



PMI NEWSLETTER

Project Management Institute / Chicagoland Chapter, Inc.
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FEBRUARY 2007

Discovering Your IS Project: *Managing for Success*

February 2007 Dinner Meeting *Eugene Shapiro, PMP, Director Programs*

DATE:
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14

SPEAKER:
Timothy Taylor, PMP
Sarah James Technical Consulting

LOCATION:
The Stonegate
2401 W. Higgins Rd.
Hoffman Estates, IL 60195
(847) 884-7000



When considering IS projects, how do you define Success?

- Our department has morphed from a profit center into a cost center!
 - My employees said they would rather have the Plague than use the new system
 - The greeting at our Help Desk is, "The system is down, please try again later."
- If you have heard compliments like these about your project, then this session is a must before you tackle your next.

Why do projects fail to meet user expectations? It's not because team members are incompetent, but because they are not asking the right questions so they can deliver the right solutions. This session will propose a new paradigm for discovering what a successful project means to your stakeholders and new tools for managing and controlling the project.

"Quality is first, always first!" You and your stakeholders deserve nothing less from your investment of time, resources, and money. This new paradigm, which sets out to ask the right questions and efficiently deliver the right answers, will:

- Guarantee a go-live strategy to validate that your system is working and you can conduct all critical business functions on day one;
- Make users' lives easier, not harder; and,
- Leave behind a system that is stable, delivers above-par performance, and can be maintained by your permanent staff.

About the Speaker

Capping a fourteen year career in the publishing industry both as an independent textbook project manager and publisher, Mr. Taylor has brought his keen observation skills to bear critically on a second, equally lengthy career as an Information Systems project manager, on multiple implementations and upgrades. Thus recognizing the difference between a successful, stable, and solidly performing implementation and the useless train wrecks of the all-too-common hasty and ill-planned project, he has dared to challenge assumptions about how to manage a successful Information Systems ERP project.

Successfully managing projects when project management was still more an art form than the scientific discipline formulated by PMI, his new paradigm is an amalgam of those insights and a leadership style that energizes a project team. Each stakeholder is both customer and supplier of some aspect of the project and its product, meaning ownership and acceptance is directly proportional to participation.

Mr. Taylor, himself also a veteran of the gritty world of steel fabrication, takes the concept of "product" in an IS context one step further. When viewed as a manufactured product, all be it an intellectual one, IS projects are subject to the same dynamic, rules, and economy of the assembly line, where each program, object, or batch job is a precision component of a larger machine, your new Information System.

Registration:

Register at www.pmi-chicagoland.org. Please note that all registrations must be pre-paid on-line and no walk-ins will be accepted the day of the event. Registration ends Sunday, February 11th at 11:59 PM.

Contact the Director of Programs at programs@pmi-chicagoland.org if you have any further questions or concerns regarding this event. For event registration matters please email the Director of Registration at registration@pmi-chicagoland.org

New Registration Features

We have modified our dinner meeting registration policy, extending the deadline from 7 PM to 12 Midnight, allowing a few more hours for attendees to register.

Additionally, a Waitlist feature has been added to the registration website for use when the event fills to capacity before the closing deadline.

Meeting agenda:

6:00Registration / Networking	7:45Raffle
6:30Announcements	8:00Presentation
6:45Dinner	9:00Close

2006-2007

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Message From the President

Tom Kroupa, PMP



The Chapter Leadership met all day Saturday, January 13, to continue efforts in improving Chapter operational maturity. One aspect of this was to review policies that Chapter Leadership must abide by in performing their responsibilities. In tandem to that, subsequent and supporting processes related to all Chapter Leadership positions were covered. This knowledge exchange took various forms depending on the position and experience level of the Chapter Leader: first heard, reiteration, and most importantly, what needs to be done to improve what is currently in place. Much of what occurred in this meeting has been covered in past Messages from me. Additionally, and what I have not mentioned before, is the business operations of the Chapter related to being a not for profit organization. The Chapter must file an Annual Report as a Not for Profit Corporation with the state of Illinois every September. Since the Chapter has revenues and expenses, it must also file yearly taxes. Within the PMI GOC (Global Operations Center) realm, the Chapter must also renew its Charter every year by February 1 - which I have just completed. The charter filing includes requests for Chapter information concerning its Leadership, PMI member file information usage, an end of the year financial health statement, confirmation that the Chapter conducts itself in accordance to its bylaws, and certification that it is operating within PMI GOC guidelines. Regardless of our current operational maturity level, the Chapter has both continuous legal and organizational responsibilities that must be met. Although much of this activity may be focused on my role, knowledge of this is important from an overall Leadership development perspective. I also believe it is important that membership awareness exists for the behind the scenes efforts, that are needed to just keep the Chapter in existence, while energy is also being focused on improvements in Chapter operational maturity.

With that said, I would like to segue into the nomination process for filling Chapter Leadership positions for the 2007-2008 term, which begins July 1, 2007. Past President Jeff Stewart walked through the process at length at the January Chapter meeting. He will continue to do so in future Chapter meetings. The Board will be slated in the coming months and be voted on in the June business meeting. Nominations for Directors will also be processed by June, with the difference being that the Director positions do not require a vote to be filled. Where they both are the same is that all Leadership positions are filled the same as any other volunteer position in the Chapter. Candidates must nominate themselves for a Leadership position in a similar manner as they would to volunteer for any other Chapter activity. Working with Jeff, Director of Volunteers, Joanne Guennewig, will be announcing an improved volunteer placement system in the very near future. The Chapter Leadership viewed this system with enthusiasm on Saturday. It was not only seen as an important step in improving Chapter operations, but also as a potential basis for achieving other Chapter goals. Be on the look out for Jeff and Joanne in the coming weeks!

Test Your Acronym IQ!

Q: WHAT DOES UAT STAND FOR?

- a. Universal Accounting Techniques
- b. Universal Acceptance Testing
- c. User Acceptance Techniques
- d. User Acceptance Testing

(answer on page 8)



In this issue

PM for a "Small Shop", **3**

PM Courses through DePaul, **6**

Does PM frighten you?
See our anti-fright tips, **8**

New PMP® Prep Class scheduled, **9**

Project Management: A Frightening Experience

Kenneth J. Peters, PMP, Chicagoland Reporter

It's a few minutes before your project plan presentation is to be made to the Board of Directors. Your palms are sweaty, your heart is racing, your mouth is suddenly dry, your left leg seems to be experiencing muscle tremors and your whole body begins to feel numb – believe it or not, you could be experiencing stage fright. "While it is most commonly associated with individuals in the performing arts, stage fright can also be associated with any performance activity including athletics and business related corporate presentations," said Michael I. Goode.

Mr. Goode is a professional trumpeter, actor, singer, and holder of a Masters Degree from the University Of Chicago in Psychoneuromusicology – a field he created in the process of conducting research and completing his work in the area of stage fright. As part of the University's Master of Liberal Arts Program "Salon Series", Mr. Goode recently provided a lecture on this subject to a very interested audience. As one of those held captive by his presentation, I found the material to be fascinating – and I was able to draw a number of connections to the project management environment.

In addition to the symptomatic illustrations touched on at the onset of this article, stage fright could potentially manifest itself in a number of project related endeavors. Conflicts with resources that are critical to project success and confronting those situations, risks that could potentially delay reaching milestones along the critical path and delivering unwelcome status information to project sponsors, and the overwhelming feeling that can often be tied to an initial blush of project scope, represent scenarios that could play into and feed anyone's stage fright in varying degrees.

While a great deal of the science associated with Mr. Goode's thesis is connected to neurotransmitting processes that are at the heart of all life, he also described in vivid clarity the connection to one's emotional status and how our backgrounds can be synergistically tied to nervous and physiological conditions that we can experience, which meet the criteria for stage fright. In essence he described that we all have a "real self" that is representative of us when we are in a harmonious state – doing what we love to do, wish to do, and doing so at the highest possible level. However, often times, as a result of a lifetime of emotional and psychological baggage, we create a "Person-B" that is influenced by the negative emotional memory and resentment that is connected with that baggage. When we operate in this condition, we drastically limit our body's abilities specific to neurotransmission, and stage fright can enter into our lives.

It strikes me that these kinds of physiological, emotional, and psychological conditions can be seen right from the start of our project management association. Preparing for and taking/passing the exam itself offered a few examples of this in my own experience, and whether it affects only a few areas (like the big meeting with the board of directors) or the entire spectrum of project management responsibilities, identifying and addressing any potential areas of stage fright may prove positive when delivering on any project plan. I personally have expanded my Risk Management Plan to focus on possible stage fright issues and impacts.

At the heart of what Mr. Goode describes as the process to reduce or completely curtail stage fright, is a commitment to personal psychological therapy that is designed to remove the baggage that hinders one's ability to realize and operate as one's "real self". He shared that at one time he was severely impaired by stage fright, and has seen this therapy work extremely well with himself, as well as with many others. "I didn't necessarily need to make an appointment to see a licensed professional and take psych therapy, but I did have to make a commitment where my personal therapy was involved," he said. This therapy involves the use of what Mr. Goode described as "anger letters" which are designed to serve as a means to channel bent up anger and personal baggage, and when coupled with a willing heart and brutal individual honesty, can be incredibly effective.

While Mr. Goode's first book (his Thesis) on this subject - "Stage Fright In Music Performance and its Relationship to the Unconscious" - is focused on describing per-

formance anxiety (more commonly known as stage fright) and the devastating effects it can have on individuals in psychological, physiological, and biochemical terms, his next book (soon to be published) entitled "Your True Self - How To Get Back The Kid In You" will delve into how we can organize and use emotions wisely; not repressing or suppressing them but making them true and useful reflections of ourselves – which is at the crux of "how" to deal with stage fright and potentially eliminate it completely, as Mr. Goode has.

One of my instructors, who helped me prepare for the complex world of project management, described the role of the Project Manager as being that of a Director in a Hollywood Film. The buck stops with you, it's your baby and while all responsibility may not lay with you, all accountability does. Operating in an environment that is conducive to your "real self" gives you much more opportunity to succeed and work through the countless barriers that just about any project can entail. I found it intriguing to learn that by removing my own internal barriers, I could easily deal with the exterior ones – and frankly, I do not believe that statement can be reversed, and still remain true.

While I'm not suggesting that stage fright is part of the project management landscape or that it is running rampant, for anyone who may experience any of the physical or emotional symptoms that have been touched on here, Mr. Goode's work may be of help. For more information on stage fright and the work done by Mr. Goode, feel free to visit his website at www.trumpetworkspress.com.

Test Your Acronym IQ! (from page 2)

Answer:

D) UAT – User Acceptance Testing

User Acceptance Testing is a process to obtain confirmation by a Subject Matter Expert (SME), preferably the owner or client of the object under test, through trial or review, that the modification or addition meets mutually agreed-upon requirements. In software development, UAT is one of the final stages of a project and often occurs before a client or customer accepts a new system. Users of the system perform these tests, which ideally developers derive from the client's contract or the user requirements specification.



Suggestions? Ideas?

The newsletter team would like this publication to reflect our exceptional membership. We invite you to submit items of interest such as awards, recognition for successful projects, stories of PM experiences, new PM initiatives, etc. Contact the newsletter director, Michelle Spencer, at newsletter@pmi-chicagoland.org.

