



OFFICE OF FEDERAL  
PROCUREMENT POLICY

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

October 17, 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF ACQUISITION OFFICERS

FROM:

Paul A. Denett  
Administrator

SUBJECT:

The 2007 Federal Contracting Workforce Competencies Survey

The development of the acquisition workforce is a priority for the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) and assessing the skills of the current workforce is critical to this initiative. In April, OFPP and the Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI) conducted a voluntary and anonymous Contracting Workforce Competencies Survey and received over 5,400 responses – nearly half of all civilian agency 1102s, and many others performing similar duties, responded. The attached general analysis highlights the key findings from the survey that Chief Acquisition Officers (CAOs) should use in developing strategies to close the competency gaps in the acquisition workforce. Additionally, a summary of the survey data is available to the general public at [www.fai.gov](http://www.fai.gov).

As a result of the survey, OFPP and FAI identified gaps in such areas as project management, requirements definition, performance-based acquisition, and negotiation. Additional gaps are identified in the attached summary, and future versions of the survey will include the capability for agencies to add agency-specific competencies to ensure that the tool provides the necessary information for short and long-term strategic human capital planning. FAI will work with agencies to identify training and other solutions to overcome these gaps.

Each CAO should review the agency's survey results with their Chief Human Capital Officer as they prepare the Gap Analysis Report and Improvement Plans for closing contracting workforce skills gaps, which are due to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) by December 15, 2007. In that report, please include the steps the agency is taking to close any skills gaps identified. The human capital officers at OPM can provide you with guidance on acceptable gap closure strategies. FAI will share any additional information specific to the contracting workforce with the Acquisition Career Managers (ACMs) and this information will be posted on the ACM community of practice at [acc.dau.mil/iacmc](http://acc.dau.mil/iacmc).

Please also include in the report to OPM a succession plan for the GS-1102 series in your agency that identifies strategies and milestones for recruitment and retention at all levels. You may want to consider not only the numbers of contracting professionals required but also the competencies needed in your organization and strategies for obtaining these skills. Please provide an electronic copy of your report to OFPP.

Thank you for your participation in the survey, and we look forward to working with you on our continuing efforts to ensure the acquisition workforce has the competencies needed. If you have any questions, please contact Lesley Field at OFPP on (202) 395-4761 or [lfield@omb.eop.gov](mailto:lfield@omb.eop.gov), or Karen Pica at FAI on (703) 805-2333 or [Karen.Pica@fai.gov](mailto:Karen.Pica@fai.gov).

cc: Director of the Office of Personnel Management  
Chief Human Capital Officers  
Senior Procurement Executives  
Acquisition Career Managers

Attachment

# Federal Acquisition Institute



## 2007 CONTRACTING WORKFORCE COMPETENCIES SURVEY

### GENERAL ANALYSIS

October 2007

## Introduction

The Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI) has performed data analysis on the 2007 Contracting Workforce Competencies Survey sponsored by the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP). General results are presented below.

### I. Survey Objectives

- A. Determine available supply of contracting skills
- B. Determine where resources should be concentrated to improve or maintain essential contracting skills
- C. Identify centers of excellence

### II. Target Audience – Federal Government employees in Executive Branch civilian agencies (DoD is collecting data with a different tool).

- A. Personnel in the GS-1102 series
- B. Personnel, regardless of series, performing Contract Specialist duties
- C. Military personnel, outside DoD, performing Contract Specialist duties
- D. Personnel, regardless of series, with Contracting Officer warrant authority

### III. Demographic Data

- A. There were 5,409 total survey respondents from 26 job series including: administrative, legal, engineering and architecture, investigation, supply, human resources, and accounting.
- B. The number of GS-1102 survey respondents was 4,323, which represented 48% of the target 1102 population of 9,016. Those in the GS-1102 series constitute 80% of survey respondents. The majority of 1102s (87%) identified themselves as Contracting Officers or Contract Specialists.

### IV. Key Demographic Data

- A. Survey respondents constitute a representative sample of the overall federal contracting workforce.

<b>A typical member of the federal contracting workforce is:</b>	
<b>According to Survey Data</b>	<b>According to ARFAW* Data</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 51-55 years of age</li><li>• Female</li><li>• GS-1102, Grade 12-13</li><li>• Not in a supervisory role</li><li>• Holds a Bachelor's degree or higher (70%)</li><li>• Eligible to retire in the next 10 years</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 46-47 years of age</li><li>• Female</li><li>• GS-1101, Grade 12</li><li>• Not in a supervisory role</li><li>• Holds a Bachelor's degree (71%)</li><li>• Eligible to retire in the next 10 years</li></ul>
Additional CWCS Data:	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Contracting Officer or Contract Specialist</li> <li>• Has 20+ years of federal government experience</li> <li>• Has 11-20 years of federal contracting experience</li> <li>• Has 1-3 years of private sector contracting experience</li> </ul>	<p>*FAI Annual Report on the Federal Acquisition Workforce (ARFAW)</p>
---	--

- B. Contracting duties are performed by multiple job series, with the majority of this group being in the GS-1102 contract specialist series.
- C. Of the 1102s surveyed, 64% of the Contracting Officer population is age 46 or above. 59% of the Contracting Officer population is eligible to retire over the next 10 years, and 52% of Contracting Officer respondents report plans to retire over the next 10 years.
- D. Of the 1102s surveyed, 49% of the Contract Specialist population is age 46 or above. 41% of Contract Specialists are eligible to retire over the next 10 years, and 37% of the Contract Specialist respondents report plans to retire over the next 10 years.

## V. Overview of General Analysis

- A. Multiple series are performing contracting duties. For all respondents, the proficiency levels in the general business competencies and in the technical contracting competencies are generally appropriate for the positions held.
- B. Of the survey respondents, the highest proficiency levels in general business and technical contracting competencies appear in the GS-1102 workforce.
- C. Within the GS-1102 workforce, the highest proficiency levels in the general business and the technical contracting competencies appear in the Contracting Officer and Procurement Analyst job functions.
- D. The highest proficiency levels in both the general business and the technical contracting competencies are reported by those respondents who have a Masters or PhD degree.
- E. The highest proficiency levels in both the general business and the technical contracting competencies are reported by those respondents with 21 or more years of federal contracting experience.
- F. Overall, contracting workforce technical competencies are generally appropriate for the positions held. Of the 17 technical competencies surveyed, gaps requiring attention were identified in such areas as project management, defining requirements, and financial management. General business competency gaps were identified in such areas as influencing/negotiating and oral communication.
- G. Analyzing survey results in concert with demographic information available in the FAI Annual Report on the Federal Acquisition Workforce suggests that a significant amount of the intermediate to advanced proficiency in both technical and general business competencies will be leaving the government acquisition workforce over the next 10 years.
- H. Respondents reported spending an almost equal amount of time performing duties in each of the three acquisition phases during their normal work activities.
- I. Respondents indicated that training in the following competency areas would be beneficial on an individual and/or an organizational level:
  - i. Project management
  - ii. Defining government requirements and performance based acquisition

- iii. Effective management of requirements for contract administration
- iv. Effective performance management and use of performance metrics
- v. Contracting professionals also indicated that training in negotiation skills, strategic planning, and the effective resolution of contract disputes and closeout would be beneficial.

J. The survey included questions on the workforce environment as well as additional questions for managers only. The following table indicates the responses to key environmental and managerial questions.

**Environmental and Managerial Responses**

<b>Employees agree that:</b>	<b>Managers agree that:</b>
Managers approve training requests.	Upper management supports training requests.
Rotational assignments to broaden expertise would be beneficial.	They would support their employees in identifying rotational assignments.
Their supervisor plays a key role in their IDP*.	They play a key role in their employees' IDP.
Their performance review gives them information about their training needs.	They provide feedback to their employees on their training needs in performance reviews.
They would benefit from a mentor or coach.	They are able to provide adequate on-the-job training and coaching for employees.
They are provided dedicated work time to complete online training courses.	They have adequate resources and support to provide the training needed by employees.
<b>Employees are neutral in that:</b>	<b>Managers are neutral in that:</b>
They have a mentor or coach.	Their team is adequately staffed to allow time for them to complete operations and also provide mentoring and on-the-job training.
	Their workload allows them the opportunity to manage their employees' development effectively.
	Their workload allows them the time to increase their managerial and leadership skills by attending training and workshops.

\* Individual Development Plan