

Developing Career Paths to Strengthen Federal Acquisition Workforce

Engagement Profile: Career Management



PARTNERSHIP FOR
PUBLIC SERVICE

Background

The Partnership for Public Service (PPS) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that strives to revitalize the federal government by inspiring a new generation to serve and by transforming the way government works.

Catalyst

The federal acquisition workforce is responsible for managing procurement obligations. The nature of these obligations has changed—from a focus on the purchase of only goods to an emphasis on the procurement of both goods and services. In addition, the scope of federal procurement obligations has increased tremendously over the past decade, but the size of the acquisition workforce has not kept pace. Increasingly difficult working conditions, resulting in part from a lack of resources to handle the changes in the nature and size of acquisitions, have strained the workforce, resulting in retention issues.

Challenge

In light of the continuing challenges faced by the federal acquisition community, PPS identified a need to provide tools and resources, and undertook a multipronged initiative to help the workforce. PPS requested support from PDRI, a CEB Company, to develop a comprehensive career path framework for the Federal Contract Specialist (1102) series that could be leveraged across the government as a career development resource.

Solution

We worked with the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), NASA, and the EPA to design relevant career paths for the Contract Specialist series. We facilitated cross-agency meetings to identify career path components, including qualifications, competencies, and critical developmental experiences. We also worked with agency representatives to develop a career path graphic illustrating the various paths federal employees follow to advance in the Contract Specialist series. We then automated the career path resource to enable employees to view path progression and requirements in an online environment.

Contact Us to Learn More

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Outcomes

Valuable career path information is now available to support career development of acquisition professionals across the federal government. This career resource ensures that Contract Specialists and those considering the occupation understand the potential long-term career opportunities available in the acquisition field, the critical competencies needed to succeed, and the development activities and experiences they should seek to strengthen those competencies. Individual agencies can customize the information in the career path resource as necessary.

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