

# GLOBAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT FORUM COUNTRY REPORT

Reported by: The Engineering Advancement Association of Japan (ENAA)

## **1.0 STATUS OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT PROFESSION:**

### **1.1 In general, at what stage is the project management profession in your country today? (i.e., newly introduced, growing, mature?) Please comment.**

The stage of maturity of the project management profession in Japan can be classified as growing on an overall scale. There is a wide variety of project management maturity, depending on the industry affiliation, as follows:

*Engineering and Construction:* Mature with 40 years of project management practice

*General Construction:* Growing to mature

*Manufacturing:* Newly introduced

*Information Technology/Information Services/Information Movement Industry:* Growing

*Public Services:* PM awareness is recognized in part of the government offices such as the Ministry of Construction

### **1.2 What industries or types of projects are the main users of modern project management in your country or region today? Briefly discuss.**

The engineering and construction companies operating in oil and gas, chemical, industrial and large infrastructure projects are the main users of modern project management in Japan. The information services industry is beginning to practice modern project management with several IT companies (Japanese divisions of global IT companies) operating based on PMBOK Guide-based project management methodologies. The general construction industry is also preparing to introduce MPM.

### **1.3 What industries or areas of application in your country have the greatest need for more or better project management, which might offer opportunities for growth of the PM profession?**

The general construction industry will draw on more comprehensive project management processes as the sophistication of their construction projects grows, cost compression or value for money drive on public projects mounts and as needs for CM (construction management) services are further identified. Architects are also endeavoring to introduce project management services in pursuit of the expansion of their profession.

The information services industry, especially its systems integration and software development sectors, is recognizing the growing opportunities for project management as PM

is expected to decrease substandard performance projects, improve operations productivity and enhance uniform quality of products and/or solutions.

The manufacturing industries will start realizing the benefits of project management with an increasing share of project-style business operations.

#### **1.4 What is the status of project management education in general and in the main academic institutions in your country?**

Vocational PM training is still mostly performed in-house at large contractor organizations. A comprehensive, public project business course (three weeks), including PM, sponsored by ENAA twice a year is well utilized. The ENAA Japan Project Management Forum has started offering PM classes open to the public.

The Chiba Institute of Technology is the only academic institution which has a dedicated PM department. PM is also taught as a subject in engineering education at several universities. Tokyo University has a Construction Management department where unique construction oriented project management is taught.

#### **1.5 How can the PM profession be most effectively advanced in your country?**

The project management profession can be advanced through the strong initiative of ENAA as Japan's traditional association that promotes project management. While maintaining its Project Management Committee (with ENAA member company delegates) which has 20 years of experience in the research and promotion of project management in Japan, ENAA has launched a pilot professional project management initiative referred to as the Japan Project Management Forum (JPMF) since July 1997 in which individual practitioners of project management network, carry out specific joint research, and meet through regular forums, seminars and symposia for case presentations, research output presentations, training seminars and workshops. This initiative is open to any and all professionals that practice or are interested in project management.

### **2.0 IMPACT OF RECENT ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL EVENT**

#### **21. What has been the impact on the local PM profession of recent economic or political conditions or events in your country or region? Briefly explain.**

The impact of the economic slowdown in Japan has evoked the awareness of professional value or employability of employees of large corporations amid the eroding permanent employment systems and collapse of large corporations which would never have occurred until some five years ago, which phenomenon has prompted them to perceive PM, study PM or more positively, join project management associations such as the JPMF and the PMI Tokyo Chapter.

**2.2 What impact have recent international or global events or trends had on the local PM profession in your country? (For example, impact of EU in Europe, financial markets, mega-mergers, etc.)**

The continuing strength of the US economy is exerting increasing influence of its underlying features of market-oriented competitive corporate culture, governance and accountability on the Japanese corporations, which shall change to survive in the global business sphere. This means that there exist growing opportunities for PM as it is believed to be one of the keys supporting the booming US economy with its mission being to provide a strategic planning and management framework to successfully attain business objectives set in the project context and to secure guidance by plans, quantification of efforts, fast responses, traceability, visibility and accountability in projectized business operations.

**2.3 What current economic, political or social trends might have the greatest future impact on the PM profession in your country? Why? Discuss only one or two.**

The impact mentioned in the response to Question 2.1 will continue. The increasing recognition of project management by professionals will eventually lead to more serious attention being paid to PM certification.

**2.4 What technological trend might have the greatest impact?**

The almost daily advent of new IT and communications features has and will have the greatest impact on the PM profession. It dramatically enhances knowledge and information sharing among project managers and project managers-to-be, which is welcome; this trend, however, might produce weak project managers who rely too much on tools and lack hands-on experience in getting the job done through people in a war room environment, the very basis of PM.

**3.0 ISSUES OF COMMON GLOBAL INTEREST:**

**3.1 What should be contained in a Global Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK)?**

As the PM body of knowledge, PMI' s PMBOK Guide is obviously a good model, which should receive global recognition through updating. It covers all the essential knowledge areas and the processes of project management which can be selectively applied to projects of specific types and regardless of project location, and the PMBOK Guide admits such flexible, selective application of its knowledge.

It should be confirmed that a PM body of knowledge should be distinguished from a PM standard which gives standard practice or requirements of project management.

**3.2 What should international or global project management “standards” consist of?**

There is no general answer to this question.

A question still exists as to whether any international or global PM standards are feasible, which can universally apply to all industries or public services with different PM exposure, maturity and complexity.

For instance, BS 6079 seems to be a realistic and comprehensive PM standard for the engineering and construction industry; however is it realistic to the IT/IM/IS industry, manufacturing industry or public services?

Then, if we hasten to come to terms harmonizing views and requirements of everybody, is it not likely to see an international PM standard like ISO 10006 which is a sort of skeleton document?

### **3.3 What PM standards are currently recognized in your country? Please explain.**

There are no project management standards recognized as predominant in Japan. The Japanese international engineering and construction companies operate more or less on international industry project management practices that are not recognized as “standards”.

Some IT companies utilize PMI PMBOK based project management processes (note: if we admit that the PMI PMBOK Guide is a sort of PM standard in the absence of globally recognized PM standards).

With the publication of the Japanese language version of the PMI PMBOK, a growing number of Japanese companies have started studying the PMBOK, but it will be some time before it is recognized as an influential standard (or body of knowledge as it is).

### **3.4 What PM certifications are currently used or recognized in your country. Briefly explain.**

The category of Project Management has been introduced into the Japanese system of state certification of professional engineers for the past four years, and there is a growing interest in this title among project managers and project engineers in engineering, construction and information services industry (the limitation of this title is that it is an engineer title).

There is also a growing interest in the PMI PMP certification in the IT/IS community, especially among the Japanese division companies of US global IT corporations, construction industry and part of engineering/construction industry. As of August 1998, three PMP examinations have been administered in Japan and another is scheduled for November 1998 at three different sites.

The JPMF is scheduled to establish a committee for needs assessment on its own national PM certification system (Phase I).

### **3.5 What topics for PM research would be most useful to professionals or organizations in your country or region?**

#### Engineering and Construction

- I Project manager development compatible with global project operations
- I Applied project management in TQM, value improving practices/best practices, front-end planning (“front-end loading”)

#### General Construction

- I Earned Value Management System (EVMS) in the Japanese project context

#### Information Services Industry

- I Professional development
- I Practical (readily workable) project management processes

#### Manufacturing Industry

- I Model process for manufacturing project management

### **3.6 What PM education is most needed in your country today? How should be provided?**

Most needed project management education includes:

- I Project management basics (overview) courses for entry-level practitioners
- I Workshops on schedule and cost/resources management
- I Workshops on the EVMS
- I Workshops on project management case histories (successful projects vs. failed projects)

These courses should be provided by both PM education vendors and industry project management professionals active in the ENAA project management organizations or in the PMI Tokyo Chapter.

### **3.7 How can “global cooperation” within the PM profession be most effectively advanced?**

Global cooperation within the PM profession could best be advanced through initiative on the PM association level. The Global Project Management Forum meetings are excellent opportunities to lay the foundation for enhanced communication and cooperation among project management associations. Associations should first agree on principles, specific themes of joint pursuit for the advancement of project management profession and the way to follow up on them through regular contacts.

### **3.8 How can “globalization” of the PM profession be most easily realized?**

If globalization of the PM profession is understood as the expansion of PM practice into virgin territories, the only means to realize it is the demonstration of cases backed by quantitative analysis proving a return of PM and not PM theories, standards or body of knowledge.

## **4.0 YOUR PROJECT MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION**

### **4.1 Briefly describe the history, purpose, organization and activities of the professional project management organization you represent.**

ENAA was established in August 1978 as a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion and capability enhancement of the Japanese engineering services/project industry.

ENAA carries on both, industrial and professional, project management initiatives. ENAA's industry-based Project Management Committee has existed since the foundation of ENAA with such broad objectives as:

- Advance the project management capability level of the overall industry through cross-fertilization
- Conduct collective research on the state of the art of project management
- Provide, through combined efforts, practical solutions to project operations issues
- Provide a forum for professional development in project management

The committee is currently represented by 40 companies (engineering and construction companies and large manufacturing companies having contracting engineering divisions). Its activities are carried out through committee meetings, steering member meetings, research by funded research task forces and non-funded study groups, and seminars.

The newly established Japan Project Management Forum (JPMF) under a pilot program is a professional PM organization. JPMF's mission is to establish a national center of excellence in project management. JPMF carries the following objectives:

- To advance professionalism and individual and organizational capability of project management in Japan by uniting those who practice project management, advocate increased business profitability and productivity through managing by projects, teach and research project management and provide methodologies, technologies and tools for project management.
- To help enhance the social and industrial recognition of the project management discipline and project management professionals
- To provide forums for matters that concern project management, and,
- To cooperate with the world's project management community for cross-fertilization and global advancement of the project management profession and discipline.

The following depict the typical activities over the past year.

- ◆ JPMF steering committee meetings have been held once a month to formulate operating objectives, approve committee activity plans and evaluate pilot program progress.
- ◆ Committee activities have also been held monthly to plan activities and events during the pilot program and for the full program.
- ◆ Regular forum meetings have been held once a month, with engineering and construction meetings and information technology/services meetings hosted alternately; theme presentations or tutorials, discussions and socializing were carried out in these 2.5-hour evening gatherings.
- ◆ Quarterly JPMF journals have been published for those registered on the mailing list and other potential members.

- ◆ A one-day orientation PM conference was hosted on October 21, 1997 with 590 delegates. Following, Japan's first full-scale PM conference "Project Management Symposium 1998 - "PM - An Emerging Management Horizon :Transforming Enterprises and Professionals through Project Management" was sponsored by JPMF on May 19 and 20 this year. The conference consisted of a plenary session with Dr. Lew Ireland's key note presentation "Globalization of the Project Management Profession", three technical tracks and one-day seminars/workshops.
- ◆ In addition to the Japanese language version of the PMI PMBOK Guide published in April 1997, two project management resource brochures, a 160-page basic PM guide and a 200-page PM guide for global projects with high outsourcing contents, have been published in cooperation with ENAA's Project Management Committee.
- ◆ Three PMI PMP examinations were hosted by JPMF's PMP examination support task force.
- ◆ JPMF's leaders represented JPMF during the PMI'97 in Chicago, Global Project Management Forum#4 in Chicago, PMA India's Global PM Symposium in New Delhi and IPMA's World Conference in Slovenia.

4.2 Please provide contact information for your organization, including names, addresses, telephone, fax and e-mail numbers.

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