

tive core CIO competencies. The consortium of universities currently includes George Washington, George Mason, Carnegie Mellon, Syracuse and the University of Maryland University College. There are three types of programs. The first is completion of a certificate program, which requires an individual to attend courses in all the Clinger-Cohen areas following the usual requirements for graduate credit. A second format offers an overview of the competencies at a higher level for an executive who needs to understand the broad sweep of the IT functions, but not at the level of detail required of someone working in a CIO organization. Finally, the third option permits individuals to take select courses to focus on specific areas that they need for remediation or update. This is especially valuable for individuals who arrive at the CIO position from other than an IT background. Detailed information is available at www.ciouniversity.cio.gov.

Your Career Progression Plan

Identifying your required competency needs and whether any of the above programs are right for you is a task best completed with the support of your manager or your mentor. At a minimum, your Career Progression Plan should include your goal, prioritized competency needs, developmental options (both formal and informal), desired dates, and estimated costs. Many managers like to also see your past education, training and developmental assignments documented in your plan. All core IM/IT professionals should include in their plans 80 hours of continuous learning as provided in the DON CIO guidance published July 11, 2000.

In this time of exceptional change and reduced resources, the DON workforce must not only be skilled, but also adaptable and flexible in meeting evolving mission demands. Strengthen your competitive advantage by taking charge of your career today, ensuring your skill sets are current and relevant.

"ACTION without vision — is a random activity. VISION without action — is a hallucination."
- Anonymous

Sandra J. Smith is the DON CIO Competency Management Team Leader.

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY SIGNS XML POLICY

The Department of the Navy's (DON) continuing efforts to transform its information technology and information management solutions suite took a major step forward with the signing of the DON Extensible Markup Language (XML) policy by DON Chief Information Officer Dave Wennegren on December 13, 2002.

The policy, which replaces an interim policy issued in fall 2001, sets parameters for how the DON will use XML — the technology that facilitates information exchange and interoperability by allowing programmers to assign information tags and attributes to data and documents. It is the first-ever formal XML policy issued by a United States military department.

"Interoperability is a cornerstone of DON efforts to strengthen its interdependent operations and, subsequently, improve the warfighter's ability to find, retrieve, process, and exchange information," said Wennegren in the December policy memorandum. "The Department, like many government and private sector organizations, has increasingly looked to XML technology for its data sharing needs."

In addition to outlining how the Department will use XML to better find, retrieve, process, and exchange data, the policy provides direction to help DON officials manage areas critical to successful XML implementation. These areas include XML technical specifications usage, XML standard components selection, adherence to business standards that define specific XML data vocabularies, and participation in XML-related technical and business standards bodies.

The policy also directs the DONXML Work Group and Functional Area Managers to formally establish XML Functional Namespace Coordinators (FNCs) for the Department's 23 functional areas established in November 2001. As XML vocabulary monitors, FNCs will be responsible for helping to develop, manage, and coordinate DON XML vocabularies, or "namespaces," within their functional areas and across the DON enterprise.

Namespace coordination is vital to XML's success. Inconsistency and a lack of uniformity in XML vocabularies will prevent



systems and applications from easily exchanging information and degrade, rather than enhance, interoperability.

"Successful XML implementation requires a firm commitment to coordination," said Wennegren. "I strongly encourage [commanders] to review and adhere to this policy, which is a crucial part of our work to foster XML coordination among DON programs and commands."

The XML policy is part of a comprehensive Department-wide XML implementation strategy. In 2001, the DON Chief Information Officer created the DONXML Work Group to provide leadership and guidance to the Department's XML efforts through focused action teams.

In addition to the DON XML policy, which names the DONXML Work Group as the Department's interim XML governance structure, other Work Group products have included a vision document outlining the Department's objectives for successful XML implementation across the DON (March 2002) and the XML Developer's Guide, Version 1.1 (May 2002). The XML Developers Guide provides DON developers with important information about XML specifications, component selection/creation, schema design, and component naming conventions.

These and other XML-related documents are available at the Work Group Web site at <https://quickplace.hq.navy.mil/navyxml>.

Go to <https://quickplace.hq.navy.mil/navyxml> for more XML information.

The DONXML Work Group Chairperson is Michael Jacobs.