COURSE SYLLABUS

CON 7200: Better Business Deals Course (Self-Paced)

This course equips experienced federal contracting professionals with advanced negotiation strategies, contractor financial analysis skills, and deal-structuring techniques to achieve best-value outcomes for the Government. Participants develop the judgment, tools, and practical confidence to lead negotiations across a range of complex federal acquisition scenarios.

> Group classes in Live Online and onsite training is available for this course. For more information, email onsite@graduateschool.edu or visit: https://www.graduateschool.edu/courses/con-7200-better-business-deals-course-self-paced

support@graduateschool.edu • (888) 744-4723

Course Outline

Module 1: Foundations of Effective Negotiation

- Identify the core principles that underpin effective negotiation in the federal acquisition environment.
- Distinguish between negotiation styles and recognize when each approach yields better outcomes.
- Examine the legal and regulatory framework governing negotiations under the FAR.
- Assess the unique dynamics of Government and contractor relationships as they affect negotiation strategy.

Module 2: Pre-Negotiation Planning

- Develop clear pre-negotiation objectives aligned with Government cost, schedule, and performance priorities.
- Establish negotiation positions, minimum acceptable positions, and target ranges.
- Analyze contractor proposals to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for negotiation.
- Prepare a structured negotiation plan that supports effective execution and documentation.

Module 3: Contractor Financial Analysis

- Identify key components of contractor financial statements and interpret their significance.
- Assess contractor financial health, risk factors, and profit drivers.
- Use financial data to inform Government negotiation positions and risk mitigation strategies.
- Recognize indicators of financial instability that may affect contractor performance.

Module 4: Understanding Contractor Business Structures and Cost Behavior

- Describe common contractor business structures and how they affect cost allocation.
- Analyze how indirect cost structures, overhead rates, and general and administrative expenses influence pricing.
- Identify cost drivers that offer opportunities for negotiation leverage.
- Apply knowledge of cost behavior to evaluate cost realism and reasonableness.

Module 5: Interest-Based Versus Positional Bargaining

- Differentiate between interest-based and positional bargaining approaches.
- Identify conditions in which each negotiation method is most appropriate.
- Apply interest-based techniques to uncover underlying contractor priorities and constraints.
- Demonstrate effective use of positional tactics when appropriate to protect Government interests.

Module 6: Developing Persuasive Negotiation Positions with Cost and Price Data

- Construct negotiation positions supported by cost or pricing data and market analysis.
- Apply price analysis and cost analysis techniques to substantiate Government positions.
- Use data from comparable acquisitions, market research, and independent government estimates.
- Communicate negotiation positions clearly and persuasively to achieve desired outcomes.

Module 7: Should-Cost Analysis as a Negotiation Tool

- Explain the purpose and application of should-cost analysis in federal contracting.
- Identify cost elements appropriate for should-cost review and challenge.
- Use should-cost findings to establish Government cost positions and negotiation targets.
- Distinguish between should-cost management and traditional cost analysis approaches.

Module 8: Negotiation Simulation Exercise 1 — Price and Cost Negotiation

- Apply pre-negotiation planning skills in a structured practice scenario.
- Demonstrate the use of cost and price analysis tools during simulated negotiations.
- Practice effective communication, active listening, and position management.
- Debrief simulation outcomes to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

Module 9: Profit and Fee Negotiation

- Apply the weighted guidelines method to develop a pre-negotiation profit objective.
- Analyze contractor risk, cost efficiency, and capital investment factors affecting profit.
- Incorporate market-informed approaches when weighted guidelines are not determinative.
- Negotiate profit and fee outcomes that reflect performance risk and Government objectives.

Module 10: Structuring Incentive and Award Fee Arrangements

- Identify the types of incentive and award fee contract structures available under the FAR.
- Evaluate when incentive arrangements are appropriate to align contractor and Government interests.
- Design incentive provisions that motivate contractor performance on cost, schedule, and quality.
- Assess the administrative requirements associated with managing incentive and award fee contracts.

Module 11: Contract Terms Negotiation

- Identify high-impact contract terms that carry significant risk and cost implications.
- Negotiate warranty provisions, intellectual property rights, and data rights allocations.
- Evaluate termination for convenience and default clauses in the context of Government risk.
- Apply strategies for negotiating other key contract terms to protect Government equities.

Module 12: Recognizing and Countering Contractor Negotiation Tactics

- Identify common contractor negotiation tactics used in federal contracting environments.
- Recognize psychological and procedural techniques that may disadvantage the Government.
- Apply effective counter-tactics while maintaining a professional and ethical posture.
- Develop strategies for managing impasse and keeping negotiations productive.

Module 13: Negotiating Contract Modifications and Equitable Adjustments

- Explain the regulatory basis for contract modifications and equitable adjustments under the FAR.
- Analyze contractor requests for equitable adjustment and identify supportable versus unsupportable elements.
- Apply negotiation techniques specific to post-award changes and modifications.
- Document modification negotiations in accordance with applicable procurement requirements.

Module 14: Multi-Party and Team Negotiations in Federal Contracting

- Describe the dynamics of multi-party negotiations involving technical, legal, and program stakeholders.
- Define roles and responsibilities within a Government negotiation team.
- Apply strategies for coordinating team positions and managing internal disagreements.
- Recognize how contractor team compositions may influence negotiation strategy and tactics.

Module 15: Negotiation Simulation Exercise 2 — Complex Deal Scenario

- Apply advanced negotiation strategies in a multi-issue, high-complexity scenario.
- Integrate cost analysis, profit negotiation, and contract terms into a cohesive negotiation approach.
- Demonstrate effective team coordination and leadership during simulated negotiations.
- Evaluate outcomes and identify trade-offs made during the negotiation process.

Module 16: Debrief and Lessons Learned from Simulation 2

- Analyze simulation performance against pre-negotiation objectives and planned positions.
- Identify effective techniques applied and opportunities for improvement.
- Apply lessons learned to refine individual negotiation strategies going forward.
- Discuss common negotiation pitfalls encountered in federal contracting and how to avoid them.

Module 17: Ethics and Legal Boundaries in Negotiation

- Identify ethical obligations and standards of conduct applicable to federal procurement negotiations.
- Recognize behaviors that constitute fraud, misrepresentation, or other legal violations.
- Apply regulatory guidance to resolve ethical dilemmas that arise during negotiation.
- Understand the consequences of ethics violations for individual contracting professionals and the Government.

Module 18: Documenting the Deal — Price Negotiation Memorandum Best Practices

- Explain the purpose and legal significance of the Price Negotiation Memorandum in federal contracting.
- Identify the required elements of a compliant and defensible Price Negotiation Memorandum.
- Apply documentation standards that support audit readiness, transparency, and accountability.
- Draft Price Negotiation Memorandum language that accurately reflects negotiation history, positions, and the final agreement.

Module 19: Capstone Negotiation Exercise — Full Deal Scenario

- Integrate all course competencies into a comprehensive, end-to-end negotiation scenario.
- Demonstrate the full pre-negotiation planning, execution, and documentation sequence.
- Apply advanced strategies for managing complex deal structures and multi-issue negotiations.
- Produce a complete negotiation record including pre-negotiation objectives and final agreement documentation.

Module 20: Capstone Debrief, Feedback, and Course Integration

- Evaluate capstone exercise performance against stated objectives and negotiation principles.
- Synthesize course learning into an integrated framework for professional application.
- Identify personal strengths and development areas as a federal negotiator.
- Apply course insights to improve negotiation outcomes in current acquisition roles.