

## Mentor-Protégé Needs Assessment

Every agreement must have a "Needs Assessment". This is a review of the protégé to determine areas to be included in the Training and Assistance section in the Mentor-Protégé Agreement. This section assesses where you are, where you want to go, and how you are going to get there.

The Needs Assessment is crucial to determining the types of training required, areas of improvement, shortfalls the Protégé currently has, and any areas mutually agreed upon between the Mentor, Protégé, and the Military Service or DoD Agency Program Manager. The Needs Assessment will result in the final training required, including a milestone schedule for when the training will be started and completed.

There is no DoD template required for the Needs Assessment. However, each Military Service or DoD Agency may have a template they require you to use. It is important to communicate regularly with your Program Manager prior to submitting the proposed agreement.

Listed below are some sample questions to consider when conducting your Needs Assessment. These are included to give you an idea of what to consider and are not inclusive.

### General Corporate Information:

- What do you consider your firm's core business competencies?
- How many sites do you have and what are the locations?
- Who are your clients (Federal, DoD, state, local, and commercial)?
- Have you worked with this Mentor before?
- Briefly describe your process for identifying and pursuing business leads.
- What prime contracts and subcontracts have you had in the last 3 years?
- What types of contract vehicles have you used (i.e. GSA schedule, IDIQ, TM, FFP)?
- Describe your company's certifications (e.g. SEI-CMM, SEI-CMMI, ISO 9001).
- Please provide an organizational chart for your firm with a description of roles and responsibilities.
- Have you been a Protégé before?

### Financial Information:

- What kind of financial system does your company utilize (i.e. Deltek, Peachtree, etc.)? Is it DCAA approved?
- How do you determine indirect costs and their allocations?
- Have you ever filed a Cost Accounting Disclosure Statement with the Defense Contract Audit Agency (DCAA)? If so, has it been reviewed/audited and approved by DCAA?
- Describe your project cost accumulation and reporting system.
- Do you have a method of segregating allowable and unallowable cost?
- Do you have an established line of credit?

### **Technical Competencies:**

- Describe your experience/expertise with the following technical capabilities: systems engineering, software engineering, network security, information assurance, e-commerce and e-business, web design/applications, quality assurance (mergers and acquisitions, risk, metrics, CM, etc.), telecommunications engineering, IT and general logistics support, 24/7 helpdesk.
- Do you have a configuration management process? Quality control process?
- Describe your software/hardware lifecycle processes.
- Describe your core technological capabilities and level of expertise, including COTS software tools.
- How does your organization stay current on technology and industry issues?
- Describe your technical training program for employees (office automation, finance and accounting, contracting, quality or configuration management, etc.).
- What individual employee technical certifications does your company maintain?

**Describe your company's one, three and five year goals.**

## Mentor-Protégé Awareness Concepts

- **Courtship:** Court a Mentor or Protégé who has a corporate philosophy that either mirrors or compliments your own corporate philosophy. Don't make a hasty commitment; take time to date, and set clear expectations.
- **Engagement:** Create your own experience by individualizing your agreement and maximize your strengths and address your weaknesses.
- **Realistic Self Assessment:** Mentor should encourage Protégé to honestly analyze current capabilities and commitment of time and energy, mentor should provide honest, constructive feedback, and both must understand the boundaries and requirements of the relationship.
- **Relationship Building:** Communicate clearly and frequently. Develop a firm, reliable understanding of goals and expectations. Address problems promptly, make decisions thoughtfully and as **partners**.
- **Mutual Respect:** Protégé should acknowledge the mentor's knowledge and experience. Mentor should appreciate the Protégés commitment. Both should recognize and celebrate their successes.
- **Trust:** It is essential for both parties. Trust comes from honest communication, reliability, consistency, and sense of loyalty.
- **Dedication and Enthusiasm:** Both Mentor and Protégé must make an honest commitment to each other and to the partnership. Both mentor and Protégé should regard the relationship as an opportunity for self-growth rather than a task to be done.
- **Time:** Schedule regular, uninterrupted blocks of time for meetings and other communication. "Check-in" informally between scheduled meetings and conversations.

- Do you have an external auditing firm? If yes, when was your last audit and what were the results? If no, have you ever been audited by an outside firm?
- Do you have issues regarding invoicing, aging receivables, or your collection processes?

### **Sales/Marketing/Business:**

- Do you have a web site?
- Describe the composition of your sales and marketing group(s). Does your company subscribe to an on-line service to identify new business opportunities?
- Do you have marketing literature?
- Describe your internal proposal procedures, (including your archiving system), use of templates, color team reviews, and reuse of documentation. When were these procedures last updated?
- Describe your marketing plan. Is it current and used?

### **Contracting Information:**

- Do you have one or more employees whose duties are either totally or significantly involved in contract or subcontract administration? If not, do you hire temporary contract/subcontract professionals?
- Describe your established internal written procedures on contract and/or subcontract administration. When were these procedures last updated?
- Who within your company is authorized to sign contracts and/or subcontracts?
- Outline your contract and subcontract mix (i.e. number and contract type of U.S. Government prime contracts, number of higher-tier subcontracts with Government prime contractors, number of state or local Government contracts, and number of commercial contracts). Include purchase orders.
- If you have contract/subcontract issues that cannot be addressed by your full-time staff, have you engaged legal counsel in order to resolve these issues?

### **Human Resources:**

- Describe your human resources processes, (including recruiting and hiring).
- What is your attrition rate? Describe your employee retention policies/initiatives.
- Do you have an orientation program and welcome packet for new employees?
- Do you have an employee handbook? If so, does it encompass the following areas: Training Programs, Dress Code, Code of Conduct, Sexual Harassment policy, and Ethics?
- Describe your benefits, (401K plan, pension plan, tuition reimbursement, employee training, health insurance, etc).
- How do you communicate employee-related information throughout your organization?
- How do you handle employee grievances?
- Do you have a performance management/assessment plan in place? Do you have a recognition program in place?
- Describe your employee termination policy/process.