

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and Other Government Agencies Implement Learning Tree's FAC-P/PM Curriculum, Quickly Improving Performance

Learning Tree's FAC-P/PM training program was developed to allow U.S. government customers to effectively develop the program/acquisition competencies that are essential to improving performance on major government projects. Quickly adopted by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and other major government agencies, the Learning Tree FAC-P/PM program has helped the federal government develop unique competencies vital to improved cost, scheduling and performance on major capital investments.

The Challenge



The U.S. federal government acquisition workforce has been challenged for years to improve its performance. With over \$500 billion in acquisitions annually, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has implemented stricter standards of accountability and oversight for all major capital investments. One of the latest standards of accountability and oversight is the Federal Acquisition Certification for Program/Project Managers (FAC-P/PM), which has been implemented to improve the approach and mind-set of federal acquisition professionals managing projects in all federal agencies.

The VA sought an innovative program that provided a customized FAC-P/PM curriculum, performance improvement measures, and a partner that was committed to supporting the VA in rapidly developing its 15,000-member acquisition workforce. The goal was to be better equipped to manage the complexity of major mission-critical programs, such as Eliminate Veteran Homelessness, Enable 21st Century Benefits Delivery and Services, as well as Automation of the GI Bill.

The Learning Tree Solution



Learning Tree addressed the challenge by developing an innovative FAC-P/PM training curriculum appropriate for all levels—Entry, Journeyman and Senior/Expert—that would support federal acquisition professionals in achieving FAC-P/PM certification while remaining consistent with OMB standards. After a curriculum review, the Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI) gave the Learning Tree Program its highest possible rating of 5. Highlights of the program include:

- A custom case study that provides acquisition professionals with an actual simulation consistent with the pressures and expectations of a highly visible, deeply complex federal program.
- An innovative groundbreaking “Action Plan” approach to capturing performance improvement as a direct result of the FAC-P/PM training.
- Greatly reduced cost of training, as well as out-of-office time, to get agency professionals quickly certified.

The Results



Learning Tree's FAC-P/PM curriculum is having a significant impact toward reducing training costs and improving program performance at the VA and other federal agencies. Acquisition professionals are now more effective on the job and able to maintain their improved performance consistently.

In just six months, Learning Tree and the VA have collectively trained over 1,000 program/acquisition professionals and are now overseeing and reporting on more than 700 improvement actions identified as a result of the best practices inherent within Learning's Tree FAC-P/PM training.

This custom-designed curriculum is aligned with the specific FAC-P/PM competencies and recommended training hours as outlined by the OMB and FAI—saving the federal government millions of dollars. Aside from the financial benefits, civilian agencies are now confidently investing in training that directly addresses the unique challenges and difficult decisions acquisition professionals must manage in order to effectively deliver on their program/project objectives and mission goals.

The VA Acquisition Academy (VAAA) selected Learning Tree's FAC-P/PM program as best in meeting its needs for rapid workforce improvement and has rolled out the program under the guidance of the Deputy Secretary. Richard Garrison, VAAA Vice-Chancellor for the Program Management School, stated, “The VAAA realized it needed a training program that focused on achieving performance improvement in both the individual's and the organization's programs and projects. The VA found this in Learning Tree's FAC-P/PM training program.”

