

PM WORLD TODAY – FEBRUARY 2010

Editor's Perspective on the Current Edition

By **David L. Pells**
Managing Editor

Welcome to the February 2010 edition of *PM World Today*, the 2nd issue in our 12th year. Since 1998, *PM World Today* has provided educational and informative articles and stories about project management. As the global reach of this online publication grows, we continue to seek new authors who want to share knowledge or advance their careers. If you have project management knowledge or a story to share, please send an article for publication. We are especially interested in those that contribute to solving global problems.

Each month the Editor's Perspective on the Current Edition provides an overview of the contents of the current edition of *PM World Today*. This month's edition again contains articles, news and stories from around the world, including several in Spanish. *PM World Today* is an educational and informative resource for PM professionals worldwide. It is also a service for PM experts, leaders and professionals who want to share knowledge, get published or gain more visibility in the PM world.

This month's **Editorial** is entitled "**Three Points – about Project Management Education, Training & Career Development or Three Good Reasons for Continuous Learning in Project Management**". While preparing to introduce a project management course in Washington, DC recently, it occurred to me that those attending might need some perspective on not only what they would be learning, but what they would not learn. The PM field now contains too much to learn in one class, course or educational program. I also realized that another important message was the importance of continuous learning in the project management field, since any one person cannot have all the answers related to managing every type of program and project these days. Experience is no longer enough. It is also apparent that project stakeholder issues are growing in today's environment, so that topic also needed some perspective. Here are my thoughts on those three issues. Please read and let me know your reaction.

The **Featured Interview** this month is with EVM pioneer **Jim Morin**, who played a key role in the early development of earned value and the cost/schedule control systems criteria (C/SCSC) in the US aerospace and defense industry in the 1960s. This is a fascinating look back at some of the issues and reasons leading to the development of earned value, one of the most important concepts in modern program and project management. Don't miss this opportunity to learn from one of the most knowledgeable former leaders from the A&D industry. (English)

Columns – a monthly series of papers on special topics, was launched in December 2009 with a series on *Advances in Project Management*, introduced by series editor **Prof Darren Dalcher** of Middlesex University in London. A second column was added in January 2010 on the topic of *Construction Project Scheduling: Issues and Controversies* by **Earl Glenwright**, well known project scheduling expert in the USA.

"New Insights into Managing Risk in Projects" is Prof Dalcher's introduction to this month's series article by Dr. David Hillson. According to Darren, *"In an increasingly 'projectised' world should we be preoccupied with projects or with risks? .. The management of risk has gradually emerged as a normal activity that is now a constituent part of many professions. The concept of risk has become so ubiquitous that we continually search for risk-based explanations of the world around us. German sociologist Ulrich Beck even noted that risk had become a dominant feature of society, replacing wealth production as a means of measuring decisions. Yet, at the same time progress is implemented through increments of projects; chunks of action that endeavour to bring about a new future that will improve and change our reality..."* The stage is set for David Hillson's article on the topic. (English)

"Managing Risk in Projects: What's New?" by **Dr David Hillson** is this month's paper in the *Advances in Project Management* series. According to Dr Hillson, *"While it is true that there is wide consensus on project risk management basics, the continued failure of projects to deliver consistent benefits suggests that the problem of risk in projects has not been completely solved. Clearly there must be some mismatch between project risk management theory and practice, or perhaps there are new aspects to be discovered and implemented, otherwise all project risks would be managed effectively and most projects would succeed... So what could possibly remain to be discovered about this venerable topic? ..."* Please read this and let us know what you think – about the series, article and topic. (English)

"Why Schedule (at all)? Premises and Purposes" is an article in the series on *Construction Project Scheduling* by **Earl Glenwright**. According to Earl, *"So what is the mystery about why we develop a work plan and then derive a schedule? We have had the answer to that since day-one. And it's not a secret or some devious requirement of the owner. You all know the real reason, and that trumps all others, bar none... Let's briefly review the history and development of Activity-network based scheduling techniques. Initially, computer capabilities were quite limited and there were many restrictive 'rules'..."* Please read this new article and let us know if this article or series is useful to you. (English)

Viewpoints articles are opinion pieces by project management practitioners, professional leaders and experts. Five viewpoints article are included this month.

Peter Taylor, Author of *The Lazy Project Manager* and PMO director for Siemens PLM Software in the UK has provided an article entitled "***Is Project Management a Core Skill and no longer a Niche Capability?***" According to Peter, "*Project management is fast becoming the preferred way for companies to get things done. In a global economy project management will make a company more competitive than the traditional methods of managing work... So for all managers there is now the need to understand the dynamics of projects together with the skill and process of project management in order to make the most out their organization's investments... Is Project Management therefore no longer a niche capability, the home of project management office members and external contractors; is it now a core skill that all executives and senior management need to understand?...*" Read the entire paper and let us know what you think of it. (English)

Tom Shieves, PhD, project management teacher and consultant and a correspondent for PMForum in North Texas has provided "***Championship Teams Don't Waste Time!***" According to Tom, "*Championship teams, whether on the field of play or in project management, don't waste time. A championship football team will carefully use time outs and passes to the sidelines to stop the clock at crucial moments. The team members seem to perform these functions like clockwork as a well-rehearsed squad. There is no individual variance, just team alignment behind a common goal. The same is true with project teams who perform at championship levels. The team moves in synchrony toward a common team goal. This level of high performance only occurs when there is a sound basis of team trust...*" Please read this article and send us your reaction. (English)

Kumar Sarma, PMP, author and consultant based in Dubai, has provided another article entitled, "***Many Problems in Projects can be Solved if only... continued***". According to Kumar, in this follow-up to his January article, "*In the last article I had explained about the principle that we should make it a habit to operate from the circle of our influence on a 'consistent basis'. Just defining the 'circle of influence' again - It is the tiny circle of our self about which we have complete control. It's the circle that we can do something about. If consistent action is taken in your circle of influence, it has no choice but to become bigger and reduce the circle of your concern. This is the exact strategy adopted by all the leaders of the world before they became 'great'...*" Please read this article and let us know if you agree with the author, or want to add something. (English)

Melvyn Lee, project manager for HCL-Axon in Malaysia, is back with another article entitled "***Critical Thinking in Project Management***". According to Melvyn, "*Despite all the planning done, project managers are often plagued with a litany of uncertainties. Should a project manager be concerned about situations or circumstances in the future of the project that might not even happen? On the other hand, a complacent project manager might react diametrically opposite by 'letting things happen' and decide what to do when they do happens... This is where critical thinking benefits project managers. Critical thinking is not only a method or*

technique but a weapon every project manager should be armed with. And there are enemies out there that are afraid of critical thinkers..." Please read this entertaining short article and send us a reaction. (English)

Getachew Teklemariam Alemu in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, has authored a very interesting article entitled "**Professional Associations: From Nonexistence to Hibernation.**" Getachew reflects on the weakness of professional associations in his country. According to Mr. Alemu, "*In a country where skilled human power is scarce, poverty is prevalent, basic human needs are still not met for millions of people, and democratic culture is in its infancy, the contribution of professional associations is immense. They play a critical role in setting the stage for policy debates, maintaining standards of production lines, undertaking development research, facilitating technology and knowledge transfer, coordinating sectoral efforts, consulting the government, creating mass-consciousness, mainstreaming professional disciplines, and underpinning international competitiveness. Yet, those professional associations that had been established and acquired legal certification since 1991 are not doing considerable things, aside from organizing annual conferences..."* We would like to identify opportunities to help jump start the PM profession in Ethiopia. Please read this article, then send us your reaction or ideas on what might help. (English)

Featured papers are serious professional contributions to the PM literature or papers of significant interest. Some are highly entertaining as well. This month we include four such papers.

"**Systems and Project Management**" is a paper by **Alan Stretton**, PhD in Sydney, Australia. According to Dr. Stretton's introduction, "*Some writers have asserted that project management actually derived from 'systems', and these are exemplified. A brief summary of the nature of 'systems' is given, and the substantial contributions 'systems' have made to project management tools and techniques are summarized. However, some project management approaches developed earlier than, and independent from, 'systems', particularly in the construction industry, and these are briefly discussed..."* Alan's paper provides some useful history and perspective regarding the relationship of PM to systems theory. Please let us know what you think of this latest paper from one of the world's elder statesmen in the field of professional project management. (English)

"**Parkinson's Law, Overtime Work and Human Productivity (Impact of the Planned Time of Work on Human Productivity)**" is another ground breaking paper by **Pavel Barseghyan**, PhD, mathematician and project scheduling expert from Yerevan, Armenia. According to Dr. Barseghyan, "*Contemporary approaches to the modeling of human work processes consider people's productivity as something constant, inherent to the individuals and human groups. This leads to inadequate project cycle time models and scheduling risk models. Especially there are serious unresolved problems with the work completion time variations. Existing*

risk models produce unrealistic high values for the standard deviation of the project completion time... In reality the human work productivity is not a constant. It is highly variable and, which is more important, it is highly controllable..." Please read this interesting paper and let us know your opinion? (English)

"Project Management Certifications Compared: a Preliminary Analysis" is a paper by **Dr Paul Giammalvo** in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. According to Paul's introduction, *"...while nearly all of the major professional organizations claim to represent the voice of the project or program management practitioner, and virtually offer multiple levels of credentials, one cannot tell from the names of those credentials exactly what they represent vis-à-vis one another. (i.e. does holding the Project Management Professional (PMP) from PMI really mean that the holder is a professional project manager?) Or what is a "Certified Cost Engineer" and how does that relate to project or program management?.. This lack of any meaningful comparison was the driving force behind this exploratory research effort..."* Including an extensive set of research results, this paper is presented as a preliminary assessment and intended to stimulate discussion and further research. Please send us your reaction. (English)

"The myriad consequences of skilled migration from developing countries" is a new paper by **Prof. Ghirmai Kefela** in California. According to the author's introduction, *"The consequences of skilled migration from developing countries are a direct loss of the fiscal contributions of these highly skilled individuals. This paper analyzes the effect of labor migration on both receiving and sending countries, and loss of talent for a developing countries or Sub Saharan Africa by examining human capital flows from those countries to the U.S. and Europe. A broad range of policy changes will be required to meet these challenges, including changes in immigration policies, and measures can be implemented to minimize the damage and turn 'brain drain' into 'brain circulation'..."* This is another new paper on a very interesting topic affecting the global economy, and many nations. We think the author has offered some fresh perspective on this emotional and controversial topic. What do you think? (English)

One **Case Study** is included this month. Authored by **Ana Maria Rodriguez** and **Adriana Salomón** in Rosaio, Argentina and entitled ***"The Rosario Habitat Program Experience: Project Management Experience Applied to Government – Part 3 of 3"***, this is a follow-up to their previous two articles on this interesting project, previously published in *PM World Today*. According to the authors' introduction this month, *"This article continues to document the experience of the Rosario Habitat Program (RHP), developed since 2000 by the Public Housing Service of the City of Rosario (Argentina), in which many Project Management practices have been implemented since its inception. In the previous editions of PM World Today we presented the background to the Rosario Habitat Program, the application of the conceptual framework of Project Management and the analysis of Integration Management, Scope Management, Time Management, and Cost*

Management. In this paper we examine specifically the application of the concepts of Quality, Human Resources, Communications, Risk and Procurement Management in the Rosario Habitat Program..." It is important to share experiences in the field of project and program management, and we thank the authors for this very useful contribution. Please read this, then send us a case study from your own experiences. (English & Spanish)

PM Advisories are papers by project management consultants, experts, trainers and executives who share practical advice for solving problems or addressing project management related issues. Six advisory papers are included this month, by authors in the UK and USA – with one translation from Mexico.

James Brown, PhD, president of SEBA[®] Solutions Inc. based in Florida, USA, is the author of "**The SC Addiction!**". According to Dr. Brown, "*That SC addiction in project management is Scope Creep (SC). Scope Creep being defined as a non-mandatory change in scope. Some individuals and some organizations are as addicted to Scope Creep as individuals are addicted to cigarettes. In both cases these addicts are good people. They are smart people. But they are people with an addiction. They have sincere and noble intentions to quit, but their addiction results in behavior that is not logical...*" Please read this entertaining and instructional article. (English)

David Hillson, PhD, well known "Risk Doctor" based in UK, has provided another "Risk Doctor Briefing" this month, entitled "**Universal Laws of Risk Management**". According to David's introduction, "*The term 'risk management' covers many different types of risk, including strategic risk, financial risk, reputational risk, operational risk, project risk, environmental risk, legal risk, contract risk, or technical risk, as well as corporate governance, business continuity and disaster recovery. While each of these areas has its own special language, processes and techniques, there are some principles which apply to them all. These might be called 'universal laws of risk management'...*" Please read this month's Risk Doctor Briefing and send us your comments. (English)

Jeff Oltmann, principal consultant at Synergy Professional Services, LLC in Portland, Oregon, USA, is back with an advisory article entitled "**Backpackers' Guide to Lightweight Project Management**." According to Jeff, "*The field of project management has been around for decades, and the accumulated technical knowledge often feels overwhelming to newcomers. For example, my favorite introductory project management book gets longer with each new edition and now weighs in at 462 pages... In my experience, this formidable body of knowledge intimidates many organizations that are newcomers to formal project management... They need a lightweight, simple way to start – a backpacker's approach to project management...*" Please let us know your opinion of this interesting and useful article. (English)

John Lugg, Manager at Moorhouse Consulting in the UK, has provided an article entitled ***"A steep learning curve... How Operationally Oriented Organisations can become more Project Oriented."*** According to Mr. Lugg's introduction, *"It's a fact that operationally focused organisations don't do programme and project management (PPM) well. But with the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) demanding tighter focus and more value for money from public sector projects, the pressure is on large service providers to change how they manage and run their major change programmes. Read on to discover why operationally led companies traditionally struggle with PPM, but what they can gain from adopting the basic principles..."* We think this is more good advice from the folks at Moorhouse. What is your opinion? (English)

We again include an article by **Michelle LaBrosse**, Founder and Chief Cheetah at Cheetah Learning in the USA, entitled ***"What's Your Tagline?"*** According to the introduction, *"With the explosion of social media, you're hearing a lot about personal brands again. Now, Andy Warhol's infamous 15 minutes of fame is a reality for anyone who can upload a video to YouTube or create a blog... However, as a project manager, when I think of personal brands, I like to think about it in terms of how people experience you. What do people think about you? What's your reputation?..."* A Spanish translation of Michelle's article has also been provided by **Rafael Díaz Real** and **Roberto Toledo Rodríguez** of Alpha Consultoria in Mexico. If you enjoy this article, either the English or Spanish version, please email a comment to us. (English & Spanish)

Three **Book Reviews** are included this month. **Carol Kacinko** has provided a review of ***"Business Driven PMO Setup"*** by **Mark Price Perry** and published by J. Ross Publishers in the USA in 2009. **Joshua Levy** has provided a review of ***"Project Manager Street Smarts: A Real World Guide to PMP Skills"***, by **Linda Kretz Zaval** and Terri Wagner, published in the USA by Sybex (Wiley) in 2009. **Randy Gannoe** has provided a review of ***"PMP Project Management Professional Exam Study Guide – 5th Edition"*** by **Kim Heldman** and published by Sybex (Wiley) in the USA in 2009.

Ms. Kacinko and Mr. Gannoe are alumni of the **Graduate Program in Project Management at The University of Texas at Dallas** (The UT Dallas), while Mr. Levy is a current graduate student there. Most of our book reviews are provided through a cooperative program between PMForum and The UT Dallas. (PMForum provides the books, graduate students and alumni receive the books and provide a review; we publish the book reviews in *PM World Today*.) Authors and publishers of project management books who would like to have a book reviewed can contact editor@pmforum.org.

Regional Reports is the section of *PM World Today* where reports from International Correspondents around the world are published each month. These include updates on local PM activities and events, discussions of local conditions

and projects, and personal experiences or perspectives. These reports provide a snapshot and multi-cultural flavor of project management around the world. This is one of the most interesting aspects of the monthly production process, to see what's happening around the world and what is reported by these active and motivated PM professionals. We hope you find these reports as interesting and educational as we do. The following reports are included this month:

- **Getachew Teklemariam Alemu** in Addis Ababa, **Ethiopia** – in *"Projects & Project Management in Ethiopia Today,"* discusses *"Project Management in Africa: Failed States, Terrorism and Bad Governance"*. (English)
- **Jouko Vaskimo** in Helsinki, **Finland** – in *"Project Management Update from Finland,"* reviews the appointment of **Jarmo Suominen** as Managing Director at Neste Jacobs and the release of a Committee Draft of the new ISO 21500 project management standard by the ISO/PC 236 committee. (English)
- **O. Chima Okereke**, PhD from Port Harcourt, **Nigeria** – in *"Report on Projects & Project Management in Nigeria,"* discusses *"Project Management Issues in the Current Nigerian Political Climate,"* which may be reaching a constitutional crisis. (English)
- **Luis Fasano** in Panama City, **Panama** – in *"Project Management Update from Panama,"* briefly describes the climate in Panama for construction projects to start the new year, and the upcoming Second PMI Panama Project Management Symposium in March. (English)
- **Florin Gheorghiu** in Bucharest, **Romania** – in *"Project Management Update from Romania"*, describes a major new highway project to Brasov City in the heart of Romania, general conditions in the country, and the potential benefits from EU funds. (English)
- **Jaycee Krüger** in Johannesburg, **South Africa** – in *"Project Management News from South Africa,"* briefly mentions news from PMSA, PMI South Africa Chapter and APM South Africa. He also mentions SETA and latest news from SACPCMP (South African Council for Project and Construction Management Professionals), concluding with a calendar update. (English)
- **Alfonso Bucero** in Madrid, **Spain** – in *"Project Management in Spain: Monthly Report"*, briefly describes a presentation in January by the Spanish Construction Project Management Association (AEDIP) on the results of a study *"The project management positioning and image"* in Spain. Alfonso also describes their upcoming big annual PM event at the PMI Madrid Chapter in March. (English & Spanish)

- **Miles Shepherd** in Salisbury, **UK** – in “*UK Project Management Roundup*”, reflects on the current economic outlook in UK, describes exciting new plans for high speed rail between Scotland and London, and updates us on professional news in England. (English)
- **Dave Maurer** in Northern Virginia, **USA** – in “*Project Management Update from Virginia*”, provides a brief introduction to three PMI Chapters, including those in Richmond (Central Virginia), Hampton Roads and Washington, DC (which holds many of its meetings in Virginia). (English)
- **Tom Shieves** in Arlington, Texas, **USA** – in “*Project Management Update from North Texas*,” briefly describes the interesting dinner meeting presentation at the PMI Ft Worth Chapter about the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Program on January 21 and upcoming events in February. (English)
- **Quang Ton** in Houston, Texas, **USA** – in “*Project Management Update from Houston*”, briefly describes PMI Houston Chapter activities and developments, including plans for their big 2010 Conference and Exposition in June. (English)

We want to extend a warm welcome to a new International Correspondent this month, **Isaac Nyarwaya** in Kigali, Rwanda. Isaac has over nine years of project management related experience in the NGO sector, United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), and recently in the private sector. He holds a Bachelors Degree in Management with Distinction from the National University of Rwanda and a Masters in Business Administration (MBA) in Project Management from the Maastricht School of Management. He also has a PRINCE2 (Foundation) Certification and is scheduled to sit for the PMP exam this year. He has been a member of the Project Management Institute (PMI) since 1997. Mr. Nyarwaya is in the process of establishing the Centre for Project Management Excellence (CPME Ltd) in Kigali to conduct project management related consultancy, training, research and publication. He is also a visiting lecturer at the Independent Institute of Lay Adventists of Kigali (INILAK). Isaac is committed to promoting professional project management in Rwanda and dreams of having many certified project managers and a professional project management body in the country one day. As an International Correspondent for **PMForum** and **PM World Today**, Isaac will be reporting news and information about projects and project management in Rwanda. Please see the news article about Mr. Nyarwaya in the PM Community News section of this month's edition.

The balance of this month's **PM World Today** features calls for papers, announcements of future events, news, information and stories related to people, projects and project management around the world. Please review the articles in PM Community News where people are featured, and the Future Events section

where important announcements about upcoming PM conferences are presented. We hope all of these stories are interesting and informative.

We want to thank our sponsors this month which include **Chronicle Graphics** (USA), **Cranefield College** (South Africa), the Graduate Program in Project & Programme Management at **SKEMA** (France), **IPMA** (Switzerland), **Palatine Group** (USA), **PMGuruOnline** (India), **PMO Consulting** (Portugal), **Program Management Academy** (USA), **The APM Group** (UK), The Graduate Program in Project Management at **The University of Texas at Dallas** (USA), **The University of California – Irvine Extension** (USA), **The US Department of State** (USA), and **The World Bank** (based in Washington, DC, USA).

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Good luck with your projects!

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David L. Pells is the Managing Editor of **PM World Today** and of www.pmforum.org, one of the world's leading online sources of project management news and information. David is an internationally recognized leader in the field of professional project management, with over thirty years' experience in project management. His professional experience includes a wide variety of programs and projects, including engineering, construction, transit, defense and high technology, and project sizes ranging from several thousand to ten billion dollars. He continues to advise several major organizations and programs. He served on the board of directors of the Project Management Institute (PMI®) twice, and was awarded PMI's Person of the Year award in 1998 and Fellow Award in 1999. He is also an honorary Fellow of Project Management Associates (PMA), the Indian National PM society, and of the Russian Project Management Association SOVNET. David has published widely, spoken at PM conferences and events worldwide, and can be contacted at editor@pmforum.org.