COURSE SYLLABUS

Performance Work Statements Course (Self-Paced)

Learn how to write effective performance-based statements of work (PWS) and quality assurance plans to ensure contract clarity, compliance, and performance accountability.

> Group classes (Live Online) and onsite training are available for this course. For more information, email onsite@graduateschool.edu or visit: https://www.graduateschool.edu/courses/performance-work-statements-course-self-paced



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Course Outline

Module 1: Introduction to Statements of Work (SOWs)

- Explain the services acquisition process and why clear, complete SOWs matter.
- Differentiate specification types and requirement documents, including SOW, PWS, and SOO.
- Apply FAR principles such as promoting competition and reflecting only the government's minimum needs.
- Use the order of precedence for requirements documents to select the right approach.
- Recognize how requirement wording affects competition, interpretation, and performance risk.

Module 2: Service Contracts

- Define service contracts and review common examples across federal missions.
- Trace the evolution of service contracting and diagnose frequent problem areas like poor planning and oversight.
- Distinguish personal from non-personal services and identify legal boundaries for personal services.
- Mitigate vulnerabilities with on-site contractor personnel through management controls in the PWS.
- Explain why services are difficult to describe and how to express outcomes for intangible deliverables.

Module 3: Performance-Based Acquisition (PBA)

- Summarize the Seven Steps to Service Acquisition and related DoD "Complete Guide" steps.
- Identify PBA's core elements: PWS written to outcomes, measurable standards, QASP, and incentives.
- Use market research resources and tools to inform requirements and strategy.
- State PBA objectives such as maximizing performance, competition, commercial practices, and savings.
- Develop performance indicators and standards that enable objective assessment.

Module 4: Requirements Analysis

- Perform a job analysis that produces inputs, work, outputs, workload, and resource needs.
- Develop performance indicators, performance standards, and acceptable quality levels (AQLs).
- Build an Independent Government Cost Estimate (IGCE) using historical data, workload, and resource analyses.

- Select and structure incentive arrangements and deductions aligned to measurable performance.
- Compile the Performance Requirements Summary (PRS) matrix to bridge analysis into the PWS.

Module 5: Writing the Performance Work Statement (PWS)

- Organize the PWS with scope, tasks, deliverables, schedules, performance standards, quality control, and special requirements.
- Write clearly using plain language, active voice, and unambiguous terms that focus on “what,” not “how.”
- Encourage innovation by avoiding prescriptive labor categories and excessive “how-to” requirements.
- Understand when to use a Statement of Objectives (SOO) and how it shifts solutioning to offerors.
- Align the PWS with the PRS so monitoring and acceptance are traceable to defined outcomes.

Module 6: Quality Assurance

- Describe the purpose and key elements of a Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan (QASP).
- Select monitoring methods that map to indicators, standards, and AQLs in the PRS/PWS.
- Identify remedies for substandard performance, including deductions when reperformance is not feasible.
- Clarify surveillance roles and responsibilities to ensure consistent, documented oversight.