PROJECT MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE - COLOMBO CHAPTER, SRI LANKA

C S L PMI

5 years @ National Service
www.pmicolombo.org

"Building professionalism in project Management"

Register at the PMI Colombo Chapter today (www.pmicolombo.org) to receive news and event alerts!

Dear Readers,

PMICC wishes to apologize to its valued members for the delay in the circulation of the newsletter since February 2010; we trust the member community still stands with us.

Although we have been silent outwardly, there has been a tremendous amount of work happening within the chapter to take Sri Lanka and Project Management to new levels. The untiring effort of the CEO and his board has paid dividends and we are now growing in leaps and bounds.

With the opening of the new premises of the PMICC in Rajagiriya, the chapter is now able to conduct PMP and CAPM lectures and assist the community at large with both project management courses and certified, skilled people to do them.

PMI CC have also undertaken a daunting task to conduct the SAARC Regional PM Conference 2010 in Colombo this year. This is a boost to both Sri Lanka and its economy as we are one of the very few countries that have been afforded this opportunity in recent times.

This is an opportunity for all professionals, in project management across all industry verticals to convene together and rub shoulders with some of the key members of the PMI. There will be several regional directors and knowledge gurus from within the SAARC region and the western countries at this event.
Mark your calendars and book your seats early at the SAARC PM Conference website (http://www.pmicolombo.org/saarc/) to avoid any disappointments.
There are several opportunities for volunteers and many more to accumulate your PDU's.
We hope to see you there to make this prestigious event a resounding success!

Thank you
The Editor

PMI Member Forums 2010:

The PMI member forums are a monthly event focusing on knowledge sharing, networking, team bonding and awareness building about the potential, the scope and the dire need of experienced and certified project managers in the post-war re-construction phase in Sri-Lanka.

These member forums are also an opportunity for those already certified to accumulate their PDU's and those with simply an interest to gain more insight to the value of a career in this field.

PMI CC is taking a keen interest in maintaining the frequency of these member forums and has pledged to provide at least 10 such forums each year.

The challenge encountered with the consistency of these forums is two-fold; one in identifying pertinent and experienced speakers and two, in finding sponsorships for each of these events.

PMI CC has hitherto depended on the organizations from whence the PMI CC volunteers come; however, the need for sponsorships is important and a humble request is hereby extended to all organizations to assist this cause.

Given below is a brief look into the member forums that PMI CC has held over the past few months:

March 2010

Effective Life of Software Quality Assurance Services to deliver software with right quality.
By: Chandana Ranasinghe (Director – Head of Test Engineering. Virtusa Corporation)

For Comments and feedback please contact editor@pmicolombo.org

April 2010

Phsychology, as a Positivie Science for Team Motivation.
Dr. H.R.S Keerthisinghe PhD, Phsychology. (President, Institute of Phsychology, Councelling, Phsychotherapy and affiliated professions. Lecturer, University of Kelaniya)

May 2010

A Project Manager must be a Good Public Speaker.
Sujith U. Bandulahewa. (Manager – Marketing – Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. Managing Director – Human Capital Solutions (Pvt) Ltd.)

June 2010

Three Dimensional view of HR Challenges in Project Management
**Mr. Yasantha De Silva Rajarathna. MSc in Management and HR(University of Worcester, England)
Assistant Director HR and Admin, Family Planning Association Sri Lankan**

Please mark your calendars for the JULY member forum

Proposed Topic *: BLUE OCEAN STRATEGY*

Speaker*: Mangala P.B. Yapa*

Location: *Salon Orchid; Galadari Hotel, Colombo*

Date and Time: *Wednesday, 21st July, 2010. 5PM.*

For reservations contact PMI CC on 011 4362638 or email info@pmicolombo.org

March 2010. – Chapter Recognition by LIM.

The Project Management Institute has recognized the PMI Colombo Chapters efforts to bring the PM knowledge and Practices during the past few years. The Sri Lankan Government SIG members are willing to assist in any way to take the PM practices across all Government Departments and Institutions.

At present PMI CC is closely working with President's office, **Director Assigned** *Ms Janaki Kurrupu* to conduct Special workshop as the initial education and brining the PM best Practices to all Government Institutions. Early last year the awareness to All Secretaries of Ministries of PM values the one day workshop was conducted by PMI Colombo at Taj Samudra in Collaboration with Ministry of Planning and Implementation, Project monitoring Unit under **Mrs Dhara Wijetilake**, who is the permanent Secretary. This workshop was conducted by PMI Colombo Chapter.

Also with this initiation of Planning and Implementation, the Project Monitoring Division conducted a Knowledge sharing session with all Project Directors, **PMI Chairman Mr Lalith De Silva**, conducted a session for the same workshop.

Continuation of the efforts of PMI Colombo Chapter,
PMI Global team is willing assist us in many ways with the discussion at the LIM (Leadership Institute Meeting) held in Melbourne, Australia March 20-2, when discussing with Chapter President/Director Hugo Wisidagama

PMI Direction

Regional conferences to focus on to more Chapter Activities with a view to offering better service and participation from the neighboring chapters
To bring this to fruition they have used Latin America as a Pilot region that is currently working well.

SARRC chapters Region 11

Mentor Mr Rammam was one of the key promoters to have regional conference and chose who will assist each Chapter and also share knowledge and Experts among Chapters for bringing more value to the Region.

The chapter plans to have the SARRC conference in Colombo end of this year and dates will be announced soon
PMI presence in the region especially PMI officer in all Indian Cities, and Increase the number of Officers in Singapore Service Centre too.

PMI Colombo Chapter Structure

The PMI CC structure has undergone a few changes to align it with the standard designations similar to other Chapters worldwide.
- **President,**
- **Past Chair also VP**
- **Secretary also VP,**
- **Treasurer also VP Finance**

All other Key positions are as VPs:
- **VP Marketing,**
- **VP Member services,**
- **VP Professional Development,**
- **VP Human Resources,**
- **Editor**
- **Webmaster**
- **Director Communications.**
- **Director Events,**
- **Director Special Projects (Government SIG).**

PMI CC is proud to announce the "PM SAARC Conference 2010" to be held in Colombo.

Please visit the website for details on registration

BEYOND 35HRS OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT EDUCATION AND PRACTICES

By Aruna kooragamage - PMP

PMP / CAPM preparation course is a mandatory requirement to sit for the PMP / CAPM credential exam. Once a person get through the PMP or CAPM exam, credential holders have to face a big challenge to maintain their credentials. It also exposure or opportunity for credential holders to extend their services to the society, share their knowledge with other professionals and continuous learning for self.

As we know any professional to maintain and improvement of their position, they need to focus on continuous education and knowledge upgrade. This is mandatory for any professional in any profession as the technology, concepts and being changed very fast. In order to corps up in the fast changing world focus on continuous knowledge upgrade it is mandatory.

While focusing on project management and related technical skills it is very, very important to have the continuous attention on developing the **soft skills**. Soft skills is a sociological term relating to a person's Emotional intelligence quotient, the cluster of personality traits, social graces, communication, language, personal habits, friendliness, and optimism that characterize relationships with other people. Soft skills complement hard skills **(part of a person's IQ**) and technical skills, which are the occupational requirements of a job and many other activities.

It has been suggested that in a number of professions soft skills may be more important over the long term than occupational skills. As an example, in the legal profession, where the ability to deal with people effectively and politely, more than their mere occupational skills, can determine the professional success of a lawyer.

Some of the soft skills which project manager should have are listed below.
- Participate in a team or team building
- Lead a team
- Conducting workshops
- Ability to handle cultural differences
- Teaching / Coaching skills
- Negotiation skills
- Motivate others
- Make decisions
- Solve problems
- Observe forms of etiquette
- Interact with others
- Maintain meaningless conversation (small talk)
- Maintain meaningful conversation (discussion/debate)
- Defuse arguments with timing, instructions and polite, concise language
- Feign interest and speak intelligently about any topic

Anybody who is interested to improve soft skills need understand them self deeply. Understanding our self is the most difficult activity sometimes. Certain negative behaviors of a person may prevent improving certain essential soft skills. Most of our behaviors are governed by attitudes. Most of us think attitudes are difficult to change. It is true that you cannot change your attitudes in most occasions but if you pay attention on beliefs which governs your attitudes are the secret of dealing with them. Beliefs can be defined in many ways. Sometimes beliefs is something accepted by the mind that something is true or real, often underpinned by an emotional or spiritual sense of certainty. Sometimes it may be due to religious faith. However you may need to find the root course for these believes if you need an impactful change in your attitudes.

Technical skills are concerned, it is important to develop the skills on project portfolio management (PPM). The fundamental objective of the PPM process is to determine the optimal mix and sequencing of proposed projects to best achieve the organization's overall goals, typically expressed in terms of hard economic measures, business strategy goals, or technical strategy goals, while honoring constraints imposed by management or external real world factors. Typical attributes of projects being analyzed in a PPM process include each project's total expected cost, consumption of scarce resources (human or otherwise) expected timeline and schedule of investment, expected nature, magnitude and timing of benefits to be realized, and relationship or inter-dependencies with other projects in the portfolio.

The key challenge to implementing an effective PPM process is typically securing the mandate to do so. Many organizations are culturally inured to an informal method of making project investment decisions. However this approach to making project investment decisions has led many organizations to unsatisfactory results. Therefore organizations must more methodical and transparent decision making process. That demand has in turn created a commercial marketplace for tools and systems which facilitate such a process.

Some commercial vendors of Project Portfolio Management (PPM) software emphasize their products' ability to treat projects as part of an overall investment portfolio.

PPM advocates see it as a shift away from one-off, ad hoc approaches to project investment decision making. Most PPM tools and methods attempt to establish a set of values, techniques and technologies that enable visibility, standardization, measurement and process improvement. PPM tools attempt to enable organizations to manage the continuous flow of projects from concept to completion. Treating a set of projects as a portfolio would be, in most cases, an improvement on the ad hoc, one-off analysis of individual project proposals.

Other areas which project management professional can focus on is voluntary work. is the practice of people working on behalf of others without being motivated by financial or material gain. Volunteering is generally considered an altruistic activity, intended to promote good or improve human quality of life. People also volunteer to gain skills without requiring an employer's financial investment.
Volunteering takes many forms and is performed by a wide range of people. Many volunteers are specifically trained in the areas they work in, such as medicine, education, or emergency rescue. Others volunteer on an as-needed basis, such as in response to a natural disaster.

In summary continuation of Professional practices in day to day work is the key success of any Profession.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The PMI Colombo Chapter has commenced training programs on PMP and CAPM examinations for the September 2010 and December 2010 examinations.

The Chapter is also available to assist with the registration procedures and any assistance you might require.

Please visit the website for details on lecture dates and times.

ERP SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION
By Samantha Matharaarachchi PMP MBCS

A case study on the implementation of an ERP project at a leading five star hotel in Sri Lanka

Introduction

This hotel is one of the leading five star hotels in Sri Lanka which managed by the Sri Lanka's premier conglomerate. The hotel was operating a legacy system for about 25 years to handle its back office functions. Since there were numerous drawbacks persisted in this system and with the expansion of hotel's operations, it was highly recommended to have new ERP system in place to provide better customer service. Therefore the top management of the hotel decided to implement world's number one ERP system – SAP. Financial (FI) and materials management (MM) modules were proposed to implement at the first phase of the project.

Challenges

The hotel is a largest city hotel in the country with over 500 rooms. The hotel's operation is totally relying on its IT systems (Property Management and back office systems) and any disruption for these systems would cause severe impact to the business. Therefore it was a crucial task that the project should not interfere with daily operations of the hotel.
The project must be strategically aligned to support the organizations business strategy.
Change management process was a major challenge which the project team had to tolerate. Changing of existing business processes (business process reengineering) and convincing the core users on benefits and value additions which would gain from the new system were a major effort.
The project team had to take a more pragmatic approach to resolving problems during the project.

Strategic objectives which envisaged from SAP implementation

- To have better control over hotel's operation through new ERP system
- Implement best practices in business processes
- Build a cutting-edge information platform to streamline business processes
- Enhance capabilities for financials, controlling, and materials management across the hotel
- Provide business intelligence capabilities, portals, and financial consolidation across the leisure group
- Create platform for outsourcing of common recurring functions
- Enable access to information to support strategic decision making
- Improve user productivity and reduce operating costs

Solutions

Each of these issues challenged the project team to complete the project on time and on budget.

The standard project management methodologies described in *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK Guide)* provided the project team with the necessary tools to navigate these challenges and eliminate their effect on final deliverables.

The *PMBOK Guide* outlines the processes for completing a project and describes the project management knowledge areas with which project teams should be familiar. Within each of these processes and knowledge areas are methodologies that help project teams to deliver high quality product on time and on budget.

Project Scope

The project proposal was to implement new ERP system to manage hotel's finance and accounting, inventory and procurement functions.

During the initiating process the project team defined the organization's objectives and why this project would be the most effective means of reaching those objectives. It also documented the project's preliminary scope, the time and budget available for the project, and the other resources necessary for the project's completion. The planning process followed the initiating process, during which the project team further defined the schedule and budget requirements. Within the planning process the team explored how the project would navigate the knowledge areas in addition to collecting information and creating a project schedule.

SAP seamlessly integrated with the hotel's front office system (IDS) and provided all the required functionality and management information to efficiently operate key business processes which includes all functions of finance, stores and logistics related operations.
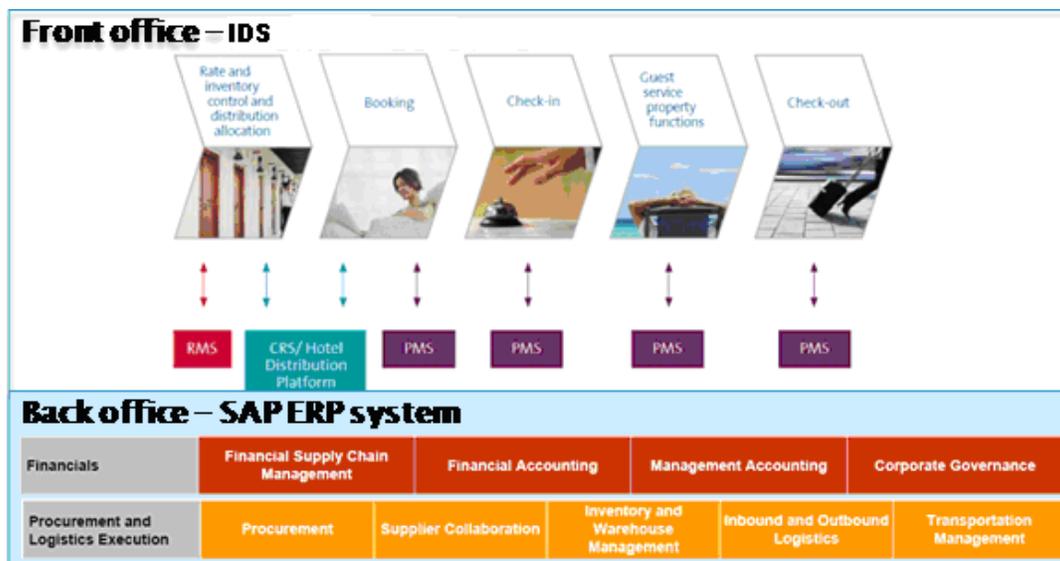
The ERP implementation methodology followed was SAP recommended '*ASAP*' ERP implementation methodology which consists of five phases.

- Project preparation
- Business blueprinting
- Project realization
- Final preparation
- Go Live and post go live support

Major business processes which are relevant to SAP finance and materials management modules were implemented at the hotel are described below.

- Finance and controlling (FICO)
  - General ledger accounting
  - Accounts payable

- o Accounts receivable
- o Fixed assets accounting
- o Bank reconciliation
- o Payment outsourcing
- o Master data management
- o Cost center and profit center accounting

- Materials Management (MM)
  - o Procurement
  - o Inventory management
  - o MRP
  - o Physical inventory
  - o Invoice verification
  - o Stock valuation
  - o Service order processing
  - o Master data management

Project Time Management

Allocated time for the project was 8 months. A time management method described in the *PMBOK Guide* is fast tracking, a schedule compression technique in which activities that are normally done in sequence are instead performed at the same time. Critical path of the project was identified using duration estimates with required dependencies and defined constrains and project milestones as inputs. Resource allocation was done based on the critical path. The project was managed to complete on time.

Project Communication Management

Since effective communication was a vital element to the success of the project, the project team established a formal communication management plan which promoted awareness and use of product and services throughout the project. Necessary information was effectively communicated to management as well as to key users of the company during the implementation time and escalation of issues communicated to steering committee at the right time.

Weekly meetings were conducted with the project team and the core team. Steering committee meetings were conducted monthly as planed and completed milestones, issues, escalations and budgetary mattes were discussed mainly at the steering committee meetings. The Project Manager prepared and distributed a project status report fortnightly, among all stakeholders.

Project Human Resource Management

Human resource management was a significant knowledge area which utilized through out the project. It was a huge task to change mind set of core users of the hotel to adopt the new system.

They had been using legacy system for several years and users were reluctant to accept the change. Project managers' reuse of knowledge (experience) associated with soft skills exploited to manage user expectations.

An advisory committee was formed to oversee and coordinate the change management activity.

Super users and functional managers, who had the organizational position to influence the behaviors of colleagues or subordinates in their respective units, were identified and targeted as potential change agents.

Training proceeded full-time for two weeks. Each user received an average of 3 to 5 days of training on process and system aspects. Training was hands-on, team-oriented, and continuously mentored.

It was oriented around employees' job roles such as how to process purchase orders, how to issue inventory from stores to kitchen, and how to post general ledger entries, rather than on how to use the SAP R/3 system.

Project Risk Management

The failure of this type of project is not too high as it's a project made for a worthy cause & there was full support from the top management of the hotel. However, each project has some probability to fail, which even this one is bound to. There are some factors upon which this project would fail, they are:
- Project scope is not defined clearly:

As the scope of the project is vital to know what exactly the project holds, ignoring it would result in the failure of the project.

- Insufficient support from senior management:
  Lack of willingness of the top management to provide the necessary resources & authority for the project implementation.

- Poor planning:
  Planning is the next vital thing in the project life cycle. Poor planning of this technology would surely lead to the failure of this project. As this is a new technology to be implemented, there needs to be a careful planning & execution of the steps of the project to make it a huge success. Project manager and the team should have ability to handle the unexpected crises & deviations from the project plan.

- Poor communication:
  There should be proper communication, consultation & active listening to all impacted parties.

Key Benefits

Key achievements of the project are listed as follows.

- ✓ Increased operational efficiency and productivity with harmonized business processes
- ✓ Achieved up to 50% efficiency increase through higher productivity using shared services
- ✓ Improved business insight by supporting strategic decision making process through superior access to information
- ✓ Improved customer service due to better credit control and understanding of customer needs
- ✓ Streamlined and integrated the complete procure-to-pay process, including requisitioning, purchase-order management and invoice verification
- ✓ Improved financial and managerial reporting
- ✓ Increased employee productivity with easy access to relevant information along end-to-end processes
- ✓ Decrease overall operating costs by converting manual processes into automated and streamlined operations processes
- ✓ It was able to implement SOX compliance business processes

Up Coming Calendar of Events from PMI CC

NEXT PMP EXAMs ARE SCHEDULED FOR

11TH SEPTEMBER, 2010

4TH DECEMBER, 2010

DON'T MISS OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER

"SAARC PM Regional Conference 2010" – and how YOU can make a difference

THIS IS YOUR SPACE

This space in the PMI CC monthly newsletter is for you to share your thoughts and ideas. Send us something you or your organization has done that you would like the PM community to know about.

Have you made a speech about Project Management? Do you have a new idea? How did you manage a particularly complex or large project through to completion?

If you have a tale to tell, We want to hear from you!

Please be kind enough to limit entries to this section to a maximum of 500 words; please include your full name and organization. Send all entries to editor@pmicolombo.org with subject titled 'THIS IS YOUR SPACE".

The Project Managers Joke Corner!

Types of Project Managers

If you get in my way, I'll kill you!
- ideal project manager

If you get in my way, you'll kill me!
- somewhat less than ideal project manager

If I get in my way, I'll kill you!
- somewhat misguided project manager

If I get in your way, I'll kill you!
- A tough project manager (eats glass, live cats, etc.)

If get kill in will way I you.
- dyslexic, functionally illiterate project manager

I am the way! Kill me if you can!
- messianic project manager

Get away, I'll kill us all!
- suicidal project manager

If you kill me, I'll get in your way.
- thoughtful but ineffective project manager

If I kill you, I'll get in your way.
- project manager who has trouble dealing with the obvious

If a you getta ina my way, I gonna breaka you arm.
- project manager from New York

I am quite confident that there is nothing in the way, so no one will get killed.
- project manager who is about to get in big trouble

If you kill me, so what? If you get in my way, who cares?
- weak, uninspired, lackluster project manager

If I kill me, you'll get your way.
- pragmatic project manager

Kill me, it's the only way.
- every project manager to date