

STATE OF THE ART OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT: 2003

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PART 3

PM AND PEOPLE

Three topics are discussed in this section:

Part 3-1 Individual Capabilities in Project Management: what is the state of PM education, training, and certification of individual people who specialize in PM?

Part 3-2 Project Teams : what the importance of team work and how it is achieved?

Part 3-3 The Profession of Project Management: is this a management discipline or a true profession?

PART 3-1

INDIVIDUAL CAPABILITIES IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT

what is the state of PM education, training, and certification of individual people who specialize in PM?

Education and Training in PM: Today, formalized education and training for individuals in all aspects of project management is widely available in most of the developed countries of the world at doctoral, master's, bachelor, and even high school levels. "More than 900 organizations (universities, government and non-government agencies, training and consulting companies, and independent consultants—on-line and on-site) in 46 countries participate in the R. E. P. [PMI Registered Education Providers] Program [initiated in 1999], currently offering 4,000 learning activities and training for more than 60,000 students per year" (*PMI Today* August 2003, Supplement). Many additional education and training providers are recognized by the 30 national member organizations of the International Project Management Association/IPMA. Eighteen graduate and undergraduate level PM certification and degree programs that exist today across the U. S. have been identified by one (Curtis 2003, pp 37-39) of the many printed and electronic periodicals devoted to PM.

PMI® Certification Program:

http://www.pmi.org/info/PDC_CertificationsOverview.asp?nav=0401

Individual certification in project management is provided by PMI and IPMA and its member associations, as well as by various educational and training institutions. PMI's certification is presently at two levels: Project Management Professional/PMP, and Certified Associate in Project Management/CAPM By July 31 2003 PMI had certified 67,160 PMPs around the world,

including 15,703 during the first seven months of the year (*PMI Today* Oct. 2003, p 7). The PMP certification examination is heavily based on the content of PMI's PMBOK® Guide, which has recently been translated from English into eight languages (Brazilian Portuguese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin Chinese, and Spanish) and focuses almost entirely on managing a single project, with little reference to multi-project, program, or project portfolio management. (The PMBOK® Guide has also been unofficially translated into Russian and probably other languages.) Although fairly extensive experience is required in order to qualify to take the PMP exam, some critics believe that PMI's PMP certification is too heavily based on knowledge rather than capability or competence, is not sufficiently application specific, and does not specifically certify project managers per se.

For an interesting, recent argument by Paul Giammalvo in favor of competency-based PM certification go to <http://www.pmforum.org/pmwt03/viewpoints03-09more.htm> .

IPMA Certification Program:

www.ipma.ch

IPMA's approach provides for the four levels of certification shown in Figure 1. These levels are being adapted and administered by the national member associations of IPMA for their countries and in their languages The 90 page IPMA Competency Baseline/ICB document (English, German and French) can be downloaded from the above address.

- Level A: Certificated programme director (CPD) shall have the ability to direct all projects of a programme or all projects of a company/branch or to manage a complex project with major partners from different international cultures.
- Level B: Certificated project manager (CPM) shall be able to manage complex projects him/herself
- Level C: Registered project management professional (RPMP) can manage non-complex projects him/herself and assist the manager of a complex project in all fields of project management
- Level D: Project management Fachman/Fachfrau/practitioner (PMF) shall have project management knowledge and may be applying it on some fields as a specialist

| Level | Capabilities | Certification Process | | | Title | Validity |
|-------|---|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|------------------|
| | | Stage 1 | Stage 2 | Stage 3 | | |
| A | Competence = knowledge + experience + personal attitude | CPD | Optional E.g. Workshop or seminar | Project Report | Interview | 3-5 years |
| B | | CPM | | | | |
| C | | PMP | Exam | Registered Project Management Professional | Time limited | |
| D | Knowledge | PMF | Exam | | Project Management Fachmanns/ Professional | Not time limited |

Figure 1. IPMA's Project Management Certification Scheme

APM (UK) Certification Program:

http://www.apm.org.uk/qualifications/APM_Qualifications_brochure.pdf

The Association of Project Management/APM, the British member of IPMA, lists 32 accredited training organizations and 15 higher educational institutions in the UK. Its program currently offers three award levels: Certified Project Manager (IPMA Level B,) Practitioner Qualification (IPMA Level C,) and APMP (IPMA Level D.) The APM Group (www.apmgroup.co.uk) acting on behalf of the UK OGC, presently accredits trainers (currently 150 worldwide) and training organizations (currently 50 worldwide) in the OGC 'Best Practice' Guides (OGC PRINCE2, MSP and M_o_R) for IPMA Level C certification.

AIPM Certification Program:

<http://www.aipm.com.au>

The Australian Institute of Project Management has a certification system based upon the Australian National Competency Standards for Project Management. It is currently available in Australia and will shortly be available everywhere else. AIPM certifies individuals at three levels: project team member, project manager and program manager, and requires individuals to prepare portfolios of evidence showing performance (that is, "output competence").

asapm Certification Program: A recently formed PM association, the American Society for the Advancement of Project Management/asapm (www.asapm.org), has announced a certification program that will be rolled out in phases with the first offering targeted at managers of complex projects and programs. This new certification program is intended to correct the perceived weaknesses in current PMI certification available in the U. S., (**not being application-specific, not assessing competence, or not certifying project managers.**) According to asapm what makes their program unique is that it is built upon performance based competency standards rather than knowledge-based ones. The program will ultimately include at least four different certification levels; but the initial offering will be for the "asapm Certified Project Manager (aCPM)." See www.pmwforum.org/pmwforum03/organizations03-09.htm#ASAPM for more detail.

U. S. Government PM Certification Initiatives: In the U.S. a number of federal government agencies have PM certification initiatives under way, including the Department of Defense/DOD and its Defense Acquisition University/DAU, Department of Energy/DOE, and the Office of Management and Budget/OMB (*PMI Today* Aug. 2003 p 1, 5). The most advanced U. S. governmental agency that best represents the state of the art in this aspect of PM appears to be by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration/NASA, which several years ago established the NASA Academy of Program and Project Leadership/APPL (www.appl.nasa.gov). NASA APPL has implemented a Project Management Development Process/PMDP that leads to APPL certification of individuals within NASA at four levels of competence:

Project Engineer/Team Member: Supports basic project needs....

Subsystem Manager: Manages in-house or contractor sub-system for a larger system.

System Manager: Manages complex system development of several subsystems to be integrated from parallel efforts (both in-house and contracted) in a team environment.

Program Manager: Manages total program/complex project of many subsystems over longer period of time, both in-house and contractor work, possibly international. (Source: The NASA Program/Project Management Development Process flowchart, Feb. 2000.)

This process is based on ten 'competency categories' covering many individual competencies, plus a large number of individual 'knowledges and skills,' and is supported by 27 internal NASA training courses. All NASA Civil Servant employees are eligible to participate in this development process.

Licensing of Individual Practitioners in the Project Management "Profession": Most legally recognized "professions" around the world have formal, official licensing procedures and practices in place, many required by federal, state, or provincial law (engineering, medicine, law, accounting, and others.) To date no country is known to have established legal licensing requirements for the practice of project management. Although this subject has been discussed in PMI and IAPM forums, a cursory search of the public records of minutes of the PMI Board of Directors meetings indicates no record of any official discussions of this subject within that body. A debate is under way presently in the U. K. about the desirability of obtaining a Royal Charter there for APM, which, if achieved, might be a forerunner to some form of government licensure.

In the U. S. and Canada, and probably also in Western European countries, the most likely scenario for licensing project managers or PM specialists, if it ever occurs, will be connected in some way with registered engineers at the state or province levels, perhaps with some sort of cooperative arrangements between the professional engineering and architectural associations (ASME, AIEE, ASCE, AIA, and others in the U.S., and the Engineering Institute in Canada), in my opinion. Such licensing will need to be for very specific types or categories of projects. "The chartered institutions in the UK are undergoing change recognizing the need for an umbrella organization and all engineering institutions there are now also a part of an Engineering Council or EC(UK). Qualified members of the subscribing Institutions may apply for registration and use of the designation CEng (Chartered Engineer) after their name" (Wideman 2003).

In the absence of governmental or other licensure there is a serious question about the validity of calling the practice of project management a "profession." This topic is discussed further under "The 'Profession' of PM."

PART 3-2

PROJECT TEAMS

what is the importance of team work in project management and how is it best achieved?

Leading practitioners on the front edge of the state of the art in PM today recognize the importance of achieving effective teamwork on each of their projects. The human dimension of PM is now the subject of numerous books and articles and training courses. To have an effective project team, as distinct from simply a group of people working on loosely related tasks, several conditions are necessary:

- Identification of the project team members and definition of the role and responsibilities of each.
- Clearly stated and understood project objectives.
- An achievable project plan and schedule.
- Reasonable rules (procedures regarding information flow, communication, team meetings,

escalation of conflicts, and the like).

- Leadership by the project manager.

If any of these conditions is not present it will be difficult to achieve effective teamwork.

Truly effective teams strive to achieve the project objectives and simultaneously satisfy *all* the major stakeholders in the project. Project stakeholders include all those persons who have a stake (a vested interest, responsibility, or decision power) in the project and its results. Advanced practitioners think about good performance and successful achievement along two dimensions: the hard/soft dimension and the acceptable/excellent dimension. The hard/soft dimension refers to two different kinds of performance, and the acceptable/excellent dimension refers to two different *standards* of performance.

"The hard/soft dimension concerns the tangible and intangible aspects of performance. Hard criteria tend to be measurable, the most frequent being to do with time, cost, resources and technical standards. Soft criteria on the other hand are more subjective and difficult to measure. Yet they are clearly used frequently in evaluating performance. They are more about 'how' the task was accomplished, the attitudes, skills and behavior demonstrated by the team and its members.... In setting success criteria ordinary teams tend to concentrate on criteria only and ask questions such as, 'How many, how much and when?' Superteams do all this too (and mostly more punctiliously) but add another dimension. They also draw out clients' and sponsors' more subtle expectations, those to do with ways of working and the relationships with the client, to attitudes adopted on such things as quality, reliability and attention to detail. These are all factors that are crucial to a client's ultimate satisfaction. Equally these soft criteria are explored, clarified and agreed with the sponsor, and service departments....

"The acceptable/excellent dimension on the other hand concerns standards of performance. And it is around this dimension that the whole Superteam idea was originally crystallized. In a world where the best is no longer good enough, the frontiers of performance are always being stretched. 'The best can always be bettered' could almost be the Superteam motto. We find many teams who think that their performance is good, but who in fact are underperforming. They may be averagely good when compared with those other teams they see. Their performance is acceptable but in no way outstanding.... Superteams strive to be different, and achieve just a little bit more than the competition. They are constantly looking for ways to do things better, constantly testing their assumptions about what is achievable and searching for ways to overcome any problems that lie in the path" (Hastings et al 1987 pp 35-37).

To achieve effective teamwork, today's chief executive officers must demand that:

The importance of the project team concept be conveyed to all contributors to every project in the organization.

Every project manager receives adequate leadership, conflict resolution, and commitment building training (Archibald 2003, p 144).

Every project team member understands:

- The project objectives,
- The project plan and schedule, and

- The rules to be followed in the project management life cycle process, including issue and conflict escalation procedures.

PART 3-3

THE 'PROFESSION' OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT

is this a management discipline or a true profession?

There is continuing discussion within the PM community of practitioners, consultants, teachers, trainers, authors, researchers, editors, publishers, software vendors, and the associations that have taken charge of the several PM bodies of knowledge, certification, accreditation, standards development, ethics, and PM maturity model development and application, regarding whether or not PM is or will ever be a true 'profession.'

"Contrary to 'PM as a Profession', I have recently come to the conclusion that project management must now be understood and promoted as a 'core competency for every executive in every organization'. The direction our 'profession' must now take, in my opinion, is to show that the benefits of professional PM are so profound and wide spread that they should be embraced by every professional, every executive and every organization. Management by projects is no longer a choice but a practical reality in a competitive world. Enterprise PM and Portfolio PM are simply steps toward a more mature and more profitable enterprise. To survive and/or to prosper, every executive must understand how to organize, plan and complete projects. These opinions are based on my research and thinking during the development of two recent papers (for Russia/IPMA in June and the IPMI in Ireland) on the subject of how 'modern project management makes money' for professionals, project managers, program managers, CEOs and organizations. It is the bottom line and, in my opinion, overwhelming logic. (Pells, 2003).

David Curling has expressed a similar opinion, recently saying that "I wrote on the 'Globalization of the Project Management Profession'nd presented the paper to PMI in Chicago [in 1998] and to some local PM organizations. Most were horrified when I declared that PM was not a profession but a business discipline and I had some difficulty in seeing that it would ever become a profession. That is, I felt that project management was simply a sub set of general management and there was little probability of 'General Management' becoming a 'legally based profession'" (Curling 2003).

Roberto Morales [2003], Dean of the National University of Engineering in Peru, captured the essence of this current thinking when he recently stated that "Project management is a way of life for all professionals."

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