



Building professionalism in project management.™

Project Management Institute

Eastern Iowa Chapter

100's NUGGET

2005 Issue

November 2005

P.O. Box 1811
Cedar Rapids, IA 52406-1811

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Check out the
answers to the
questions from
the September
program.

See Appendix .

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Our Next Chapter Meeting - November 8th

The November breakfast meeting will be held Tuesday, November 8, 7:30am to 9:00am at the Clarion Hotel and Convention Center at 525 33rd Ave SW in Cedar Rapids. Debra Salz will be presenting "**Leadership from A to Z**" – Leading a team can be as confusing as spelling a word using alphabet soup; having many letters, but struggling to develop skills and strategies to consume them!

Target Audience: People who have an interest in leading others, personally or professionally.

Focus Areas:

- Facilitate an active discussion regarding leadership – does leadership find you or do you find it?
- Explore the consistent patterns of knowledge, attitude, and behaviors displayed by people viewed as leaders.
- Uncover practical tools and tips of effective leaders.
- Demonstrate strategies where participants can incorporate the leadership qualities in their life.

Our Buffet Breakfast will include:

- Assorted chilled fruit juices
- Golden scrambled eggs with Cheddar Cheese
- Crisp bacon & sausage links or Ham
- Breakfast potatoes
- Assorted Fresh Pastries with butter and preserves

Cost: \$10.00

Please RSVP by Friday, November 4th via email to
ProgramRegistration@pmieasterniowa.org.

Program

7:30 - 7:45	Breakfast/Social time
7:45 - 7:50	Opening by President Bob Sanders
7:50 - 8:40	Presentation by Debra Salz.
8:40 - 8:50	Final Announcements and Wrap-Up

President's Corner - by Bob Sanders, PMP

As you know the PMI Eastern Iowa Chapter Board of Directors (BOD) will be reorganized in 2006. For 2006, new director roles will be placed under the vice presidents of Communication, Education, Operations and Outreach. Two directorships will be placed under the Ex-Officio (Past President).

In order to jump start this process, the 2005 BOD would like to proceed with appointing candidates for the various director positions now so they are we can hit the ground running in 2006.

There are 14 director positions to appoint:

Director of At-Large – Assist the past president on special projects

Director of Certifications – Work on promoting PMI certification programs, which includes the PMP and CAPM programs

Director of Corporate Outreach – Strategically work with Eastern Iowa businesses to promote the value of project management in their organization

Director of Individual Outreach – Target project management professionals and provide them information on the value of PMI

Director of Logistics – Organize the meeting logistics/facilities of programs and training classes

Director of Marketing – Assist in branding PMI in Eastern Iowa and help promote PMI sponsored events in Eastern Iowa

Director of Member Relations – Work with current members to make sure they are getting value-add from PMI resources and provide membership data to PMI associates

Director of Newsletter – Assist the VP of Communication to solicit, write, edit, and publish the monthly newsletter

Director of Professional Development – As-

sist the VP of Education to plan project management related training on as needed basis

Director of Programs – Work with the VP of Operations in identifying monthly program topics and speakers

Director of Technology – Assist in determining and implementing new technology to help support PMI members

Director of University Outreach – Help reach out to students in the project management discipline at local universities and schools

Director of Volunteers – Organize a volunteer program as well as assist in determining the needs of the chapter and find the volunteers need to support initiatives

Director of Website – Maintain the chapter website with project management information within the Eastern Iowa area

In addition to volunteering, you will earn 5 PDU's per year for your services.

If you are interested in any one of the director positions and are willing to serve, please contact me, thepres@pmieasterniowa.org. If volunteers step up and assist in promoting the value of project management in the Eastern Iowa area, the quality of our chapter will continue to excel.

Thank you for carefully considering this opportunity,

Sincerely,
Bob Sanders, PMP
President, PMI Eastern Iowa Chapter



Meeting Reminders, RSVPs and Cancellations - by: Stephen Schmitz

The Program Committee strives to make the meeting registration process as easy as possible for our members and guests. If you cannot attend a meeting, do not respond to the Meeting Reminder email. If you register for a meeting, and then find that you must can-

cel, write to programs@pmieasterniowa.org to cancel your reservation. This will ensure that your cancellation message is received and processed.

Web Site Statistics - by Darin A. Hart, PMP

Pages-URL (Top 20) - Full list - Entry - Exit					
46 different pages-url					
	Viewed	Average size	Entry	Exit	
/index.htm	196	4.08 KB	158	93	
/calendar.htm	76	16.76 KB	36	36	
/courses.htm	73	9.31 KB	30	30	
/pdu.htm	55	28.18 KB	37	45	
/Dixon.htm	34	9.44 KB	34	34	
/newsletter.htm	29	9.07 KB		5	
/docs/Resource+Management+Class+Flier+November+2005.pdf	26	25.38 KB	8	18	
/Dendurent.htm	24	3.10 KB	19	17	
/Membership.htm	19	12.56 KB	2	4	
/contacts.htm	19	3.65 KB	1	5	

Membership Update - by Darren Benzing, PMP

PMI Eastern Iowa Chapter membership stands at **255**, with 133 **PMP®s**. Our top companies by member count are Pearson (102), Rockwell Collins (21), Intermec (15), and Aegon (14), Iowa Health Systems (5), and Perot Systems (5).

New PMP®s: Viraj Anavkar, Frances Anderson, Kim Braginton, Matthew Brunscheen, Kristi Burkle, Barry Ehrig, Charles Harbour, Darwin Hochstedler, Hans Hoppe, Allen Jeter, Lowell Johnson, Paul Jones, Julia Klaren, Karen Kucera Wright, Mark Latta, Keith Luegering, Candyce Lyman, Robin McGlynn, Jackie McMahan, Jacqueline Mikkola, Amy Mills, Michele Mitchell, Jeff Peters, Wayne Riley, Kevin Rose, Stephen Sawyer, Hugh Scieszinski, Deb Sheets, Michael Simpson, David Smiley, Danielle Strank, Brian Thorn, Robert Traeger, and Darcy Vondracek



New Members: We welcome: Daniel Appleby from Rockwell Collins, Ken Bozer from Pearson, Lisa Howard from Principal Financial Group, Jan Knott from New Horizons Computer Learning Center, Cheryl Magnuson from Intermec Technologies, and Laura Smith from Iowa Health Systems. We are glad to have you in the PMI Eastern Iowa Chapter!

Renewing Members: Joy Donald, Jeri Frank, Doug Krsek, Donna Strottman, Catherine White, Douglas Williams, Melissa Williams, and Sean Williams. Thank you for renewing your membership for another year.

Want to join PMI and/or our Chapter: Check out: <http://www.pmieasterniowa.org/Membership.htm>

Chapter transfers: If you have a need to transfer to another chapter because you have moved or relocated due to changes in employment or work locations, please contact componenttransfer@pmi.org.

Chapter Sponsored Professional Development

The following chapter sponsored professional development opportunities are available.

- Pipeline planning and Resource Management using MS Project (C100-2300)
- OPM3 for Organizational Execution (C100-1400)

Date	Course ID	PDUs	Location	Title
11/07/05	C100-2300	4	Kirkwood	Pipeline Planning and Resource Management using MS Project
12/12/05	C100-1400	4	Kirkwood	OPM3 for Organizational Execution

Please find more details on our website at <http://www.pmieasterniowa.org/course.htm> or send questions to ProfessionalDevelopment@pmieasterniowa.org

Priority Management Training schedule

The following Priority Management sponsored professional development opportunities are available.

- PROJECT MANAGEMENT BREAKTHROUGHS
- WORKING SMART WITH MS PROJECT
- WORKING SMART WITH MS OUTLOOK
- WORKING SMART WITH LOTUSNOTES (NOTE: WEB WORKSHOP two) 2 hour sessions

Date	Course ID	PDUs	Location	Title
11/08/05 – 11/15/05	1161-TN070100	7	Web workshop at your desk	Working Smart with LotusNotes
12/1/05	1161-TN060100	7	Cedar Rapids, IA	Working Smart with Microsoft Outlook
12/06/05 – 12/08/05	N/A	21	Cedar Rapids, IA	PROJECT MANAGEMENT BREAKTHROUGHS
12/09/05	N/A	7	Cedar Rapids, IA	WORKING SMART WITH MS PROJECT

Please find more details on our website at http://www.prioritymanagement.com/rsmith/workshop_schedule/ or send questions to rsmith@prioritymanagement.com.

New Horizons Training schedule

The following courses are available at New Horizons Cedar Rapids in the coming months.

- Microsoft Project Management Scheduling Seminar Series: I of III
- Project Management for Professionals
- Project 2003- L1
- Project 2003- L2

Date	Course ID	PDUs	Location	Title
11/17/05		2	New Horizons	Microsoft Scheduling Seminar Series: I of III
11/17/05		6.5	New Horizons	Project 2003- L1
11/18/05		6.5	New Horizons	Project 2003- L2

Please find more details on our website at <http://www.newhorizonscr.com> or send questions to Events.cedarrapids@newhorizons.com



2005 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President:

Bob Sanders, PMP thePres@pmieasterniowa.org

President Ex-Officio:

Steve Rucker Ex-Officio@pmieasterniowa.org

VP of Communications and Publicity:

Darin Hart, PMP Communications@pmieasterniowa.org

VP of Finance:

Connie Smith, PMP Finance@pmieasterniowa.org

VP of Membership:

Darren Benzing, PMP Membership@pmieasterniowa.org

VP of Professional Development

Jamie Northrup, PMP ProfessionalDevelopment@pmieasterniowa.org

VP of Programs:

Steve Schmitz Programs@pmieasterniowa.org

VP of Special Projects:

Leo Bertling, PMP SpecialProjects@pmieasterniowa.org

October Program Recap - by: Stephen Schmitz

Twenty-four members and guests attended the chapter meeting on October 11th. Upcoming chapter-sponsored courses were reviewed and special recognition given to our newest PMPs. Thirty-four chapter members passed the PMP exam in September, pushing us over the 50% mark for the number of members who are PMI-certified Project Management Professionals. Membership stands at 251 members, 133 PMPs.

Our guest speaker was Rich Smith, president of Priority Management Services and former chapter member. Rich addressed three topics: "2005", "A Different Approach", and "Just Do It". He led participants through an exercise to demonstrate "A Different Approach", starting with the goal statement "Double attendance at chap-

ter meetings by April 2006". Chapter members may recognize this approach as "starting with the End in mind". Ideas to increase attendance included organizing car pools, giving door prizes, establishing workplace liaisons in member companies, developing a Recognition and Rewards committee, and developing a chapter informational brochure.

Paddy Puthige took the lead on transcribing the flow chart and the activities list into electronic format, for review by the board and action by chapter members willing to step up to the challenge and reward of reaching the goal to Double Attendance at Chapter Meetings by April 2006



Date	Time	Location	Topic
Nov 8th	7:30am - 9:00am	Clarion Cedar Rapids	Debra Salz will be presenting "Leadership from A to Z"
Dec 13th	6:00 - 8:00 pm	TBD	TBD

No.	Question	Answer	Resource
1.1	PMI chapters exist in how many countries?	67	http://www.pmi.org Global Membership & Communities Chapters
1.2	What is a SIG, and how many are there today?	Special Interest Group, 30	http://www.pmi.org/info/GMC_SiGListing.asp
1.3	To prepare for the PMP Exam, a candidate should study knowledge areas from what resource?	A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (a.k.a. PMBOK Guide)	http://www.pmi.org Professional Practices About the Profession Evolution
1.4	Who was the first African-American Republican elected to the Iowa House of Representatives, in 1966	Cecil Reed	http://cornellcollege.edu/news_center/press_releases/nr2000/documentaries.shtml
1.5	What is the circumference of the earth	24,902 miles at the equator.	http://geography.about.com/library/faq/blqzcircumference.htm
1.6	What is the corporate url for New Horizons?	www.newhorizons.com	google, website
1.7	What type of testing center is New Horizons - CR?	Vue or Prometric	plaque in hallway / sign on testing center
BONUS 1.8	How much does a butterfly weigh	Ranges between 0.3 grams for a large Swallowtail and 0.04 grams for an Elf.	http://www.nides.bc.ca/Assignments/Insects/Butterflyfaq.htm#Q31
2.1	What was the title of the 2003 Fun Night activity?	Off The Wall Requirements and Lean-Way Scheduling	www.pmieasterniowa.org/pdu.htm
2.2	How many courses is the Eastern Iowa Chapter currently offering?	5	http://www.pmieasterniowa.org Courses
2.3	How many knowledge areas are tested, on the PMP Exam?	9 - Integration, Scope, Time, Cost, Quality, Human Resource, Communications, Risk, Procurement.	http://www.pmi.org Certification
2.4	What is the average distance in miles to the moon	238,900	http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/astronomy/moon
2.5	How many birthdays occur each day?	700,000 on average	http://pressroom.hallmark.com/birthday_trends_stats.html
2.6	When is the next MS Project class available at New Horizons - Cedar Rapids, IA	MS Project L1 - Sept. 26, 2005	www.newhorizonscr.com
2.7	What year was New Horizons founded?	1982	poster in hallway
BONUS 2.8	Where was the world's largest cucumber grown and how much did it weigh?	The world's largest cucumber was grown in 1988 Australia. It weighed in at 59 pounds.	http://www.healthrecipes.com/cucumbers.htm
3.1	Project Management Institute in the beginning - when and where was the first meeting held?	In January, 1968, Ned Engman wrote inviting potential members to a meeting to form a National CPM Society. The meeting would be held at the Roosevelt Hotel in New Orleans , Louisiana, February 15-16, 1968 . Attended by Messrs. Engman, Jenett, King, Davis and Snyder, the minutes show that they agreed to form an organization to be known as the "American Project Management Institute"	http://www.maxwideman.com/papers/pmi/snowstorm.htm
3.2	The Project Management Institute has 15 members on the board of directors. How many does the Eastern Iowa chapter have?	8 (until January 1, 2006, when there will be 6).	http://www.pmieasterniowa.org/contacts.htm
3.3	PMI has two certifications. Which exam requires contact hours in formal PM education?	Both ! CAPM = 23 hrs, PMP = 35	http://www.pmi.org Professional Development & Careers Certifications
3.4	The Panama Canal has been referred to as Teddy Roosevelt's Big Ditch. What city will benefit from the 22-year, \$14.6 billion project nicknamed The Big Dig?	Boston	http://www.boston.com/advertisers/bigdig/bigdig.shtml
3.5	What is the population of Iowa?	2,926,324	http://www.50states.com/iowa.htm
3.6	What is the New Horizons - CR mission statement?	Help Every student earn a promotion!	Values / Mission plaques in various rooms
3.7	What New Horizons' class teaches you how to view and access project information located on the server, as well as report progress on assigned project tasks?	MS Project Web Access	www.newhorizons.com
BONUS 3.8	According to PMI, the phrase "project management" began to emerge when?	in the late 1950s and early 1960s	http://www.pmi.org Professional Practices About the Profession Evolution
4.1	Currently how many chartered and potential chapters are there in the world?	Currently there are over 240 chartered and approximately 20 potential chapters geographically dispersed over 67 countries.	http://www.pmi.org/prod/groups/public/documents/info/gmc_chaptersoverview.asp
4.2	How many chapters exist in Iowa?	3 Eastern Iowa/Cedar Rapids Quad City Area/Davenport Central Iowa/Des Moines	http://www.pmi.org Global Membership & Communities Chapters
4.3	Who gave a presentation to the chapter on the Kinnick Stadium Renovation Project?	Hugh Barry	http://www.pmieasterniowa.org Calendar or February 2005 newsletter
4.4	What is the average number of words spoken per day for women and men?	On average women say 7,000 words per day. Men manage just over 2000.	http://www.corsinet.com/trivia/average.html
4.5	Google history - when and where did Google get started?	On September 7, 1998, Google Inc. opened its door in Menlo Park, California.	http://www.google.com/intl/en/corporate/history.html
4.6	What year did New Horizons - CR earn the "Global Center of the Year" award?	2004	plaque in hallway / trophy at front desk
4.7	What is the scheduled lunch break for classroom 4?	11:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.	plaque in room
BONUS 4.8	Name 2 resources for project management reference material.	Any 2 answers will be accepted -- examples: www.pmi.org chapter website PMI Bookstore Knowledge & Wisdom Center PM Network Magazine PMI Today (monthly supplement to PM Network) New Horizons PM Courses Yahoo AskJeeves Google	misc
5.1	PMI has two certifications. What are they?	CAPM = Certified Associate in Project Management PMP = Project Management Professional	http://www.pmi.org Professional Development & Careers Certifications
5.2	How many publications does PMI put out?	3 - PMI Today & PM Network Magazine (monthly), Project Management Journal (Quarterly)	http://www.pmi.org Publications & Information Resources
5.3	The PMI Knowledge & Wisdom Center was named for what long-time contributor to the organization and the profession?	James R Snyder	http://www.pmi.org Publications & Information Resources Home Page Logo
5.4	Average person walks this far in a lifetime?	The average person walks the equivalent of twice around the world in a lifetime.	http://www.corsinet.com/trivia/average.html
5.5	What are the top four flavors of ice cream?	Vanilla, Chocolate, Butter Pecan, Strawberry	http://money.cnn.com/2005/07/25/pt/goodlife/summer_ice_cream/
5.6	What PMI accredited certification class is available at New Horizons?	Project Management for Professionals Classroom (ILT), Online LIVE (OLL) and Online Anytime (OLA)	www.newhorizons.com
5.7	What 3 learning modalities does New Horizons offer?	Classroom (ILT), Online LIVE (OLL) and Online Anytime (OLA)	www.newhorizons.com
BONUS 5.8	How much does a Livestrong™ Cycling Jersey, men's cost?	\$90	store-laf.org/sports.html



WBS TASK 1: Review the Project Management Basics

BY: DOUGLAS WILLIAMS, PMP

EMAIL DKWILLIAMS@WITSYSTEMS.COM

Opening Dialogue

Important Terms

Optimism
Pessimism

In today's fast-paced business climate, project managers are often burdened with an onslaught of business practice, process and culture change, which is sometimes made more interesting by an abundance of supportive technology change. Project managers (and their support teams) are often wooed by the intensity of change and sometimes overcome by its mob-like excitement. Project management teams are easily distracted by resulting chaotic workflows and are sometimes lured away from simple project management standards and basics, the ones that are the foundation to the PMI® PMBOK®.

This column continues the intention to present ideas, concepts, tools, and definitions to help you learn (or reaffirm) many project management standards and basics that make project management tasks easier. These writings are presented within the simple PMBOK® phase context: initiating, planning, executing, controlling and closing. Most are presented with industry independence in mind, but some may include industry specific references to improve overall clarity. Your comments and thoughts are always welcome to the email address listed above.

WBS TASK 1.2: Project Definition - Planning

WBS Task 1.2.7 Balancing project manager optimism and pessimism.

Scenario: Your boss, the project sponsor, just came over to discuss an "exciting" new work opportunity. As you listen, you realize that the assignment is a large project and requires your being able to manage across several groups. You also realize that the project has much higher visibility and risks than you are accustomed to. Cautiously, you attempt to tell the project sponsor about your lack of desire, but he simply does not understand your statement about not wanting to be the project manager. You are instructed to move along and become the project manager. Regrettably, your project sponsor does not realize the highly pessimistic influence that has just been introduced into the project.

Consider the following sections to understand several project manager focused optimism and pessimism influences over project moods within the Project Definition – Planning context.

Coming Up Next

PLANNING

- Understanding some early planning related project failure events

Some Google Strings For More Information

Go to Google's advanced search engine http://www.google.com/advanced_search and try the following search strings with special settings to obtain additional information.

"project manager" fears - choose last three months

"project manager" pessimism - choose last three months

"project manager" optimism - choose last three months



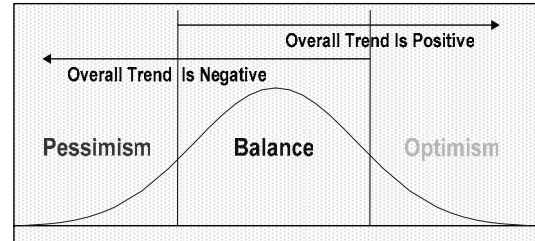
® PMI and PMPOK are registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office by the Project Management Institute.

WBS TASK 1.2: Project Definition - Planning (continued)

WBS Task 1.2.7 Balancing project manager optimism and pessimism.

Understand project optimism and pessimism extremes

It is important to understand that all projects maintain individual, sub-team, team, and group attitudes to form project moods. These moods align to two basic extremes: optimism and pessimism. The project manager's role includes being able to stabilize optimism and pessimism influences so that the overall project mood remains balanced. Consider the effects on the project based on the following scenarios:



- Over-weighting with optimism leads to accelerated work momentum, higher risk taking, and increased re-work
- Over-weighting with pessimism leads to decelerated work momentum, lower risk taking, and decreased re-work
- Balancing optimism with pessimism leads to steady work momentum, balanced risk analysis and decreased re-work

Understand project starts tend to catalysts for prompting optimism and pessimism extremes

The “exciting” new project is starting. In an effort to keep people motivated, the project sponsor actively works to set the initial project mood within the project team and other stakeholders. The active involvement reinforces optimism to a point where the project team and stakeholders perceive the project sponsor as “totally-on-board” with this new effort. As a side effect, the project mood is unintentionally moved into an overly optimistic state.

The project sponsor chooses a project manager to continue with the project management aspects. The project manager accepts the responsibility and begins project management duties. The project manager’s first days are anticipated to be the sweetest and the easiest. There is ample team excitement about doing something new (or different). Momentum remains elevated because team thoughts are looking forward to finishing the project work with grand recognition and/or compensation rewards. The project manager knows this project mood, but also anticipates it will fade as the team members encounter the project realities (scope, schedule, cost, issues, risks, changes, resources, dependencies, and priorities). The project mood remains in an overly optimistic state.

As the project gets moving, the project’s overly optimistic state gives way to other less optimistic events, which are the project realities now influencing the project team. Over time, these influences swing the overall project mood between the overly optimistic and greatly pessimistic extremes. For example, one estimating mistake causes the project workload to swell within the fixed project timeline, resulting in the project team’s attitudes turning 180 degrees from a previously firm overly optimistic “we-can-do” mood into a greatly pessimistic “we-can’t-do” mood. To recover, the project manager performs corrective action, but also causes the project team to ricochet 180 degrees back into the positive. The end result is likely a team perception that the project is to be emotionally unpredictable.



Since all projects seem to go through this ebb and flow, the project sponsor should always work to ensure the “best-fit” project manager is selected. The selected project manager needs to be ready and willing to manage the project mood swings away from the extremes and towards a project mood balance centerline. Review the following sections to understand important focus areas.

Know An Effective Selection Equation: Attitude + Aptitude = Altitude

The project sponsor can use this equation during the project manager selection process. A project manager that has a strong attitude to maintain project mood balance (between optimism and pessimism) is very likely to become a better match. A project manager who has a higher aptitude is likely to find more ways of managing project mood balance. When combined, a strong attitude and high aptitude predispose the project with the “best fit” mood management capability.

WBS TASK 1.2: Project Definition - Planning (continued)

Understand Project Manager Mood Setting Early Comments

Project manager statements often influence how the project team perceives the project. The more optimistic the project manager statements, the more optimistic the project mood may become, which is not always a good situation. Conversely, the more pessimistic the project manager comments, the more pessimistic the project mood may become, which is also not a good thing. The “best fit: project manager balances optimism and pessimism within statement. Consider the following project manager statements that may be encountered during a project start.

“If nobody will read my plan, why should I bother creating one?” - a pessimism indicator

This statement is normally made out of defiance, a very pessimistic indicator. A project manager that refuses to keep a plan is likely a project manager that also will not be able to maintain project mood balance. Continued defiance should conclude with the project manager being replaced.

Notably, the project plan is the most important aspect of every project. The project sponsor should always understand that its existence is one of the most critical project success factors. Since the project manager owns the plan creation and maintenance, the project sponsor should make it a required project deliverable.

The project sponsor should also be flexible to varied project manager plan practices. Some project managers believe that the “project plan” should be read, understood, and maintained by everyone participating on the project effort. Some could care less who reads and uses it. And, and others (often the very best project managers) never show their plans for the sole reason of keeping project participants focused on their work roles and not on project planning. Regardless of practices, the project sponsor should at least require a plan be created and maintained.

“What does management expect my plan to be?” - a (sometimes) pessimism indicator

Generally, this statement has potential of becoming a pessimistic influence on the project mood. It is sometimes encountered when the project manager is eliciting project planning requirements. At other times, it is made out of retaliation to one or more “interrogating” project plan and planning practice questions. And at other times, the statement is encountered when a project planning method or format is being imposed (by management or standard).

It is important to note that some rules should apply when setting initial planning formats and practices. The project sponsor should require the project manager keep track of the core project data (scope, schedule, cost, issues, risks, changes, resources, priorities, and dependencies). The project manager should be flexible to offer data reporting views so that questions and status update requirements are responded to.

“What would people like the status report to say?” - a neutral indicator

Generally, this statement has potential of becoming a pessimistic influence on the project mood. It is sometimes encountered when the project manager is requesting status reporting requirements. At other times, it is a reaction to criticisms made about a recent status report.

Notably, the status report should always correctly and truthfully represent the core project data (scope, schedule, cost, issues, risks, changes, resources, priorities, and dependencies). The project sponsor should be a proponent of establishing a “project life long” standard status reporting format. Using the standard and the data, the project manager will be able to make status reports a repeatable step for as long as the project is active. This approach helps reduce status report criticisms, improves status reporting accuracy and reduces the temptation to hide or embellish project facts.

“What must ‘I’ do to force the project green (on track for scope, cost, and schedule)?” - a neutral indicator

This statement is encountered when a projectized work environment uses “dashboard” color status indicators. The indicators are used to indicate project health conditions and where green is good, yellow is help needed, and red is trouble. In a healthy project work environments, the statement simply prompts the project sponsor for help. In less healthy project situations, the project manager may use the statement to defer accountability. In the unhealthy project situations, the project manager may make the statement (and purposefully falsify the color indicators) in order to defer requesting corrective action (and for many potential reasons).



WBS TASK 1.2: Project Definition - Planning (continued)

Notably, some project managers fall victim to management's temptation to use the colors as a "whipping stick" instead of as a help needed indicator. As a result, some project managers become conditioned to incorrectly represent the project conditions by using reds and yellows less often. For example, a project sponsor sees a yellow status for a projects. Instead of asking the project manager about what needs correction, the project manager is blamed for the condition. Out of fear, this management error causes this project manager to entertain the idea of falsely representing the color in the future. If the negative management behavior persists, all project indicators tend to migrate incorrectly towards green.

"We are complete, except for" - an overt optimism indicator

When would this ever make sense to indicate that a task is complete? This misleading introducing phrase can only indicate that the referenced topic is NOT complete. Project managers that use this phrase should be replaced.

"Since no projects meet scope, schedule and schedule factors, why should my project do so?" - an overt pessimism indicator

This defeatist statement should be construed as a preemptive excuse for the project manager not wanting or not being able to coordinate and deliver the project results within the scope, schedule, and cost factors. A project manager that uses this phrase should be replaced.

"But, I do not want to be the project manager !" - a pessimism indicator

A project manager that makes this statement usually means it. The project sponsor should work quickly to identify and fix the project managers reasons for making the statement. Sample reasons include the project is too big, the project definition is mal-formed, the project risk levels are too high, or the person really does not like project management. Regardless, the project manager who repeatedly makes this statement should be replaced, and generally without penalty.

Understand The Roar Of The Crowd Perspective

Some project events are significant enough to cause the entire project team to respond as a crowd. When this occurs, the project manager needs to realize that pulling everyone from the optimistic or pessimistic extremes is very difficult and takes a high level of patience and negotiating abilities. The project sponsor should look for project managers with these abilities.

Understand Relative Perspectives

Project managers are sometimes affected by relative perspectives. During project mood changing events, the project manager needs to account for both the audience's and the project manager's positions on the spectrum between optimism and pessimism. The project manager should then adjust his approach and discussion specific to audience's relative position. Consider the following example.

The project manager is using a data centric management style that permanently aligns him to the balanced centerline of the project optimism and pessimism spectrum. A project mood change event occurs where he must address an overly optimistic project team. Without adjusting to the team's optimistic position, it is likely the team will dismiss the project manager as being (relatively) pessimistic. This perception is true because the group needs to look towards the opposing mood and anything less than their sense of optimism is categorically pessimistic.



Conclusions

All projects seem to go through an emotional ebb and flow between the extremes of optimism and pessimism. As project size and team member count grows, the project sponsor should place ever greater influence on selecting a project manager with the "right" attitude and aptitude for being able to navigate and balance any project mood swings that may occur. The project sponsor should also consider a project manager's early statements for mood adjustment clues. On larger projects with more team members, the project sponsor should place greater emphasis on project managers having improved patience and negotiating capabilities. Finally, both the project sponsor and project manager need to recognize how to best gauge the mood swings between optimism and pessimism and ensure the project achieves balance.