

CASE STUDY

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

DIRECTOR, ACQUISITION TALENT MANAGEMENT (DATM)



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Transformation Systems, Inc. (TSi) is providing support services to the Director, Acquisition Talent Management (DATM) for all Department of Navy (DoN) Acquisition Workforce (AWF) matters to include strategic planning, policy deployment, career development, education, and the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) implementation. The scope required new application of existing data analytics, leadership coaching, and strategic planning services to the acquisition workforce during a turbulent transition to “Back to Basics” — the first major reform of the defense acquisition workforce management and training framework since the early 1990’s — with a high degree of technical and schedule uncertainty. Performance required highly skilled and educated subject matter expert personnel in I/O psychology and management systems engineering. TSi’s work for DATM includes both civil servants and military officers and involved over 70,000 personnel at scores of locations around the country and the world, requiring us to be responsive to numerous largely independent senior executive teams at various locations.



BACKGROUND

ASN (RD&A) has the responsibility to ensure Acquisition Workforce (AWF) capabilities and capacity requirements are balanced with workload. Meeting this responsibility occurs in the context of an ever-evolving national conversation about affordability and willingness to pay (the relative balance among risk, need, value, health, and cost). Navy’s Acquisition Workforce Strategic Plan describes the current environment and sets goals and objectives for the AWF. The Navy Director, Acquisition Talent Management (DATM) is the enterprise lead for the professional development and management of the AWF. The DATM is the chief AWF advisor to the ASN (RD&A), and the focal point within the Department for all matters related to the AWF.

Introduction: Warfighting system demand signals articulated in U.S. National Strategy documents, such as the Department of Navy (DON) 30-year shipbuilding plan, generate a certain amount of acquisition work that must be accomplished to get capability into the hands of warfighters. DON has allocated various domains of acquisition work among several acquisition System Commands (SYSCOMs).

Each SYSCOM uses a tailored approach to translate warfighting system demand signals in their domain into a sequenced volume of work to be accomplished. Each

SYSCOM's tailored approach estimates how many people (with appropriate knowledge and experience levels) are needed to perform that volume of work. DON DATM has expressed a need for ASN(RD&A) to have a more integrated view of these SYSCOM manpower estimates to promote the ability to defend AWF size and conduct trade-offs when required.

Work accomplished by the DON Acquisition Workforce (AWF) enables industry partners in the value stream to construct and deliver warfighting systems. Delivering acquisition, modernization, and maintenance of warfighting capability to warfighters is the aim of this civilian-military-industrial enterprise. The outcome is readiness to fight and win.

Changes in National Strategy over time have caused cyclical shrinkage and swelling among the ranks of the AWF. Perceptions of AWF affordability fluctuate among stakeholders across time.

Robustly managing the AWF and telling a defensible story about its affordability demands strategic thinking, systems thinking, industrial and organizational psychology, management science, engineering, and principles of major program management.

DON DATM required TSi's expertise in organizational science and engineering to model and assess the dynamics of acquisition people systems and apply a disciplined, science-based approach to inform and develop advanced training for productivity, innovation, and excellence in the acquisition workforce.

The objectives were (1) an energized acquisition workforce, (2) an acquisition workforce focused on productivity, innovation, and technical and professional excellence, and (3) an acquisition workforce managed like an acquisition program, where models provide understanding of process and environmental impacts to AWF capacity, and provide measurement of program costs, productivity, and risks.

The aim was to provide advanced training and supplemental materials to DON's AWF Leadership to enable an acquisition workforce managed like an acquisition program, where models

provide understanding of process and environmental impacts to AWF capacity, and provide measurement of program costs, productivity, and risks.



DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF RELEVANT WORK PERFORMED AND RESULTS ACHIEVED

TSi investigated differences among data sources of record and performed ongoing health assessments (size, hiring, attrition, retirement eligibility, diversity, training and certification compliance, etc.) of acquisition workforce functional areas comprising 70,000+ professionals, including workforce policy change impacts to program performance. TSi refined the use of existing tools by designing and implementing

new metrics reports to produce the most comprehensive diversity analysis to date of key leadership and critical acquisition positions. TSi frequently suggested tools and approaches and data visualization products to achieve additional government benefit.

- TSi routinely prepared and presented information briefs for senior executives, flag officers, and political appointees. TSi was responsive to government requests for additional customized reports and products.
- The government trusted TSi as a key collaborator (and the only contractor) on the Independent Assessment of the Naval Acquisition Career Center which explored current state, identified issues for resolution, and described a desired future state. Regarding an analysis suggested and performed by TSi of Director, Acquisition Talent Management (DATM) key change initiatives over 24 months, the client responded, “That one slide is worth the value of your entire contract.”
- TSi provided data analyses that demonstrated the increasing degree of under-representation of key demographic groups in successively higher positions of authority, casting light on questionable selection and promotion practices. TSi identified a weak interview process as a barrier to successfully filling key positions. Regarding the Interview Rubric developed by TSi, the client responded, “thank you, you and your team are invaluable.” Variability in how Commands select candidates for key program management positions was also identified as a weakness. TSi facilitated the Program Management (PM) Slating Panel Working Group to produce a more consistent selection process.
- TSi did such a thorough job on designing the framework, drafting the priorities, and writing the words for the acquisition workforce strategic plan that Director, Acquisition Talent Management (DATM) forwarded the document to Principal Civilian Deputy for review and signature without any markups. The Secretary signed the Acquisition Workforce Strategic Plan document without requesting any revisions.
- TSi conducted numerous roles and responsibilities exercises with Director, Acquisition Talent Management (DATM) staff and various functional area working groups to assist them in defining appropriate staffing levels to accomplish both mission tasking and improvement tasking, including analysis of needed skill mixes on implementation teams.
- TSi facilitated a special study of System Engineering Campaign Plans, including convening a workshop of 75 subject matter experts across the acquisition Navy to identify and eliminate barriers to Digital System of Systems Engineering across Navy organizations. TSi consistently and effectively communicated status, findings, risks and mitigations, with astute impact assessments of options presented for course of action.

- TSi was instrumental in guiding the development of six functional area (program management, life cycle logistics, business financial management, contracting, test & evaluation, and engineering & technology management) career guides that influence Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) acquisition workforce professionals' certification compliance, continuous learning requirements, and preferred certifications. These career guides will influence the professional development trajectory of over 70,000 individuals responsible for Naval acquisition.



METHODOLOGY, TOOLS, AND/OR PROCESSES UTILIZED IN PERFORMING THE WORK



TSi applied data analytics to explore, monitor, and explain human capital issues. TSi demonstrated exceptional value by creating unique organizational analysis products, including systems dynamics models of the acquisition workforce and environmental systems; an integrated acquisition workforce health measurement portfolio; a model of acquisition workforce affordability and tradeoffs; approaches for career fields to understand and measure productivity, innovation, and excellence; and career navigation tools. TSi utilized Microsoft PowerBI data analytic software to produce real-time data visualizations for deep exploration. TSi maintained an acquisition workforce data warehouse of approximately 250 data elements for each of 70,000+ persons to produce workforce trends, correlations, and deep analytics.

- TSi developed a systems-thinking framework for measuring/managing workforce processes, costs, productivity, and risks; and used that framework to promote executive storytelling about the enterprise consequences of acquisition workforce leadership decisions. TSi maintained Back to Basics milestones chart, detailed plan of action and milestones, and risk register to communicate status to senior executive leader. Regarding talking points and Director, Acquisition Talent Management (DATM) master slides for the new acquisition workforce Strategic Plan developed by TSi, the client responded, "Thanks –even better than I was picturing in my head!". TSi anticipated senior executive questions around acquisition workforce data and designed innovative data visualizations to depict insights. TSi analyzed International (INTL) acquisition workforce training requirements and reporting from the ground up, including review of all Defense Acquisition University INTL course catalogs, Training Requirements Cards, database reports, and the script for INTL quarterly training completions, and design new data visualizations including trends. TSi mediated conflict resolution within and between leadership teams. Participated/facilitated Senior Executive human capital meetings and summits.
- TSi delivered a series of interactive workshops to hundreds of acquisition workforce members who explored cultural challenges in relation to workforce health measures and mission results measures. TSi generated a causal loop model for attrition to depict causal relationships among various levers the Navy can influence, external

labor markets, and the impact on attrition among the work force and identified over two dozen functions and factors influencing the number of vacancies and civilian and military retention rates, including 16 improvement initiatives aimed at increasing retention.

- TSi provided meeting facilitation for numerous high-visibility executive working group meetings including facilitation, read-ahead materials, information capture and organization, transition planning, cross function and cross organization coordination, scheduling, and status tracking of actions and products. TSi ensured effective/efficient meetings with disciplined follow-up, process analysis and improvement, data analysis, and decision support.



DEMONSTRATION OF SPECIFIC EXPERIENCE AND/OR SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS

The contract required new application of existing data analytic, leadership coaching, and strategic planning services to the acquisition workforce during a turbulent transition to “Back to Basics” – the first major reform of the defense acquisition workforce management and training framework since the early 1990’s – with a high degree of technical and schedule uncertainty. Performance required highly skilled and educated subject matter expert personnel in industrial-organizational psychology and management systems engineering. TSi provided staff with a diverse, advanced skill and experience mix contributing to high-quality, effective service delivery.

- TSi staff are trained in Industrial and Systems Engineering (ISE) and Industrial and Organizational (I/O) Psychology as mutually supportive and integrating disciplines. The common threads between these disciplines are Business and Organizational Effectiveness. Overlapping practice areas within these two disciplines include Systems Thinking, Workforce Development, Employee Satisfaction and Motivation, Instructional Design, Behavioral Psychology, Leadership, Strategic Planning, Performance Measurement, Statistics, Process Improvement, and Change Management.
- Specific ISE qualifications and experience include Process Management, Engineering Management, Performance Measurement, Productivity & Quality Measures, Engineering Economy, Compensation Management, Work Measurement/ Time Study, Work Design, Human Factors Engineering, Project and Program Management, Strategic Planning, and Facilitation.
- Specific I/O Psychology qualifications and experience include People/Human Resource Management, Leadership, People Performance, Survey Development, Performance Management (Appraisal), Compensation Management, Job Analysis, Job Design, Ergonomics Team Effectiveness/Team Building, Human Resource Planning, Applied Behavior Management, and Coaching