	Recognizes or uses correct English grammar, punctuation, and spelling; communicates information in a succinct and organized manner, produces written information that is appropriate for the intended audience.
Project Management	Develops and maintains a workable plan and manages resources to accomplish the overall goal of the project; plans, manages and follows through to ensure the smooth flow and timely completion of activities that deliver project results; anticipates obstacles or gaps that would impact project success and works to continuously improve the agency's capability to achieve success.

Technical Competencies	Definitions
Effective Communication of Contract Requirements	Plan for contract administration. Conduct a post-award orientation. Monitor contractor subcontract management in accordance with prime contract and performance-based requirements. Modify or adjust a contract when needed. Determine whether or not to exercise an available option. Utilize task order contracts, delivery order contracts, and basic ordering agreements.
Effective Performance Management	Monitor contract performance and take any necessary action related to delays in contract performance or the need to stop work under the contract. Apply remedies to protect the rights of the government under commercial item contracts and simplified acquisitions. Apply remedies to protect the rights of the government under noncommercial item contracts. Document past performance information.
Strategic Planning	Advise customers on their acquisition-related roles as well as the development and implementation of strategies needed to assure that supplies and services are available when needed to meet mission requirements throughout the contract lifecycle.
Detailed Evaluation Skills	Receive bids including the safeguarding, opening, reading, recording, and abstracting of each bid. Evaluate offered bid acceptance periods and take appropriate action. Determine whether a bid is late, and if late, whether it can be considered for contract award. Identify and resolve mistakes in bids. Calculate the evaluated price for each bid and determine whether the lowest price is reasonable. Determine responsiveness for the invitation for bids (IFB).
Defining Business Relationships	Select the most appropriate pricing arrangement(s) to solicit. Determine whether and how to provide for recurring requirements. Prepare unpriced orders and contracts. Determine whether to provide for government financing and where necessary the method of financing. Determine bonding requirements for the solicitation and contract. Determine the method of payment. Determine whether a written source selection plan is necessary or desirable.
Understanding the Marketplace	Collect and analyze relevant market information from government and non-government source; analyze and provide business advice on the procurement request; review and provide business advice in the preparation of requirements documents and related elements of the procurement request.
Effective Oral and Written Communication	Select and implement a method or methods of publicizing the proposed procurements. Establish appropriate subcontracting and make-or buy requirements. Conduct oral solicitations. Prepare a written solicitation that includes the appropriate provisions and clauses tailored to the requirement and assembled in a format appropriate to the acquisition method and market for the required supply or service. Respond to an inquiry about the solicitation received prior to contract award or a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act. Conduct a pre-quote, pre-bid, pre-proposal conference when appropriate. Amend or cancel a solicitation.
Defining Government Requirements in Commercial/ Non-Commercial Terms	Select appropriate offer evaluation factors for incorporation into the solicitation that tie back to clear and unambiguous technical requirements included in the RFP; determine the method of acquisition.

Effective Negotiation Skills and Effective Analytical Skills	Receive quotations/proposals including the safeguarding, opening, tracking, assessing compliance with minimum solicitation requirements, and identifying of quotations/proposals that will not receive further consideration. Apply non-price factors in evaluating quotations, proposals, and past performance. Determine what pricing information (if any) to require from offerors. Consider the adequacy of a firm's accounting and estimating systems in making contracting decisions. Assure that a firm properly discloses its accounting practices when required by government cost accounting standards (CAS) and that the disclosed practices comply with CAS requirements. Obtain any necessary audit support. Establish pre negotiation positions on price including: the need to cancel and re solicit for price related reasons; the need for communications; the need for cost information; and the need to negotiate. Establish pre negotiation positions related to cost reasonableness and cost realism by analyzing cost and technical data from the offeror and other sources. Develop pre negotiation positions on terms and conditions other than price. Determine whether to award without discussions. Conduct communications to enhance government understanding of proposals; allow reasonable interpretation of a proposal; or facilitate the government's evaluation process. Select offerors/quoters for discussions (i.e., establish the competitive range under FAR Part 15). Prepare negotiation strategy. Conduct a negotiation session and document in the contract file the principal elements of the negotiated agreement.

Appendix F Chart of Key COTR Duties

Please see the next several pages to view COTR duties.

Duty	Duty Summary	Duty Standards
Duty 1 – Work Package	As the individual assigned to initiate the acquisition of the government's requirement for a service or supply, the program or other authorized official is required to develop a Purchase Request Work Package for transmittal to the Contracting Officer.	The duty is successfully completed when the authorized official had provided sufficient documentation to support the current, complete, and accurate information to proceed with the procurement.
Duty 2 – Government Property	As the individual identified as the Property Administrator, the COR recommends whether to provide government property to the Contractor.	The duty is completed successfully when the COR correctly recommends the use of government property for a proposed procurement. Justifications provided fully support recommendation.
Duty 3 – Technical Assistance	As the individual assigned to assist with a proposed procurement or contract program, the official may be required to provide pre-award technical assistance when requested by the CO.	This duty is completed successfully when technical assistance provided is sufficient to support actions taken by the CO. Solicitation-award phase assistance is in accordance with any source selection procedures established for the procurement and actions taken did not exceed any delegated authority.
Duty 4 – COR Workplan	As the individual officially delegated contract responsibilities by the Contracting Officer (CO), the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) will need to prepare a COR Workplan and establish and maintain appropriate record-keeping files.	A COR Workplan is measured as a success when: Assigned tasks are clearly defined. Assignments are workable. Concerns are identified. Milestones related to tasks are clearly flagged.
Duty 5 – Postaward Orientation	When requested by the Contracting Officer, the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) will assist and participate in the postaward orientation.	At the completion of an orientation, success is measured when: The contractor is correctly informed of all postaward rights, duties, and milestones of both parties that affect substantial performance. All potential issues that may affect substantial performance are identified and resolved. The resolution of each issue is fully documented in a Postaward report. The Contracting Officer is notified of any issues that were not resolved after subsequent effort. The contractor is advised of procedures, including rebuttal rights, for documenting performance in the agency Past Performance File.
Duty 6 – Administer Government Property	As the individual delegated contract responsibilities by the Contracting Officer (CO), the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) may required to: Monitor the acquisition, control, and disposition of government Property by government personnel and by the contractor. Assess contractors for any loss, damage, or destruction of property.	This duty is considered successfully completed when any damage, loss or destruction has been accurately documented, the CO has been notified and an assessment of costs has been made.

Duty	Duty Summary	Duty Standards
Duty 7 – Monitor Contractor Performance	As the individual delegated contract responsibilities by the Contracting Officer (CO), the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) will be required to: Perform monitoring actions as authorized by the Contracting Officer. Document contractor performance.	Successful monitoring occurs when: All potential problems on performance and delivery requirements are reported to the CO. Any noncompliance with other terms and conditions of the contract are identified and reported to the CO. Sufficient documentation of a contractor's performance exists to support payments under the contract. Technical analysis is sufficient to support Contracting Officer's negotiations and final decision issued.
Duty 8 – Inspection and Acceptance	As the official delegated by the Contracting Officer (CO), the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) performs inspection and acceptance actions and informs the CO when rejecting or accepting nonconformance.	Inspections and acceptances are measured as successes when: Supplies or services tendered by contractors meet contract requirements. Nonconforming supplies or services are rejected or otherwise resolved.
Duty 9 – Document Past Performance	As the official delegated by the Contracting Officer (CO), the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) may be required to document a contractor's performance in the agency's Past Performance file.	Past performance documentation will fairly characterize the contractor's actual performance. Past performance information is complete and sufficient for application in pre-award source selections.
Duty 10 – Modifications	As the individual who is delegated contract responsibilities by the Contracting Officer (CO), the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) will be required to: Review and recommend contract modification requests. Prepare a technical evaluation to support a determination that the change is not outside the scope of the contract.	Assisting the CO with changes to the contract is successfully completed when the COR has provided: A technical evaluation addressing quality, quantity, price, and other factors impacting contract performance. Any other necessary documentation supporting the actions taken by the CO to resolve the modification request.
Duty 11 – Options	As the official delegated contract responsibilities by the Contracting Officer (CO), the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) may be required to: Recommend, in writing, to the CO whether an option should be exercised under the contract (given a contract awarded with options and an option clause). Submit market research data to the CO to support the recommendation to exercise the option.	An option is processed successfully when: The option is exercised within the time frame established in the contract. Relevant market research data is submitted to support the recommendation to exercise the option. The option represents the most advantageous offer available from the commercial market.
Duty 12 – Delays	As the individual delegated contract responsibilities by the Contracting Officer (CO), the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) is required to notify the CO about a delay in the delivery or performance schedule under the contract.	The COR should be able to correctly identify delays in contract delivery or performance schedule. The technical analysis should be sufficient to support the action taken by the CO to remedy the delay.

Duty	Duty Summary	Duty Standards
Duty 13 – Stop Work	As the individual delegated contract responsibilities by the CO, the COR may be asked to assist in administering Stop Work Orders.	This duty is completed successfully when the COR: Can identify and determine the necessity of a Stop Work Order. Administers a Stop Work Order to avoid unnecessary costs. Minimizes government risk.
Duty 14 – Claims	As the individual delegated contract responsibilities by the Contracting Officer (CO), the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) will be required to assist the CO in analyzing a claim, recommend settlement position, and participate in the resolution process.	The COR has successfully completed this duty when: The validity of the claim is correctly determined. A proper and complete report is prepared and fully supports the CO's determination. The government's interests are protected while treating the contractor fairly and equitably within the terms of the contract.
Duty 15 – Remedies	When a breach of contract has been identified, the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) should provide to the Contracting Officer (CO): Sufficient evidence of a breach and suggestion for an appropriate contract remedy, and Assistance in evaluating contractor response.	At the end of this duty, the COR should be able to successfully: Provide remedy notification that is adequate, timely, and will support the CO's final decision. Suggest the remedy that will best minimize the impact of the contractor's performance problems on the requirement, delivery schedule, and cost.
Duty 16 – Termination	As the individual delegated contract responsibilities by the Contracting Officer (CO), the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) may be required to assist the CO in determining whether to terminate a contract.	This duty is completed successfully when the COR identifies termination situations and procedures and can recommend a Termination for Convenience or a Termination for Default (or Cause) when necessary.
Duty 17 – Payment	As the official delegated contract responsibilities by the Contracting Officer (CO), the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) will have to recommend to the CO whether to authorize payment against an invoice in full, in part, or not at all.	This duty is completed successfully when the COR can recommend to the CO whether to authorize payment against an invoice in full, in part, or not at all.
Duty 18 – Closeout	A Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) final duty as the individual delegated contract responsibilities by the Contracting Officer (CO) is to perform contract closeout.	This duty is completed successfully when the contractor and government have fulfilled their obligations in a timely manner, all outstanding contract administration issues have been resolved, and all records are correctly disposed.