



# INSTRUCTORS

BMRA is preparing to deliver a complement of courses to the Department of Veterans Affairs in the upcoming fiscal year of 2011. Although we are excited about the award, we recognize the VA is a demanding client. They aspire to be the “best in show” when it comes to acquisition workforce training. Consequently, they are meticulous about every aspect of the course delivery.

## Be prepared!

1. When you start your class on the first day, begin by speaking about the agency. Each instructor should develop a 15 to 30-minute discourse on his or her understanding of what the VA is, what it does, who it serves, etc. We recommend a thorough review of the [VA Strategic Plan \(SP\)](#).

2. Go over the VA’s goals and objectives and ask the students to describe how the service or product they procure helps fulfill requirements set out in the SP.

Have students review the SP and describe their roles in the [organizational structure](#). You might have students who cannot find themselves, thus allowing for open classroom discussion.

3. Help students discern the VA-specific agenda in the training. It is important that we minimize the number of student comments that “course materials are not VA-specific.”

Review the [USA Spending website](#) (you can find a link on [www.bmra.com](#)) and discuss the variety of what the VA purchases. Point out that many commodities are procured beside the ones the students in the class have been asked to procure.

Review your materials to find occasions to explain how the instruction addresses VA requirements (commodities cited in the USA Spending data). Try to tie in whatever the example is to the agency, e.g., “Does your agency use body armor? Probably not much...but it certainly *does* use commercial items, sometimes in quantities above the SAT”

Although we work to remove DoD references, never imply that any such references make the course material irrelevant to civilian agencies in any way.

4. Every instructor must be prepared to implement this type of introduction for every VA course BMRA provides. Not only is it crucial to success in the classroom, if you do not do it, it will show in the evaluations from the students and the proctors.
5. Explain clearly that our objective is to teach principles that will apply to most purchases rather than step-by-step instructions that apply to one specific purchase. (Address this only if challenged by a student; do not argue its merits, just state the fact.)
6. Familiarize yourself with the [SmartBoard technology](#). Be aware of [all protocols that are priorities to the VA](#), i.e., cell phones, parking, equipment usage, etc. Do not compromise any of the protocols.

**Remember:** Always be professional. Do not argue with anyone; take pride in your work, but be careful to avoid arrogance.