

Seventeenth International Defense Educational Arrangement (IDEA) Seminar



June 6-10, 2005
To be held in
Berlin, Germany

The Seventeenth International Defense Educational Arrangement (IDEA) Seminar will be hosted by the Bundesakademie für Wehrverwaltung und Wehrtechnik (The Federal Academy for Defence Administration and Military Technology).

The seminar will be a theme-based format, to include an industry day; will provide for your individual participation; and will provide you information exchange and feedback.

The seminar is sponsored by IDEA, which consists of defense acquisition educational institutions in Germany, Spain, Sweden, Australia, France, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

Those eligible to attend are Defense Department/Ministry and defense industry employees from the seven sponsoring nations who are actively engaged in international defense education programs. Other nations may participate by invitation.

Invitations, confirmations, and administrative instructions will be issued after May 1, 2005.

Contact an IDEA team member for additional seminar information:

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Updated information can be found on our Web site:
<<http://www.dau.mil/international/international.aspx>>

upon your project. You don't have to learn it all by trial and error. Don't hesitate to talk to others with more experience. Get them to share what worked for them and what didn't, and consider that homework. Lessons learned reports from other projects are another great tool.

Develop an ongoing evaluation process. This should include evaluation of your internal processes, products, and documents. Ask how these can be made better, faster, easier, and cheaper. Evaluate what works and what does not for your specific project. An integral part of your evaluation is a look at metrics and measurements. Metrics must be quantifiable, measurable, and limited in both scope and number. Use them to measure things that are within your control. There are many good guides and articles on metrics. That is another part of your homework: learn about metrics.

There are two types of documentation. The first is documentation on the project, processes, and personnel so that you have information you need when you need it. It provides the background and an audit trail for everything that has been done on the project. It doesn't have to be extensive, but it does need to be comprehensive. By that, I mean that you need to make notes—on a daily basis if possible, but at least periodically—about what has happened, what has been accomplished, what the problems were, and how they were overcome. This log or diary will help you answer the questions that arise and can protect you. It also provides lessons learned for yourself and others.

The second type of documentation includes those papers or electronic files that are needed to meet management requirements or regulatory guidance. These are the plans, schedules, analyses, documents, and reports that many managers see as wasted effort. While I, too, have felt that way at times, it turns out that most of them *are* worthwhile. They do more than just filling the squares: they help apply organization, structure, and scope to the project, if nothing else. They also provide the history, records, justification, and basis for decisions on the project and what you have done. They will help you answer the questions that I guarantee will come.

When the documents are prepared, ensure that they are reviewed, edited, and checked for accuracy. Look at them for content and appearance. Bad grammar, errors, typos, and wrong or missing information can damage the document's credibility, hurting both you and the project. It is also good practice to have a subject matter expert review documents for technical and functional content.

While you need to coordinate documents, especially draft documents, for inputs, when it comes to the final version, coordinate for approval/disapproval, *not* as a question or