LEVERAGING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION INNOVATING THE ACQUISITION WORKFORCE – PRODUCT SUPPORT EDITION

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Research Question

- How does Product Support integrate with Digital Transformation (DX)?

- What is being done and what should be done?

- What needs to occur in terms of workforce development to support these objectives?

Research Issue

- Product Support is "the package of support functions required to field and maintain the readiness and operational capability of <u>covered systems, subsystems, and components</u>, including all functions related to <u>covered system readiness</u>."

- DX initiatives across the DoD are prolific and include tools, infrastructure, workforce development and many other dimensions

- Much of the training has focused on digital engineering and engineering at large, with logistics and product support seemingly neglected or delayed

- What has been done or planned to account for this gap, and what should the digitally transformed workforce for product support entail?

Methodology

- Qualitative methods to understand people's attitudes, behaviors and culture towards product support and digital transformation

- Pre-interview research
  - Conversations with programs and support teams on needs and skill sets desired/needed
  - Curricula developers on current and planned training
  - Document research on current trainings offered and coverage of topics
- Document analysis
  - Position descriptions
  - Analysis of available Product Support/Digital training to the acquisition workforce
  - Other training and certifications

Observations

- When discussing DX or DE and logistics, the conversations are focused on software tools, like Product Lifecycle Management (PLM), executing tasks using software, or logistics product data

- Training and certifications remain focused on supply chain and management, rather than other IPS elements

- Rarely discussed is
  - What data are required and flow
  - The work and skill required to make proper use of the PLM
  - What a PLM provides or tactical steps to achieve the desired end-state
  - Less discussed are the other Integrated Product Support (IPS) elements that are required to realize full Product Lifecycle support in a digitally transformed operating model

Results

- While B2B modernized the digital landscape for engineering, digital transformation training with a focus on integrating product support remains ill-defined

- Digital Transformation courses
  - Courses coded in engineering include mission engineering, systems thinking, data analytics, value management and a multitude of digital engineering courses
  - **Only two four-hour courses**
    - **Digital Product Support**
    - **Data analytics fundamental for product support**
  - **No other courses currently planned**

- Open questions
  - Considerations, scope and value of a PLM rollout
  - What should Readiness mean in the future?

Recommendations

- Significant work remains to define, scope and integrate all IPS elements in the digital framework

- Establish a dedicated training curricula that focuses on modernizing Product Support in the digital age

- Training must highlight and showcase not only the integration of the IPS elements, but also how Product support integrates with Engineering, T&E and other disciplines