

There is a misperception among many job seekers that contract positions are inferior to permanent employment. Even if your ultimate goal is a permanent position, you may find that contract work is a desirable alternative.

This is not true. In fact, the FAR encourages innovations such as the Agile approach, allowing agencies to change direction in collaboration with their vendor after both learn lessons from experience and customer feedback received during early phases sprints in their major IT modernization projects. This paper describes the details of how the FAR supports Agile, and suggests that acquisitions should be considered successful based on whether benefits have been received from the eventual implementation of the project – not from simply selecting a vendor and awarding a contract to start the project.

Introduction It is not uncommon in acquisitions of information technology that typical standard federal agency procurement practices fail to yield the intended results. A common complaint is that the final product the government receives is quite different than what it envisioned at the beginning of the acquisition process. Is it possible for the government to implement better acquisition practices that yield better results and still work within acquisition regulations? As a corollary, how can it be done without greater risk of protest? Additionally, we will show how this approach presents a lower risk when viewed in the context of achieving the purpose of the acquisition. To successfully capture the value from Agile, the Government must be willing to change in three different ways. The first change should be in the perspective. When procuring agile services, the Government should recognize that they are not acquiring a system, but services. This is the most frequent unspoken assumption in systems acquisitions. Before the advent of Agile software development, Waterfall was the default methodology. By the time a contract was awarded, so much had changed that it was not unusual for the Government and Contractor to immediately begin making changes and negotiating revised cost estimates. In Agile, it is more important to obtain the services that will eventually deliver a system that provides the greatest value to the Government at contract completion over delivering comprehensive and convincing proposal documents. It is about Show-Me instead of Tell-Me. The second change in perspective essential to successful acquisition is to start viewing Federal Acquisition Regulations FAR as the gateway to success instead of a roadblock to using innovative techniques in acquisitions. The FAR actually promotes innovation! Later in this article, we will show how many in the Government currently misinterpret the FAR and, as a result, do not fully take advantage of all the potential tools and techniques that are already available through innovations in information technology. Finally, the third change is that Contracting Officers must change their perspective on risk. Contracting Officers need to adopt the perspective that the greatest risk to the Government is that once a contract is complete, if the Government does not have a successful program, the Government has wasted both time and money at the expense of the taxpayer. Program failure is the greatest risk. The downside risk of using innovative techniques is much smaller in comparison to program failure. The change in perspective starts with a review of current commonly used acquisition activities to honestly assess their effect. In a standard acquisition, there are some market research activities such as a Request for Information RFI. Then, there may be a pre-solicitation conference where the Government talks to industry about the acquisition and answers questions. Then, there might be a draft Request for Proposal RFP followed by more written questions and answers, followed by the actual RFP with more question and answers. After receipt of proposals, there is usually a written discussion with offerors. There are unfortunate consequences of this process: Written documents are subject to interpretation and misinterpretation by the reader. Even good writers find it a challenge to put their vision into words. If the requirements are not clear or are interpreted differently by different members of industry, the estimates to perform the work will be flawed or inconsistent. The written question and answer cycle is not always helpful, because the written Government response may be misinterpreted as well. Compiling all these documents and responses takes time, slowing the acquisition and decision-making process. All the time and energy to create these documents has little usefulness to either the Government or contractors after award. Most programs are very different at implementation compared to the vision when acquisition is starting due to changing circumstances and time delays on the first day of

execution. They end up awarding it based only on written responses, which only proves one contractor can write a better proposal. Rarely do the written acquisition documents define the metrics for success of the program. Due to the length of time and the self-inflicted documentation requirements, there is an increased cost of acquisition for both government and contractors. Multiplied across the entire Government, the cost of doing business this way is staggering. It allows for shifting needs and wants of the end user. To further improve the probability of success, the Government could structure acquisitions to obtain services from a contractor who not only knows Agile software development, but can assist the Government in the process of envisioning the end product. Current Acquisition Process and Problems All this may sound very sensible and reasonable. However, it prompts the question: The acquisition reforms envisioned under the Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act in and Federal Acquisition Reform Act of were brought about precisely to help the Government to acquire products and services in ways more akin to those used by private businesses, and to better ensure the best use of taxpayer funds. Agile software development was an unknown concept as well. However, the changes brought about by those Acts were not meant to deter innovation in acquisition. In fact, the Acts themselves were a great evolution in Government acquisition reform. The question is how far they were meant to be taken? Is the use of technology and communications over the nearly quarter century since the FAR was rewritten outside the intent of the reform? Or, were these Acts ahead of their time and meant to be viewed in light of their intent? Existing Acquisition state and Agile Acquisition There are unique contracting challenges that Government and industry both must address in purchasing and delivering Agile software development services. However, none of the challenges negate the need to revisit the acquisition process and implement innovative techniques using available IT tools to improve contractor performance. That is addressed later in this article. Reverse Planning “Start to End A new perspective on systems acquisition is needed from start to finish” literally. It sometimes seems as if the procurement phase and the contract performance phase are two disconnected processes. Once a contract is awarded, the acquisition staff are done and can get back to their day jobs. It may benefit agencies to designate certain Contracting Officers as subject experts on Agile. It would enhance the success of the system acquisition if it were viewed as a holistic process from the end state all the way back to the acquisition planning stage. By taking a holistic view, the Government starts by clearly describing what the successful acquisition looks like when it is done instead of simply describing the steps that should be taken. A good process envisions the Contracting Officer to have more engagement throughout the contract life cycle. Since the sprint cycle of the Agile approach has much shorter steps, there are more opportunities to ensure contractors are performing as expected. Many times, Contracting Officers are only engaged during performance when there is a problem or a change to the requirements. They should also be engaged when the program is succeeding so they have greater insight into how quality contractors perform Agile development. The Contracting Officer should be engaged on what the end state looks like as well. After this initial step, start imagining it even farther into the future months or years later. The participants then write down, in as much detail as possible, exactly what the system will have done to make them successful in achieving their objectives. This exercise helps define success at the end of the acquisition process. If everyone, including the acquisition contracting officer, agrees on what success means, it will drive actions toward that end. This process may be compared to swimming in the open water toward a specific spot “it helps to lift your head out of the water frequently to see if you are on track. Agile Acquisition Start from End The result of this exercise should not be filed in a drawer once is complete. Share it with industry! The envisioned success might be achieved! Consider inviting industry to participate in the process so vendors get a more in depth understanding of how to achieve success in performing the contract. As discussed earlier, the goal of this process is not to perfectly define the finished product in the pre-RFP phase, only what program success looks like. The problem with a SRD is that both the Government and industry are committed to delivering those requirements regardless of whether they add any value or continue to be relevant. Additionally, revisions to the SRD means that that there will likely be cost increases and schedule delays due to the negotiation process. The best way to avoid this situation is to only describe what success looks like from a high level in concrete measurable terms, but not cling to those terms. Agile development favors incorporation of new requirements. It works best when the outcome is measurable in meaningful terms.

Since the process now has a clearly defined outcome, we can consider how innovative techniques can further the likelihood of success starting at the very earliest phases of procurement planning! As we mentioned earlier, the Government often conducts market research by sending a Request for Information RFI to various industry members. A pre-solicitation conference is held, with industry invited to attend. As we know, however, many times after contracts are awarded, there are still technical as well as other questions that must be addressed. Anyone who has participated in any of these activities knows how and why this occurs. The exchanges are usually tightly controlled and the communication is typically one way. Industry is asking the questions and the Government is not completely open in communicating its needs because it is risk averse. When the Government responds, the responses are often cryptic, leaving industry members to derive their own interpretation of the response. This could be done in a very open and transparent way using the innovative techniques that are part of our amazingly technological age. For example, there are some great new organizations that facilitate multiparty participation in discussions see <https://www.innovation.gov/>: The Government could engage multiple industry professionals and clearly communicate what their budget is to get a better idea of the possibilities of what can be achieved in the timeline with their budget. When this is the basis for the dialogue, the chances significantly improve that the outcome of the development during execution will be realistic. The Government will have a much better understanding of what is possible, and thus be better able to evaluate actual performance. And, industry partners will have a better understanding of what the Government is trying to achieve. Additionally, all of this could be recorded and made available online for any interested bidder to review, adding to transparency in the process. Several Government agencies are already increasing the use of innovation in the acquisition process. So, now we come to the big question: The answer might surprise. Principally, the reforms were implemented so that the Government could act more like a business, rather than being bound to award a contract to the lowest bidder.

Chapter 2 : Why Contracts with Your China "Friends" Are So Necessary - China Law Blog

It's been a rough offseason for the Redskins, especially with Scot McCloughan absent from the NFL Scouting Combine, so Jay Gruden's extension should be welcome news for fans.

Oshie powers through with game-winner after two head shots The Redskins got drilled by the Falcons last Sunday. Another embarrassing loss to a team with a high-powered offense, much like the Saints game one month earlier. Only this time, things went from bad to worse for Washington. The team lost three offensive starters against Atlanta, as Brandon Scherff, Shawn Lauvao and Paul Richardson hit the injured reserve this week. What does it all mean? So, how to get right for the Burgundy and Gold: Morgan Moses might play, but is definitely still hurt. To fill the void, Washington signed a rash of veteran free agent linemen, and look for at least two of them to start this week in Tampa. With Ryan Fitzpatrick at the helm, the Buccaneers have the vertical pass game working and a pair of elite deep threats in DeSean Jackson and Mike Evans. The Redskins defense has slowed some of the best running backs in the league, guys like Ezekiel Elliott and Christian McCaffrey, and held those teams below 20 points. Like blind date at a heavy metal show ugly. In two losses to the Saints and Falcons, the Redskins gave up 81 points and 52 first downs. Tampa has a pass-first offense, just so you know. Alex Smith had his first yard passing game with the Redskins last week, and for some, that is a breakthrough. Either way, Jay Gruden needs more from his offense to get back in the win column. Tampa has the worst pass defense in the NFL, and Smith should be able to feast. Yes, the Redskins are thin at wideout, but Adrian Peterson and Jordan Reed could be more heavily used in the pass game as well. Smith has been improving for Washington, and this would be a great week for a breakout. They said it Alex Smith was asked if there is more pressure on him to produce because of all the injuries: I have to be accountable. I have to hold up my end. I think you can get into trouble trying to do that. No, I mean I have to do my job better, a little better.

Chapter 3 : Why It Makes Sense to Invest in Metal Roofing in Minnesota | Quarve Contracting, Inc.

Why a contract extension makes sense for both Larry Nance Jr. and the Cavs New, comments In a post LeBron James world, there is value in the Cavs locking Nance beyond next season.

As lawyers, our thoughts upon hearing this sort of thing tend to be as follows: It is always better to have a good relationship with the companies with which you do business, be that company be in China or in Peoria. But to us as lawyers, that you are friends with your Chinese counter-party or that you have a great relationship is legally irrelevant. We have been trained to ask the what ifs and the what ifs here are easy-peasy sorry, but I just wrapped up season two of *Stranger Things*, which BTW, is every bit as good as season one. The what ifs here are easy for us because we deal with them pretty much every day, usually in one of the following two situations: The foreign company was wrong about its Chinese counter-party and their relationship with it. Or maybe they were right but the situation changed enough so that the relationship soured. The existing ownership or management structure changed and the relationship changes with it. Either way, we as lawyers can help a company having to deal with one of the above situations if they have written documents to protect them. Contracts are generally written when the relationship among the contracting parties is good. There are three reasons why it makes sense to have a contract with your Chinese counter-party “ even if your relationship with it is great: The first is to achieve clarity. To make sure you and the Chinese company are on the same page. At that point, you and the Chinese company can figure out what is realistic and then you know what to expect, realistically, going forward. Needless to say, I can give countless examples of this sort of thing, but this is yet another reason why we advocate putting your contract in Chinese and not just translated. Clarity before you start the relationship. It is more important than you think and it totally makes sense no matter how good your relationship may be. The second benefit of having a contract with your Chinese counter-party is that it will likely bring that company to heel. By this I mean that just having a well written contract that is at least potentially enforceable means that the Chinese company knows exactly what it must do to comply. And, in most cases, it might as well. If your Chinese manufacturer makes widgets for 25 foreign companies and 5 of those have very clear time deadlines with a very clear liquidated damages provision , and the Chinese company starts falling behind on production, to which companies will the Chinese manufacturer give production priority? Of course it will put the five companies with a good contract at the front of the line and that is relevant even if you have a good relationship. Or are you willing to go to the back of the line because your Chinese counter-party believes you are the safe one to delay because of your good relationship?

Chapter 4 : Spacio Design Build | Why Signing a Cost-Plus Contract With Your General Contractor Makes

Contract manufacturing for early-stage companies, in most cases, is the logical route to market to be effective for a brand that is managing capital and taking advantage of the efficiencies outsourcing offers.

People will take them if they have to, but would rather hold out and wait for a better, long-term offer. However, if you are looking for a job, it may still be a good time to consider a temporary assignment. Even if your ultimate goal is to secure a permanent position, you may find that contract work is a viable, and even desirable, alternative. Makes you more marketable If you are currently out of work, having a job “ even a contract assignment ” makes you more marketable for permanent positions. Most hiring managers find currently employed people more hireable than those who are out of work. You can also expand your network as you make contacts in a new job. Contract work looks great on your resume as you add different companies and skills to your work experience. You may also increase your chances of a counter-offer for a permanent position if you are working in a contract assignment. Get that reach assignment Despite the shift in the job market, many organizations still have stringent hiring criteria for permanent positions. They are looking for potential employees with 10 out of 10 skills on their wish list. The criteria for hiring for contract assignments, however, is often more flexible. Contract posts at many companies emerge quickly because of an immediate need. If a new client comes on board or a project deadline is moved up, the organization needs to hire people fast to take on the extra workload. Because the timing is urgent, they are more likely to hire people who meet most, but not all of their requirements. This presents an opportunity for job seekers to try out a new industry or land that stretch assignment to help build skills and further their careers. Strike resume gold The less rigid contract hiring process also allows job seekers a chance to look for positions at prestigious organizations in their industry. At most Fortune companies, the vetting process for permanent positions is lengthy and rigorous, but less so for contract jobs. Contractors can get a foot in the door of a prominent company, and can then name-drop on their resumes and with their networks to help secure permanent employment. Compensation advantage Compensation is typically higher for contractors because they are paid by the hour as opposed to a set salary. If the job requires overtime, that time is compensated, unlike the same hours for a salaried employee. If a job seeker has a spouse, partner or parent whose job offers health insurance and other benefits, contract work can be lucrative. Contracting also provides some income while being unemployed and gives the person the flexibility to continue looking for a permanent job. People have the luxury of finding the right position, not just any position. Better chance of securing a permanent job Contract assignments can also turn into permanent positions. Today, many employers are still hesitant to add permanent staff, because of the risk of the hire not being a good fit for the organization. If the organization sees strong performance, they are extremely likely to offer a candidate a permanent position. We are seeing this trend increasingly in They are willing to take a small step to relieve their employees by hiring temporary workers, but are hesitant to take a leap and make permanent hires until they know the investment will pay off. This business climate makes it an opportune time for people to consider contract assignments. Job seekers who choose contract work expand their networks, expose themselves to greater opportunities, and build their brands, which are advantages in any job market.

Chapter 5 : Compressed Air Performance-Based Contracting and When It Makes Sense - BAY Controls

For the next four years, Chris Paul will make \$ million, more than probably everyone who sees this blog post will make in their lifetime €” combined. Well, unless CP3 reads this. CP3 turned

Dean Marsman blog , Industry News contract manufacturing , manufacturing , maquiladora , mexico 0 Companies who outsource their manufacturing typically think of China and other Asian countries. Yet in many cases, contract manufacturing in Mexico makes the most sense, due to labor cost considerations and logistics. There are different modes of outsourcing, but for many, the contract manufacturing option is the most advantageous. This is especially true in view of the convenience and cost efficiency of Mexican production. With this option, foreign companies can take advantage of the highly skilled, low-cost labor pool in Mexico without actually having to relocate to Mexico. The plants are already established and available. This is similar to, but not the same as contract manufacturing or subcontract manufacturing, a solution requiring far less involvement by the foreign firm. US companies or companies from other countries need not acquire a maquiladora plant and begin managing these Mexican workers, as convenient as this option may be. Contract manufacturing in Mexico is an even more convenient solution, allowing these firms to place a manufacturing order with another firm with a plant in Mexico. This option is becoming quite popular for US firms, and contract manufacturing in Mexico is growing. Employment numbers, output levels, and orders placed are rising. The maquiladora system is also growing, and for good reason. For many companies, owning or leasing a manufacturing plant in Mexico works. But for many others, a subcontracting option makes more sense. So how do you know which is best for your operation? In general, companies in the late stage of growth and maturity phases of the business life cycle do best taking advantage of the maquiladora option. This allows for full control and long-term exploitation of the operation. They perform all or most of their manufacturing at this plant. But for smaller to medium sized companies without the infrastructure to handle order flow, it is far more convenient to order from a contract manufacturer in Mexico. Either method takes advantage of the unique benefits Mexico offers. But typically contract manufacturing is a low-risk, low-involvement solution for companies requiring outsourced manufacturing service. Each contract manufacturer handles all these for you. Start up is quick and easy. Companies can experience the benefits of Mexican manufacturing without the commitment of acquiring a maquiladora. Mexico offers skilled labor and nearby proximity for US companies, and even Asian companies are moving manufacturing there. For large, mature companies looking to shift their focus to Mexico, the maquiladora option is attractive. Contract manufacturing in Mexico is growing, and for many, now is the time to join the trend.

Chapter 6 : 3 reasons why contract extension for Jay Gruden makes sense | NBC Sports Washington

Yet in many cases, contract manufacturing in Mexico makes the most sense, due to labor cost considerations and logistics. There are different modes of outsourcing, but for many, the contract manufacturing option is the most advantageous.

Maybe you know that you need to reduce your compressed air system pressure. Or perhaps your facility is being pushed to cut energy expenses as part of a corporate mandate. One that involves an outside vendor. As with any project involving partnering with a vendor, funding the project can be a major hang-up. The same goes for choosing the method in which to work with another company. Sometimes, the solution to this problem comes down to using a compressed air performance contract – also known as the performance-based contracting PBC method. But what does this mean, exactly? And when would it make sense for you to use a performance-based contract for your compressed air project? What is Performance-Based Contracting? Describe the requirements in terms of results required rather than the methods of performance of the work Use measurable performance standards i. There are several scenarios where using a performance-based contract for your compressed air project may make sense: For instance, when Bay Controls worked with Ford Motor Company on a compressed air project for 12 of their plants, Ford requested that we deliver the intended project as a performance contract for this very reason. This is especially helpful if you are exploring ways to pay for compressed air upgrades with little or no out-of-pocket costs. As we mentioned in our blog post about this topic , if you can align your project financing with the anticipated energy savings via a performance contract spanning several years, you can potentially pay for compressed air upgrades entirely with the energy savings they generate via the performance contract. Cross-functional teams are especially needed to establish the requirements, the measures, and evaluation methods for PBC. It is important that such teams work together to solve the issues related to the contract rather than defending their traditional silo organizations. However, it is not always possible to have an integrated, cross-functional team involved in a project involving compressed air. If this is the case, this may not be the best method or manner to enact your project. For example, do you want to lower your energy spend by a certain percentage or dollar amount? Or meet a corporate mandate? Or perhaps prevent system-wide compressed air pressure fluctuations? If you do, though, using a project-based contract can ensure the project success! FAR gives this explanation of what this looks like: Everything depends on the nature of the project. In some circumstances, you may not be able to be flexible. You may have to be prescriptive. If you can set performance indicators or standards before the project begins and measure them throughout the project, you can successfully utilize a performance-based contract for this compressed air project. And what should these indicators or standards look like?

Chapter 7 : Why contract manufacturing in the U.S. makes sense

Reasons Why Makes Sense For Your Company/India's largest online contract staffing marketplace Slideshare uses cookies to improve functionality and performance, and to provide you with relevant advertising.

Chapter 8 : Why Ryan Tannehill's new contract makes sense for the Dolphins - calendrierdelascience.com

There are a whole host of benefits to being a contractor in the UK. The most obvious being that, when operating as a limited company, you stand to make substantial tax savings compared to normal employees.

Chapter 9 : Axiom Contracting Group, LLC | Why Us

Outsourcing manufacturing production of electronic equipment to the Far East has become a reflex action on the part of many U.S.-based original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) who are apparently bedazzled by the region's low labor rates. Hidden and not-so-hidden increased logistics and other costs.