

Programmatic Risk Management Comprehensive Course

This course builds practical, DoD-aligned skills to identify, analyze, prioritize, and manage program risks in defense acquisition programs using the DoD Risk Management Process, clear risk statements, the 5x5 matrix, and effective handling strategies.

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/programmatic-risk-management-comprehensive-course>



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Course Outline

Module 1: Introduction to Programmatic Risk Management

- Define risk, issue, and opportunity in a DoD program context.
- Distinguish essential risk terms, including risk appetite vs. risk tolerance and inherent vs. residual risk.
- Explain how program risk management supports acquisition policy and federal oversight expectations.
- Identify common sources of program risks that can affect cost, schedule, and performance.

Module 2: The DoD Risk Management Process

- Describe each phase of the DoD risk management process and how the phases connect end-to-end.
- Outline how to plan a Program Risk Management Process (PRMP), including roles and responsibilities.
- Apply practical methods to identify, analyze, mitigate, and monitor risks as a continuous cycle.
- Differentiate qualitative and quantitative approaches to likelihood and consequence assessment.

Module 3: Risk Statements and the 5x5 Matrix

- Construct well-formed risk statements that include condition/event, consequence, and root cause.
- Rewrite risks using an if-then format and avoid common risk statement pitfalls.
- Plot risks on the 5x5 Risk Reporting Matrix using likelihood and consequence criteria.
- Interpret risk levels (low, moderate, high) to support prioritization and communication.

Module 4: Risk Handling and Mitigation Overview

- Distinguish among the four handling strategies: accept, avoid, transfer, and mitigate.
- Select handling approaches using factors such as risk appetite and cost-benefit considerations.
- Describe the purpose and core components of a risk mitigation plan.
- Explain how a risk register is used to document, track, and report risk actions.

Module 5: In-Depth Analysis and Root Cause Techniques

- Apply structured techniques to identify root causes and key risk drivers.
- Use tools such as fishbone diagrams, bowtie analysis, and the 5 Whys to analyze risk scenarios.
- Compare qualitative and quantitative analysis methods and when to use each.
- Translate analysis results into clearer, more actionable risk understanding.

Module 6: Developing Risk Mitigation Plans

- Build a complete risk mitigation plan that includes actions, resources, milestones, and schedules.
- Define success criteria and exit conditions to know when mitigation is working.
- Incorporate fallback or contingency provisions for high-impact risks.
- Explain how mitigation plans align with program baselines and escalation/acceptance processes.

Module 7: Opportunity Management

- Recognize opportunities as positive uncertainties in a DoD program context.
- Distinguish opportunity handling strategies (pursue, share, enhance, accept).
- Apply ROI thinking to decide which opportunities are worth pursuing.
- Describe how an opportunity register is used to document and track opportunities.

Module 8: Tracking, Reporting, and Burn-Down Charts

- Explain how risks are monitored and re-assessed over time.
- Identify common approaches to risk status reporting and update cadence.
- Interpret and create a basic risk burn-down chart using sample data.
- Connect risk tracking to program performance measures and milestone reporting.

Module 9: Hands-On Group Workshop

- Work in a team to identify risks for a realistic (notional) defense acquisition program case study.
- Write risk statements in if-then format and analyze them using the 5x5 matrix.
- Prioritize key risks and document handling approaches in a risk register template.
- Present one top risk and rationale during a short debrief discussion.