



## Contents:

(press control and click on the links to go to that part of the newsletter)

**Anita's Adages** (A Message from the President) 1

**Upcoming Events** 2

**Leadership Institute Meeting** 2

**New Members** 5

**Starting Up a PMO** 6

**Rochester Area Outreach** 7

**PMI News** 8

**Professional Development** 8

**Vision Ops Training** 8

**Sponsorship** 9

**Benefits of La Crosse Chapter Membership** 9

**Job Opportunities** 9

## Links

<http://www.lacrossepmi.org>

<http://www.pmi.org>

## Newsletter Editor:

Brian Hinton, PMP

[directorofmarketing@lacrossepmi.org](mailto:directorofmarketing@lacrossepmi.org)

## Anita's Adages (A Message from the President)

Greetings, La Crosse PMI chapter!

Welcome back from a happy holiday season! I hope you enjoyed and found value in the first issue of the chapter's newsletter. We will continue to publish this on a quarterly basis, with the goal of delivering valuable information to you that we no longer have time to cover during the monthly membership meetings. As I emphasized in issue 1, please consider this your own newsletter - you are invited to send us feedback, content ideas, and so forth. Simply use the "contact us" link on the web site. We are excited about the response we've received so far, and you'll notice that one of our members, William Arnold, is published in this issue. He addresses a popular topic – building a PMO.

Although it seems we just kicked off the season, we've already reached the mid-point. December was a bye month for our monthly membership meeting. However, the board met to discuss strategic planning (both for this season and leading into next season) and status. The primary agenda items were:

- Review member feedback from first half of season
- Discuss new services (e.g. Professional Development Days) to provide members
- Assess state of the budget
- Discuss outreach initiatives such as the Rochester committee pilot

The board strives to get information to you on a timely basis so that you can plan (like the good project managers you are!). 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

[Back to Contents](#)



## Upcoming Events

**January 15<sup>th</sup>: Speaker:** Rich Petro from Strategy & Management-Innovations, LLC  
**Topic:** Leadership  
**Location:** Freight House, La Crosse, WI

**January 10<sup>th</sup> – March 13<sup>th</sup>: PMP Study Group**  
**Location:** WTC, La Crosse, WI

If interested in attending please contact Louise Donohue at [directorofmembership@lacrossepmi.org](mailto:directorofmembership@lacrossepmi.org).

**February 11<sup>th</sup>: Speaker:** Laura Robinson  
**Topic:** Business Analysis Overview  
**Location:** Freight House, La Crosse, WI

**February 12<sup>th</sup> Seminar:** **Speaker:** Laura Robinson  
**Topic:** Business Analysis Overview  
**Location:** Stoney Creek Inn, Onalaska, WI

[Back to Contents](#)

## Leadership Institute Meeting, October 2007, Atlanta

By Anita Wood, MBA, PMP  
President, La Crosse PMI Chapter

PMI's Leadership Institute focuses on providing learning opportunities to enhance leadership skills. One channel PMI uses to offer these opportunities is via the Leadership Institute meetings that precede each Global Congress; these meetings "offer face-to-face opportunities to connect with and learn from fellow volunteer leaders."

The board of the La Crosse chapter has sent a representative to a Leadership Institute meeting over the last several years, each time bringing back ideas and contacts to help us improve our local services and offerings, as well as operational improvements. In October, I was fortunate enough to make my first trip to such a meeting, and I wish I had attended sooner! You just can't replace the amount of information sharing that takes place at such a huge and well organized event. The structure enabled and emphasized networking with peers, so I heard many great ideas and answers to the list of questions I brought with me. The highlights I took away from the event:

*"Region 2 Rocks!" (Page 3)*

*Chapters with Branches (Page 3)*

*Strategic Alignment Initiative and Performance Management Framework (Page 4)*

[Back to Contents](#)



## Leadership Institute Meeting, October 2007, Atlanta (Continued)

### *“Region 2 Rocks!”*

There is always a friendly competitive environment between regions, with plenty of fancy and fun trinkets to show everyone just how cool a region is. Region 2’s motto is “Region 2 Rocks!”. The La Crosse chapter belongs to region 2, which includes 21 chapters in ND, SD, NE, MN, IA, WI, IL, IN, North Saskatchewan and Manitoba. At the leadership meeting, a half day was dedicated to splitting us out into our regional teams so that we could collaborate at a regional level. By chance I sat next to our new region 2 mentor (effective 2008), Heather Charles, and I look forward to working with her; she will be actively relying on the new chapter representative role to help make region 2 rock even more. In the session, we prioritized the top priorities for Heather to address during her term. Her next step is to compile everyone’s feedback and communicate and implement the top three.

### *Chapters with Branches*

There is a great deal of discussion going on regarding the new component structure. The meeting offered several sessions focused on the guidelines, processes, regulations, and metrics surrounding chapters with branches structure. I also attended a session that presented two case studies where this structure was implemented. This new structure was initiated to help improve consistency across components as well as the outreach provided by chapters.

Essentially, there are three options available to form a new community: committee; branch; chapter. The committee has served well to “test” and see if there is enough interest and success to support the branch structure. This is what the La Crosse chapter is currently piloting, beginning with a Rochester committee. The goal in doing this is to increase the services available to the areas outside La Crosse. We already have a team of volunteers from Rochester putting together a business plan. Brian Hinton, director of marketing on the chapter board, is also an active member of that team.

Without going into all the detail, I can tell you that changing an existing structure follows nearly the same process as creating a new one. For example, in order to change from our current chapter structure to a chapter with branches, there is a long process to follow with GOC (Global Operations Center or PMI National), including submitting a business plan. There are also specific metrics being designed that the chapter (with branches) will have to satisfy on an on-going basis. Much of this is not yet finalized and ties into another new topic I will address in the next section: Performance Management Framework.

Some notes I took away from the Leadership Institute meeting, to give you a high level understanding of branches structure:

- A branch is located within the geographic bounds of the chapter
- To go this route requires approved change in chapter charter with PMI

(Continued on Page 4)

[Back to Contents](#)



## Leadership Institute Meeting, October 2007, Atlanta (Continued)

- The process is similar to forming a new chapter, including:
  - Submit business plan to GOC (PMI National) for approval
    - Demonstrate the value to members
    - Detail core services provided and number of each per year
    - Include financial plan (expected expenses and revenue)
  - Gating process
  - Voting at general members meeting (2/3 vote required, with ½ present)
  - Change in entity structure
- Bound by Performance Management Framework (PMF) that will be implemented in 2009
  - Specific criteria/expectations for chapters and branches to meet (e.g. core services provided)
  - Metrics used by GOC (PMI National)
  - If we proceed with branch structure, we need to plan for PMF
- A branch may NOT be perceived as an entity / organization separate from the chapter. The following must all remain at the chapter level
  - Branding (branch cannot create own logo)
  - Finances
  - Elections
- Things to consider and plan
  - Roles and responsibilities changes for operations and governance (e.g. branch leader that reports to board)
  - Management of finances at branch level

### ***Strategic Alignment Initiative and Performance Management Framework***

Another strong focus during the Leadership Institute meeting was the strategic plan and a new means to measure our performance against it: Performance Management Framework (PMF). The goal of the plan is to empower components (i.e. chapters) and help to drive the future of the project management profession. The PMF is intended to normalize member value across all components.

The PMF will provide metrics / standards at all levels of the organization, and a scorecard will be used to gauge core services and extended services provided by a component. The plan is to implement PMF in 2009, with a pilot occurring in 2008, so details are not finalized yet. Just a few examples of metrics that are available at this time, specific to chapters with branches:

- Retention rate of 80%
- Number of contact hours – 16 per year
- Complete strategic alignment documentation

(Continued on Page 5)

[Back to Contents](#)



## **Leadership Institute Meeting, October 2007, Atlanta (Continued)**

Although this initiative is still in the planning stages, GOC is providing much of the information and guidance necessary for us to begin incorporating PMF into our planning (process and procedures to support PMF, introduce infrastructure to support PMF, self assessment tools).

The two days I spent in Atlanta were information packed, and I believe I came back to La Crosse a better board member and a better representative of the members of the La Crosse chapter. We will continue to send one or two board members to these Leadership Institute meetings, in addition to the region 2 meetings.

Thank you  
Anita Wood, MBA, PMP  
President, La Crosse PMI Chapter

[Back to Contents](#)

## **New Members**

These members have joined the chapter since August. Welcome!

### **August**

Phyllis Schultz  
Nicole Smith

Herff Jones, Inc, Lewiston, Mn  
Mayo, Rochester

### **September**

Malinda Hebert

U of Wis – Eau Claire

### **October**

Joe Whetstone

Student

### **November**

Karen Richner

Student

[Back to Contents](#)



## Starting Up a PMO – A real world case study

By William Arnold, PMP – warnold@logisticshealth.com



William Arnold, PMP

Let me start by saying that it is an honor to be writing this article as we embark on a great journey at Logistics Health Incorporated (LHI) during this time of exploration and change.

Let me introduce myself. I graduated from UW-LaCrosse with a B.S. in Computer Science and a Minor in Mathematics. I worked at Firstlogic, Inc. for 11 years moving through the ranks from Software Engineer, Technical Leader, to Group Manager where I gained my PMP in December of 2004. Through the years, I witnessed Firstlogic grapple with change and struggle with the process maturity that would move it from an ad-hoc to a reputable development organization. I participated in and led many efforts to mature the development processes and document software tools experiencing both success and failure.

I started my career at LHI in August of 2006 as an Operations Manager. I was pleased to find there were many similarities between LHI and Firstlogic, despite the difference in corporate outputs (software products vs. health services). LHI develops a product in the form of a service and in an environment of rapid corporate growth, is facing the same process challenges with which Firstlogic struggled.

**LHI Landscape** – In order to gain insight of the benefit a Project Management Office (PMO) brings to LHI, we must look at the current state of the organization at a high level. LHI is the industry leader providing health services to Commercial and Government customers. Three service delivery methods exist in the form of Call Center, In-Clinic, and On-Site events. All operational areas support the services and the delivery methods. LHI fits the classic definition from the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) as a functional organization which presents certain challenges to the development/maintenance of service related Programs. (For our purposes, a Program is a business concept developed across operational areas requiring Project Management support.) Communication is an issue with any functional organization and, given the silo'd nature of functional areas, the weaknesses are typically expressed through timely dissemination of information, duplicate efforts, non-productive communication channels, and a reactive vs. proactive environment. Couple this with a void of Program Development/Project Management methods and the operational agility of an organization is reduced.

All companies experience a maturing of their capabilities as positive growth and success occur – LHI is no different. Given my software background, I think in terms of the Capability Maturity Model (CMM). This model is geared towards software organizations, but LHI, with respect to Program Development/Project Management efforts, is experiencing the same growth pattern operationally. The CMM Level 1 definition is “Processes are usually *ad hoc*. Success in these organizations depends on the competence and heroics of the people in the organization, and not on the use of proven processes. In spite of this environment, Maturity Level 1 organizations often produce products and services that work. However, they frequently exceed the budget and schedule of their projects-Wikipedia.”

(Continued on Page 7)

[Back to Contents](#)



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

The CMM Level 2 definition is “development successes are *repeatable*. The processes may not repeat for all the projects in the organization. The organization may use some basic project management to track cost and schedule. Process discipline helps ensure that existing practices are retained during times of stress. Project status and the delivery of services are visible to management at defined points (for example, at major milestones and at the completion of major tasks). Basic project management processes are planned and established to track cost, schedule, and functionality. The minimum process discipline is in place to repeat earlier successes on projects with similar applications and scope–Wikipedia.” LHI’s Program Development/Project Management efforts more closely match CMM Level 1.

**So what has changed and prompted the consideration of a PMO?** Good question – As mentioned earlier, LHI is an industry leader providing high quality health services catering to Government and Commercial customers. While the Government sector continues to be a main focus, the company in parallel started aggressively pursuing more Commercial opportunities. The influx of new business is exercising every operational area and exposing weaknesses in Program and Project efforts. In addition, through some coordinated Project Management exposure, value was found in the communication, focus, and planning aspects raising awareness and acceptance of more structured methods. Now the pertinent question becomes, “What is the effort to reach CMM Level 2?”

**Why a PMO?** The approach of the organization could have been to continue with the introduction on a small scale of Project Management methods, but the company chose to staff a Project Management Office. There are a few factors that play a part in this decision:

- 1) programs developed to support new business must play to LHI’s core competencies – introducing the concept of Program Development as a preface to any Project Management effort;
- 2) given the functional organization of the company, it is not difficult to imagine the creation of a functional area to manage Program Development and Project Management efforts;
- 3) changing a culture to facilitate the adoption of methods is not a small effort and benefits from dedicated resources; and
- 4) a PMO has marketing power – a perception in industry as a center of excellence and repository of best practice.

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

[Back to Contents](#)

### Rochester Area Outreach

The La Crosse Chapter is exploring an outreach effort to increase service to the Rochester area. A committee has been established in Rochester to facilitate the planning of this effort. Watch the chapter website and this newsletter for more details!

[Back to Contents](#)



## La Crosse Chapter PMI

Newsletter

Winter 2007-08

### PMI News

Exposure Draft Period Opens Soon for Four Key PMI Standards

In the final quarter of 2008, PMI is scheduled to release updated editions of these prominent standards:

- A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide)—Fourth Edition
- The Standard for Program Management—Second Edition
- The Standard for Portfolio Management—Second Edition
- Organizational Project Management Maturity Model (OPM3®)—Second Edition

Exposure drafts of these standards will be available for comment in mid-December. The comment period will remain open for 45 days from the date of posting. Please check PMI.org for details. Your review and input are desired and appreciated!

[Back to Contents](#)

### 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](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](http://www.lacrossepmi.org/Instructions_SubmittingPDUs.htm)

[Back to Contents](#)

### Vision Ops Training

The La Crosse, Wisconsin PMI Chapter is pleased to announce its association with VisionOps' 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](mailto:vicepresident@lacrossepmi.org) for more details.

[Back to Contents](#)



## 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](mailto:directorofmarketing@lacrossepmi.org) for more details.

[Back to Contents](#)

## 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.

[Back to Contents](#)

## 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>

[Back to Contents](#)