



Personal Lessons from Project Management Failures

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During the course of our professional careers, we look back fondly at

shared successes. However, we rarely appreciate the hard lessons learned from failures because it takes acknowledgement and brings disappointment. Here are a few lessons learned.

Actively participate. Effective project management will not happen by itself. Be the owner, and act like it with respect to funding, appearance and functionality.

Focus on planning. Do not undermine a properly staffed action by rushing to execution. Keep the plan alive and reflect any corrections along the way. The plan should set goals, milestones and be results-oriented.

Recognize and establish a Partnering relationship with all the stakeholders. Contractors, end-users and Program Office personnel, regardless of their career fields, are your execution team. If

they interact or have a stake in the deliverable, they will be committed to the project. Don't micro-manage contractors, but do not be hands-off—your regular involvement will ensure success.

Pay attention to the funds. Track them accurately and separately, regardless of the project stage and funding source. Design, execution, contingency, fees and management reserve need to be differentiated between “desirements” and “requirements.”

Understand the acquisition strategy. Get things to the contractor early; bilateral consent and openness in negotiations will pay dividends. The contractual instrument and the record must always be accurate and updated in a timely manner, especially in a “change” situation pertaining to scope increase/deletions, project cost increase and delays in execution.

Have a Communication Plan. Stay on message. Communicate your goals, end-results, and definition of acceptable performance clearly, consistently and early.

Open communication fosters trust, and you want your team to trust each other with good news and bad news. The project team will take your attitude toward the challenges ahead of them, so be realistically optimistic.

Seek and require reliable and up-to-date information constantly. Anticipate the future and use it to your advantage. Sometimes it is better to plow around obstacles rather than to waste time going through them. Resolve conflicts quickly and objectively.

Be Decisive. Understand the facts, consider various solutions and their consequences, ensure that your decisions are consistent with your objectives, and effectively communicate your decision.

Processes are managed and people are led, never the other way around. Take care of your people. Give them a clearly defined goal to enable the processes by removing barriers. Asking for their assistance or advice is a sign of strength, not weakness.

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Corrective Action Plan (CAP) Corner: Corrective Action Plan Scorecard

By: Thomas Bruder, Project Manager, OECM



Last month, I mentioned the twenty-one individual (seventeen collective) corrective measures established by the July 2008 Corrective Action Plan (CAP). Our FY2008 results were sent to the Office of Management and Budget and the Government Accountability Office. We made

significant progress toward improving contract and project management through the development of these seventeen specific, measurable metrics that focus on desired outcomes in FY2008.

We met or exceeded our FY2008 targets for fifteen of the seventeen metrics.

Specifically, we have met or exceeded the goals for seven of the nine quantitative metrics, established baselines for all five of the new focus areas highlighted in the CAP, and started the staffing study to develop the objectives for the staffing metrics.

Special thanks to all those who helped us prepare this initial report!

DOE Order 413.3A, Change 1, *Program and Project Management for the Acquisition of Capital Assets*

On November 17, 2008, the Deputy Secretary issued a page change to [DOE O 413.3A](#), making mandatory the use of DOE-STD-1189-2008, *Integration of Safety into the Design Process*, for Hazard Category 1, 2 and 3 nuclear facilities.

DOE Standard 1189 was developed to show how project management, engineering design and safety analyses interact to successfully implement the Deputy Secretary's expectations. This interaction is fundamental in the integration of safety throughout the DOE Acquisition Management System and key to the timely identification, evalua-

tion and adjudication of Safety-in-Design issues early in project life.

The Standard provides the Department's expectations for incorporating safety into the design process for new or major modifications to DOE Hazard Category 1, 2 and 3 nuclear facilities, and the handling of hazardous materials, both radiological and chemical, in a way that provides adequate protection for the public, workers and the environment. The Standard also incorporates the facility safety criteria of DOE O 420.1B, Facility Safety, as a key foundation for Safety-in-Design determinations.

Upcoming PMCDP Courses

January

- 7-9 Executive Communications (L4), Los Alamos
- 12-15 Integrating Safety into Project Management (L1), Oak Ridge
- 13-15 Executive Communications (L4), DC
- 13-March 6 (Blended Learning) Project Management Essentials (L1), Savannah River (onsite Feb 10-12)
- 26-29 Project Risk Analysis and Management (L2), DC
- 26-29 The Federal Budgeting Process in DOE (L2), Golden, CO
- 26-29 Integrating Safety into Project Management (L1), Brookhaven Site, NY
- 27-March 10 (Blended Learning) Advanced Concepts in Project Management (L2), Oak Ridge (onsite March 3-5)

February

- 2-6 Environmental Laws, Regulations, and NEPA (L2), Oak Ridge
- 2-6 Project Management Simulation (L2), Las Vegas
- 9-March 24 (Blended Learning) Advanced Concepts in Project Management (L2), Las Vegas (onsite March 17-19)
- 9-13 Program Management and Portfolio Analysis (L3), Los Alamos
- 10-11 Planning for PBMC (L1), Richland
- 10-12 Leadership and Supervision (L2), Cincinnati
- 24-26 Acquisition Strategy and Planning (L1), DC
- 24-26 Value Management (L2), Los Alamos

March

- 2-6 Cost and Schedule Estimation and Analysis (L2), Los Alamos
- 2-6 Project Management Simulation (L2), NETL

March (cont'd)

- 3-April 16 (Blended Learning) Project Management Systems and Practices (L1), DC
- 3-5 Contract Administration for Technical Reps (L1), Savannah River
- 3-5 Earned Value Management System (EVMS) (L1), New Orleans
- 9-12 Integrating Safety into Project Management (L1), Las Vegas
- 9-13 Cost and Schedule Estimation and Analysis (L2), Idaho Falls
- 9-11 Contract Administration for Technical Reps (L1), Albuquerque
- 12-13 Planning for PBMC (L1), Albuquerque
- 17-18 Project Alignment/Pre-Project Planning (L3), Chicago
- 17-19 Systems Engineering(L3), DC
- 24-26 Executive Communications (L4), Oak Ridge
- 24-27 Integrating Safety into Project Management (L1), DC

Please be aware that course dates and locations sometimes change.

For the most up-to-date course schedule, please visit: <http://www.colleagueconsulting.com/training.htm> and click on "Current Training Schedule"

Certified Federal Project Director (FPD) Corner

Needs Assessment

In order to assess the PMCDP curriculum and determine if the courses meet the professional needs of DOE employees, OECM will conduct a Needs Assessment. FPDs will be asked to complete a short questionnaire to assess the PMCDP curriculum based on their real-world

experience. The information that is gathered will be used to revamp the PMCDP curriculum and supplement the FY2010 Data Call. FPDs will receive this questionnaire via email in December 2008 or January 2009.

Thanks in advance for your input!



Hats off to the recently certified FPDs who've attained new or higher level certifications that help mark milestones in their careers!

Level 1

Robin L. Sweeney, YMP
William R. Tunnell, YMP

Level 2

Theodore R. Johnson, HQ
Michael P. Keane, HQ
Laura Ortiz Wilkerson, OR



Mark Your Calendar

*Please plan on attending the
2009 Project Management Workshop
Tuesday and Wednesday, March 31st and April 1st
At the
Mark Center Hilton Hotel
5000 Seminary Road
Alexandria, VA*

*This year's theme is
Change: The Only Constant*

More details to come next month!

Upcoming PMCDP Certification Review Board (CRB) Meetings

January 9, 2009—Forrestal Bldg.
February 13, 2009—Germantown
March 6, 2009—Forrestal Bldg.

Packages for CRB consideration must be submitted a minimum of five weeks prior to a scheduled meeting. Packages must contain a copy of your signed cover sheet and experience documentation. The CRB can not guarantee that packages submitted within the requisite timeframe will be considered at the next scheduled meeting.

Question of the Month:

Question: Is it mandatory that candidates for Level 3 and Level 4 certification be interviewed prior to being granted certification as those levels?

Answer: It is at the discretion of the CRB as to whether a candidate will be interviewed or not. Should the Board want to interview a candidate, the candidate is notified and will be given the date and time of the interview. The interview may be conducted via a conference call or in person.

Questions or Comments?

General questions and comments about the newsletter should be directed to:

PMCDP.Administration@hq.doe.gov. Or visit our website at <http://www.management.energy.gov/1036.htm>. For further information about the OECM PMCDP or Program Management Career Development Curriculum contact:

Peter O'Konski, Director, Office of Facilities Management and Professional Development: 202.586.4502

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