



MAXIMUM FLOAT

Michigan Capital Area Chapter Newsletter

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Message from the President

By Amy J. Piper, Ph.D., PMP

Are you looking for a new career opportunity? Have you wondered what an Enterprise Program Office really does? Do you wish you could buy project management books less expensively? If you answer "Yes" to any of these questions, you would find value in joining the Project Management Institute. You may already be a member and ask yourself, "What value does the organization bring me?" This month I want to outline some of the value of being a member of PMI.

If you are looking for a new career opportunity, the PMI CareerLINK Directory provides members access to potential employers. This is a complementary member service that will deliver your resume to employers seeking project management professionals. There is also a job posting service that allows employers to post relevant positions on PMI's website for a nominal fee. If your looking for a new opportunity checkout www.pmi.org!

If you're wondering about an Enterprise Program Office or Project Management Office check out the February, 2001 PM Network journal. With your membership you receive monthly PM Network and the quarterly Project Management Journal. The PM Network provides timely articles on practical project management topics. The Project Management Journal contains articles based on project management research.

Another benefit is monthly chapter meetings! As a PMI MCAC member you may attend dinner meetings at a reduced rate. These meetings provide opportunities to discuss project management topics with others doing similar work. If you need information on a particular project management topic, you're sure to find someone who has experience in that area. Just ask around at the next meeting!

Continued, see "President" on page 2

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PM Eye on Deb Mosher!

Deb Mosher is manager of the Information Technology and Reengineering Division of the Department of Management and Budget, Office of Retirement Services.

The Office of Retirement Services (ORS) administers retirement program services in support of four retirement systems: Michigan public school employees, State employees, Michigan State Police, and Michigan's Judges.

The Information Technology and Reengineering Division (ITR) facilitates the provisioning of information technology to the business units and is currently developing plans to implement Centers of Excellence in several key disciplines. Top on the list is project management methodology (PMBOK).

Deb's primary focus is to implement the Centers of Excellence program. Deb states "It is my privilege to be leading the ITR team in this endeavor."

Deb's interests lie in professional growth and networking with chapter members. She attends virtually all PMI chapter meetings because of her interest in project management. The structure of the meeting provides opportunities for her to talk with others informally, as well as receiving more formal presentations on varied and interesting topics. She very much appreciates the efforts of the PMI organizers and presenters in putting together a quality program each month.

Please introduce yourself to Deb at a future dinner meeting, as he was the latest winner in the "free dinner" drawing!

Can you match these Project Management Acronyms with their definitions?

Acronym	Match	Description
SOW		1. Maximum number of nonconforming items that can be included in an acceptable lot, usually expressed as a percentage.
CPFF		2. Event-oriented, probability-based network analysis technique used to estimate project duration.
AQL		3. Narrative description of products or services to be supplied under contract that states the specifications or other minimum requirements.
BCWP		4. Expected total cost of an activity, group of activities, or total project when the work is complete.
FBS		5. Type of contract in which the buyer reimburses the contractor for the contractor's allowable costs (as defined by the contract) plus a fixed amount of profit (fee).
QC		6. Hierarchical structure relating the function of a product or service.
EAC		7. Monitoring of specific project results to determine whether they comply with relevant quality standards and identification of ways to eliminate causes of unsatisfactory performance.
PERT		8. Sum of approved cost estimates (including any overhead allocation) for activities (or portions of activities) completed during a given period.

President, continued from page 1

Your PMI membership also entitles you to reduced rates on books, conferences and seminars. This is just some of the value you will get from a PMI membership. If you aren't a member, please join us! If you are a member, I hope you find enough value to continue your membership. If you don't, feel free to provide me with feedback on how our chapter could provide you more value.



Grey Matters

Random Thoughts on Project Management

by Daniel Belcher

Time is in short supply. There are still 24 hours in a day but there is "never enough time". You either "run out of time" or "don't have the time". If something is important we try and "find some time" or "make time". Occasionally you can "spend time" but that is usually doing something unpleasant. I am rarely "wasting time" "killing time" or "passing the time away" unless I am waiting for someone who has "lost track of time". Does "time stand still" anymore?

With time so valuable I believe salaries should be in dollars per minute. Before you laugh, remember that it was not long ago that wages were set by the week and the day. Let's say that I currently make \$30/hr. In the new system this would equate to \$0.50/min. Throughout my life I never would have imagined making so much money. When I was a kid, this would equate to 2 candy bars per minute. In high school, a feast every 10 minutes and in college a pizza every 15 minutes. Today, I would equate this to a meal at a restaurant for a family of four every 60 minutes.

Just think of the change this could inspire. Each minute of our day would become important and scrutinized. We would begin to think of activities in a new light.

- Phone call from your spouse with grocery list - \$2
- Trying to get spaghetti lunch off your shirt - \$3
- Discussing last night's big game with Joe - \$5
- Calculating how many days until retirement - \$6

The feeling you get on a Friday after accounting for every minute of the previous week - priceless!

Growing the Membership

Rick Cummings

Vice President - Membership

Since our charter back in the summer of 1999, the Michigan Capital Area Chapter of PMI has seen a membership growth of 165% with a small amount of non-renewals. This is a great accomplishment for the chapter and reflects the need and desire for Project Managers to be actively involved in their profession. We understand that a growth rate of 165% is not sustainable indefinitely, however, we would like to maintain a steady influx of new and experienced Project Managers into the chapter. Our growth rate since August of 2000 to January 2001 has only been 11.4% and has somewhat "stalled" during the holiday season of December and January at 195. Your Board, with the support of the current membership, would like to raise that growth percentage over the next several months.

In place of a Bonus Program for the March Dinner meeting, we will be conducting a "Growing the Membership" session with you, the Chapter members. This will be a session for brainstorming ideas and strategies to help maintain a growth of Membership in the chapter, retain those that are already members, and assist those that want to transfer into our chapter from other organizations.

I will be sending out a separate mailing to the membership prior to the March Dinner meeting providing you with statistics of membership growth covering renewals, transfers in and out and the addition of new members. Included will also be some preliminary ideas discussed at the last Board meeting.

Please help support your chapter and attend the "Bonus" portion of the March Dinner meeting. We need your help !!!

See you March 20th at 5:15

March's Featured Speaker

David L. Davis, AT&T

"Schmoozing and the Art of Project Management",

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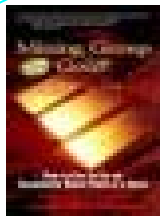
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How do you get that uncooperative line manager to get more committed to your project?? How do you make all members of a geographically disperse team feel ownership for a project?? How do you make suppliers stay actively involved in your project?? You schmooze 'em!

Schmoozing is the act of genuinely treating people well. All projects depend on people to complete various tasks in the WBS. It is important to make each person feel wanted, needed, and important. This session will explore project manager schmoozing techniques that will have the participants feel they are contributing toward a WOW project that not only enhances the corporation goals, but also their individual goals and helps them to grow as a person. ...And make you a better project manager!

Dave Davis is a certified PMP and has been actively involved in the science of project management for the last 20 years. Holding 2 Master's degrees, including an MBA, Dave has worked in a management capacity for AT&T for the past 16 years. He has been involved in a wide range of projects and program management, including some W@W! and some not-so-wow projects. He is president of the Toledo PMI chapter and has experienced projects from many different points of view. As chapter president, he managed the first and very successful Project Management Professional Development Day for Northwestern Ohio. Dave currently is involved in a wide variety of projects for the AT&T Business Customer Care Electronic Servicing. This role offers a rare opportunity for program management as well as project management in the scope definition phases of the project. Dave has published papers in professional journals and has presented at many professional seminars and conferences including PMI National conferences.



Food for the PM: Short Review of *Mining Group Gold* by Thomas A. Kayser.

Ever wonder about the real meaning of "facilitation" in a meeting?

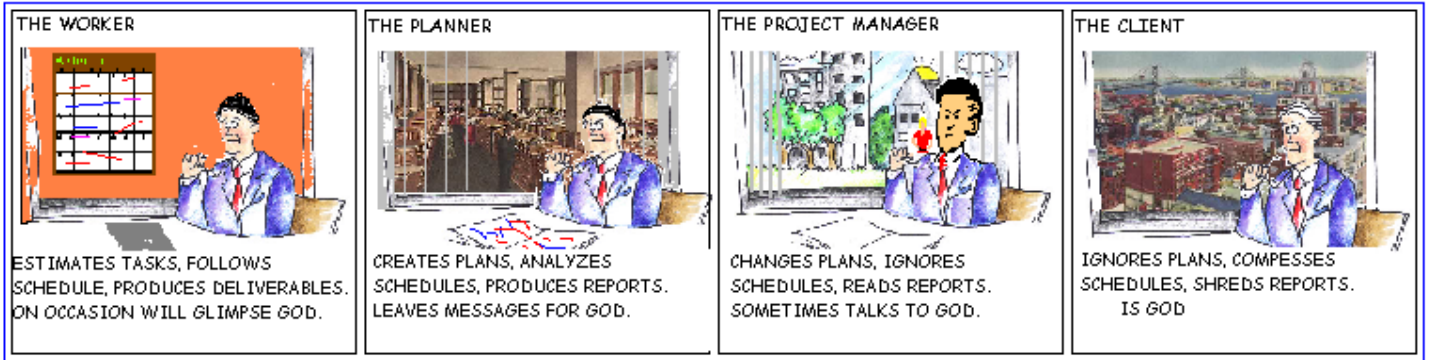
I recently had the pleasure of attending a training seminar offered in the area that was called "Team Facilitation Skills" and a focus on why meetings are successful. The book introduced in that seminar is worth the look and review for those that need to utilize team building skills in their Project Management.

As Project Managers, many times we are called to do just that, facilitate the meeting not lead it. In the book, *Mining Group Gold* by Thomas A. Kayser, 14 principles are presented that get at the center of a power group or team. The use of the words *group* and *teams*, though not really interchangeable, are just words for those of us who begin to look at successful results.

One of the most impacting ideas in the book is the use of primary and secondary facilitation. Reminding ourselves that we don't need to carry the team in everything is important. As the group moves to be a successful team, the responsibility of the facilitation of a meeting is on the whole team. As everyone becomes comfortable with the roles they play in the team, the more normal it is to have the team facilitate and run their meeting.

Oh, don't you wish that this practice were more wide spread. When you feel that too many hats are piling on top of your head, maybe it is time to take a look at this evolution. This book can help you, if not remind you that sanity in the Project Management arena is available by maximizing the outputs of your team.

Judy E. Walsh



Tips, Quips, and Quotes

Compiled by Liz Chaney

"It takes as much courage to have tried and failed as it does to have tried and succeeded."

--Anne Morrow Lindbergh

"Pity costs nothing and ain't worth nothing."

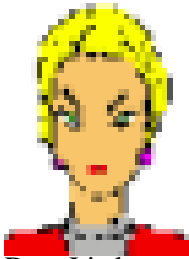
--Josh Billings

You don't have to get all of it right all of the time: "The essence of man is imperfection."

--Norman Cousins

"What, after all, is a halo? It's only one more thing to keep clean."

--Christopher Fry



Dear Maxine,

There are many definitions used in Project Management that I don't understand. I've been a Project Manager for a while now, but many of these terms just don't come up that often. Could you give me your opinions on the items below?

Listless in Dewitt

Dear Listless,

You and many others have asked me for definitions of terms that have been heard concerning Project Management. To answer you and others, I will begin a three part series of definitions beginning this issue of 'Maximum Float'. Part One – Budgetary definitions.

Actual Cost of Work Performed (ACWP) – The amount of money an organization actually spends for resources to perform the work in a project during a specific time period in the life of the project.

Bottom-Up Budget – A method for creating the budget for a project by estimating the budget for all of the lowest level tasks in the Work Breakdown Structure and then rolling these estimates up to higher levels until the total project budget has been estimated. Usually done in the project planning phase.

Budgeted Cost of Work Performed (BCWP) – The amount budgeted for the work in a project that has been completed by a specified date.

Earned Value (EV) – A Project Management control technique that allows you to quantify the overall progress of the project in monetary terms. All the activities in a project are assigned budgeted monies, and the project is tracked by the dollar value of the work completed. Another term for earned value is Budgeted Cost of Work Performed.

Cost Performance Index (CPI) – A ratio of Budgeted Cost of Work Performed (BCWP) to the Actual Cost of Work Performed (ACWP).

Program Events Schedule

The Chapter Dinner Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month, September through May, excluding December. The Dinner Meetings are held at the Lansing Sheraton Hotel and Convention Center. Bonus Programs are held prior to dinner meetings from 5:15 to 6:00.

Costs: Dinner costs are \$25 for members and \$30 for non-members. Anyone who does not pay in advance will be charged an additional \$5 at the door. If you are not pre-registered, we may be unable to accommodate you due to restaurant limitations.

April 17, 2001 -- Mr. Tim Pearl, CEO of Agate Software, "Ensuring Customer Satisfaction on Web Projects while Adhering to Schedule and Budget"

Bonus Program: "The Controlling Process" – Case Study

May 15, 2001 -- Award Program/Elections

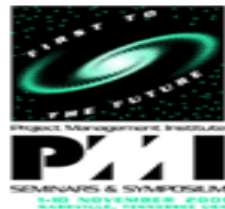
Bonus Program: "The Closeout Process" – Case Study

September 18, 2001 -- Mr. John Tuman, CEO of Management Technologies Incorporated, "The Past, Present and Future of Project Management"

Answers to Puzzle from page 2

Created by Liz Chaney!

1. AQL, Acceptable Quality Level
2. PERT, Program Evaluation and Review Technique
3. SOW, Statement of Work
4. EAC, Estimate at Completion
5. CPM, Cost plus fixed fee
6. FBS, Functional Breakdown Structure
7. QC, Quality Control
8. BCWP, Budgeted Cost of Work Performed



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