Title: Overview of the GAO Agile Assessment Guide
Presenters: Michael Holland (HollandM@gao.gov) and Jennie Leotta (LeottaJ@gao.gov)
Track: Agile in Government
Type: Talk
Audience Level: Learning, practicing
Room Setup: Theater, No Preference
Duration: 60 minutes
Keywords: Agile guide, federal government, Agile adoption, Agile acquisition, Agile execution
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Abstract: The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) is an independent, nonpartisan agency that reviews federal programs in response to Congressional requests. In the past, we have found that federal agencies have struggled to adopt and execute Agile. As a result, we began to develop the GAO Agile guide in consultation with approximately 400 experts from across government, industry, and academia. The guide will establish a consistent framework based on best practices that can be used across the federal government for developing, implementing, managing, and evaluating agencies' IT investments that rely on Agile methods.

The guide will provide a comprehensive framework for Agile adoption. The will inform agency transitions to Agile and oversight entities as they seek to evaluate these transitions. For example, the guide will cover topics such as agency, team, and program-level best practices for adopting Agile; requirements management best practices, acquisition best practices for Agile projects; and best practices for cost and schedule estimating and using Earned Value Measurement on Agile projects. It will also discuss Agile adoption and execution metrics and provide a discussion on myths surrounding Agile development. GAO has previously developed guides for cost estimating, schedule estimating, and technology readiness assessments that have been widely adopted in the federal government and beyond.

This presentation will provide an overview of the *GAO Agile Assessment Guide* and the best practices described within.

Information for Program Team:
This presentation expands on our prior presentation at various conferences within the US and internationally. It will review the contents of the guide and provide an overview of the guide's contents and best practices included for Agile adoption, acquisition, and execution in the federal government.

The presentation will be 60 minutes; 45 minutes to present and a 15 minute question and answer period. However, based on prior experience, it may be necessary to expand the question and answer period because there is a high level of interest in this subject matter within the federal government since GAO reports and best practice guides are often cited in presentations and used to help other federal agencies develop their own policies and guidelines. Additionally, GAO informs Congress and provides recommendations to federal agencies that can impact their funding.

The following is a tentative outline of the presentation

Overview of the Guide (5 minutes)
- GAO mission and the guide's purpose
- Review of the chapters included in the Guide

Chapter 3: Agile Adoption Best Practices (15 minutes)
- Team-level practices
- Program-level practices
- Agency-level practices

Chapter 7: Acquisition Best Practices (10 minutes)
- Tailor contract structure and inputs to align with Agile practices
- Incorporate Agile metrics, tools, and lessons learned from retrospectives during the contract oversight process
- Integrate the program office and development teams

Chapter 9: Agile Execution Best Practices (15 minutes)
- Cost
- Schedule
- EVM

Question and Answers (15-30 minutes)

Prerequisite Knowledge: none

Learning Outcomes:
- To familiarize the audience with resources available to them
- To provide an overview of key themes to effectively manage software products using Agile methods in the government
- To disseminate information regarding the best practices GAO has established through our internal research and discussion with approximately 400 experts
- To share information about practical challenges in the federal government among participants during the question and answer period

Presentation history (of speaker):

Michael Holland is an Assistant Director on GAO's Information Technology and Cybersecurity team, where his current portfolio includes the development of GAO's Agile Guide and evaluating Agile adoption at the Department of Homeland Security; Agile implementation at the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services; Department of Defense business system modernization; Department of Defense financial management systems; major DOD information technology systems; efforts to modernize the Department of Defense's information technology infrastructure; and government wide adoption of enterprise architecture best practices. In addition, he led GAO's effort to develop its 2011 Enterprise Architecture Management Maturity Framework. He also periodically updates GAO's Congressional clients on ongoing and completed assessments; provides input to related legislation; and advises internal business modernization efforts at GAO.

He has presented on GAO's Agile Development guide and Agile development in the federal government at the 2017 CPIC Forum in Washington, DC and to GAO's International Fellows program participants in 2017, in addition to various internal training sessions. He has also presented on GAO's perspective on federal enterprise architecture at the Federal Enterprise Architecture Conference in 2010, 2011, and 2012; to the Society for Information Management's

Enterprise Architecture Working Group in 2012; to the Federal Chief Information Officers Council in 2011; and to the Federal Chief Enterprise Architects Forum in 2012.

Jennie Leotta is a Senior Operations Research Analyst for the Government Accountability Office (GAO). She is responsible for performing cost, schedule, and Earned Value Management analyses to support audits on a wide range of government programs. Before joining the GAO, Jennie worked for the Department of Homeland Security and the Navy, developing and analyzing cost estimates. Jennie holds a B.S. in Quantitative Finance from James Madison University and an M.A. in Economics from George Mason University.

Jennie has presented many of GAO best practice guides. For example, she presented the GAO Agile Assessment Guide at EVM World (2018) and served on an Agile panel at the SAFe Summit (2018). She also presented the GAO Cost Estimating and Assessment Guide at ICEAA Canada (2016), AACE in Lisbon, Portugal (2017), and the ICEAA 2017 and 2016 Conferences. She has presented on the topic of data collection and normalization at the MORS 2015 Symposium and developed and presented a training class on cost estimating for auditors and analysts; which she has presented three times for GAO employees. Additionally, she has been invited to speak on GAO's best practice guides at different agencies around the National Capital Region; including Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration, National Security Administration, and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.