

Pathways to Project Success

MAY 2010

Improving Front End Planning: One of the Key Goals for Achieving Project Management Success within DOE

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Front-end planning is the most critical phase of a project and the one that often gets the least attention. The front-end planning process defines the project. It is the phase where the best project alternative is selected to meet the mission need in conjunction with the safety considerations. The decisions made in this phase constrain and support all actions downstream and often determine the ultimate success or failure of the project. Projects with adequate front-end planning do not always succeed, but those with inadequate front-end planning most often fail [Construction Industry Institute (CII), 1995]. Research through nearly two decades by the CII has confirmed that a project typically will not be better than its front-end planning process.

The initial front-end planning stage encompasses determination of the mission need

or business objective [Critical Decision-0 (CD-0)]; an evaluation of the project alternatives and risk considerations, selection of the acquisition strategy and best project alternative (CD-1) and a preliminary project execution plan.

The second stage of front-end planning consists of completion of preliminary design leading to CD-2, approval of performance baseline. Unfortunately, if the design is not of sufficient maturity, this will lead to increased risk for project scope creep and subsequent breaching of the performance baseline.

Experience has shown that the Project Definition Rating Index is best used as a tool to help project managers organize and monitor progress of the front-end planning effort. Federal Project Directors who do not spend time at the early planning stage to get a project right will probably spend a lot of time and resources later to fix it.

An appropriate front-end planning process would help DOE to identify the mission need for the project and aid in identification and evaluation of alternative approaches and assessment of the cost and risks of each. This should lead to a well-defined set of requirements and scope of work that form the basis for effective design. Front-end planning in the DOE project management system includes planning procedures from project conception through approval of the performance baseline (CD-2).

The Office of Engineering and Construction Management has developed two guides to assist Federal Project Directors in measuring progress toward achieving technology and project definition maturity during front-end planning prior to CD-2. DOE G 413.3-4, Technology Readiness Assessment, was issued in October 2009; and DOE G 413.3-12, Project Definition Rating Index, is in the DOE RevCom process now and is expected to be issued this year.

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Federal Project Director (FPD) Corner

The Certification Review Board (CRB or Board) conducted a special interview session on April 23, 2010, for three higher-level certification candidates; all three interviews were successful. As a result, the Board granted PMCDP certifications to the following individuals:

Dale E. Christenson (Level IV), NNSA – Oak Ridge, TN

Dwight R. Henderson (Level III), NNSA – GTN/HQ

Janet Appenzeller-Wing (Level III), EM – Las Vegas, NV

On April 30, 2010, the Board conducted a virtual meeting and granted PMCDP Level I certifications to the following individuals:

David M. Ross, CIO – Las Vegas, NV

Mark S. Bellis, EM – West Valley, NY

Welcome Aboard!

The PMCDP would like to introduce three new program points of contact (POCs) who recently joined our team. As you know, program POCs are integral in terms of fostering communication between the PMCDP and the many different field sites. These POCs are extremely helpful in terms of not only preparing candidates for the PMCDP certification process, but also in relaying important CRB certification and policy decisions. Our new POCs are:

Joe Boda, NE: 301-903-7123,
joseph.boda@nuclear.energy.gov

Loretta Fahy, EM: 301-903-9527,
loretta.fahy@em.doe.gov

Mike Reitz, NNSA: 202-586-0690,
michael.reitz@nnsa.doe.gov

Question of the Month



Question: I have been nominated by my respective program to apply for PMCDP certification. I am not certain what channels my certification package needs to go through to obtain certification, and also whom I should contact within my Program Secretarial Office (PSO) for questions regarding my responses

to the competencies. Is there a dedicated person within my PSO whom I should consult?

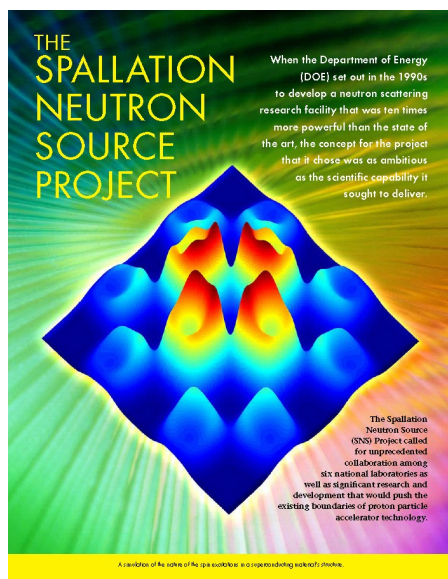
Answer: Yes. Each participating Program Office has a point of contact (POC) who is responsible for assisting you with PMCDP matters and providing guidance when developing your certification package. These

POCs work directly with PMCDP and serve as liaisons between your respective PSO and the PMCDP's Certification Review Board (CRB). For a list of our current POCs, please click the "PMCDP points of contact" link that appears on the home page of the PMCDP website listed below:

http://www.management.energy.gov/documents/PMCDP_Points_of_contact.pdf

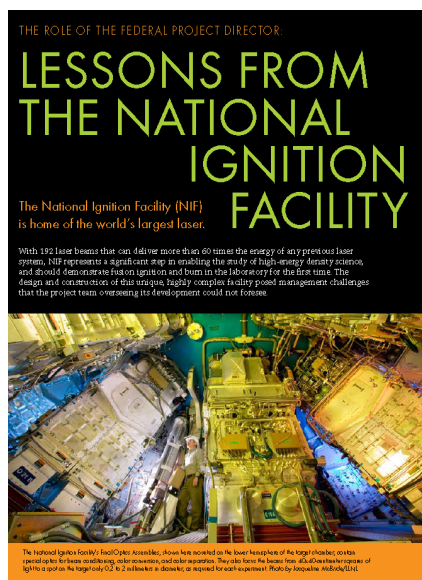
Lessons Learned Articles

As stated by the famous screenwriter Robert McKee, "Storytelling is the most powerful way to put ideas into the world today." We agree. The Department of Energy's project management community is rich with vibrant stories of success and failure; stories that are abundant with insight and experience, vehicles of knowledge sharing. In an effort to capture these stories, OECM has launched a series of lessons learned articles. Benchmarking federal best practices, the articles are in the same genre as the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's well-known *ASK Magazine*, and feature project stories in the Federal Project Director's (FPD) own words.



The first articles of the series feature the National Ignition Facility at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and the Spallation

Neutron Source at Oak Ridge National Laboratory.



Experience from the FPD's point of view the difficulties and triumphs of building the world's largest laser at the National Ignition Facility. Appreciate a project's unique solutions to project staffing and its ability to deliver the Spallation Neutron Source successfully under budget and ahead of schedule. Both articles are formatted for a quick and enjoyable read, with accentuating graphics and interesting project details.

For copies of the articles, or more information, please go to <http://management.energy.gov/1768.htm>. If you or your project team would like to tell your story, please contact Victoria Pratt at (202) 586-7358, Victoria.pratt@hq.doe.gov.

PMCDP Course Schedule

Start	End	Course	PDU's	Location	PMCDP Info	CHRIS Code/ Session	Registration Restrictions
May 2010							
5/3/10	5/5/10	Acquisition Strategy and Planning	21	Washington, DC	Level 1 Core Course	001027/0038	Intern Program Sponsored ¹
5/4/10	5/6/10	Project Execution and Operational Readiness Reviews	21	Las Vegas, NV (NSO)	Level 3 Elective	001039/0005	None
5/4/10	5/6/10	Contract Administration for Technical Representatives	21	Albuquerque, NM	Level 1 Core Course	000058/0159	None
5/4/10	5/7/10	Federal Budgeting Process in DOE	28	Richland, WA (Hammer)	Level 2 Elective	001034/0008	Richland Sponsored ²
5/11/10	5/13/10	Acquisition Strategy and Planning	21	Idaho Falls, ID	Level 1 Core Course	001027/0039	Idaho Sponsored ³
5/17/10	5/21/10	Acquisition Management for Technical Personnel	32	Richland, WA (Federal Building)	Level 1 Core Course	000145/0022	None
5/18/10	5/20/10	LEED for New Construction and Existing Buildings	18	Washington, DC	Level 1 Elective	001936/0001	None
5/18/10	5/20/10	Performance-Based Management Contracting	21	New Orleans, LA (SPRO)	Level 1 Core Course	001951/0004	None
5/25/10	5/27/10	Real Property Asset Management	21	Oak Ridge, TN	Level 2 Elective	001183/0016	None
June 2010							
6/7/10	6/11/10	Program Management and Portfolio Analysis	35	Las Vegas, NV (NSO)	Level 3 Core Course	001025/0018	None
6/8/10	6/10/10	Executive Communications	N/A	Idaho Falls, ID	Level 4 Core Course	001031/0020	None
6/8/10	6/10/10	Labor Management Relations	N/A	Aiken, SC (Savannah River)	Level 3 Elective	001038/0005	None
6/8/10	6/10/10	Strategic Planning	N/A	Washington, DC	Level 4 Elective	001043/0005	None
6/9/10	6/11/10	LEED for New Construction and Existing Buildings	18	Cincinnati, OH	Level 1 Elective	001936/0011	None
6/14/10	6/16/10	Performance-Based Management Contracting	21	Morgantown, WV (NETL)	Level 1 Core Course	001951/0006	None
6/14/10	6/18/10	Cost and Schedule Estimation	35	Richland, WA (Federal Building)	Level 2 Elective	001044/0008	Richland Sponsored ²
6/22/10	6/23/10	Effective Program and Project Communication	N/A	Albuquerque, NM	Level 2 Core Course	001940/0001	None
6/22/10	6/24/10	Acquisition Strategy and Planning	21	Las Vegas, NV (NSO)	Level 1 Core Course	001027/0040	None
6/23/10	8/13/10	Project Management Essentials	70	Albuquerque, NM	Level 1 Core Course	001022/0046	None
6/29/10	7/1/10	Contract Administration for Technical Representatives	21	Oak Ridge, TN	Level 1 Core Course	000058/0161	None

Start	End	Course	PDU's	Location	PMCDP Info	CHRIS Code/Session	Registration Restrictions
July 2010							
7/12/10	7/14/10	LEED for New Construction and Existing Buildings	18	Richland, WA (Federal Building)	Level 1 Elective	001936/0008	Richland Sponsored ²
7/12/10	7/15/10	Federal Budgeting Process in DOE	28	Las Vegas, NV (NSO)	Level 2 Elective	001034	None
7/13/10	7/15/10	Negotiation Strategies and Techniques	N/A	Albuquerque, NM	Level 3 Elective	001047/0006	None
7/13/10	7/16/10	Project Risk Analysis and Management	25	Washington, DC	Level 2 Core Course	001033/0027	None
7/20/10	7/22/10	Contract Administration for Technical Representatives	21	Washington, DC	Level 1 Core Course	001028/0005	None
7/20/10	7/22/10	Performance-Based Management Contracting	21	Aiken, SC (Savannah River)	Level 1 Core Course	001951/0002	None
7/20/10	7/23/10	Advanced Risk Management	25	Washington, DC	Level 3 Core Course	001042/0010	None

For the corresponding classes, registration is restricted to the designated organization unless prior arrangements are made with the following individuals:

¹Contact Johnny McChriston, 505-245-2134, johnny.mcchriston@hq.doe.gov

²Contact Semi Bird, 509-376-1665, semi_bird@rl.gov

³Contact Debbie Williams, 208-526-8771, williadb@id.doe.gov

Full PMCDP Course Schedule

For the full listing of FY2010 classes, visit the PMCDP website at http://www.management.energy.gov/project_management/1581.htm and click on the "course schedule" link that appears on the "Training" page.



Questions or Comments?

Please email general questions and comments about PMCDP to
PMCDP.Administration@hq.doe.gov,
or visit our website at

http://www.management.energy.gov/project_management/pm_certification.htm.

For specific information, please contact one of the following individuals:

- Victoria (Vicki) Barth - Course Schedule, Certification Review Board (CRB) information, Certification and Equivalency Guide (CEG): Victoria.Barth@hq.doe.gov
- Linda Ott - PMCDP Curriculum, Auditors and Technical Content Advisors:
Linda.Ott@hq.doe.gov
- Steven H. Rossi, P.E., PMP, LEED AP - PMCDP Newsletter, Continuing Education Units:
Steven.Rossi@hq.doe.gov
- Marylee Baker, Lead Professional Career Development Analyst:
Marylee.Baker@hq.doe.gov
- Peter J. O’Konski, P.E., CEM, PMP, LEED AP, Director, Office of Facilities Management and Professional Development: Peter.O'Konski@hq.doe.gov