



PMI WA-Chapter Newsletter

August 2009

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WA PMI Chapter's President Address

Special Point of Interest!!

Projects-in-Action Program 2009

Assessing Project Manager Competencies will be held Tuesday 15 September.

Peter Horth PMP will facilitate this workshop.

For further information, please go to <http://www.wapmi.org.au/education/index.php#pia>

Clinton in't Veld, PMP
Education Director
PMI WA-Chapter

Inside this issue:

PMI WA-Chapter's President Address 1

PMI WA Board Nominations 1

PM Ed 09 1

Upgrade to PMBOK-4? You CAN DO IT !! 2

FAST-TRACKING and CRASHING a Project! 3

Remaining PIA 2009 Events 4

- On 12th August, a Special General Meeting (SGM) was held to consider changes to the Chapter's Constitution and Bylaws. The Constitution and Bylaws are two fundamental documents that provide a legal framework under which the Chapter operates.

- This meeting came about as a result of identifying a number of issues with the governance documents, in particular the bylaws. The Bylaws were not in line with current PMI standards, and there were clauses that were inconsistent and open to interpretation. Whilst the intentions within the laws were well founded, in practice they created unintended difficulties in areas such as, for example, succession of Board Officers.

- It is something that the Board has been grappling with for some time, and in 2008, these issues had a detrimental impact on the effective operation of the Board – many of you will recall that last year's Board Election were deferred following challenges to the by-laws. Clearly, these issues needed to be resolved as early as possible,

as observed by the previous President, Steve Meintjes, in his closing remarks as last year's AGM.

- The process for making changes to governance documents is long, tedious and time-consuming. Proposed changes are first considered by the Board, drafted and forwarded to PMI Global Operations Centre (GOC) for approval. Sometimes, as was the case with these particular changes, GOC requests a review and confirmation that the changes conform to regulations in the local jurisdiction (in our case WA's Associations Incorporations Act 1987).

- The Board gave careful consideration to each of the proposed changes, with the sole objective of improving the Chapter's governance processes, removing ambiguity, and clarifying roles and responsibilities, but at the same time ensuring that there was flexibility where necessary. Other Chapters' rules were researched and compared. The Board as a whole took into consideration both the positive and negative effects of each proposed change.

- It was therefore disappointing that the changes recommended by the Board were not adopted in their entirety. Whilst the SGM agreed to adopt the amendments necessary to meet the current PMI bylaws template, most of these changes were cosmetic and in practice will have no material effect. Yet the most beneficial changes recommended by the Board will not now be implemented, leaving the Chapter in much the same predicament as last year.

-The changes approved by the SGM will be implemented as early as possible and, based on advice from PMI, we will be holding further discussions with the Chapter Membership with a view to giving members a better appreciation of the issues with some of the current rules, and work towards a re-vote to try to pass the amendments.

Nigel Rarp, PMP
PMI WA-Chapter President

PMI WA Board Nominations

Keep an eye out for the call for nominations for Board positions.

There will be at least five Board positions open for nomination.

We welcome fresh new ideas, and are keen to make the Board as inclusive as possible.

There are many good reasons for joining the Board

- ability to influence the direction in WA,
- be part of a team,

- learn from other Board members,
- increased networking opportunities,
- professional development.

And you are never short of PDUs.....

If you are interested in nomination please contact me or one of the Board Members for further information.

Nigel Rarp, PMP
PMI WA-Chapter President



Finally, to all those who attended PMED at the beginning of July, my thanks for attending and making this year's event another success.

Attendance this year was affected by the financial downturn, but we decided to proceed with the event regardless.

And from the feedback we've received to date, the decision was the right one in terms of ensuring our members are given every possible opportunity to expand their knowledge and experience from quality speakers.

Nigel Rarp, PMP
PMI WA-Chapter President

How to Upgrade Yourself to the PMBOK Guide 4th Edition !

About the Author:

Cornelius Fichtner, PMP is a noted PMP expert.

He is the host of The PM Podcast at <http://www.thepmpodcast.com> where you can hear his free interviews with PM experts from around the world.

His PM PrepCast at <http://www.pmprepcast.com> has helped over 6,000 project managers to study for the PMP exam.



If you studied to take your PMP exam using the PMBOK® Guide 3rd edition and were unable to take, and pass, the exam before June 30th 2009, you are now required to take the exam based on the new PMBOK® Guide 4th edition.

The PMI will not make any exceptions.

"Upgrading" your knowledge to this new version of the PMBOK® Guide is not something that you can do in just a day.

Even though the PMP Exam consists mainly of scenario-based questions, it will be necessary for you to have an in-depth understanding of the PMBOK® Guide 4th Edition to be able to answer questions correctly.

Plan a minimum of two weeks of intense study.

There are notable changes between versions 3 and 4 of the PMBOK® Guide such as the reduction of processes from 44 to 42.

This seems straightforward at first.

But if you look deeper, you will realise that the change wasn't removed simple removal of two processes.

Instead, some processes have been removed from the Guide, some have been combined, and several new processes have also been added.

Appendix A in the PMBOK® Guide 4th edition describes the bulk of the changes.

A number of authors have also described these changes and made their analysis available for free.

It is, however, important to note that these descriptions don't list all the detailed changes.

For instance, the inputs, tools and techniques, and outputs of many processes have changed.

Some have been removed and new ones have been added.

However, it must also be said that just because the PMBOK® Guide has changed, project management itself hasn't changed.

The fundamental way in which projects are managed is still the same.

But in order to pass your PMP exam, you will have to be aware of the new definitions in the PMBOK® Guide.

Studying them takes effort, dedication, and time.

AN UPGRADE APPROACH

Here is a possible study approach to "upgrade" yourself to the PMBOK® Guide 4th edition:

- 1) Read **Appendix A** and familiarise yourself with the changes. In particular, familiarise yourself with the processes that have been added, removed, and combined; Learn the new process names; Study **Table A1** on page 350 and know which documents are part of the PM Plan, and which ones are "other" project documents.
- 2) Read the summary descriptions of the 9 knowledge areas and the 42 processes in **Appendix F**. At this time you may also wish to read the introductions to **Chapters 4-12**.
- 3) Read **Appendix G** - the Interpersonal Skills
- 4) Study **Table 3-1** on page 43 and know which process belongs to which process group. It is a good idea to start with a blank piece of paper and be able to draw this table from memory.

5) Finally (and unfortunately): Read the complete PMBOK® Guide 4th edition ... twice.

When reading the new PMBOK® Guide, familiarize yourself with the new inputs, tools and techniques, and outputs of all the processes.

Study **Figure 3** in **Chapters 4 through 12**. This is the Data Flow Diagram for each process. These diagrams illustrate the flow of the inputs and outputs, and will strengthen your understanding of the flow of all the inputs and outputs. It will also help you understand the integrated nature of all the processes in the PMBOK® Guide.

You should also make special note of the changes to the Earned Value Formulas in Chapter 7.3.2.

Good luck!

What Is “Crashing” and “Fast-Tracking” a Project Schedule?

“Crashing” and “Fast-Tracking” Explained

Both “Crashing” and “Fast-Tracking” a schedule are ways to reduce the length of elapsed time in a project schedule.

Crashing is a general term for reducing project schedules. When we crash a schedule, we spend money or resources to reduce the scheduled time for the project in such a way that we do the things that have the greatest reduction in schedule for the least amount of cost. When we first start to crash a schedule relatively small amounts of money and resources need to be spent to get rather large reductions in project time. As we continue to reduce schedules the relative cost of reducing schedules increases.

Fast-Tracking is a special kind of schedule reduction. When we fast-track we take items that were originally scheduled to be done in sequential order and reschedule them to be done in parallel, or partially in parallel. Fast-Tracking will also increase cost; but, more importantly, fast-tracking will increase risk. When we have several tasks in a project-taking place at the same time and something goes wrong, or a problem develops, it may be necessary to disrupt all of the activities in progress.

Tell me more....

In an ideal world, all schedules would be optimized in such a way that the time to do the project and the cost to do the project would be at a minimum. This is not always the case and, even if it were, we would have managers and stakeholders who would not be satisfied with the predicted date of completion for the project. We will often be asked to reduce the project completion date. By reducing the project completion date, we mean to make the project complete earlier.

The first thing we should recognize about schedule compression is that there is no value in making any schedule changes to activities that have total float or free float greater than zero. In other words, the only way we can reduce the overall schedule of a project is by reducing the schedule of the tasks that are on the critical path. The critical path determines the overall duration of the project. Items that are not on the critical path will have no effect on schedule reduction efforts.

Notice, also, that as we reduce the schedule by reducing the number of days in the schedule, we are reducing the number of days in the critical path. This will also reduce the number of days of total float in the activities not on the critical path. Eventually these activities will have their total float reduced to zero and they will join the critical path as well. As we continue to reduce the schedule length more and more, activities will join the critical path and it will become more and more difficult and expensive to reduce the schedule. The cost of reducing the schedule will increase more and more rapidly as we take more and more days from the schedule.

There are many means available to crash a schedule. Reducing the scope of the project will generally reduce the project completion date. If the stakeholders really want to get the project completed early, one of the easiest ways of reducing the schedule is to simply reduce the scope of the project. This can be done by eliminating some of the requirements, or delaying them to a later date, as in a phased in approach to project delivery. When this is done, care must be exercised to be sure that what is delivered in the early phases of the project is useful and can stand-alone from the other parts of the project and is not something that depends on the undelivered part of the project to be usable.

It does the customer no good to receive 75% of the project if that 75% depends on the undelivered 25% of the project in order for that 75% to be useful to the customer.

Additional resources can be used to shorten the project schedule as well. This can be done by adding additional resources to the project, or by using the resources that are already present, but now on an overtime basis. Adding additional resources creates a problem for the project team because the additional resources must somehow be absorbed by the project. If we add additional *equipment* resources, we must have people to operate the equipment. The additional people required to operate the new equipment must be competent and capable (and, if not, may require training ... which comes at time penalty and cost).

If we add additional human resources to the project, there must be training and familiarization of the new resources before they can become productive. The new human resources will slow down the already present human resources and will inadvertently cause a further slow down of the project, and a loss of productivity, while the new human resources are being trained and made familiar with the project tasks.

Creating additional resources by using mandatory overtime is also not without problems. Many companies do not pay an overtime premium for overtime work and some do not even pay anything at all for overtime worked. Under the conditions of imposed or forced or mandatory overtime work, there is a noticeable reduction in productivity. This reduction in productivity may actually reduce the number of productive hours a person works to a point where the actual number of productive hours worked is less than the number of productive hours worked on straight time.

Fast-Tracking, the special case of crashing, means attempting to do things in parallel that would have normally been scheduled to be done in sequence. Suppose we had a project to install a new gymnasium floor at the university basketball arena. We could begin by removing the old floor, levelling the foundation, installing the new floor, sanding the new floor smooth, and varnishing the new floor.

Suppose that this project will require 33-days to complete. Using this method each step of the new floor installation will be completed before the next step is taken. By allowing two days of lead-time to take place on the second, third and fourth activity we can improve the schedule by 6-days. This is not without problems either. We will begin levelling the foundation while the old floor is still being removed.

This may cause some interference problems if the people tearing up the old floor do not have the debris removed as they work. It may also be a problem if parts of the old floor are in place where the foundation levelling people need to work. The new floor installers may also have problems if the areas that they have to work are still being levelled by the foundation levellers. The sanding operations are scheduled to begin two days before the floor installers are complete with their work. If the sanding operations create large amounts of dust it may slow down or prevent the floor installers from working. There is no overlap on the varnish operation because the dust from the sanding operation would ruin the finish on the varnish.

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The Western Australia Chapter of the Project Management Institute (PMI®) was established in December 2001 as a not-for-profit Australian organisation.

PMI is the largest international professional organisation for the project management profession and is well known for its international defacto standard publication called the "Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge" (PMBOK®).

The WA Chapter's vision is "To be the leader in promoting Project Management best practice, professional development, and standards in Western Australia."

www.wapmi.org.au

Member contributions welcome.

Please contact the Editor at: communications@wapmi.org.au

Errors and omissions to communications@wapmi.org.au

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Communications Director

Building professionalism in project management.™

Project Management Institute

Remaining PIA 2009 Events

DID YOU KNOW?

That there are only four
PIA Events remaining
for calendar 2009 ???

**Mark your
calendars NOW !!**

8.45 am for a
9.00 am start
Finish 12.30 pm

Book early to secure your place.

Register online:

<http://www.wapmi.org.au/education/index.php>

PIA Date	PIA Topic
Tue 15 September	Assessing Project Manager Competencies
Tue 20 October	PMBOK and PRINCE2 – What Are The Differences and Similarities
Wed 18 November	The Essentials and Science of Negotiating Skills
Wed 16 December	Linking Projects to Strategy – Importance of Project Manger's Business Acumen skills for Projects