Loud and Clear:
The Negotiation Game

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
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The research objective of this project was to improve acquisition workforce training, especially on new acquisition concepts and approaches by investigating if/how gamified training approaches could improve training. Acquisition outcomes were heavily dependent on learning and currency of Department of Defense (DoD) workforce in the ever-evolving acquisition ecosystem. New approaches were needed to improve training speed, retention, and interest given learning time-constraints and workforce turnover.

The Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) and North Carolina State University (NCSU) research teams produced a set of negotiation scenarios that were incorporated into an interactive player platform that allowed teams to take on various roles within a negotiation team on either the government or industry side. Players competed against each other and tried to reach the optimal solution for their team given their tasks, constraints, and goals. Researchers assessed how teams interacted given various complex negotiation trades, variations of constraints and asymmetric information.

Analysis of participant feedback showed the exercise was enjoyable, promoted creative problem solving, and had potential benefits for acquisition professionals. However, participants desired more time, structure, clarity in expectations, and accessibility. The positive feedback exhibited a learning orientation, while the negatives reflected a performance focus. Overall, the gamified approach shows promise for enhancing negotiation skills vital for acquisition professionals. This research provides an initial methodology and prototype for gamified negotiation training. Further refinement and testing are needed to optimize game design, player experiences, and learning outcomes. Gamified methods can promote engagement and real-world skills, but careful implementation is required for success.

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