ORANGE COUNTY CHAPTER OF PMI

MILESTONES

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SEPTEMBER 2000, Volume 12, Number 8

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September 12th Meeting

PROJECT PARTNERING: A TEAM-BUILDING TOOL FOR PROJECT MANAGERS

By Dennis Eriksen

This overview of partnering will serve you well if, as a project manager, you are challenged to achieve results by bringing together the contributions of a mix of organizations.

Case studies will be reviewed to highlight projects that achieved extraordinary results by proactively building their teams through partnering methods. Like most high performance teams, these took pride in setting their goals high, pulling together and sharing in success!

The partnering process uses workshops to bring those having a stake in the project, the stakeholders, together in a neutral venue. At the workshops, the issues, opportunities and risks of the project are reviewed, goals are established (goals that when met will define success for all), and processes are designed to manage in an environment of cooperation, open communication, and rapid issue resolution.

Partnering was developed by a construction industry task force to fill a void in the project manager's "tool kit." Other business segments, having noted construction's successes, are beginning to apply project partnering. The U.S. Army Material Command and the Office of the General Council of the Navy are adapting and applying these methods to the defense industry. This acquisition reform initiative offers a new culture based on trust to the defense industry—yes, trust between the government and their contractors! DOD project managers have already begun to credit partnering for significant program breakthroughs.

New developments in partnering will be presented. Appropriately, after ten years of use and thousands of partnered projects, the construction industry has over the last year been in a period of reflection and review of the effectiveness of partnering. These reviews are unanimously creating a recommitment to and revitalization of partnering activities by organizations that include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Associated General Contractors of America, and the California Department of Transportation.

Partnering provides project managers with structured processes, "tools", to introduce this culture of cooperation to their organizations. And, partnering provides proactive "tools" for project managers to build project teams where the customer, prime contractor, consultants, subcontractors and suppliers can work shoulder-to-shoulder rather than nose-to-nose. Clearly, that helps projects to succeed and project managers to take satisfaction in having proactively led their teams to success.

Dennis Eriksen, *founded ATI Systems, a management consulting firm that provides facilitation services to aid project managers to bring stakeholder organizations together as effective project teams. His industry experience includes 30 years with Litton Industries, where he served as the Vice President & General Manager of Litton's Data Command Systems Division. While facilitating partnering workshops, Dennis has had the opportunity to observe the formulation of a large number of project teams. He actively contributes to improving the methods of partnering and his experiences are related in articles that he has authored for the Society of American Military Engineers, the American Institute of Architects, and the Project Management Institute. Dennis holds a BSc from UC Berkeley and a MSc from UCLA.*

Vendor Showcase: Galorath Inc.

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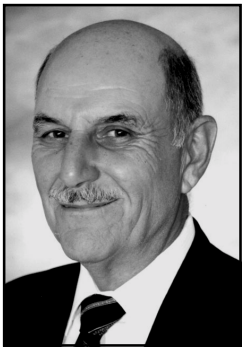

By any standard of measuring the age of a profession, modern project management (PM) is in its infancy. Last year, PMI celebrated its thirtieth anniversary. When measured in terms of human longevity that's only one and a half generations. In contrast, the well recognized professions—law, accounting, engineering and medicine—are several generations older.

All of these professions started with noble beginnings, driven by, among others, a mixture of human curiosity and the desire to improve the state of the human condition. In that light, we must ever be vigilant not to stultify new ideas whose intent is to improve our ability to better manage projects. Given this thesis and being in a pensive mood when I wrote this column, permit me to create a brief but hypothetically plausible story.

The field of metallurgy began with blacksmiths, who discovered by trial and error that one could change the properties of iron or copper by heating, quenching, forging and alloying it with other metals. Over centuries of time and concurrent with scientific discoveries in physics and chemistry, these phenomena were scientifically investigated and theories evolved in an attempt to explain such behavior. The natural outcome was that a group of dedicated people decided to codify and organize this information into a body of knowledge. I am sure this hypothetical history of metallurgy parallels that of the origins of those dedicated individuals, who formed PMI and produced the first edition of PMBOK© in 1989. Subsequent to that watershed event, we have experienced explosive growth in PM literature and training (textbooks, articles, courseware, etc.) which remains unabated to this day. We are now using the 1996 edition of PMBOK© and the 2000 Exposure is in the hands of all PMI members for review and critique. I've found no one who would deny that the '96 version is far better than the '89. And with the new version of PMBOK© nearing release, it can only enrich our knowledge of project management. This process of amendment is a pervasive virtue for any worthwhile document. Just look at the US Constitution as a good analogy!

As in every growing profession, new hypotheses and techniques are formulated and then applied. Some survive the test of time, because they work. Others are rejected or perhaps temporarily put aside, and still others are modified and reapplied. We have experienced similar dynamics in the PM profession. For instance, the application of a deliverable-oriented WBS seems ever popular and is growing in use in most industries using PM methods. The application of PERT and PERT/Cost in scheduling, as originally developed, has been modified insofar as the use of probabilistic elements are not very much in vogue, but has gained strength in risk management. However, networking tasks using PERT and CPM are the pervasive methodology for schedule planning. Performance measurement using C/SCSC has been modified into a far more useful and friendlier version called EVPMS. As I write this, I am thinking of the *Theory of Constraints*, the title of the book by Eli Goldratt.

Recently, TQC has gained a lot of attention if not popularity. Unfortunately, it has also conjured up in some circles—what I feel to be—unnecessary controversy. Some of the disciples of TQC have voiced the position that TQC should replace or radically alter much of what is shown in the PMBOK©. This kind of reaction is similar to the early advocates of Einstein's Theory of Relativity as to how it would replace Newton's Laws of Motion. Of course it didn't. When the irrational exuberance around Einstein's theory died down, the more sober view was that both theories were mutually compatible. On the other end of the spectrum, there are those who say that TQC is not more than the latest fad.

Before we proverbially "throw the baby out with the bath water" or treat TQC as if it were the replacement to the Ten Commandments, both views should be tempered. As I stated earlier, we must be vigilant not to stultify new ideas, nor should we be afraid to experiment. I am gratified that those who worked on the 2000 Exposure draft of the PMBOK© felt the need to include some TQC tools and techniques, especially as it pertains to Project Time Management.

Dave Jacob

CHAPTER ELECTION – 2001

ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS

In accordance with the current chapter constitution, elections are to be held each year and the newly elected officers to start their term beginning January 1st of the new year. A nominating committee has been appointed to seek out those members who have indicated a desire to hold office in the coming year and will submit their names to be voted on in the forthcoming election. The election will be held at the annual business meeting, which is currently scheduled for October.

The chairman of the nominating committee is Charles Lopinsky, Trustee. A tentative slate of candidates has been prepared listing those persons who have expressed a willingness to serve in certain positions. Here is the list:

President ..... ADRIENNE KEANE
Vice President–Programs ..... JUDY QUENZER
Vice President–Communications ..... TERRY WARNER
Vice President–Operations ..... CYNDI SNYDER
Vice President– Corporate Relations ..... KEN PAO
Vice President–Finance ..... JANICE PRESTON
Vice President–Membership ..... OPEN
Vice President–Professional Development ..... OPEN
Trustee ..... DAVE JACOBS

All eligible members are invited to submit their names as candidates for the open positions or as additional candidates for the positions where a name has already been listed. Interested persons may want to discuss their intentions with either Charles Lopinsky or Adrienne Keane.

Operating a chapter of the size to which the Orange County Chapter has grown, and continues to grow, requires more people than the above slate indicates. All of the positions on the Board require the help of an assistant to properly carry out the functions of each Vice President.

Additionally, there are other activities that must be carried out, in order to have proper functioning of the chapter, that are not considered to be in the portfolio of the designated Vice Presidents. Some are temporary, and some of them continue on a year round basis.

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Nov. 4	Risk and Integration Sessions	Elden Jones
Nov. 18	Quality Session and Practice Exam	Dave Blaine

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FUNNY BUT TRUE

The following story appeared in an e-mail. It has a frightening ring of truth to it.

If you think that some of the constraints on your project are odd . . .

The US standard railroad gauge (width between the two rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. That's an exceedingly odd number. Why was that gauge used? Because that's the way they built them in England, and the US railroads were built by English expatriates.

Why did the English build them like that? Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways, and that's the gauge they used. Why did "they" use that gauge then? Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they used for building wagons which used that wheel spacing.

Okay! Why did the wagons have that particular odd wheel spacing? Well, if they tried to use any other spacing, the wagon wheels would break on some of the old, long distance roads in England, because that's the spacing of the wheel ruts.

So who built those old rutted roads? The first, long distance roads in Europe, and England, were built by Imperial Rome for their Legions. The roads have been used ever since. And the ruts in the roads? Roman war chariots first formed the initial ruts, which everyone else had to match for fear of destroying their wagon wheels. Since the chariots were made for (or by) Imperial Rome, they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing.

The United States standard railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5 inches derives from the original specification for an Imperial Roman war chariot. Specifications and bureaucracies live forever. So the next time you are handed a specification and wonder what horse's ass came up with it, you may be exactly right, because the Imperial Roman war chariots were made just wide enough to accommodate the back ends of two war horses. Thus, we have the answer to the original question.

Now the twist to the story!

There's an interesting extension to the story about railroad gauges and horses' behinds. When we see a Space Shuttle sitting on its launch pad, there are two big booster rockets attached to the sides of the main fuel tank.

These are solid rocket boosters, or SRBs. The SRBs are made by Thiokol at their factory in Utah. The engineers who designed the SRBs might have preferred to make them a bit fatter, but the SRBs had to be shipped by train from the factory to the launch site. The railroad line from the factory had to run through a tunnel in the mountains. The SRBs had to fit through that tunnel. The tunnel is slightly wider than the railroad track, and the railroad track is about as wide as two horses' behinds.

So, the major design feature of what is arguably the world's most advanced transportation system was determined over two thousand years ago by the width of a horse's ass!

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PMP EXAM QUESTIONS

TRY YOUR KNOWLEDGE ON PMP EXAM QUESTIONS
(answers on page 7)

Here is a sample of some questions:

1. Most of the project's budget is spent during:
   a. Project plan development.
   b. Project plan execution.
   c. Overall change control.
   d. Project initiation.

2. In both the weak and strong matrix organizational structures, the primary condition leading to conflict is:
   a. Communication barriers
   b. Conflicting interests
   c. Need for consensus
   d. Ambiguous jurisdictions

3. In general, disagreements among stakeholders should be resolved in favor of the:
   a. Sponsor
   b. Senior or upper management
   c. Performing organization
   d. Customer

4. Milestones are *not*:
   a. Events of zero duration
   b. Significant events in the project life cycle
   c. Measures of achievement for performance, time and money
   d. Best utilized when denoting start and finish of all activities

SEVEN WAYS TO CREATE A HIGH PERFORMANCE TEAM

By Jon White

The evening's presentation was initiated by Jon asking the audience, "Who has ever been frustrated by leading a team?" and receiving a room full of positive responses.

Jon asked the audience to take a few minutes to list their personal Team Leader Frustrations. A summary list of the most prevalent audience responses follows:

- Inadequate and/or High Turn Over of Resources
- Inaccurate Schedules
- Inadequate Communications
- Inadequate Executive Support
- Resource Lack of Ownership, Motivation, Training
- Disorganized Project Meetings
- Resource Politics, Hidden Agendas
- Ineffective Team Leader
- Project Scope Creep

Jon mentioned that these responses are fairly representative of common project frustrations, and that his following presentation will show how High Performance Teams, using his key project guidelines, can avoid many of the frustrations mentioned.

Seven Ways to Create a High Performance Team

All of the above Team Leader Frustrations can be avoided or minimized, if the team leader and its members initiate the following guidelines together, while forming the team:

#1. Develop Project Team Ground Rules.
Written, agreed upon, Project Ground Rules define required project team actions and disciplines for smoother team operation. Publishing an agreed upon list of 'dos and don'ts' defines team expectations and will tend to improve performance, especially if peer pressure is applied.

#2. Assure Clear Project Purpose.
It is most important to define a clearly written project objective and scope for team members, as well as all stake holders. A written, well defined, agreed upon Project Object / Scope will avoid any misunderstanding.

#3. Develop Clear Roles and Responsibilities.
Each team member, including the sponsor, must have clearly defined, written team roles and responsibilities for an effective team operation

#4. Encourage Team Participation
Organize project meetings with an agenda that requires member participation. Increased team member participation will significantly improve team communication and project results.

#5. Allow Civilized Disagreement.
"Civilized" disagreement allows the membership to present different views or "vent" emotions. In this environment, the team membership can work toward the "buy in" of a common solution.

#6. Arrive at Consensus.
Team members should be encouraged to arrive at consensus or agreement, as long as the agreement does not violate ethical, moral or legal issues.

#7. Perform Team Self Assessments.
Projects can always improve. Periodically assess the team performance. Identify what the team does "good" and then postulate what can be done "better," and how. Implementing team "better" actions will result in continuous improvement of team performance.

Conclusions

Jon responded to several audience questions, as summarized below:

When dealing with member disagreement, talk about how to deal with the problem, not a particular person.

Never leave a meeting without agreement on a specific plan of action for an open issue.

Team interaction may require working together personally, rather than remotely, especially for resolution of a critical problem .

Due to the communal aspects, teams seem to gel together while partaking of a meal.

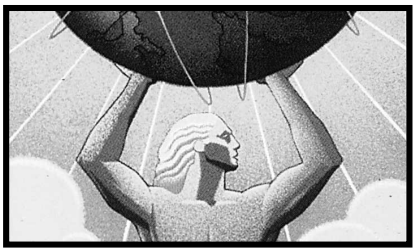
An example of a Highly Effective Team Model: Phil Jackson and the LA Lakers

To conclude the presentation a drawing was held for three, free, one hour sessions on Team Building led by Jon White & Associates.

Congratulations to Michael Moore, Greg Jacobsen (AIM), James Shepard (Teknor Apex).

Tom Herrera

SELF-IMPROVEMENT PROJECT.



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Program: PROJECT PARTNERING:
A TEAM-BUILDING TOOL
FOR PROJECT MANAGERS

Vendor Showcase: GALORATH INC.

Location: Wyndham Gardens Hotel
3350 Avenue of the Arts, Costa Mesa
Behind the O. C. Performing Arts Center

Time: 5:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Cost:

In Advance	Members	$30.00
	Non-Members	$35.00
At the Door		$40.00

Please register online at **http://www.pmi-oc.org**

Payment, by cash or check, may be made at the meeting. Checks should be made out to **PMI-OC.**

Make your reservation early to guarantee seating.
Please cancel your reservation if you are unable to attend.

DUE TO THE PMI ANNUAL SEMINARS & SYMPOSIUM BEING HELD 7-13 SEPTEMBER, THE SEPTMBER DINNER MEETING IS BEING HELD ON THE THIRD TUESDAY OF THIS MONTH.

Meeting location:
Wyndham Gardens Hotel
3350 Avenue of the Arts, Costa Mesa, 714-751-5100
(Take 405, San Diego Freeway, exit at Bristol St and go north, turn right onto Anton Blvd, left on Avenue of the Arts)

ANSWERS TO PMP EXAM QUESTIONS

1. b. **Project plan execution.**
It is during this phase that all the interfaces affecting the project must be coordinated and the product or service of the project is created. [Executing] PMBOK, pg.42 and 43

2. d. **Ambiguous jurisdictions**
Ambiguous jurisdictions exist when two or more parties have related responsibilities, but their work boundaries and role definitions are unclear. This situation is found frequently in weak and strong matrix organizations because of the "two-boss" syndrome.

3. d. **Customer**
Ultimately, it is the customer whose requirements must be satisfied. However, because the needs and expectations of the other stakeholders cannot be disregarded, finding appropriate resolutions to disagreements among stakeholders can be a major project management challenge.

4. d. **Best utilized when denoting start and finish of all activities**
Because milestones represent significant project events, a milestone for the start and finish of every activity would be excessive. [Planning] PMBOK, pg. 70

NOTICE

For the first time since its inception, twelve years ago, it is necessary for the Chapter to raise the price of our dinner meeting. Please note the new prices in the Meeting Announcement.

PMI-OC WEB SITE

Visit our web site at:
http://www.pmi-oc.org
to make your reservation for the dinner meeting and to stay informed of events that are important to members and to project management.

ORANGE COUNTY CHAPTER PMI™

PMI Orange County MILESTONES

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Mark your calendar for these ***can't miss*** PMI-OC dinner meeting topics :

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14 NOV	**Does Your Thinking Limit Your Success? By Jim Muller**
12 DEC	**Holiday Social**

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