



PROJECT MANAGEMENT  
CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE

A.J. CLARK SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING  
Civil & Environmental Engineering Department



# ENGAGING WITH INDUSTRY FOR OPTIMAL PROJECT RESULTS

*Krista L. Sweet*

*2019 Project Management Symposium*



# Importance of Industry Engagement

- Government saves time, money, and limited resources
- Understand "art of the possible" and trade-offs
- Understand what to buy and how to buy it
- Attract small businesses, increase competition of ideas
- Incentivize industry investment and performance
- Improve the acquisition process
- **ACCOMPLISH MISSION**



# Barriers to Effective Communication

## **Government:**

- Fear of getting in trouble
- Bid protests
- Inconsistent leadership support
- Time constraints
- Lack of training
- Knowledge gaps re: how private sector operates

## **Industry:**

- Fear of sharing proprietary information
- Fear of losing competitive advantage
- Fear of upsetting customer
- Lack of forums for engagement



# Models for Industry Engagement

## **Example 1:** Improving procurement of a service

- *Market Research Roundtable on IT Service Level Agreements (SLAs)*

## **Example 2:** Bringing first responder technology to market

- *The Future of First Response Workshops*

## **Example 3:** Improving the acquisition process

- *Reverse Industry Days at DHS, DoD, GSA, IRS, HHS*



# Market Research Roundtable on IT SLAs

## **Focus:**

- Best practices and contract language from other agencies
- Performance levels and methods for measuring specific types of SLAs
- Trades offs and cost benefit analysis between SLAs
- Industry methodologies to develop, maintain, and monitor SLAs
- How to write SLAs to get specific results and avoid common pitfalls



# Compare Engagement Models - Time, \$, Value

## Request For Information

- 2-4 weeks for industry response (\$\$\$), additional time to review responses
- Identity and experience of written responders unknown
- No ability for explanations, follow up questions, clarification, or feedback

## Market Research Roundtable

- 3 hour discussion
- 8 industry SMEs w/ 8 gov't program and procurement leads
- Two-way exchange allowed for questions, clarifications, and multiple viewpoints



# Future of First Response Workshops

## Goal:

- Define future vision of tools, clothing, technology, and support systems for first responders in 15 years, then develop those products and systems.

## Challenges:

- Defining requirements: understanding current state of technology v. desired future state
- Business case, return on investment, incentives, market dynamics, engagement strategy

## Take Away:

- Start with the problem you are trying to solve
- **DON'T DEFINE THE SOLUTION**



# Reverse Industry Days – Hot Topics

- How does industry make decisions (RFIs, RFPs)?
- What are the cost drivers, timeline, and resources involved with response?
- How do levels of engagement and acquisition strategy affect price, innovation, competition, teaming, and delivery?
- How does industry interpret requirements and evaluation criteria?
- What are the challenges of doing business with the federal government?
- What makes a quality debriefing?
- What drives industry to protest?





# Reverse Industry Days – Formats and Types

## **Industry led panels and scenario-based discussions**

### **Mock role plays**

- Industry "gate" reviews (RFI and RFP)
- Industry deciding whether to protest
- Industry deciding on teaming partners
- Contract debriefing exercises and role plays with government and industry

### **Specialty RIDs**

- Federal Cloud Adoption and Procurement Practices (GSA)
- Intersection of Acquisition, Innovation, Cybersecurity, and Technology (DHS)



# Questions?

## **Contact:**

Krista L. Sweet, *Director of Policy*

Homeland Security & Defense Business Council

[ksweet@homelandcouncil.org](mailto:ksweet@homelandcouncil.org)