



Supplier Development and Continuous Improvement: Commitment to Continuous Improvement Assessment

Background

Newport News Shipbuilding (NNS) partners with our supply base in a series of engagements designed to share the mission of shipbuilding and the Navy, link our shared business processes and improve communications to foster good relationships. NNS utilizes a range of industry wide best practices and tool sets, modified to complement the expectations and requirements of DOD shipbuilding.

The NNS **Supplier Development and Continuous Improvement Program (SDCI)** contributes to the Supply Chain Management mission of developing a healthy supply base, lowering NNS acquisition costs, improve quality and seeks to compress lead times to satisfy planned and emergent demand. The Program's tools sets range from on-line / in-person training, operational assessments, lessons learned events and the analysis of our shared value stream. The Program methodically improves our understanding of doing business with one another, seeks clarity in technical requirements and provides the means for the supplier to become a capable, reliable partner to meet both our quality and delivery requirements.

Commitment to Continuous Improvement – Overview

As bookends to the SDCI process, NNS conducts the **Commitment to Continuous Improvement Assessment (CCI)** to gage a supplier's commitment to improve. It sets the baseline at the beginning of the SDCI Program and captures the conclusions to our engagements at the end. The CCI is an objective appraisal of an organization's continuous improvement approach against industry best standards and practices in four core attributes:

- Commitment to Improvement and Associated Business Goals
- Customer Feedback and Support
- Employee Involvement and Empowerment
- Process Improvement Approach and Tools

NNS bases the criteria upon portions of the *Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence*, seeking:

- The extent to which a supplier has a definitive approach
- Evidence of solid deployment
- Learning and change is evident
- Integration across the business plans, organization and operations

NNS scales the assessment to the type of work invoked and the size of the organization. NNS performs the assessment at the supplier's site, typically in one day. NNS may administer the CCI at the same time as other SDCI engagements. NNS scores each attribute on a scale from one to five. NNS awards credit for a Commitment to Continuous Improvement if the supplier scores an average of four or better across all four attributes. When credit is awarded, the supplier receives recognition in the encourages practices section of the Supplier Performance Scorecard. Regardless of the score, the NNS representatives provide feedback, suggestions and ideas to achieve the next level.

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Commitment to Continuous Improvement – Process

Pre:

- SDCI Program Management sends the assessment worksheet to the supplier in advance
- SDCI Program Management provides an opportunity to answer questions prior to arrival

During:

- Upon arrival, NNS requests a brief opening meeting with the supplier's management staff and participant to explain the process and attributes
- During the day, NNS actively listens to select subject matter experts to understand the approach across the attributes
- An operations tour is expected for random Q&A with employees to gauge the extent of deployment
- NNS requests to witness real examples of change in both process and product based on continuous improvement efforts
- NNS representatives require a moment alone for consensus and consolidation of results
- Towards the end of the day, NNS will provide an out brief to share results and ideas

Post:

- NNS provides the final CCI worksheet to the Supplier within a week for review
- NNS provides an internal debrief with NNS stakeholders
- On-going status dialog and updates, at a maximum of 6 months intervals from the original assessment, performed by conference call or in-person visits when necessary.

Who is needed from the Supplier's Organization?

At scheduled intervals, during the course of the day, representatives that develop and administer the organizations direction, listen and react to the customer, manage daily operations, listen and react to the employees and has oversight of and/or applies continuous improvement in processes and products.

Who is needed from Newport News Shipbuilding?

Representatives that are familiar, experienced and trained in industry continuous improvement standards and methods. NNS Procurement and/or Supplier Quality Engineering representatives as needed.

Benefits

- A pass noted on the Supplier Performance Scorecard
- Improved understanding, sharing and relationships
- The exchange of suggestions and ideas to improve the approach towards continuous improvement

For more information, contact the Newport News Shipbuilding Supplier Development and Continuous Improvement Program at NNSSDCI@HII-NNS.com.