



## ACQUISITION RESEARCH

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## HANDBOOK SERIES

# A Handbook to Word Choice and Frequently Used Terms

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ACQUISITION RESEARCH PROGRAM  
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## **Preface**

This handbook is one of a series of four produced for the Acquisition Research Program at the Naval Postgraduate School. The series includes:

- *An Analysis Planning Handbook for Thesis, Joint Applied Project, and MBA Research Reports*
- *A Handbook to English Usage and Writing*
- *A Handbook to APA Citation Style*
- *A Handbook to Word Choice and Frequently Used Terms*

For additional copies, please visit the Acquisition Research Program Office at the Graduate School of Business & Public Policy in Ingersoll 372. Also see our website [www.acquisitionresearch.org](http://www.acquisitionresearch.org) for additional research resources.



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## Word Choice and Usage

adopt	choose to follow an idea
adapt	adjust one thing to another
affect	to cause change in something (v.)
effect	something brought about by change (result) (n.)
allude	to hint
refer	make direct reference
alot	<i>not a word</i>
a lot	to informally describe a quantity of something
already	previously
all ready	all are prepared
among	in association with three or more things
between	separates two things
anxious	nervous
eager	looking forward to
assume	to take as true without evidence
presume	to take as true for a specific reason
assure	to make confident
ensure	to make certain something happens
insure	to buy insurance
because	the reason for something
since	relation in time
capital	city
capitol	building
compliment	to praise
complement	to complete



complimentary	given free as a courtesy
complementary	acting as a complement; completing
continual	happening in steady succession
continuous	uninterrupted
credible	believable, trustworthy
creditable	deserving credit, praiseworthy
discreet	prudent
discrete	distinct
disinterested	impartial
uninterested	not interested
e.g.,	<i>exempli gratia</i> , for example
i.e.,	<i>id est</i> , that is, that is to say
emigrate	to leave a country for residence elsewhere
immigrate	to take residence in a country where one is not a native
eminent	distinguished or outstanding
imminent	about to happen
everyday	(adjective) normal, not out of the ordinary, occurring every day
every day	(refers to when something is happening)
evoke	bring out
invoke	call upon
farther	to extend in regard to physical distance
further	to extend in regard to everything but physical distance
fewer	quantities that can be counted
less	quantities that must be measured

Web

webcast

website (preferred over home page)

widescale

workday

workflow

worklife

worldwide

Worldwide

**X Y Z**



supply chain management (SCM)

system-of-systems

**T**

takeaway [adj.]

takt time

third-party logistics (3PL)

third-party network ( ... services, etc.)

thought-leadership

timeframe

time-to-market

toolkit

top line

Total Quality Management (TQM)

trade-off

Ts & Cs (for terms and conditions; ampersand required)

turnkey

two-bin system

**U**

Under Secretary of Defense (Under Secretary is two words)

US (No periods necessary)

username

**V**

value added

**W**

War on Terror

warfighter

waybill

fortunately	an unforeseen good thing happening
fortuitously	by chance
function	operate; occupation or employment
functionality	contribution to the development and maintenance of a larger whole  (don't "longwordify" what would otherwise be clear)
good	adjective (describes something)
well	adverb (describes how something was done)
hanged	done at criminal executions (people)
hung	past tense of hang (objects)
incredible	unbelievable
incredulous	not believing
individual	use when distinguishing a person from a group or a corporation
person or someone	can usually be used instead of <i>individual</i>
infer	to conclude by reasoning from something known or assumed
imply	hint or suggest
instinct	a natural, subconscious impulse to do something
intuition	subconscious knowledge gained through personal experience
irregardless	<i>not a word</i>
regardless	without regard for objections
its	shows the possessive of pronoun <i>it</i>
it's	contraction meaning <i>it is</i>
its'	<i>not a word</i>



last	being after all others
latter	being the last mentioned of two
lay	to place something
lie	to recline
libel	damaging public statement made in print
slander	damaging public statement made orally
like	comparison (followed by a word or phrase)
as	comparison (followed by a clause—a subject + verb)
list	Don't use <i>listing</i> as a noun where <i>list</i> will do. A phone book is a <i>list</i> of names, each of which is a <i>listing</i> .
listing	
literally	following the exact order of the real
figuratively	not in its usual/exact sense
majority	more than 50%
plurality	the largest groups without regard to percentage
marketing	all aspects of selling
merchandising	sales promotion and advertising; function of marketing
method	a way of doing something
methodology	study, or system, of methods (Don't "longwordify" what would otherwise be clear.)
may	expresses permission
can	expresses ability
militate	to fight or argue
mitigate	to soften or moderate

public-sector [adj.]

**Q**

**R**

R&D (research & development)

Real GDP

real-time

request for information (RFI)

retake

RFID (radio frequency identification)

RFP (request for proposal)

RFQ (request for quote)

roadmap

ROI (return-on-investment)

roll-out (n.)

**S**

short cut

single sourcing

Six Sigma

skill set

source evaluation

source selection [n.]

source-selection process

spend [n., as in, the company's annual spend, business spend]

statement of work (SOW)

stock out [v.]

stockout [n.]

subsystem



Net (meaning internet)  
 non-value-added

**O**

OEM (for original equipment manufacturer)  
 offline  
 offshore; offshoring  
 OMB (Office of Management and Budget)  
 onboard  
 online  
 on-site and off-site  
 Operation Enduring Freedom  
 Operation Desert Storm  
 operating level  
 OPM (Office of Personnel Management)

**P**

performance-based  
 PO (for purchase order)  
 policy-maker  
 pretest  
 price/cost analysis  
 private sector [n.]  
 private-sector [adj.]  
 proactive  
 process integrity  
 procurement-sensitive [adj.]  
 program management  
 project management  
 public sector [n.]

notable	compliment to a person of distinction
notorious	widely known in an unfavorable manner
oral	spoken
verbal	related to words
parameters	a variable value that stays constant
perimeters	boundaries or limits
persecute	harass, treat unfairly
prosecute	take legal action through a court
perspective	point of view
prospective	probable or expected
persuade	to succeed in causing another to act a certain way
convince	to cause another to believe something
precede	go before
proceed	advance to
presumptive	based on a probability or an assumption
presumptuous	arrogant, unduly confident
principal	the most important, the main
principle	fundamental idea
raise	to lift something (transitive verb takes object)
rise	things/people which lift by themselves (intransitive verb, no object)
stationary	not moving
stationery	writing paper
take	carry away
bring	come with



their	possessive of pronoun <i>they</i>
there	refers to a place or expletive
they're	contraction of <i>they are</i>
unique	rare or uncommon, without like or equal
unusual	different, not the norm
use utilize, utilization, usage	<i>Use</i> (as a noun and verb) is almost always better. (Don't "longwordify" what would otherwise be clear.)
valuable	of great worth
invaluable	priceless
where	generally refers to a location
when	generally refers to a time or is used in a conditional phrase
which	refers to things (not people) and introduces <i>nonessential</i> material
who	refers to people
that	refers to things and introduces <i>essential</i> information

knowledge management (KM)  
knowledge-value added  
KPI or KPIs (key performance indicator(s))

## L

lead-time  
leading-edge [adj.]  
lean (OK to use alone as a noun; also lean management, lean purchasing, lean practices, etc.)  
lifecycle  
lifecycle costing  
lifecycle procurement  
log in [v.]  
login [n.]  
low risk [n.]  
low-risk [adj.]  
lower priority

## M

M&A (mergers and acquisitions)  
macro-level  
micro-level  
mission-essential [adj.]  
MRO (materials, repair and operating, i.e., indirect materials)  
MRP (materials requirements planning)  
multicultural

## N

Naval Postgraduate School (NPS)  
nearshore; nearshoring



follow-up [n.]

*Fortune 500 and Fortune 1,000*

## G

GAO (General Accounting Office—before July 7, 2004)

GAO (Government Accountability Office—after July 7, 2004)

Global War on Terror

## H

handheld [n.; a device]

handheld [adj.]

hardcopy

hazmat

healthcare

homepage (generic; *Note: Try to use “website” instead*)

hotspot

HR (human resources; does not need to be spelled-out)

## I

industry

industrywide (also nationwide, companywide, etc.)

internet

intranet

IT (information technology)

## J

just-in-time (JIT)

## K

keynote

keyword (technology)

## Frequently Used Terms

*This resource is meant to provide a list of words and phrases which commonly appear in the Acquisition Research Program publications. Please default to the spellings as they appear in this list.*

### Numbers, etc.

21<sup>st</sup> Century

9/11 (for September 11, 2001)

## A

Acquisition reform

## B

B2B (business-to-business)

B2C (business-to-consumer)

B2E (business-to-enterprise)

bar code [n., adj.]; bar coding

baseline

benchmark [n., v.]

best practice [adj.]

best value

best-in-class

boardroom

bottom line

business case

business-sensitive [adj.]

buy [n.]

buy-in [n.]

## C

CD-ROM



cell phone  
CEO (chief executive officer; does not need to be spelled-out)  
Certified Professional in Supply Management (CPSM)  
CFO (chief financial officer; does not need to be spelled-out)  
chair (not -man/-woman/-person)  
chat room  
civil servants  
color-coded  
command-and-control  
commercial  
commercial off-the-shelf  
conflict of interest  
Continuing Education Hours (CEHs)  
contract award  
contract management  
contracted out  
contracted support  
contracting out  
corporate-level (adj.)  
cost effective  
cost-effective [adj.]  
cost estimate  
cost-estimate [adj.]  
cost estimating  
cost growth  
cost saving [n.]

cost-saving [adj.]  
coworker  
CPO (chief purchasing officer; does not need to be spelled-out)  
cycle-time

## D

database  
DAU (Defense Acquisition University)  
decision-makers; decision-making  
*DFARS (Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement)*  
Department of Defense (DoD, not DOD)  
dollar amount  
dot-com  
downtime

## E

earned value management  
e-auction, e-mail, e-commerce, e-procurement, e-tool, etc.  
end-to-end  
end-user [n., adj.]  
ERP (enterprise resource planning)

## F

*FAR (Federal Acquisition Regulation)*  
fishbone chart  
fixed-price contract  
flow path

