



November 2011

Our Next Chapter Meeting – November 10, 2011

The next PMI breakfast meeting will be held on **Thursday, November 10, 2011** from 7:15 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. at the **Clarion Hotel and Convention Center, 525 33rd Avenue SW, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.**

Clarion Hotel and Convention Center - Phone number **(319) 366-8671.**

Program Title:

"Phase Gate Organizational Project Management" presented by Jamie Northrup.

About the Program:

Phase Gate Organizational Project Management is the method of choice for many successful organizations today; organizations such as Apple, P&G, Exxon Chemical, Lego, etc. As the concept matures, it is quickly becoming one of the most successful methods for managing the new product and project pipeline. Phase Gate Organization Project Management helps organizations to deliver better, faster, and less expensive products. Many organizations today run like disorganized restaurants. Work comes in unmitigated waves with each and every patron demanding the immediate attention of a few (constrained) cooks doing the work back in the kitchen. Some of the patrons barging through the doors have no shirt or shoes (no business case). Some have no money (non-capitalized projects). There are even some young whipper-snappers budging in line ahead of stalwart customers (no project prioritization)!? As the old adage goes, "it is the squeaky wheel that gets the grease." Phase Gate Organizational Project Management applies the best practices of organizational project, program, and portfolio management along with the process governance and rigor needed to sustain the best practices.

About the Speaker:

J. Alan Northrup, PMP is the principal consultant with Triple Constraint®, Inc. and author of the book, "Every Organization Can Implement OPM3". He is a former U.S. Army Officer and has served as a senior manager, program manager, and project manager in the aerospace engineering, telecommunications, and academic industries. A graduate of the University of Iowa, Jamie holds a degree in Management Science. He is certified as a PMP® and an original OPM3 team member and OPM3 Second Edition Core team member.

Cost: Chapter Members: \$13 (online) or \$20 (pay at door); Guests: \$20 (online or pay at door)

Registration Deadline: Sunday, November 6, 2011 (11:45 p.m.)

To register, go to www.pmieasterniowa.org and click **Events > Monthly Program Meetings > November 2011 Monthly Meeting.**

Note: Even if you plan to pay at the door, we ask that you register online so we have an accurate attendance count for food and beverage.

Program Schedule:

7:15 - 7:30	Registration, breakfast and networking
7:30 - 7:45	Opening by Chapter Officers.
7:45 - 8:45	Presentation / Discussion
8:45 - 9:00	Final announcements and wrap-up

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Step Up to the Challenge and Grow

By Tammy Sweat, PMP

Dedicated to James (Smoe) Prymek

My heart is heavy at this time as a dear friend has recently passed. Before he left us, I recognized the need to help his family, especially his wife, provide the necessary care he needed after his diagnosis of cancer. For the past few months he sat and watched as I did his yard work and helped his wife re-arrange the house to move in medical equipment. Then the attention turned to him as his health rapidly declined.

My mom said to me, “You really grew up during this experience.” (oh Mom I’m in my forties!) I replied that I didn’t necessarily “grow up” but I definitely grew. I learned new things about myself. I learned that I could make a real difference in the lives of others. I also learned about oxygen machines, administering medicine, providing personal care, and how wonderful the Hospice organization is. I’d have to say though, that the largest lesson learned, is how important it is to have friends and family to lean on in times of need.

I didn’t necessarily ask for this assignment. It certainly wasn’t in my “job description” as a family friend. However, I couldn’t sit back and watch them struggle when I had both the time and energy to help. A little bit of my help went a long ways.

These lessons can also be applied within the work environment:

- Help others: Go out of your way to help others. Does it really inconvenience you? Does the little time it takes to help others really matter at the end of the day? A little inconvenience to you may be a large help to someone else. What goes around comes around, and you may also need some help some day as well.
- Learn new skills: Everyone is a novice at first. It takes practice and patience but eventually you can become the expert!
- Keep healthy working relationships: I can’t say enough about how important this is. Work encompasses so much of our time. It’s typically where we meet our best friends. It’s imperative that you make an effort to remain professional yet develop friendships and bonds with those around you. Remember the saying, “It’s not what you know, it’s who you know.” Your job will be much easier if co-workers and management view you as someone they like to be around.
- Try something new: Whether a new work assignment is thrust upon you or whether you have volunteered for the assignment, it doesn’t matter because in the end you are expected to accomplish it to the best of your ability. Approach it with a positive attitude and seek the help you need to complete your tasks. Take charge and “go for it!” You may be surprised at what you can achieve when the challenge calls for it.

At the end of the each day we all strive to feel good about what we have done that day. As we reflect over the day’s activities, we want to be able to say to ourselves that we made a difference. Give it your all and you will make a difference, grow and be proud of what you have accomplished.

PMI North America Leadership Institute Meeting

Carol Scherrman, VP of Operations

I was privileged to represent the Eastern Iowa Chapter at the Project Management Institute (PMI) North America Leadership Institute Meeting October 20-22, 2011 at the Gaylord Texan in Grapevine, Texas.

The Leadership Institute Meeting featured a variety of educational tracks, general sessions, and networking opportunities for chapter and Communities of Practice (CoPs) leadership from across the globe. Over 800 chapter and CoP leaders attended this year's meeting. Meeting highlights included:

- More than 50 educational sessions focusing on PMI institutional knowledge, association governance, and leadership development
- PMI Chapter Leader Track designed to provide information and tools for new leaders on how to successfully support communities
- Regional breakout sessions
- Breakout sessions by volunteer role

The meeting also included three dynamic general sessions.

- **Stefan Swanepoel** opened the meeting by taking us on a “Safari of Self Discovery.” Stefan motivated us to build better teams by connecting with the animal in all of us. He shared excerpts from his experiences living in and traveling to the Serengeti, which inspired his book *Surviving Your Serengeti: 7 Skills to Master Business & Life*. What animal are you? You can find out by taking the short *free* quiz at www.whatanimalami.com. Based on your qualities, you can learn to develop your own strongest survival skills and identify and understand the strengths of those you work with – all while having fun and developing an extraordinary team. I am a cheetah, which hopefully will serve the chapter and me well in 2012 as your new chapter president.
 - The efficient cheetah clearly illustrates how “finishing the job” in the shortest possible time with the least amount of wasted resources leads to success. Key is the ability to overcome interruptions, distractions, mistakes, mental and physical fatigue, and to focus on being effective and able to produce the desired result.
- **Gina Schreck** spoke on “Using Today’s Technology and Social Networking to Share Knowledge and Deliver BIG Value to Members.” Did you know that various studies indicate that those of us born in the 60s have consumed—on average—50,000 of television? What has it given us? Nothing! Today’s media is interactive, it is collaborative, and it is SOCIAL. This session challenged chapter leaders to use the new tools and share knowledge with members that is informative, engaging, and delivered in the way members want. Your leadership team will continue to explore ways to enhance how we deliver content to members using social media tools.
- **James Kane** (www.jameskane.com) closed the meeting with a thought-provoking discussion on “The Loyalty Switch – How to Make Anyone Loyal to You, Your Organization, or Your Cause.” Based on research, he makes the case that human beings have a fundamental need to be loyal and actively seek out the specific clues from others that tell them when they can and should be. When an organization, as well as an individual, is able to understand and demonstrate those loyalty-building behaviors, they can develop relationships that will last a lifetime and result in unwavering and unlimited support. To garner loyalty, an individual must have trust, a sense of belonging, and a purpose. Of these three, trust is the most important.

The Leadership Institute Meeting was an excellent forum to network with other chapter leaders to see what their chapters are doing. It also gave me a long list of ideas for our chapter to consider in 2012. The 2012 Board of Directors will be getting together in the next few weeks to identify and prioritize our goals and objectives for the chapter for next year.

FREE Professional Development Units (PDUs)

If you're looking to earn PDUs, here's an easy and inexpensive way to do so. The International Institute for Learning, (IIL) is sponsoring the 8th annual International Project Management Day 2011 on November 3, 2011: **Power of the Profession**. You can earn 12 PDUs at this free virtual event, where you can view 20 video presentations by global thought leaders on a wide variety of PM topics, visit sponsored booths, and download valuable collateral, case studies, research, and demos.

Here's a small sample of presentation titles:

Leadership - Latest Research on How Best to Influence People

Squeeze Until it Hurts: Project Prioritization

Defining the Right Training, for the Right People, at the Right Time

WHAT IF? Modeling Uncertainty in Microsoft® Project 2010

You say you're not available on November 3? No problem! Registration for this virtual event gives you 90 days from the launch date to explore IIL's virtual conference center, visit sponsor booths, view presentations, and download information.

To register, you'll need to [click here](#) and scroll down to the bottom of the home page. Then, start by entering your e-mail address followed by your contact information. You'll receive a registration confirmation e-mail. **Registration is free, so join the celebration!**

What's all the buzz about RISK?

Behram Kasad, MBA



Imagine your average project where you are faced with the choice of Path A, Path B and Path C each with its own pitfalls and gains when reviewed against your short, medium and long term needs?

The astute person will immediately start compiling a list of the pros and cons for each path. Ask questions about the environment and circumstances which merit taking the particular path and finally make a judgment, based on some criteria, about which one makes best sense. What this person is unconsciously doing is conducting a Risk Analysis to determine which one presents the best odds for his/her circumstance.

The funny thing is that we have been conducting Risk analysis for hundreds of years. Where it helped us to stay alive, I guess you could say that it was well thought out and the person was 'lucky'. Where it didn't, the person was "unlucky and unfortunate". The good news is that we are getting better at it, the bad news is that Risk management and analysis is becoming a science. No longer in the realm of '*taking a chance*', risk assessment spans every aspect of our daily lives - from the time we wake up, leave the comforts of our home to the time we get back. We are doing this all the time. Fact is that everything has a risk associated with it; the illusion is that we have placed a value on it that we are comfortable with. Very often we choose to ignore or don't see the true exposure.

Take our professional lives for instance – we identify a risk, assign a probability and an impact value based on some arbitrary or anecdotal assessment to determine our exposure. Using a variety of risk management tools we can then calculate the value associated with a specific risk, take steps to mitigate it and develop contingency plans that will help address it should the risk occur. Where risk has been overlooked or undermined, things have gone drastically wrong - the space shuttle disasters of 1986 and 2003, the I-35W bridge over the Mississippi collapse in 2007 the Deepwater Horizon oil spill of 2010 and most recently the double tragedies of the earthquake and tsunami to hit Japan's nuclear reactors are a few testaments to a "scenario" that risk planning considered but chose to overlook. They probably had a significant economic cost of mitigation associated with them, but we all know what cost overruns can do to a project. Understandably some things such as natural disasters are somewhat hard to protect against, but when lives are at stake should anything be overlooked?

Look at the world around you. Stock markets around the world hedge their bets on the price of commodities - oil, coffee, soy beans, orange juice, etc. going up or down and advising clients to buy or sell their shares. A process based entirely on "risk taking" (more like "risk passing", since the commodity brokers get their commissions regardless). Corporations are doing the same when they advertise new products and increase share price - will the market want it, what price point, what market, etc.

So what can we do about this and why? Just like the carpenter has his measuring tape and the bricklayer has his trowel, we as professionals are best placed to dissect our projects and identify the spectrum of certain and

uncertain risks that can occur, place them in an order of likelihood and identify a cost for each one. We have the means and the tools to do so.

But why do so? Well, for a start because we are professionals. Next, because, the PMBOK talks about it and, finally it makes us look good when we can turn around a certain risk and bring the project in on time through good mitigation and/or contingency planning. Besides, it is becoming the fastest growing aspect of our profession with good compensation, if you get my drift! Risk Management is no longer confined to statisticians but has now gone mainstream.

Whether we keep them written on Post-It notes, Excel spreadsheets or apply more formal risk management packages, those of us who manage projects need to consider not just the known risks, based on historical data, but also the unknown risks that could occur and make pronounced decisions not based on '*gut feel*' but ones that are based on sound qualitative and quantitative data. Risk identification may not always be accurate or precise due to the subjectivity associated with them but that does not mean that it should be overlooked or ignored. So that deciding between Paths A or B or C becomes a well defined process not just an impulse decision.



Boost your PMP Studies - Join PMP Exam Prep Internet Forums

By Cornelius Fichtner, PMP

One of the best sources of information you currently have at your disposal is the use of an internet forum. The opinions and information available on these forums can be extremely valuable and they often provide specific examples and personal experiences to help guide you in your quest for knowledge and instruction. [PMP Exam prep internet forums](#) are no exception.

You may be wondering why it would be beneficial for you to spend your precious study time reading materials on internet forums. This is because these forums can actually help you prepare for your exam. If you are having trouble understanding a specific project management concept, there is probably someone on these forums who can explain it in such a way that you can better understand it. Chances are that they ran into the same problem during the course of their own studies. This will save you time and frustration and you will understand the concept, instead of just memorizing it.

There are many ways that you can use these internet forums. The method you use will depend on the specific type of information you are looking for. This information may include asking specific questions, using a 'search and scan' technique for more detailed information, or soliciting advice on specific PMP Exam Prep topics. Many project managers (who are Project Management Professionals in their own right) are active participants in these types of forums. They are usually open to answering your specific questions, willing to provide you with information search tips, and also enjoy sharing their experiences from their own journeys to [PMP certification](#).

If you have a specific question that you want to ask concerning preparation for the exam, most online forums have a detailed and easy-to-follow process for you to submit your question. The beauty of this is that you will most likely receive answers to your question from many different project managers, who will offer a variety of perspectives and experiences. This will help you choose the best answer as it pertains to your specific question and/or situation.

On the other hand, if you are a self-starter and you prefer to do your own research, internet forums can also make this very easy. Almost all of these forums include a very strong search engine so that you can quickly 'search and scan' the forum content to find the information that you are looking for. And since you will be reviewing internet forums specific to PMP Exam Prep, your search will be that much more targeted.

Most importantly, you will find participants on these forums who have already completed the entire study process for the exam, and who have successfully passed the exam. One of the main reasons these PMPs spend their time on these forums is to help aspiring PMPs become successful so that they too can use these skills to give back to their local communities. You will also find expert advice on how to properly complete the PMP application process. This can be very tedious and time-consuming and is probably the most difficult part of the entire certification. Forum members will give advice on the best way to complete the application, sometimes even providing templates and tools to make this process as easy and as painless as possible.

You will also find advice on how to study for the PMP exam. There is a wealth of information on these forums about specific study tools such as PMP Exam Prep courses, books and guides, audio/visual aids, tips and tricks, and the all-important exam simulation practice questions. You will learn exactly what happens from the moment you walk into the exam room until you leave it from the point of view of someone who has actually been there. PMPs will also suggest the best time to take the exam, as well as letting you know the specific "Do's" and "Don'ts" of effective exam preparation.

As you can see, there are many benefits to participating in PMP Exam Prep internet forums that will help you prepare for the exam, take the exam and successfully pass the exam. But how can these forums help you after you successfully pass the exam and obtain your PMP certificate from the Project Management Institute (PMI)? Well, by participating in these forums during the exam preparation stage, you will have established and grown your project management network base, which will lead to many opportunities for both your personal and professional growth in the discipline of Project Management.

There are many internet forums available that provide all the information you need to get you on your way to becoming a PMP. Following are some recommended choices:

- <http://www.allpm.com>
- <http://pmp.groupsie.com>
- <http://groups.google.com> (search for “PMP Exam”)
- <http://www.pmpbest.com>
- <http://projectmanagement.ittoolbox.com>

I am certain it is obvious that by joining a PMP Exam Prep internet forum you will save both time and money, avoid frustration and counter-productive study habits, and be thoroughly prepared for successfully passing the PMP Exam. Then it will be your turn as a PMP and an internet forum participant to pass on your knowledge and experience to future generations of aspiring project managers.

About the author: Cornelius Fichtner, PMP is a noted PMP expert. He has helped over 16,000 students prepare for the [PMP Exam](#) with The Project Management PrepCast and offers one of the [Best PMP Exam Simulators](#) on the market.

Looking Ahead to 2012

Carol Scherrman, VP of Operations

The November 10, 2011 chapter meeting is our last chapter meeting for this year. As we have done the past couple of years, we have proactively canceled the December and January chapter meetings to accommodate everyone's hectic schedules during the holiday season and to eliminate the risk of having to cancel these meetings for inclement weather.

During our short winter break, continue to check our chapter website at www.pmieasterniowa.org for news and updates. Here are a few things to keep in mind for 2012.

2012 Board of Directors

The 2012 Board of Directors was confirmed at this year's Professional Development Day (PDD) on September 29, 2011. The new leaders are:

- President: Carol Scherrman
- Past President: Tammy Sweat
- VP of Communications & Publicity: Mark Bazzell
- VP of Education: Behram Kasad
- VP of Finance: Brian Thorn
- VP of Operations: Jacquie Haltmeyer
- VP of Outreach: Mary Phelan

Chapter Meetings in Coralville

Based on feedback received over the past couple of years from many chapter members, we will hold three chapter meetings in Coralville in 2012. Meetings will be held at a training site near the Coralville Marriott just off Interstate 80 in April, July, and October. Watch the chapter website and newsletter for details on these meetings as we get closer to those dates.

Registration/Payment for Chapter Meetings

As you know, our new website automated many of the registration features that the chapter formally performed on a manual basis. To continue our efforts to fully use all of the website features, and to implement additional controls around our accounting of chapter fees and collection of attendee numbers, we will move to an online payment system only for chapter meetings in 2012. This new policy will go into effect with the February 2012 meeting.

Director Positions Still Available

The chapter still has open director positions for 2012. Please consider taking on a volunteer role with your chapter. Being a chapter leader is a great way to enhance your leadership skills, network, and earn professional development units (PDUs). You can view a description of each open position on our website (www.pmieasterniowa.org) under Get Involved > Volunteer Openings.

DATES TO REMEMBER

NOVEMBER 2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

6 – Day Light Saving Time Ends
24 – Thanksgiving Day

DECEMBER 2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

21 – Hanukkah Begins
25 – Christmas

JANUARY 2012						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	28	29	30	31

1 – New Year's Day
16 – Martin Luther King Day

Chapter WHO's Who?

Role	Name
President	Tammy Sweat, MSPM, PMP®
VP of Communications and Publicity	Behram Kasad, MBA
VP of Education	Srikanth C Kamineni PMP®
VP of Finance	Brian Thorn, PMP®
VP of Operations	Carol Scherrman, PMP®
VP of Outreach	Suzanne Prymek, PMP®
Past President	Bhaskar Pulikal, MBA, CISA, PMP®
Director of Certifications	Denise Boeding, PMP®
Director of Individual Outreach	Mary Phelan, PMP®
Director of University Outreach	Bob Sanders, PMP®
Director of Logistics	Vacant
Director of Marketing	Jennifer James, PMP®
Director of Member Relations	Geri Stivers, PMP®
Director of Newsletter	Sathian Devarajan, MBA, PMP®
Director of Professional Development	Jacquie Haltmeyer, PMP®
Director of Programs	Travis Zweibohmer, MBA, PMP®
Director of Website and Technology	Mark Bazzell, MBA, PMP®