

## **'Benefits of having PMP Credential' a scenario based hypothesis**

*The scenarios are worked out with the following assumptions;*

- 1) *The PM is handling a project of this nature(size, complexity, distribution) for the first time*
- 2) *The project is critical*
- 3) *No special training on professional project management is provided to the project manager*
- 4) *The organization do not have documented project guidelines for the project manager to refer to*

### **Scenario 1 – project initiation**

You are selected as the project manager for a prestigious project. It is your dream job, and you have never handled a project of this size and nature. You are chosen to manage this project, because you have a successful track record as a project manager, which were smaller than this and the management believes that you can handle this. You want to be successful at any cost and at the same time, do not know where to start, due to the geographical spread of the team and the large number of project stakeholders, it seems very complex. There are multiple ways to execute the same project. Which one to choose? Whom all should I consult? What should be the team hierarchy? These kind of questions plagues you and you are not confident?

If you are a non PMP, the chances for failure in the initial phases itself is very high. If the organization do not have a documented process / guideline for managing such projects do not exist (and that is the case, when the projects are first of it's kind in the organization), you will be in a most un-enviable position. The chances of you projecting yourself as in adequate or in experienced is very high. Can you afford to take such a big risk?. Once the credibility is lost at this stage, it is very difficult to recover. PMP credential will give you enough knowledge on the tasks (best practices from industry), to be performed during the project starting (project initiation) and they are;

- Conduct Project Selection Methods
- Define Scope
- Document Project Risks, Assumptions, and Constraints
- Identify and Perform Stakeholder Analysis

- Develop Project Charter
- Obtain Project Charter Approval

## **Scenario-2 - project planning**

You are planning for the project. You came out with a good schedule which is done to the best of your ability. With this schedule you go to meet the project sponsor. During the discussion the project sponsor asked for details such as;

- What are the major tasks on the critical path?
- What are the major risks and how you are going to manage them?
- What is the planned tracking mechanism of cost, scope, schedule?
- What are the billing milestones
- Month wise resource requirement

All you have is a schedule. You feel miserable.

A PMP is equipped with enough knowledge to get these right and knows upfront that the following tasks are required to be performed during the project planning stage.

## **Planning the Project**

### Tasks

- Define and Record Requirements, Constraints and Assumptions
- Identify Project Team and Define Roles and Responsibilities
- Create the WBS
- Develop Change Management Plan
- Identify Risks and Define Risk Strategies
- Obtain Plan Approval

- Conduct Kick-off Meeting

this not only helps to do the project plans professionally but provides enough knowledge to provide guidance and suggestions to senior management on critical project planning aspects.

### **Scenario – 3 – project execution**

You are in thick of project execution. In one of the team meetings you realized that, the team is doing certain activities, which are not in the project schedule and at the same time some other critical activities are not performed. When you asked them, why this is so? the answer was ' the divisional manager asked for it'. Divisional manager is your boss's boss. You did not know how to handle the situation. This really upsets you. How to tackle this scenario? Ultimately towards the end of the project, all the stakeholders of the project should be happy. How to achieve this?

The pressure mounts on you. As a project manager, you are accountable and if you do not have control over the project activities, how are you going to achieve it..... You already started feeling that, this project is going to be a failure.....

If you are not a PMP, its quite likely that, you will end up straining your relationship with your own team. But a trained project manager will know exactly what need to be done. PMP credential Armour you with knowledge on;

### **Executing the Project**

- Execute Tasks Defined in Project Plan
- Ensure Common Understanding and Set Expectations
- Implement the Procurement of Project Resources
- Manage Resource Allocation
- Implement Quality Management Plan
- Implement Approved Changes

- Implement Approved Actions and Workarounds
- Improve Team Performance

#### **Scenario-4 – monitoring and control**

Of late you and the team started to think that the project review meetings are a waste of time. Very often it turns out to be a stock taking meeting, with a very ad hoc focus on the issues and concerns. The decisions are very short sighted. If you had the foresight and knowledge about what is required you would have planned for it and unfortunately that is not the case. Due to all these, you are not very confident on the current project status, the real issues and concerns and whether the speed of execution is sufficient to meet the deadline. Everybody is busy executing the project and work very hard, but you, the project manager is under tremendous pressure and is not very sure.....

If you are a PMP, you will have sufficient knowledge on

#### **Monitoring and Controlling**

- Measure Project Performance
- Verify and Manage Changes to the Project
- Ensure Project Deliverables Conform to Quality Standards
- Monitor all Risks

This knowledge will help you do your job better.

#### **Scenario – 5 - Project close out**

The delivered the product of the project. Customer is happy and has given the acceptance letter. The team celebrates. Every body thinks that the project is over. After five days, the project sponsor forwards you a supplier complaint regarding the delay in his final payment. The sponsor is very upset about it, because this incident is going to hit the supplier satisfaction score negatively. You have put in all the hard work to make the delivery on time, the team and

the customer is happy....but at the last moment, to your utmost surprise this happens. You feel terrible.....

If you are a PMP, you will be aware that, during the project closing phase, you need to take care of;

### **Closing the Project**

- Obtain Final Acceptance for the Project
- Obtain Financial, Legal, and Administrative Closure
- Release Project Resources
- Identify, Document and Communicate Lessons Learned
- Create and Distribute Final Project Report
- Archive and Retain Project Records
- Measure Customer Satisfaction

and this knowledge will help you to be more proactive, which is the essence of successful project management.

### **Scenario – 5 - professional responsibility**

Your company is subcontracting a part of the work, related to your project. One of the potential sub contractors is your friend's friend. One day, he calls you for a party and offers you a small packet containing a gift. Your company policies do not allow you to take any gift of value more than \$100, from the subcontractors of the company. In this case, he is only a potential sub contractor and the value of the gift is not known, at the time of receipt of the gift. You are in a dilemma. What is the right action?

A PMP will definitely know, how to handle such situations professionally and ethically. The PMP examination focuses on the professional responsibility of project managers.

Written by [Abrachan Pudussery](#) PMP © 2005 [PMRI](#)

These are the reasons why PMP credential is widely acclaimed world wide. Project management is becoming more and more complex due to;

- 1) Distributed developmental work
- 2) Cultural issues
- 3) Time zone issues
- 4) Legal issues
- 5) Copy rights
- 6) Environmental issues
- 7) Pressure to reduce cycle time

All these calls for expert project managers. A search in <http://www.monster.com> gives me more than 150 opportunities for project managers, where PMP credential is specifically mentioned as a criteria for selection. You are better with PMP, than without it.

#### **About the author of this article**

*Abrachan is a coach, practitioner and student of software engineering, project management and quality management. He has around two decades of experience in software development, quality management and project management. He started his career as a computer programmer and subsequently played the roles of systems analyst, senior consultant, project manager, senior project manager, head – QA, manager – Process Engineering and profit center head. He worked for organizations such as [HCL](#), [FEC Singapore](#), [OTE Muscat](#), [Think Business Networks](#). At present he works with [Novell Software Development \(I\) Private Limited, Bangalore, India](#), leading their software quality assurance efforts and the project management of '[Pragati](#)' software process engineering and project management product development. He co-authored and conducted a two hour workshop on iterative software development at the [SPM-ICON, 2004](#) international conference on project management, which was well appreciated. He presented the 'pragati' project management tool, in the [Bangalore linux conference - 2004](#) which was subsequently presented at [Brainshare USA](#). He is an*

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*advisor to the [Project Management Research Institute](#) for their research and development activities in project management and quality management.*

*He is a visiting faculty of PMI, Bangalore for their project management trainings ([PMP](#)) and has conducted PMP preparatory programs both within India and abroad.*

He can be contacted by email: [abrachan \(at\) gmail \(dot\) com](mailto:abrachan@gmail.com)