

## Project Management Spotlight

Contributed by Lea Stabler, PMP

This month, our Project Management spotlight is on Benefits Outsourcing. This is the practice of managing benefits data for a corporate client. The client's objective is to offer good or better service to their employees as economically as possible. Projects require management of client relationships, software development for rules engines, data conversion activities, and developing operational guides and call center scripts. The work involves assuming and on-boarding historical and current benefits data along with the rules that govern that data. Waterfall methodologies are used for data, operations, and call center components as, typically, there are few changes. Software development and rules conversion teams have moved to Agile.

As a Benefits Outsourcing Project Manager, I was involved in planning, execution, reporting, and closure of customer implementations to convert and migrate client data onto the outsourcing company systems. I had oversight of client data corrections, new benefits rules, and data workflow, which often required new tools and processing changes.

Project Managers in this environment face the challenge of task ownership because requirements are not clear and/or not detailed enough. Plan Documents are written from a legal perspective and can be vague on

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## Roundtable Moderators and Topics Needed

The March 27<sup>th</sup> Chapter Meeting is an opportunity to share Project Management knowledge in a Café Roundtable and Networking Event. Each table will focus on a topic and a moderator will lead a 10-15 minute discussion on a relevant topic. After the discussion, attendees will move to another table. Example topics include:

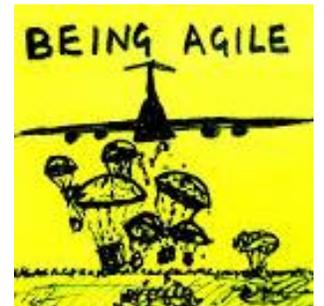
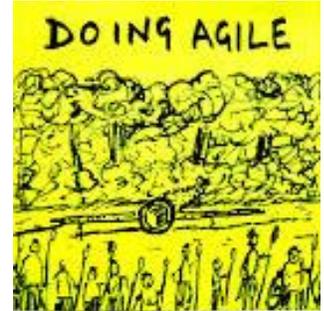
- Conduct a 5-why meeting without asking why
- Conduct better project status meetings
- How to give bad news to your executive sponsor
- Managing issues during an Agile Sprint meeting

We are seeking eight leaders and Project Management- related topics. If you have ideas and/or would like to lead, please contact VP of Operations, [Peg Duggan](#) by March 6. The March Chapter meeting will be held at the Back Yard Brewery in Manchester.

## 12 Steps to the Successful Agile PMO

If you were one of the 53 people who attended the January Chapter Meeting, you heard Dave Todaro, President & CEO of Ascendle, discuss the Agile PMO. Here is a recap of the tips he presented, or 12 Steps to integrating Agile into your PMO.

1. **Build Your PMO with Agile Experts.** Moving Scrum Masters into the Agile PMO allows the PMO to offer them as Subject Matter Experts (SME) to your Agile projects. This also includes all the projects within the PMO such as creating the Agile PMO.
2. **Build Your PMO to be inclusive of Agile.** Engaging the PMO supports the Agile transition and implementation and to help spread Agile throughout the organization.
3. **Build Your Agile PMO from within the PMO.** Use SCRUM to manage the PMO during the transition to Agile and during the Agile PMO launch. Do more than “talk the talk” - “walk the walk” and show others in the organization that Agile works.
4. **Build Your PMO to Provide Agile Training Resources.** Use the Agile PMO for training, coaching, and developing Agile Skills along with all the other skills useful for successful project delivery. Improve teams’ productivity.
5. **Build Your Agile PMO to be the Change Agent.** Use the PMO to change existing behaviors and beliefs and provide techniques for continuous team improvement. As behaviors and beliefs change, the culture will change as well. Get buy-in, develop trust, and aid in decision making faster and more effectively.



Agile PMO continued page 5.

## Share Your Knowledge

In January, the PMI New Hampshire distributed a survey to get your input for useful and engaging topics for upcoming programs. We would like to say thank you to the members who responded. The intention of the survey was to get member input for useful and engaging topics in upcoming programs.

Now that we understand membership distribution across business industries, we need your help. We are looking for experts in the following industries who are willing to share their knowledge.

- Financial
- Insurance
- Government
- Software
- Healthcare

Your support will help us plan upcoming presentations and educational events that add value to members in your industry. Please contact [Nora Colliton](#) if you have industry knowledge to share.

Without context, a piece of information is just a dot. It floats in your brain with a lot of other dots and doesn't mean a damn thing. Knowledge is information-in-context ... connecting the dots.

– Michael Ventura

## Principles to Live by in Project Management and Beyond

Contributed by Bernadette Donnelly, PMP, M.S.

On Feb 7, John Perry Barlow died at the age of 70. He was a visionary, an internet pioneer, political activist, Grateful Dead lyricist and cattle rancher. At age 30, he compiled a list of rules to live by, which he titled Principles of Adult Behavior \*.

1. Be Patient. No matter what.
2. No Don't badmouth: Assign responsibility, not blame. Say nothing of another you wouldn't say to him.
3. Never assume the motives of others are, to them, less noble than yours are to you.
4. Expand your sense of the possible.
5. Don't trouble yourself with matters you truly cannot change.
6. Expect no more of anyone than you can deliver yourself.
7. Tolerate ambiguity.
8. Laugh at yourself frequently.
9. Concern yourself with what is right rather than who is right.
10. Never forget that, no matter how certain, you might be wrong.
11. Give up blood sports.
12. Remember that your life belongs to others as well. Don't risk it frivolously.
13. Never lie to anyone for any reason. (Lies of omission are sometimes exempt.)
14. Learn the needs of those around you and respect them.
15. Avoid the pursuit of happiness. Seek to define your mission and pursue that.
16. Reduce your use of the first personal pronoun.
17. Praise at least as often as you disparage.
18. Admit your errors freely and soon.
19. Become less suspicious of joy.
20. Understand humility.
21. Remember that love forgives everything.
22. Foster dignity.
23. Live memorably.
24. Love yourself.
25. Endure.

As I read Barlow's principles, I recognized the values that drive ethical conduct in the Project Management profession: **honesty, responsibility, respect and fairness**. But I also realized that Barlow's principles should be extended to relationships outside the office.

What do you think?

\* Principles to Live By was retrieved from <http://i.imgur.com/PPvtT8t.jpg> on February 15, 2018.

### Chapter Meeting Ticket Change

Since January, "Pay at the Door" dinner tickets for Chapter Meetings are no longer available. To receive the Early Bird discount, you must select "Pay Now" ticket options. This will allow our meeting planner to accurately count the number wanting dinner and prevent over payment for preordered dinners when there is a cancellation or no-show.

Our cancellation policy remains the same. If you pay in advance and are unable to attend, you must send a notice to [Director of Events](#) before the event and you will receive credit for a future chapter meeting.

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servicing features or rules applicable only to small subsets of the population. There may be multiple vendors responsible for current and past administration therefore, there is no one source with first-hand knowledge. For clarity and decisions, the client's legal council is often involved. Often, there is more than one acceptable way to execute the requirements. The challenge becomes guiding the client to solutions that can be implemented efficiently and economically in the outsourced system and still meet requirements.

A second common challenge is competition for resources. Available resources do not always align with the scope or schedule that are sold by the outsourcing organization.

One of the lessons I learned was to report issues as soon as they emerge rather than waiting for scheduled review meetings. A key part of the project, data conversion, was completed in three parts. In order to identify and resolve missing or questionable information, an initial file, then an adjusted file, and then the final production file were created. Project status was provided to the client after completion of each file. If the file contained errors or missing information, management escalation ensued. The client would escalate to their upper management who would then meet upper management and relationship management of the Outsourcing company. Most often, the project team was authorized to move forward, activating the service and potentially even making the data corrections. If identified problems were discussed with the client immediately, the team could gain time and meet the agreed upon activation date. Upper management involvement would be limited so they could focus on more important policy discussions.

I focused on relationship-building because I recognized that future projects would be staffed with the people currently assigned. Conversations with my team members provided insight into their experience, comfort level with assigned tasks, and how dependencies and precedents came into play in their role. This also allowed me to track issues to their source versus just where the current issue resided.

My advice to other Project Managers is that change is the new normal; we are being asked to be more efficient and economical. Cycle times will be shorter for waterfall and expectations higher for Agile based projects. Everyone must stay current with technology, communication, and tracking requirements.

Project Managers also need to stay current on the trends in their business and industry. He says "Keep an eye on the money both for the client's business and yours. This will provide clues on how decisions will be made and the direction of projects."

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*Challenges emerge when requirements are not clear.*

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*A valuable lesson learned: escalate issues as soon as they emerge.*

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## Professional Development Workshop Planned

Keep your calendar open for our full-day professional development workshop at the Tuscan Kitchen in Portsmouth. For more details, visit the [Event Description](#).

- Topic: From a Good Project Manager to a Great Leader
- Presenter: David Barrett
- Wednesday, June 6, all day, 8 PDUs.





## January Food Bank Donations

In January, the New Hampshire Chapter donated 74 pounds of food to the New Hampshire Food Bank, our sponsored charity.

Remember to bring non-perishable food products or a check payable to “NH Food Bank” to every Chapter meeting you attend. Or, if you can’t attend in person, you can send a check to the New Hampshire Food Bank, 700 E Industrial Park Drive, Manchester, NH 03109.

### Agile PMO from page 2.

*Expanding the traditional PMO into Agile is critical to the success of all projects in the organization.*

6. **Build Your PMO as a Center of Excellence (CoE).** Become the Governance and Compliance Center building the resources necessary for industry and governmental compliance, Enterprise Environmental Factors (EEFs), and Organizational Process Assets (OPAs). Use the PMO as a bridge to connect traditional and agile Project Management.
7. **Build Your PMO to Oversee Agile Projects.** Manage Programs and Portfolios as well as projects within the PMO. Leverage projects selection and management.
8. **Build Your PMO’s Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).** Identify, develop, establish, and collect meaningful “Measures of Project Success” to focus on common goals and ensure those goals stay aligned within the organization.
9. **Build Your PMO with Agile Processes.** Streamline processes, documents, meetings while eliminating or minimizing waste of time and resources. Increase the teams’ productivity.
10. **Build Your PMO as a Research Center.** Research, acquire, and configure Agile tools. Then provide training and develop best practices for using tools to improve your projects visibility.
11. **Build Your PMO with Useful Tools.** Develop Agile artifacts and best practices. Refine the roles, ceremonies, and artifacts. Provide the ability to manage changing priorities.
12. **Rename the PMO.** What better way to launch the Agile PMO than a new name for a new role, it’s now more than a traditional Project Management office. Showcase the adoption of Agile where it most makes sense.

Expanding the traditional PMO into an Agile PMO is critical to the success of all projects in the organization. Traditional Project Management may be the best choice for projects with known requirements, while Agile may be the better choice for complex projects where requirements are unclear and there is a lot of uncertainty. Adopting Agile practices into the PMO provides the best chance for the adoption and transition to Agile for projects where it makes sense.

### JANUARY NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

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- Volunteer Editor: Jeff Eichel, PMP, MSEE
- Director of Communications: Sandra Hebert, PMP
- Vice President of Operations: Peg Duggan, PMP