

FROM OUR READERS

Some Additional Rules

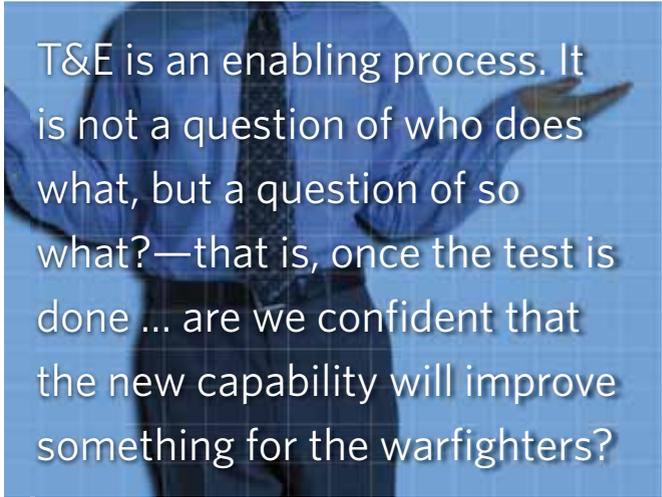
I liked Wayne Turk's article "Step up to the Podium" in the September-October 2008 issue of *Defense AT&L* magazine. It presented many practical tips for preparing, crafting and giving an effective presentation, and preventing the dreaded "PowerPoint® Poisoning" that is so common these days. I plan to distribute the article to all the members in my division as a guide for when they need to make a presentation.

I would like to suggest another technique for effective presentations. A lot of benefit can be realized with pre-briefs of meeting participants before the actual presentation is given. Pre-briefs and offline meetings allow a lot of peer review prior to the formal presentation. It's a good opportunity to get early feedback to be able to tweak the presentation and avoid dropping any bombshells at the actual meeting. We do this routinely here at Naval Air Systems Command. A pre-brief also allows people to concentrate more fully at the actual presentation because it's not the first time they've seen it and they don't have to so many questions.

I also liked Brian J. Duddy's article "To Boldly Go ... Into Defense Acquisition: The Program Manager's Rules Of Acquisition" in the September-October 2008 issue of *Defense AT&L* magazine. The Star Trek theme was an entertaining way to effectively present important information. I liked the rules the author cited, especially the ones about clarity in the statement of work. And I agree whole-heartedly that verbal agreements aren't enough.

I would like to suggest that formal contract modifications aren't always necessary. Naval Air Systems Command routinely holds technical interchange meetings, and the minutes from these meetings provide the written agreements about changes that are made. Minutes are rarely, if ever, disputed, and are a much easier, cheaper, and faster mechanism than a formal contract modification to document changes. Also, making every agreement a contract modification can present a significant workload increase for our contracts department. We usually reserve contract modifications for when there is a change that involves money or a change in scope of the contract.

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T&E is an enabling process. It is not a question of who does what, but a question of so what?—that is, once the test is done ... are we confident that the new capability will improve something for the warfighters?

tions of capability effectiveness and suitability. The conditions for test should replicate the joint mission environment and leverage distributed live, virtual, and constructive T&E capabilities to the maximum extent possible.

The *Defense Acquisition Guidebook* says that the milestone decision authority should designate the lead operational test agency to coordinate all operational test and evaluation. The lead operational test agency should produce a single operational effectiveness and suitability report for the program. (DAG, paragraph 11.1.2.2.)

Let's change the DAG to read, "The milestone decision authority should designate a responsible test organization to coordinate all test, evaluation, and certification activities. At the conclusion of each test activity, the responsible test organization should produce a single capability evaluation report for submission to the MDA, the Joint Staff (for interoperability certification), and the DAA (for information assurance certification)."

In the next round of updates to the DoD 5000, let's eliminate the rice bowls and focus on the capability being proposed for fielding to our warfighters.

Making Integrated Testing a Reality

Every test event should be considered a shared resource. Integrated testing is not just about early involvement; it's about sharing information to improve our understanding of capabilities and limitations. As a shared resource, every stakeholder should have some say in how the event is constructed so it satisfies some part of their needs. To be successful at integrated testing will require some non-traditional thinking and the breaking of those rice bowls. Moreover, integrated testing is not just a matter of saying it; we have to teach it, train it, demand it, plan it, and practice it. So let's get on with it.

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