

meeting overload, and disregard of team analysis and recommendations, often resulting in “unmade” decisions or “perpetual decision revisiting.” Poor-communications root causes are never quite the same from organization to organization. Analyzing communications patterns, decision-making processes, and detailed planning becomes a key to solutions for the organization.

We also have achieved valuable insights from APTW structured interviews and surveys on how to achieve solid success in program execution.

**Lesson Learned No. 7:** PMs’ goals need to be viewed from the implementer’s perspective (“a view from the deck plates”) to thoughtfully build a practical, executable plan.

**Lesson Learned No. 8:** Managing the internal and external program success expectations must be an integral part of any successful acquisition strategy.

The DAU APTW team often talks with and surveys the contractor, stakeholders, and others in the decision chain. It’s very common for the program team to have pockets of misunderstanding or lack of trust that need fixing. Quality of data sharing can be “all over the map” within the government, with disconnects between the government team and the prime contractor and between the primes and their subcontractors.

**Lessons Learned:** Encourage transparency throughout the extended program.

Early program data transparency from the start improves the quality of day-to-day management in areas as various as processing CDRLs and drawings, system engineering reviews, program progress assessments, responding consistently to requests from external stakeholders, and many, many more.

The APTW, and organizational “deep dives,” are among DAU’s most complex workshops. Most of their supporting tools can be adapted for short assist visits—e.g., strategic workshops for PMs. In those short assists, we seek to understand the PMs’ and leaders’ goals, interview the teams, and build quick reaction workshops. Surveys (we have a large database of survey questions developed from looking at many programs in different life-cycle phases) can help a program office analyze organizational issues or internal issues. The surveys also may be tailored to analyze specific program activities. Program office interviews and short workshops can help identify the need for program office streamlining or issues in preparing for a milestone. In support of Better Buying Power, we also are aiding programs in the “how to” for implementing BBP initiatives.

This DAU mission assistance toolkit is focused on helping acquirers and their organizations adapt to program changes in our dynamic acquisition world. If we can be of help, please give us a call!

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