



**Building Professionalism
in Project Management™**
Project Management Institute

® **Central Mass Chapter Newsletter**

Inside this Edition

- [A Note From Our President](#)
- [Where is Project Management Going?](#)
- [Notes From an Aspiring PMP](#)
- [Ethical Conduct for the Changing Work Environment](#)
- [Managing Project Expectations in the IT Organization](#)
- [Next Chapter Meeting Topic](#)
- [PMP Exam Prep Training](#)
- [PM Humor](#)

Next Chapter Meeting

- **Date:** May 8, 2007
- **Topic:** Your PDU Project
- **Time:** 5:30 - 8:30 PM
Please go to [PMI Central Mass](#) to sign up
- **Location:**
Doubletree Hotel Boston/
Westborough

Upcoming Events

A Note from Our President

by Barbara Karten, PMP

Spring is finally here, and the chapter has much to celebrate. Our fall/winter programs have been very successful and we have an exciting spring/summer lineup.

Participation at the chapter meetings has been excellent - attendance continues to exceed our expectations. We have had excellent speakers who have been very well received, and sponsorship has provided interesting products and services for our membership.

[full article](#)

Where is Project Management Going?

by Karl Fischer, PMP - Global Knowledge Instructor

To find the answer, we also need to ask a different question, "Where is business going?" The environment in which businesses operate dictates the way in which projects are executed. As project managers, we need to focus on developing business practices that make a real and lasting difference in company performance. Understanding the issues that make up the social, cultural, and informational environment in which the company operates is essential to advancing project management practice. Let's take a look at what we know about the current environment of our corporations.

What are corporations experiencing? Major research firms are engaged in tracking and forecasting trends in today's businesses. Here are some of the trends we see when we look into the future of corporations.

[full article](#)

April 2007, Vol 2 Issue 1

Meet the Board

President
Barbara Karten, PMP

Vice President
Ed Yee, PMP

Treasurer
Debra Wallace, PMP

Acting Secretary
Jeanne Talatinian, PMP

Dir, Mtgs & Events
Steve Tolf, PMP

Asst Dir, Mtgs & Events
Rowena Sy-Santos, PMP

Dir, Programs
Joan Hurley

Dir, Sponsorship
Dick Kennedy

Dir, Communications
Alice Thayer, PMP

Asst Dir, Communications
Steve Forde, PMP

Dir, Membership/Volunt'rs
Debra Trainor, PMP

Asst Dir, Membership
Dana Black, PMP

Dir, Info Technology
Steve Forde, PMP

- **The Southern New England Chapter**
April 25, 2007
Complementary or Competing? Achieving Synergy with OPM3®, CMMI®, and ISO 9001-2000
[Southern New England Chapter](#)

- **Champlain Valley PMI Chapter**
April 25, 2007
Vision and opportunities for the Green Valley Economic Development and e-Vermont Initiatives
[Champlain Valley Chapter](#)

- **SNEC-PMI Conference**
May 4, 2007
[Conference](#)

- **Mass Bay Chapter**
May 10, 2007
PMP Prep Class
[Mass Bay Event](#)

- **Rhode Island Chapter**
May 10, 2007
Project Management and Leadership
[Rhode Island Chapter](#)

- **Maine Chapter**
May 10, 2007
Magnet Status Project-Nursing Excellence
[Maine Chapter Events](#)

- **New Hampshire Chapter**
May 16, 2007
Tips on How To Build Your First Project Management Office
[New Hampshire Chapter Event](#)

- **PMI Global Conference**
EMEA
Budapest, Hungary
May 14-16
[Global Conference](#)

- **Keene, Nh Greater Monadnock**
Stay tuned for the May meeting
[NH Greater Monadnock Chapter](#)

Notes From an Aspiring PMP

by Colleen V. Rougeaux

Here's the context. Consider that I am writing from a project manager's perspective who is not PMP certified... yet. I have been working as a project manager for about ten years in the healthcare and construction industries. I have always believed that I was an organized project manager- prepared for all contingencies- until I started studying for the PMP certification exam. Only now I realize how much was *missing* that can make the difference in ensuring the success of my projects. I have come to understand that the documents one takes for granted can turn out to be the ones that matter the most!

[full article](#)

Ethical Conduct for the Changing Work Environment

by Nilou Fotouhi, PMP

What is a critical tenet of good leadership? Inspiring an effective team. You start by selecting the right people, transferring the "vision", and continue to inspire and actively support the team as individuals first, and team members second. Team cohesion requires a leader to build an environment of trust, create systems where conflicts are respectfully resolved and accountability is engrained into the culture. An effective leader recognizes the process of reaching the goal with a team that is driven by both individual and team success.

A leadership shortcoming that can seriously jeopardize the cohesion of a team is a lapse of good ethical judgment. Unethical behavior in a team leader can demoralize the members; create rifts in the group, foster distrust and loss of motivation.

[full article](#)

Asst Dir, IT
George Henriques, PMP
Mike Angeley, PMP

Newsletter Editor
Nilou Fotouhi, PMP

Past President
Sue Baust, PMP

Jobs at PMICMass

A free service of our chapter, our Jobs distribution list allows employers to access our repository of skilled project management professionals.

If you have project management openings at your organization, email the information to jobs@pmicmass.com for distribution to our list.

Volunteer with us

Get involved!
Volunteering with us is a great way to make contacts in the field, take on projects you care about, and further your career.
Send us an [email](#) or attend one of our chapter meetings. Thanks!

- **PMI SeminarsWorld**
San Jose, California
June 11-14, 2007
[SeminarsWorld Events](#)

Chapter Opening

- **We are soliciting volunteers for a number of Board positions and Chapter Projects. We encourage you to join our Board- it's a rewarding experience. [Email us!](#)**

Managing Project Expectations in the IT Organization: Provoking Stakeholder Thought With Two Simple Words

by Christopher J. Wright, MPM, PMP

Dan Maloney, the Director of Marketing, tells Elie Chapman, the IT Project Manager, he just received word that the competitor will be launching its new retail point of sale (POS) system one month ahead of their own company's planned deployment. Maloney stresses that being first to market is critical to the success of the company's new ad campaign on improved customer service. At this point, Maloney asks Chapman, "Can the IT project team expedite its launch schedule for the new POS system one month ahead of the original schedule?"

What should Chapman's answer be to this project change request?

[full article](#)

Next Chapter Meeting: Your PDU Project



Did you achieve your PMP certification or planning to? Is certification important to your career path? Do you want to learn more about earning and tracking PDUs? Is your renewal date creeping up? This session will overview the PMP certification renewal process.

[next Chapter meeting](#)

Upcoming Training - May 14-18, 2007:

PMP Exam Prep Boot Camp

We are pleased to offer a PMP Exam Prep Course brought to you by Ten Step Inc.

Please note the training will be held at the Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel & Trade Center in Marlborough.

[training event info on the web site](#)



PM Humor

So you're getting the latest report on the Project. How do you really ascertain the status of the Project when the metrics are not available? You've learned to decode the jargon. If you haven't honed your skills yet, here's a little primer...
[jargon](#)



**Building Professionalism
in Project Management™**
Project Management Institute

® **Central Mass Chapter Newsletter**

Inside this Edition

- [A Note From Our President](#)
- [Where is Project Management Going?](#)
- [Notes From an Aspiring PMP](#)
- [Ethical Conduct for the Changing Work Environment](#)
- [Managing Project Expectations in the IT Organization](#)
- [Next Chapter Meeting Topic](#)
- [PMP Exam Prep Training](#)
- [PM Humor](#)

Next Chapter Meeting

- **Date:** May 8, 2007
- **Topic:** Your PDU Project
- **Time:** 5:30 - 8:30 PM
Please go to [PMI Central Mass](#) to sign up
- **Location:**
Doubletree Hotel Boston/
Westborough

A Note From Our President

by Barbara Karten, PMP

Spring is finally here, and the chapter has much to celebrate. Our fall/winter programs have been very successful and we have an exciting spring/summer lineup.

Participation at the Chapter meetings has been excellent - attendance continues to exceed our expectations. We have had excellent speakers who have been very well received, and sponsorship has provided interesting products and services for our membership.

Our Microsoft Project event was fully subscribed and we received highly favorable feedback from the participants. Due to the strong response, we may consider offering this program again in the fall.

April Met SIG Webinar event, available to our Chapter members, was well received. Our upcoming PMP Exam Prep class is slated to be held May 14 through May 18. If you are considering getting certified, take advantage of this opportunity and sign up early.

Going forward, the Board is looking to hold another special event in August (details to follow). Selected individuals on the Board will participate in the Region 3 Conference in Montreal in early June and will report back to the membership. And, please note that there will be no Chapter meeting in July.

We have Chapter initiatives (per our Strategy) to increase our membership numbers, reach out to the business community, and provide enhanced value to our membership.

We look forward to working with you, and invite your participation.



**Building Professionalism
in Project Management™**
Project Management Institute

® **Central Mass Chapter Newsletter**

Inside this Edition

- [A Note From Our President](#)
- [Where is Project Management Going?](#)
- [Notes From an Aspiring PMP](#)
- [Ethical Conduct for the Changing Work Environment](#)
- [Managing Project Expectations in the IT Organization](#)
- [Next Chapter Meeting Topic](#)
- [PMP Exam Prep Training](#)
- [PM Humor](#)

Next Chapter Meeting

- **Date:** May 8, 2007
- **Topic:** Your PDU Project
- **Time:** 5:30 - 8:30 PM
Please go to [PMI Central Mass](#) to sign up
- **Location:**
Doubletree Hotel Boston/
Westborough

Where is Project Management Going?

by Karl Fischer, PMP - Global Knowledge Instructor

To find the answer, we also need to ask a different question, "Where is business going?" The environment in which businesses operate dictates the way in which projects are executed. As project managers, we need to focus on developing business practices that make a real and lasting difference in company performance. Understanding the issues that make up the social, cultural, and informational environment in which the company operates is essential to advancing project management practice. Let's take a look at what we know about the current environment of our corporations.

What are corporations experiencing? Major research firms are engaged in tracking and forecasting trends in today's businesses. Here are some of the trends we see when we look into the future of corporations.

■ **Compression of product life cycle**

The velocity of new product development and product turnover has increased exponentially. Fifty years ago, the life cycle of products was 15 to 20 years. Today it is three years. Hi-tech firms estimate six months. This situation drastically reduces the time-to-market window and dramatically changes the way that resources are utilized.

■ **Knowledge/Technology Explosion**

A significant portion of U.S. products now come from new-knowledge areas. Improved knowledge and technology support innovation, and innovation results in new projects. Since technology is increasing at a rapid pace, so are projects.

■ **Global Competition**

As of the year 2000, foreign firms employed 6.4 million U.S. workers with a payroll of \$330 billion, according to the Commerce Department. Analysts at Forbes.com, predict that by 2015, more than three million white-collar jobs in the United States will be outsourced to other countries. Businesses now compete with and have access to products, labor, and new marketing techniques from all over the world.

■ **Customer Power**

Around the globe, consumers are demanding more quality, service, customization, convenience, speed, and competitive pricing. Global competition and new technology are providing customers with greater choice about when, how, and where they will receive goods and services. Customers are becoming the determining factor in the success or failure of most corporations.

What is the workforce looking like?

Permanent loyalty to a corporation is no longer a viable option in today's marketplace. Now, it is more effective to think of employees in terms of flexible "temporary systems," much like a sports team or a movie company. Moreover, it is not a great leap to conclude that, because of technological innovation, a work force can practically be anywhere on the globe.

What about projects themselves?

Cross-border, cross-cultural projects are increasing, requiring project managers to develop a global perspective. Companies will restructure to meet these global changes, requiring project managers to work with their counterparts in different countries.

Ad hoc project teams will become more widespread. Organizations will hire individual project managers who will then recruit appropriate team members from outside the organization to complete the project.

Again, the question

Now that we've gazed at future business trends, how can we as project managers prepare?

■ Learn the Language of the Business in which you manage projects

Let's start with a phrase: competitive advantage. Every business professional understands this phrase; every project manager - not necessarily. In PM Network 7/06, in an article titled "No Limits," Marcia Jedd notes, "Project managers hold themselves back by not communicating in the terminology used by executives. This is terminology that focuses on results and value."¹ Project managers must focus on the value of the project to the business and be able to speak about the project using "business-speak."

■ Pursue broad business educational goals

One of the reasons that project managers don't speak the language is because they have difficulty with the concepts behind the language. Again, in the "No Limits" article, Jedd quotes Michael Thiry: "Project managers need a broad education in management like organizational change, strategy development, marketing, finance, advanced leadership and negotiation."² J. Davidson Frame, in an article in PM Network titled "Project Management 2.0," says "The best project managers are now very strong business personnel. Professionals in project management need to be able to deal effectively with individuals trained in various disciplines."³ Clearly, business education must be one of the top qualifications for advancement in project management.

■ Learn Corporate Strategic Thinking

"Marks of Distinction, a recent white paper by Accenture, addresses the importance of connecting with the strategies of the organizations⁴. The strategies of the corporation must be understood as being directly implemented by the effort of the project. Strategic thinking for the project manager must go beyond project thinking. For instance, a late project may result in a missed window of opportunity in the marketplace, reducing the corporate market share. Management is much more likely to listen to a request for additional resources to meet a deadline if the project manager can discuss the situation in these terms.

The project manager must incorporate this type of thinking in his/her conscious, operational decisions. It is not simply an issue of resources-versus-project-deadline-type thinking. It's how we, as project managers, see what we're doing. As project managers, we are all stone masons. Are we just cutting stone or are we building a cathedral? What do we see?

Develop Business Acumen

The project manager must see him/herself and must be seen as driving business value. Project managers need to know how the business side makes money. Corporations make their money not only on high margins but, where possible, a high return on net assets, creating a low-cost structure that can sustain innovation. The entire process of creating a corporate value, developing a strategy to implement the value and finally initiating a project to implement the strategy is a necessary part of project management training.

Summing Up

Corporate Thinking

The direction in which business is moving requires a melding of vision, strategy, culture, and process, all of which must be expressed in project performance. Vision, strategy, culture, and process are the new ingredients of project performance that will replace the traditional within-cost-time-and-scope performance.

Management

It is the job of the modern project manager to educate management. "When executives think of project management, they think it's a product-delivery process sitting at the bottom of the organization," says Michel Thirty⁵. "They do not really understand how it can contribute to actual strategy or implementation of strategy."

Methodology

Advanced project management training must get out of the classroom. Advanced PM training must explore and collaborate with additional educational experiences to be fully valuable. Mentoring is the one of the keys to training in project management methodology.

People

Improving people skills is also paramount. Project managers must be able to deal effectively with individuals trained in various disciplines.

What the business trends are telling us is that the new project manager needs the financial and project management skills to measure project success and return on investment (ROI) as well as the leadership skills to change the way the organization works. This applies to both the education of management and the ever-increasing support of a global perspective. No small task!

About the author

Karl Fischer, PMP, instructs and develops project management courses for Global Knowledge. He has consulted for a number of well-known companies including Boeing, AT&T Wireless, and the City of Seattle. He welcomes your comments at kfisch1@mindspring.com.

This article was originally published in Global Knowledge's Management in Motion e-newsletter. Global Knowledge (www.globalknowledge.com/PMILocal) delivers comprehensive hands-on project management, business process, and professional skills training. Visit our Knowledge Center at for free white papers, webinars, and more.

References

www.forbes.com - Forbes is a research company that suggests investments based on business trends.

www.forester.com - Forrester Research identifies and analyzes trends in technology and their impact on business.

www.metagroup.com - The Meta Group is a provider of information technology research, advisory services, and strategic consulting. Recently bought out by Gartner.

www.gartner.com - Gartner, Inc. is the world's largest Information Technology research and advisory company.

www.conference-board.org - The Conference Board creates and disseminates knowledge about management and the marketplace.

www.standishgroup.com - The Standish Group International, Inc. is a market research and advisory firm specializing in mission-critical software and electronic commerce.

www.yankeegroup.com - The Yankee Group provides research and consulting covering communications and business

1. Jedd, Marcia, 'No Limits' PM Network, July 2006, p.76

2. ibid

3. Fretty, Peter, 'Project Management 2.0', July 2006, p.41

4. [Accenture.com](http://www.accenture.com) 'Marks of Distinction' Article available for download on Accenture website

5. Jedd, Marcia, 'No Limits' PM Network, July 2006, p.74

© Copyright 2006, [Global Knowledge](http://www.globalknowledge.com). All rights reserved.



**Building Professionalism
in Project Management™**
Project Management Institute

® **Central Mass Chapter Newsletter**

Inside this Edition

- [A Note From Our President](#)
- [Where is Project Management Going?](#)
- [Notes From an Aspiring PMP](#)
- [Ethical Conduct for the Changing Work Environment](#)
- [Managing Project Expectations in the IT Organization](#)
- [Next Chapter Meeting Topic](#)
- [PMP Exam Prep Training](#)
- [PM Humor](#)

Next Chapter Meeting

- **Date:** May 8, 2007
- **Topic:** Your PDU Project
- **Time:** 5:30 - 8:30 PM
Please go to [PMI Central Mass](#) to sign up
- **Location:**
Doubletree Hotel Boston/
Westborough

Pounce on Your Potential with Cheetah Exam Prep

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Succeed at Cheetah Speed with Our Proven Expertise</p> <p>If you are looking to become PMP certified, it's your turn to get on the career fast track with the global leaders in Project Management exam prep training. Now you have a choice when it comes to Cheetah's Exam Prep for the PMP—you can take our popular four-day course or you can register for our new online exam prep class. Get your certification the Cheetah way—fast and future-focused.</p> <p>Get Started Today with Our Free PM SmartStart Guide</p> <p>Get a jump-start on your exam preparation with Cheetah's PM SmartStart download—your free guide to becoming PMP certified FAST. It includes information you have to pay for in many other exam prep courses and tips you won't find anywhere else. Download yours today to start running with the big cats.</p> <p>Use our promo code and receive 10% off</p> | <p>PROMO CODE: CMA307 by May 15</p> |
| <p>ISN'T IT TIME TO BECOME A CHEETAH?</p> <p>WWW.CHEETAHEXAMPREP.COM</p> <p><small>PMP is a registered certification mark of the Project Management Institute, Inc.</small></p> | <p>KNOWLEDGE, CONFIDENCE, RELIABILITY</p> |

Notes From an Aspiring PMP

by Colleen V. Rougeaux

Here's the context. Consider that I am writing from a project manager's perspective who is not PMP certified... yet. I have been working as a project manager for about ten years in the healthcare and construction industries. I have always believed that I was an organized project manager—prepared for all contingencies—until I started studying for the PMP certification exam. Only now I realize how much *was missing* that could make the difference in the successful outcome of my projects. I have come to understand that the documents one takes for granted can turn out to be the ones that matter the most!

The current project I am working on involves the implementation of an enterprise-wide software system for two skilled nursing facilities. Our structure is a balanced matrix organization and we have a formal oversight committee and several workgroups: one workgroup per area of implementation. The project is projected to complete in two-year's time. If you are familiar with long-term care projects, you know that there is a shortage of resources. Fortunately I have full support from the oversight committee (which is comprised of mostly senior management).

I was assigned to this project in the planning phase. The Charter, Scope Statement, budget, Org Chart and other documents had been created and were helpful to me to become familiarized with the project. The WBS had not been created and a lot of the PM Processes had either been skipped or not yet completed. When I took over this project I was not aware of the 'formal' Project management practices. Up until that point I was a project manager by trade, not by education. So, like many people who call themselves project managers, I did what I knew best based on my past experience. Later, after a brief discussion over coffee with a co-worker, a PMP, I became convinced that to enhance my career, I should also pursue certification. Had I realized how much knowing PM methodology would be helpful to me in the day-to-day management of projects, I would have learned it years ago. I was extremely naïve of me to think that I probably knew most of what the PMP courses teach.

After taking an online course, reading the PMBOK, and looking over some other material, I immediately wanted to review my current project to see how I was measuring up in "real life". I actually did okay. Fortunately I was already doing most of what was involved in the formal steps. Besides the Charter and the Scope documents, I also had the Roles and Responsibilities Matrix. However, I was going through the process out of order, finishing steps that should have been completed in the beginning, and using valuable time to go back and make corrections. So, I started going back through documents, bringing them to the oversight committee for proper approval. There was a lot of comments such as "didn't we already do this?". In fact, they had seen the documents... I just wanted them to read and understand them.

Since I started studying for the PMP I feel like a rookie Project Manager again; I am now trying to enforce all of the "rules" of proper project management. Which, I am sure, can be a little annoying to some people who are not used to my "new" style. However, this methodology has paid off in a recent meeting. We were about to begin the "executing" component of the Phase One for a project. A few of the project team members started to grumble about the role they were taking in the project—actually it was less of a grumble and more of a ROAR. This group were expected to train their peers, build the system and create documents and manuals to support the new system. The group wanted the vendor to do this work and were making a last ditch effort to avoid the inevitable work that lay ahead. (This is a very typical occurrence in the type of projects I work on where resources are scarce). I was able to handle this situation quietly, quickly and effectively—something I had never been able to accomplish before. I pulled out the documents they had all been given in the kickoff meeting, redistributed the Scope, the Charter, and the Roles and Responsibilities Matrix. Much to my amazement, it worked. The grumbling stopped and everyone's memory of what they were expected to do was restored.

I learned to appreciate the art of project management and the importance of adhering to **every** step in the project life cycle. Hopefully this real life experience will help me on the test. But even if it doesn't specifically come up in the exam, I know as a result of this experience I will be a better project manager.



**Building Professionalism
in Project Management™**
Project Management Institute

® **Central Mass Chapter Newsletter**

Inside this Edition

- [A Note From Our President](#)
- [Where is Project Management Going?](#)
- [Notes From an Aspiring PMP](#)
- [Ethical Conduct for the Changing Work Environment](#)
- [Managing Project Expectations in the IT Organization](#)
- [Next Chapter Meeting Topic](#)
- [PMP Exam Prep Training](#)
- [PM Humor](#)

Next Chapter Meeting

- **Date:** May 8, 2007
- **Topic:** Your PDU Project
- **Time:** 5:30 - 8:30 PM
Please go to [PMI Central Mass](#) to sign up
- **Location:**
Doubletree Hotel Boston/
Westborough

Ethical Conduct for the Changing Work Environment

by Nilou Fotouhi, PMP

What is a critical tenet of good leadership? Inspiring an effective team. You start by selecting the right people, transferring the “vision”, and continue to inspire and actively support the team as individuals first, and team members second. Team cohesion requires a leader to build an environment of trust, create systems where conflicts are respectfully resolved and accountability is engrained into the culture. An effective leader recognizes the process of reaching the goal with a team that is driven by both individual and team success.

A leadership shortcoming that can seriously jeopardize the cohesion of a team is a lapse of good ethical judgment. Unethical behavior in a team leader can demoralize the members; create rifts in the group, foster distrust and loss of motivation. In the larger context, loss of ethics in an organization has an adverse effect on the stakeholders, both internal and external. The resulting damage to the company’s reputation may prove to be difficult or in some cases impossible to overcome. We have all become familiar with a number of companies that have fallen from grace due to lapses of ethical judgment in accounting principles, stock option rewards, and sub-prime lending policies.

One result of these public displays of questionable business behaviors is a renewed interest in understanding and promoting ethics standards in general; in fact ethics discourse is a hot topic these days. The reverberations of these scandals are not solely confined to the business environment but have far-reaching effects within the larger society. PMI has responded by initiating a review of its Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, approved last year, providing further guidance for Project Managers on a global basis.

The revised Code was divided into two components—mandatory and aspirational—to provide clear guidance for ethical conduct, while allowing for cultural differences within the practice across the globe. Project Managers, regardless of the industry they are working in, have always had an important role to play in upholding ethical standards in the course of their work.

Leaders are faced with a myriad of decisions throughout the life of a project where the standards of behavior may not be clear-cut. Having a good understanding of the ethical framework guidelines provided in the revised PMI Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, practicing a policy of transparency and good faith, will help Project Managers remain effective as leaders as they guide their teams with integrity and confidence.

Refer to the [PMI Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct](#) document for details.



**Building Professionalism
in Project Management™**
Project Management Institute

® **Central Mass Chapter Newsletter**

Inside this Edition

- [A Note From Our President](#)
- [Where is Project Management Going?](#)
- [Notes From an Aspiring PMP](#)
- [Ethical Conduct for the Changing Work Environment](#)
- [Managing Project Expectations in the IT Organization](#)
- [Next Chapter Meeting Topic](#)
- [PMP Exam Prep Training](#)
- [PM Humor](#)

Next Chapter Meeting

- **Date:** May 8, 2007
- **Topic:** Your PDU Project
- **Time:** 5:30 - 8:30 PM
Please go to [PMI Central Mass](#) to sign up
- **Location:**
Doubletree Hotel Boston/
Westborough

Managing Project Expectations in the IT Organization: Provoking Stakeholder Thought With Two Simple Words

by Christopher J. Wright, MPM, PMP

Dan Maloney, the Director of Marketing, tells Elie Chapman, the IT Project Manager, he just received word that the competitor will be launching its new retail point of sale (POS) system one month ahead of their own company's planned deployment. Maloney stresses that being first to market is critical to the success of the company's new ad campaign on improved customer service. At this point, Maloney asks Chapman, "Can the IT project team expedite its launch schedule for the new POS system one month ahead of the original schedule?"

What should Chapman's answer be to this project change request?

The Common Problem

Because most internal IT organizations are viewed as a cost center and not a revenue-generating entity, the IT project team is expected to automatically acquiesce to the business request and answer "yes". At the same time, the IT department is stretched beyond its current resource capacity, and all project managers have been instructed to advise all suitors that they cannot take on any more work - effectively answering "no" to all requests.

These positions create a common paradox for all IT organizations. If the project team consistently answers yes to these requests in order to meet the expressed and implied business needs, they can create a problem for IT's ability to deliver on expectations. If the project team consistently answers no, the organization will be viewed as an obstacle, a roadblock, and not a "team player."

The Key Words for Managing Stakeholder Expectations

Though eliminating scope creep is a valid concern, many change requests for IT projects are based on a valid business need. Therefore, it is important that IT organizations do not simply disregard them for the sake of maintaining the project and resource status quo. At the same time, teams must carefully consider the impact that immediate business needs have on the projects. So, what should the common answer be to key project stakeholders who inquire about changes?

In nearly two decades of experience in technology project management, I have found that the best answer contains two simple words: "It depends." This response is not designed to answer the immediate question, but to encourage discussion and provoke rational thought. If project manager Chapman responds to Maloney's inquiry regarding expediting the timeline with an "it depends" response, it opens the door for a discussion on critical trade-offs. In practical terms, Chapman's project team may be able to deploy the POS system sooner if they are provided either with more resources (budget, people, and capital) or a reduction in scope or quality requirements. At that point, Chapman's team must determine the impact on the project's budget and/or scope if the sponsor decides to expedite the schedule.

Prioritizing the Triple Constraints

To help guide the project team's decisions, it is imperative that the project manager and sponsor reach an agreement (early in the project) on the relative priorities of the triple constraints (time, cost, and performance). Though project success is often measured by the team's ability to deliver the project on time, on budget, and on specification; these elements often do not carry the same weight. Though all are important, one of the constraints is considered more critical than others. For instance, a new video gaming system project with the primary objective to be first to market will likely consider time to be the most important constraint. An ERP upgrade project intended to reduce costs, on the other hand, might consider the cost leg of the triple constraint model as the most critical constraint.

All IT organizations regularly face the challenges created by constant change in stakeholder direction. Due to competitive business pressures, IT organizations cannot erect a firewall to keep out project change requests. IT project teams can however, provoke an objective review by working with key stakeholders to prioritize the triple constraints and promote discussion and analysis.

Will this work for all of your IT projects? It depends on how early you engage key stakeholders and how consistently you apply these techniques. Good luck.

About the author

Chris Wright, MPM, PMP is a course director and instructor for Global Knowledge's project management courses. He has over thirteen years of project leadership, mentoring, consulting, and education experience in the technology industry. Chris is currently the Vice President of Education for the North Carolina PMI Chapter and can be contacted at chris.wright@tandenllc.com. This article was originally published in Global Knowledge's Management in Motion e-newsletter. Global Knowledge (www.globalknowledge.com/PMILocal) delivers comprehensive hands-on project management, business process, and professional skills training. Visit our Knowledge Center at for free white papers, webinars, and more.

© Copyright 2006, Global Knowledge. All rights reserved.



Building Professionalism
in Project Management™
Project Management Institute

® **Central Mass Chapter Newsletter**

Inside this Edition

- [A Note From Our President](#)
- [Where is Project Management Going?](#)
- [Notes From an Aspiring PMP](#)
- [Ethical Conduct for the Changing Work Environment](#)
- [Managing Project Expectations in the IT Organization](#)
- [Next Chapter Meeting Topic](#)
- [PMP Exam Prep Training](#)
- [PM Humor](#)

Next Chapter Meeting

- **Date:** May 8, 2007
- **Topic:** Your PDU Project
- **Time:** 5:30 - 8:30 PM
Please go to [PMI Central Mass](#) to sign up
- **Location:**
Doubletree Hotel Boston/
Westborough

Next Meeting Topic: "Your PDU Project"

by Vern Valero, PMP

Did you achieve your PMP certification or planning to? Is certification important to your career path? Do you want to learn more about earning and tracking PDUs? Is your renewal date creeping up? This session will overview the PMP certification renewal process. Vern Valero will explore sources for earning PDUs and provide a framework for planning, tracking, and executing "Your PDU Project". Join your fellow chapter members for a refreshing new perspective of one of your most important projects.



Meeting Sponsor

About Our Speaker

Vern Valero, PMP is an engineering project manager in Bose's automotive division. He has software schedule responsibility for the newly launched Bose automotive infotainment product line. In addition, Vern is functional manager for software integration test and software configuration management.

A veteran software developer and analyst, Vern had written software in the telecommunications industry for twenty-one years before transitioning into project Management. He developed software products at 3Com, Bay Networks, Bytex, Prime Computer, GTE, and Raytheon.

Vern has earned the Project Management Professional (PMP) certification from the Project Management Institute. He holds a Bachelor of Science of Electrical Engineering from Northeastern University, a Graduate Certificate of Information Systems Project Management from Boston University, and Certificates of Software Engineering and Data Communications from Northeastern University. He is currently completing the Masters of Project and Program Management at Brandeis University.

Vern is an active member of the Project Management Institute's Central Mass, Mass Bay and Ocean State chapters.

About Our Sponsor

TEKsystems is one of the nation's largest single source providers of information technology and communications staffing and services- ranked number one in the industry by an independent review run by *IT Services Business Report*. They are committed to world-class technology execution delivered with customer service that's second to none.

One of TEKsystems' core advantages is their specialized knowledge and understanding of key market segments: Communications, Financial Services, Government and Information Technology.



Building Professionalism
in Project Management™
Project Management Institute

® **Central Mass Chapter Newsletter**

Inside this Edition

- [A Note From Our President](#)
- [Where is Project Management Going?](#)
- [Notes From an Aspiring PMP](#)
- [Ethical Conduct for the Changing Work Environment](#)
- [Managing Project Expectations in the IT Organization](#)
- [Next Chapter Meeting Topic](#)
- [PMP Exam Prep Training](#)
- [PM Humor](#)

Next Chapter Meeting

- Date: May 8, 2007
- Topic: Your PDU Project
- Time: 5:30 - 8:30 PM
Please go to [PMI Central Mass](#) to sign up
- Location:
Doubletree Hotel Boston/
Westborough

Decoding the Jargon

[Project Management Jokes](#)

Here's a set of definitions to help you understand what those Checkpoint Reports are really telling you!

Essentially complete.

It's half done.

We predict...

We hope to God!

Risk is high, but it is within acceptable ranges.

100:1 odds, or with 10 times over budget using 10 times the people we said we'd employ.

Potential show stopper.

The team has updated their resumes.

Serious but not insurmountable problems.

It'll take a miracle...

Basic agreement has been reached.

The @##\$%'s won't even talk to us.

Results are being quantified.

We're massaging the numbers so they will agree with our conclusions.

Task force to review.

Seven people who are incompetent at their regular jobs have been loaned to the project.

Not well defined at this time.

Nobody's even thought about it.

Still analyzing the requirements.

See previous answer.

Not well understood.

Now that we've thought about it, we don't want to think about it anymore.

Requires further analysis and management attention.

Totally out of control!

Results are promising.

Turned power on and no smoke detected -- this time...

Elements will be phased in gradually as the software interface matures.

It's late!

Unacceptable stretching-out of the time scale.

It's late!

Still in the early phase of the learning curve.

New.

The requirement was changed and the programme concluded.

Cancelled.

Experiencing transient malfunctions.

Going wrong.

Conceptually configured in several variations.

Modified.

A structured interface with the government on an inter-departmental basis.

Money!