PMI-NH Chapter Newsletter

March 2010

NEXT CHAPTER MEETING

April 21, 2010 (Wednesday)

6:00 PM to 9:00 PM
Portsmouth Country Club
Greenland, NH

The Project Apologist:
Can You Define and Defend the Value of Project Managers?

Speakers: TBD

Discount cutoff date: April 16, 2010

Please visit www.pmi-nh.org/meetings.htm for additional details about this upcoming meeting.

Inside This Issue:

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Please see the chapter web site for the latest President's message from Ray Peeples.

PMI New Hampshire Chapter's Networking Group
Networking *by* Project Managers *for* Project Managers

- Regular bi-weekly meetings held in Derry, NH.
- No cost to chapter members.
- Visit the chapter website at PMI-NH.org for more information and contact details.

CHAPTER NEWS

Volunteers needed:

Board of Directors Vacancies

A number of Board positions are open. If you are interested in serving, please contact Ray Peeples at president@pmi-nh.org for more details.

PMP Certification:

The Board of Directors of the NH Chapter of the Project Management Institute (PMI-NH) congratulates you for recently earning your PMP certification:

Mr. Neal King, PMP

Mr. Michael Laliberte, PMP

Ms. Elaine Lawrence, PMP

Mr. Brian McCarthy, PMP

Ms. Becky Steed, PMP

New Members:

We'd like to welcome the following to the chapter:

Ms. Shari Callahan

Mr. Walter Havenstein, Jr.

Mr. Bruce Kaczmarek, PMP

Mr. Michael Kirkconnell

Mr. Gerald Mackamam

Mr. Douglas McClellan, PMP

Ms. Becky Steed, PMP

Mr. Don Yelton

Chapter member named PMI Fellow

Karen R.J. (Heath) White, MS, PMP, has been designated as a Fellow of the Project Management Institute (PMI) during the PMI Awards Ceremony at PMI Global Congress 2009-North America held in Orlando, Fla. in October 2009.

"The PMI Awards Program recognizes excellence in project management across a broad array of categories for organizations, individuals, community advancement and our chapters and their volunteers," said Gregory Balestrero, president and CEO of PMI. "Winning this award is a testament to the value project management brings to our varied stakeholders."

Ms. White currently serves as a member of the PMI Ethics Review Committee. She is a former member the PMI Board of Directors as well as former Chair of both the Ethics Review Committee and Educational Foundation.

An independent consultant assisting non-profit organizations, she is the author *of Agile Project Management: A Mandate for the 21st Century* (Center for Business Practices, 2009) as well as a contributing author to several books on project management.

Ms. White is a member of both the New Hampshire and Mass Bay PMI chapters.

Karen White is a graduate of Northeastern University where she received a Bachelor of Science degree, with honors, in Information Systems and a Master of Science degree in Information Systems Management. She as was previously awarded the Army Commendation Medal in recognition for her leadership while a former member of the US Army Reserve.

GUEST ARTICLE

Should you learn ITTO's by Heart?

By Cornelius Fichtner, PMP

Do you feel that in order to pass the Project Management Professional (PMP) ® exam you should memorize the PMBOK® Guide's ITTO' s (Inputs, Tools, Techniques and Outputs)? Do you think that the PMP exam is full of IITO type of questions? Many people still believe this myth. Well, let me clear some misconceptions…

Many project managers have successfully passed the PMP exam without any memorization. The current PMP exam is all about an in-depth understanding of applying project management concepts and principles from the PMBOK® Guide as well as general management knowledge from other sources to project situations.

Granted, ITTO's are a major part of the PMBOK® Guide and about 75% of material for the PMP Exam is taken from the PMBOK® Guide. So it's understandable that we assume because there are hundreds of ITTO's in the Guide the exam must be full of knowledge-based questions about them. And sample questions like "Which of the following is not an Input of the Create WBS process?" are plentiful on the internet.

So should you, or should you not memorize them?

Here is my story: When I studied for my PMP exam I knew them by heart. I could tell you exactly which ITTO is used in which process. But I took my exam years ago. Since then the PMP exam has become more experience-based using situational questions over knowledge-based questions.

Therefore a change in approach is needed.

It is still important to have a general understanding about which ITTO is used in which process, but you do not need to be able to recite them by heart. It is much more important to understand the concept of "Why is this ITTO used in this process?" Your knowledge about WHY an ITTO is used in a process will definitely help you to arrive at the right answer.

Additionally, this new approach is much more helpful for you as a project manager in the long run. Frankly speaking, who cares whether an ITTO is part of a particular process or not after you have passed the PMP exam? If you need to know, you can just look it up! But knowing what they are, why you need them and how to apply them successfully on your projects greatly enhances your project management skills. It goes a long way in making you an exceptional project manager.

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Second, it is very common that an Output from one process becomes an Input to another process. Focus your studies on understanding how these items flow through the many processes in the PMBOK® Guide in order to produce our project deliverables. Use the many charts that the Guide provides to see this graphically.

Third, Tools & Techniques very often have some form of "action" attached to them, like a meeting, a methodology, a technique, a form that you must fill in, or a matrix that you create.

And lastly, don't forget to read the complete PMBOK® Guide glossary. Study and understand the definitions of the roughly 350 terms that you find here. Again, you are not doing this for memorization sake, but instead you want to learn "the language" of the PMP exam. Often we use project management terms loosely and interchangeably in our day to day work. But for the exam we have to know exactly what each term means.

Reading the glossary ensures that you know the correct definitions, and, as a bonus, the glossary indicates for each term if it is an input/output, tool or technique.

Reading the glossary ensures that you know the correct definitions, and, as a bonus, the glossary indicates for each term if it is an input/output, tool or technique.

So move beyond a third-graders approach of fact memorization. Instead, study the big picture, the data flows and how the ITTO's are the glue between the processes.

About the Author:

Cornelius Fichtner, PMP is a noted PMP expert. He has helped over 9,000 students prepare for the PMP Exam with his PM PrepCast at http:\\www.pm-prepcast.com.

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The Alternate Angle …on Confusing Roles

by Steven Lapinskas, PMP

Editor – PMI NH Chapter Newsletter

The Alternate Angle is a commentary on issues in project management. Feedback is welcome at newsletter@pmi-nh.org.

In case you haven't read, the latest newsflash is the Project Manager is now the Project Leader. Can one be both and do each effectively? Good question. Here are some thoughts to consider about it.

First, there's no doubt that leadership is a quality that's sought in business. It's one of the differences between having a concept being brought to market and one brought to market and succeeding wildly.

Take Steve Jobs of Apple for example. Over time since the first computer was developed with Woz, there's been more than 9 lives to this company. A return from disastrous mis-steps and the I-Pod and I-Phone redefining what Apple is as a company. Was it Jobs' technical ability? Financial skills? Managing the timeline for any of these? Probably no to all.

It's more likely that it was his ability to provide the big picture about what could be instead of what already is. That, harnessed with the synergy of all the technical and marketing talent at Apple, brought the company back from the brink and made it what it is today over 20 years after first founded.

Now back to the PM and the leadership idea. Some writers define leadership as the ability to motivate people to perform above and beyond what they might think they are capable of. On the other hand, management is usually described as the "nuts and bolts" of what makes business run. Planning, directing, organizing, and solving the problem du-jour are among the practical aspects.

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Can you be a project manager-leader? It probably depends on how you define it in your sphere of influence.

Act to ensure that the project starts and proceeds to completion following processes suited for what's being done. See that communications are functional or issues are addressed in both transparent and predictable fashion. This is leadership by example. Sure, you are performing the "nuts and bolts" function, but it's with a discipline and consistency that others see.

Attempting to take on significant responsibility in either technical or personnel issues sounds like you'll accomplish even more of the leadership function. In reality it may not work out that way.

Within the PMI PMBOK there's discussion of delegating the role of a team member professional development to their functional manager. Consider the difference between the motivational aspect as a PM versus the career manager part before tackling this.

Grabbing a technical lead role and attempting to PM at the same time has been a disaster for more than one project. If there weren't a need for a PM process, there wouldn't be the need for project managers.

While the PM headlines now announce this new hybrid, consider bounds that make sense. You may already be fulfilling this new expectation.

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