Key Personnel vs Outcome-Based Acquisition: A Shift in Mindset for Agile Delivery

### **Training Module: Rethinking Key Personnel in Outcome-Based Agile Contracts**

#### **Slide 1: Title**

**Key Personnel vs. Outcome-Based Acquisition** Aligning Contract Structure with Agile Delivery

#### **Slide 2: Why This Matters**

* Traditional contracts often focus on individual resumes and named personnel
* Agile delivery depends on adaptable, empowered teams focused on user outcomes
* Misalignment can lead to performance risk, delays, or unnecessary contract actions

#### **Slide 3: Key Concepts**

* **Key Personnel (KP):** Named individuals contractually required for performance
* **Outcome-Based Acquisition:** Contracts structured around results, not inputs
* **Agile Software Development:** Emphasizes team collaboration, iteration, and user feedback

#### **Slide 4: Common Practice vs Agile Need**

| **Aspect** | **Traditional KP Model** | **Agile/Outcome-Based Approach** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Focus | Individuals | Teams |
| Structure | Prescriptive | Flexible |
| Risk Strategy | Lock in resumes | Trust team capability |
| Performance Unit | Person | Team |
| Evaluation | Resumes, Certs | Team experience, delivery history |

#### **Slide 5: When Key Personnel Requirements Hurt**

* Slows down onboarding or team adjustments
* Requires mods for personnel changes, even if performance is unaffected
* Incentivizes “check-the-box” compliance over results
* Undermines contractor’s responsibility for staffing to meet outcomes

#### **Slide 6: When Key Personnel May Be Appropriate**

Use KP sparingly, and only when:

* Role is critical to contract governance or stakeholder coordination
* Transition or continuity risk is high
* Program-level management needs to maintain direct relationships

**Examples:**

* Program Manager
* Technical Integration Lead (across vendors)

#### **Slide 7: Contract Type Matters**

| **Contract Type** | **KP Relevance** |
| --- | --- |
| **T&M** | Higher need for KP; Government bears more risk |
| **FFP / Outcome-Based** | Limit KP; trust contractor to staff and deliver |

#### **Slide 8: Recommendations**

* Shift focus from **who** to **what** (outcomes)
* Use team-based evaluation criteria
* Hold vendors accountable for delivery, not resumes
* Limit KP roles to those where continuity is essential

#### **Slide 9: Discussion**

**Ask participants:**

* Have you experienced problems with rigid KP clauses?
* What outcomes could you define in place of specifying individual qualifications?
* How could evaluation criteria better reflect team capability?

#### **Slide 10: Final Takeaways**

* Agile delivery succeeds when we empower teams, not individuals
* Over-specifying KP limits flexibility and undermines accountability
* Use KP intentionally and sparingly, and focus evaluation on ability to deliver outcomes

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