

Mr. Kendall's Challenge



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MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL TUTTLE AND BOARD OF VISITORS MEMBERS

Before our next Board of Visitors meeting, I would like you to give some thought to a challenge that Mr. Kendall has given to DAU. This challenge falls under the Better Buying Power initiative of creating a more professional workforce. He has used several phrases to describe what he'd like to have the workforce do more often:

- be experts in your field, not action officers
- think about products more, and about process less – don't just check the box
- think creatively, and ask the critical questions that might not otherwise be asked
- use leadership's guidance as guidance, not as law

In one way or another, Mr. Kendall refers to this nearly every time I talk with him, so it's clearly a priority. In my discussions with government and industry leaders, I often hear a similar sentiment expressed directly or as an undercurrent of frustration with government. The discussion at our last BOV meeting about competition is an example.

We already do a lot at DAU to encourage the characteristics Mr. Kendall describes. Case studies, particularly prominent in the DSMC courses, are an example. We offer courses specifically targeted at "critical thinking". We bring in leaders from all parts of the defense enterprise to speak to our students and offer varying points of view. Despite these efforts and others, there seems to be an unmet need.

It is a difficult problem, and the particular circumstances of our bureaucracy create real obstacles. Nonetheless, the goal of more professional thinking is a worthy one – we can come up with many examples of what its absence costs us. How can DAU help? I would like this to be a topic of discussion at our next BOV meeting. I am writing now so that you can give it some thought beforehand. I look forward to hearing your insights and having a robust discussion.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J.P. Woolsey", is written above the printed name.

James P. Woolsey
President

Promoting Critical Thinking

How can DAU help the Defense Acquisition Workforce...

- be experts in their fields, not just action officers;
- think about products more, and about process less – don't just check the box;
- think creatively, and ask the critical questions that might not otherwise be asked;
- use leadership's guidance as guidance, not as law



Critical Thinking in DAU Courses

Program Manager's Course (PMT 401)

- Acquisition case studies (Harvard model)

Understanding Industry (Business Acumen) (ACQ 315)

- Capture Case Study – Planning and Proposal Development
- Capstone Board Game – Business and Operational Planning

Advanced Information Systems Acquisition (IRM 304)

- MIT Sloan: UPS case study
- DAU Case study: Force XXI Battle Command

Executive Product Support Manager's Course (LOG 365)

- Dozier Ground Vehicle Case Study
- C-65C Atlas Aircraft Case Study
- Integrated Bridge Navigation System Case Study

Advanced Production, Quality, and Manufacturing (PQM 301)

- Harvard Business School Case: Toyota Motor Manufacturing
- Harvard Business School Case: Ford and Dell

Advanced Test and Evaluation (TST 303)

- Risk Management Case Study
- Reliability Growth Case Study

Critical Thinking in DAU Courses (continued)

Contractor Business Strategies (BCF 205)

- Analyze the firm's internal business management and control processes (case study)
- Evaluate impact of external stakeholders on the firm's strategies and financial condition (case study)

Acquisition Business Management (BCF 225)

- Program & Budget Preparation (case study)

Business, Cost Estimating and Financial Management Workshop (BCF 301)

- Defend Cost Estimating (CE) strategies appropriate for a given situation (case study)

Advanced Concepts in Cost Analysis (BCF 302)

- Critically evaluate cost estimates for a major defense acquisition program, develop and defend a reconciled life cycle cost estimate and quantitative risk analysis (case study)

Source Selection and Administration of Services Contracts (CON 280)

- Case Studies

Contract Administration & Negotiation Techniques in a Supply Environment (CON 290)

- Case Studies

Contracting for Decision Makers (CON 360)

- Case Studies
- "Improve Tradecraft in Acquisition of Services" (Senior Leadership Project)