



Focus on the Future

Guest Predictions: James J. Daday

Guest Predictions is a regular feature in which we ask leaders in a number of professions a set of questions that affect us all.

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James Daday founded Agile Management Group in 2012 to support companies that need adjustments in program management, particularly as pertains to federal contracting. He has 36 years experience as a US Air Force active duty officer and DoD/DHS contractor. Mr. Daday was the Director, Mission Assurance & Acquisition Services for Engility Corporation, providing acquisition and information assurance support to various DoD agencies. He has served as an electronic warfare engineer and manager, as well as both a U.S. intelligence program manager and liaison officer with the German Luftwaffe; and intelligence systems acquisition officer at Hanscom AFB, MA. Mr. Daday has both a BSEE and MBA. He resides in Virginia with his wife, Beth. They have a married daughter, a married son and 1 grandson.

Q: Which changes in your professional environment in the past 3-5 years have you found to be the most beneficial?

A: When you look across the Federal Sector, there has been continual pressure to reduce budgets and reduce costs. This applies to the Federal government, federal programs, and supporting contractors. What has not changed is the pressure for improved performance. This has led to more streamlined acquisition and management processes and tools to continue to do things better, cheaper, and faster.

Q: What changes have been the most troubling to you?

A: The government's adaptation of "lowest price, technically acceptable" evaluation criteria for competitive awards. It may appear to drive down cost for the government, but from what I have experienced, it severely impacts performance, employees, contractor reputation, and mission performance.

Q: How will globalization affect your professional area in the near term?

A: The effect will be felt in two areas. First, as US Government spending for contractor support decreases, companies will look to capturing new business overseas. The effect could be both positive and negative depending on the industry and work. Second, The US Government itself will look to reach out to other countries for mutual assistance. This holds the potential for improving US stature and security overseas.

Q: What significant challenges might be anticipated in your professional area in the next few years?

A: For better or for worse, there are a significant number of people and companies that rely on doing business with the Federal Government. There will continue to be less and less spending available on government contracts. The government is faced with the challenge of continued operations and sustainment of systems, especially DoD and DHS systems and processes, that have a "must pay" price tag. Industry must adapt as well. Alternatives include diversification and overseas markets. Large companies may be able to adapt better than small companies.

Q: What are the greatest challenges confronting young professionals in Western culture today?

A: My daughter is enrolled in the PhD Program at the University of Nebraska. Her dissertation will be on Corporate Leadership... dealing with the mix of Baby Boomers, Gen X'ers, and Gen Y'ers in the workplace. In the work environment today we are seeing a mix of outlooks, each with a different sense of entitlement, as well as different ideas of self-worth and motivation. The challenge for the young is to take their "video game" mindset into the professional world and successfully sell their value to those entrenched in 'traditional' business environments.