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Links

<http://www.lacrossepmi.org>
<http://www.pmi.org>

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Anita's Adages (A Message from the President)

Bonjour! Guten Tag! Just practicing up for my trip to Switzerland this summer... Yes, summer is closer than we think, which also means the 2007 – 2008 La Crosse PMI chapter season is wrapping up. What a great season! Many thanks go out to the volunteers who have not only made this happen but who have also helped ensure continuous improvement. I have had the honor and great experience of working with them and would like to recognize these individuals:

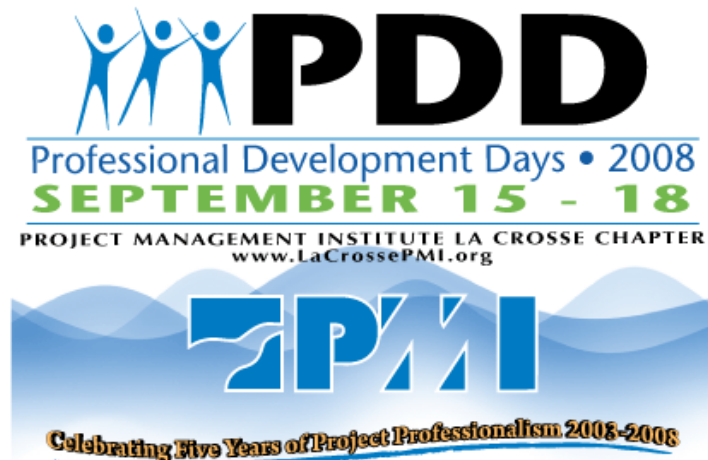
- Heather Kujak-Coon, vice president
- Wayne Gorski, director of events
- Brian Hinton, director of marketing
- Louise Donohue, director of membership
- Joan Barth, treasurer
- Ann Yates, secretary
- Pam Starcher, immediate past president
- Don Gabrielson, webmaster

Since this is only our third issue of the quarterly newsletter, I'd like to remind you again that this is your newsletter - we invite you to send us feedback, content ideas, and so forth. Simply use the "contact us" link on the chapter web site. We are grateful to William Arnold for the second article in his PMO series, which you will find in this issue.

Some exciting items I'd like to highlight:

First Annual Professional Development Days:

To help celebrate the chapter's five-year anniversary, we will be hosting our very first Professional Development Days (PDD) on September 15 - 18, 2008. It will be a four-day conference style event, also giving PMPs a convenient and cost effective means to earn many PDUs. Details are formulating quickly, and we will relay them to you as we receive them. Mark your calendars now!



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Anita's Adages (A Message from the President, continued)

Outreach Progress:

The outreach initiative is progressing very well, with our pilot being led by the Rochester committee. You will notice via the Calendar of Events that we are slowly but surely increasing activities and events hosted outside of La Crosse. I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank the members of the Rochester committee: Brian Hinton, Jim Strong, Candie McKay, Liz Daugherty, Ajay Singh, Peter Crowley, and Sherry Bennett. Participation on the Rochester committee qualifies as a PDU earning activity. If you are interested in learning how you can contribute, please contact Brian Hinton at directorofmarketing@lacrossepmi.org.

Chapter Representation at Region 2 Meeting:

Region 2 has approved funding to send two of our board members to the bi-annual meeting, which will be held May 1 - 3 in Saskatoon (Canada). We very much appreciate this opportunity, as the Region 2 meetings have proven very valuable in improving the services and benefits we provide both our members and general public in the La Crosse chapter area. Some of the agenda items for the Region 2 meeting include:

- Further discussions and updated information (including pilot status) regarding the global Strategic Alignment Initiative and Performance Management Framework (see previous issues of this newsletter for information)
- Break-out sessions providing best practices for presidents, outreach, professional development & programs, membership & communication, finance, and others
- Region 2 budgeting

The calendar of events is as current as possible, so don't forget to check it at <http://www.lacrossepmi.org/calendar.html> on a regular basis for updates.

Please feel free to contact me or the board at any time. You can do this via "Contact Us" on our web site.
Thank you
Anita Wood, MBA, PMP

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Upcoming Events

May 6th: **Chapter Monthly Meeting and Annual Business Review: La Crosse, WI**
Link: http://www.lacrossepmi.org/Invitations/2008_5_6_PMI_invitation.htm
Speaker: Andy Crowe
Topic: More on Alpha Project Managers

May 7th: **Chapter Monthly Meeting and Annual Business Review: Rochester, MN**
Link: http://www.lacrossepmi.org/Invitations/2008_5_6_PMI_invitation.htm
Speaker: Andy Crowe
Topic: Alpha Project Managers: What the Top 2% Know that You Don't

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PMI Announces New Scheduling Credential

The Project Management Institute will introduce a new scheduling credential at the PMI College of Scheduling 5th Annual Conference. The PMI College of Scheduling conference will be held in Chicago on May 4 – 7 at the Drake Hotel. The new scheduling credential will become available to PMI members, globally, toward the end of May 2008.

The new credential is called the PMI Scheduling Professional, or PMI-SP. PMI is offering a pilot program for this new credential. The pilot will be conducted between May 30th and July 31st 2008. The first 100 candidates to sit for the exam will receive 50% off the price of the exam and will be entered into one of the four regional drawings for a chance to win \$1,000. You can find a link to the handbook

<http://www.pmicos.org/PMI-SPHandbook0308.pdf>

For information on how to become a pilot participant contact certquestions@pmi.org.

The PMI College of Scheduling is the only worldwide organization dedicated solely to advancing the techniques, practice and profession of Project Scheduling. The College is working within PMI to build upon PMI's many years of Scheduling Proceedings, Body of Knowledge, and expertise in establishing practice standards for the Project Management profession. The College is involved in all aspects and applications of the vitally important function of Project Scheduling, and membership is open to all members of PMI.

For more information about PMI's College of Scheduling, go to: <http://www.pmicos.org/>



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La Crosse Chapter PMI

Newsletter

Spring 2008

New Members

These members have joined the chapter since the last newsletter. Welcome!

December

Brandon Dachel
Sandra Haydon

Luther Midelfort-Mayo Health, Eau Claire
IBM, Rochester

January

Michelle Giblin
Vincent Hoover
David Hughart
George Johnson
Kalyana Kolouju
Chris Rice

Watkins, West Salem
McNeilus Co., Dodge Center, Mn
PM Consult, Alma Center, Wi
Allen Memorial Hospital, Waterloo, Iowa
Trane, La Crosse
Trane, La Crosse

February

Garrison Lloyd
Lisa McLain-Sharp
Ajay Singh

IBM, Rochester
UW-L, La Crosse
Rochester

March

Nancy Brown
Corie Frasor
Carol Lofquist
Sheri Nichols
Amanda Schock
Brad Williams

Trane, La Crosse
La Crosse
HP Hood LLC, Rochester
Ashley Furniture
Arcadia, Wi
Onalaska

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New PMPs

Congratulations to our newest PMPs!

Timothy Ask
Lauren Baker
David Hughart
Scott Dahl

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Starting Up a PMO – A real world case study

By William Arnold, PMP – warnold@logisticshealth.com



William Arnold, PMP

In the last article, we looked at the LHI Landscape, what prompted the consideration of a PMO, and why a PMO was launched at LHI. In this article, we continue the journey by discussing organizational acceptance and the steps used at LHI to create a strong foundation on which to build the PMO.

Organizational Acceptance of more structured methods centered around Project Management/Program Development for some companies is difficult. Which is why I firmly believe Organizational Acceptance starts from the top down.

Resources in the trenches might find value in the introduction of more structure, but without engaging managers and Executives it would be difficult to drive the type of productive change necessary to turn an ad-hoc environment into a repeatable one. Predominate questions by decision makers that bubble to the top center around Return on Investment (ROI) and the increased turn-around time of services with the introduction of structure methods. These are valid points to consider and difficult to answer for some organizations.

There is an enormous amount of data available on the internet about the cost of failed projects. All of which can be used to seed a conversation on ROI, but unless your organization is mature enough to measure Project/Program costs this approach is not entirely tangible. The approach at LHI was to focus on the value of coordinated project efforts, improved employee morale, productivity, and empowerment. An excellent article called, “The Project Management Office” written by Rob O’Dell – EPM Solutions Director – was helpful in understanding ROI facts. When describing ROI, Rob states, “There seems to be a strong link between the length of time a PMO has been operating and project success rates: The longer the better. While 37 percent of those who have had a PMO for less than one year reported increased success rates, those with a PMO operating for more then four years reported a 65 percent success rate increase.” ROI is realized over time so think long term, not short term. And be in it for the long haul!

Process and structured methods must be right-sized for any organization when considering their effect on the turn-around time of services. Look at the organization and introduce a series of small process/methods with a clear plan for maturity over time. Through trial and error, an understanding will develop concerning what the organization can bear that will help to right-size any process. Remember, in a chaotic environment pushed by positive growth, the introduction of a small amount of structure will be refreshing for most and starts you on the path of acceptance.

Creating and properly communicating a well defined plan is key to gaining acceptance by the decision makers of an organization. Four areas considered important for our plan were 1) The definition of the PMO; 2) The use of strong Mission Statements and a Guiding Principle; 3) The PMO Charter; and 4) The PMO Steering Committee.

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Starting Up a PMO – A real world case study (Continued)

The definition of the PMO helps to shape and create a baseline against which all internal PMO efforts can be measured. Turning to industry for many great references, the following definition was created for LHI – A group within LHI responsible for: Supporting the successful completion of projects/programs; Keeping the Executive Team and LHI community informed; Building Project Management/Program Development professionalism in the LHI culture; Serving as *the* resource on Project Management/Program Development process; Maintaining the LHI Project/Program Portfolio.

The use of strong Mission Statements and a Guiding Principle creates the long term vision for the PMO and how it will support the Organization. The LHI PMO will 1) Enhance the Organization's ability to selectively deliver quality services on time and on budget through the successful application of Project Management and Program Development standards and methods; 2) Change our Organizational culture to facilitate the adoption of standards, processes, and tools; 3) Create a central repository of information that can be used to support our Organization's business strategies; and 4) Support the Organization in meeting Fiscal commitments by providing Program and Project oversight. The PMO is guided by the principle that our "success is weighed and measured by the success of the Organization in meeting its commitment to customers with confidence."

The PMO Charter is the operational document that outlines the definition, mission, and strategy for the PMO. Creating the charter is a time of collaboration with the decision makers. Their participation is essential for buy-in and gives them ownership. Areas covered by the LHI PMO Charter include: Executive Overview, Mission Statement, Role of the PMO, Role of the PMO Steering Committee, Critical Success Factors, and Benefits. Click to open a copy of the PMO Charter: http://www.lacrossepmi.org/pmo_charter_newsletter.pdf

The PMO Steering Committee is comprised of decision makers that provide oversight to all activities of the PMO. They "steer" the PMO and keep the PMO on the path of meeting the Organization's needs. Healthy Steering Committee interaction is a must, and shows that the decision makers are engaged. At LHI, a monthly meeting is scheduled with the Steering Committee to discuss 1) current activities of the PMO; 2) problems requiring resolution; 3) work queue and prioritization; 4) upcoming PMO events; and 5) any item requiring action.

These are but a few steps the LHI PMO has taken to begin to nurture Organizational Acceptance and to lay a strong foundation on which to operate. Organizational Acceptance starts with the decision makers of the Organization exuding enthusiasm over the practical application of more structured methods. Their acceptance should, then, cascade down into the functional areas of an organization much the same way champagne overflows from the topmost glass of a champagne fountain. In the next article, we will look at mentoring an organization, communication to the masses, leading by example, and some challenges faced to date.

Editor's note: This article, by William Arnold, is the second in a series of articles about the PMO subject. Look for more PMO articles in subsequent newsletters.

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Chapter News

The following Chapter members are candidates for the 2008-2009 Board of Directors and are competing for three open board positions: Joan Barth, Denise Thompson, Nancy Olson, and Bill Oakes

Board members are elected for two year terms. Returning Board Members include Heather Kujak-Coon, Wayne Gorski, Ann Yates, and Brian Hinton.

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Professional Development

PMPs desiring to keep their certification current must earn 60 Professional Development Units (PDUs) in a 3 year renewal cycle. In addition to the CCR Handbook (http://www.pmi.org/PDF/pdc_ccrhandbook.pdf), did you know the La Crosse Chapter has outlined the procedure for claiming PDUs?

PMPs submit their own hours in some cases and that can be accomplished using the procedure found at: http://www.lacrossepmi.org/Instructions_SubmittingPDUs.htm

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Vision Ops Training

As a reminder, the La Crosse, Wisconsin PMI Chapter is associated with VisionOps', an online testing tool. Local chapter members may utilize this online testing tool in preparation for the PMP® Certification exam. VisionOps offers over 2400 sample PMP Exam prep test questions online to simulate the 'real' PMP exam.

Sign up through the La Crosse chapter for your 45 day access to questions from the comfort of your home (or office). This testing tool may be just what you need to clear the final hurdle on the way to your PMP designation.

Contact Heather Kujak-Coon, vicepresident@lacrossepmi.org for more details.

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Sponsorship

What better way to spread the word about your company's project management products and services than to become a sponsor of the La Crosse Chapter PMI? We will display your company's logo and hyperlink, news article with hyperlink, or event listing with hyperlink on our website based on your sponsorship selection.

Check out our sponsorship form, <http://www.lacrossepmi.org/sponsorship.pdf> and contact directorofmarketing@lacrossepmi.org for more details.

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Benefits of La Crosse Chapter Membership

- Learn new project management techniques.
- Share work experiences via networking with your peers.
- Help advance the level of project management professionalism within your community.
- Free monthly PM Network magazine with project management articles.
- Free monthly Project Management Journal with white papers.
- Free monthly PMI Today newsletter with PMI headquarters offerings, changes, and events.
- Free copy of the Project Management Body of Knowledge, the basic reference of generally accepted project management knowledge and practices.
- Access to the PMI Web Knowledge and Wisdom Center.
- Save money on project management books and other learning materials and seminars
- Visit/tour area businesses.
- Find out about regional training events and seminars.
- Get a discount on the enjoyable monthly dinner meetings.
- Practice your project management vocabulary with other members.
- Support the financial ability for your chapter to exist.

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Job Opportunities

As a service to its membership, the La Crosse PMI Chapter posts job opportunities related to Project Management. Positions contained in this site are presented as a service and neither constitute nor imply endorsement or warranty as La Crosse PMI Chapter makes no attempt to verify job openings.

Current Job Postings: <http://www.lacrossepmi.org/jobs.html>

Also, known job opportunities can be submitted. To submit an opportunity, please use the instructions at: <http://www.lacrossepmi.org/Job%20Contact.html>

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