

PROJECT MAINE

A Newsletter of the **Maine Chapter, Project Management Institute**

OCTOBER 2003

www.pmimaine.org

207-766-5511

Missing the boat on projects

Hannaford PMO manager to explore issue for PMI Oct. 16

Many companies that routinely do projects, small and large, are missing an important opportunity for improving their processes.

That issue will be explored in a PMI Maine program Oct. 16 by Steve Odden, PMP, who manages the Project Management Office for Hannaford Brothers, the large New England grocery retailer based in Scarborough. Odden's topic will be "Strengthening Corporate Project Management Competency".

Many companies that are not focused on Project Management repetitively execute small initiatives that can be thought of, technically, as projects, but use traditional management methods to conduct them. Then, periodically, they handle large, multifaceted projects the same way.

Sodden will trace approaches such companies can adopt that will improve overall project execution to that of a high-performance model, moving team members to a significant level of competency around project work. All the disciplines of Project Management can be brought into play when the organization identifies the activity's project characteristics.

Training programs and Project Management consulting functions within companies should look for opportunities where Project Management processes can be applied – not just in the project context, Sodden notes, but throughout the organization.

The Oct. 16 program will open at 5:30 p.m. at the Hannaford Brothers headquarters on Pleasant Hill Road in Scarborough. Detailed directions can be found at pmimaine.org.

After networking, an inexpensive buffet and a brief chapter meeting, the presentation will begin at 6:30, and open to questions 45 minutes later. The meeting will end by 8:30 p.m. Advance registration is encouraged at pmimaine.org.

The regular meeting date this Fall for PMI Maine has been switched to THURSDAY night from Wednesdays. The meetings will be Oct. 16, Nov. 20 and Dec. 18.

Software projects are different . . . So is the estimating

Talk about bringing the point home! John Amacker, PMI Maine's September speaker, started by asking members of the audience to estimate the amount of "coin" money each had in pocket or purse.

Then he asked for a second estimate, allowing more time for the repeat guess. Almost everyone refined the estimate on the second try. Yet, Amacker said, 28 percent of the

people in the general population will stand by their first estimates "come hell or high water". Psychologists think people just believe in some natural accuracy of a first guess.

Speaking on the topic "Software Cost Estimation for the Working Project Manager", used the example to compare heuristic and parametric estimating.

Heuristic is the rule of thumb: If the last project kept two people busy for one month, it looks as if this time we can keep three people busy for four months.

Parametric uses known project size to calibrate effort, schedule and defect levels.

He highlighted the following characteristics of software development projects:

- Many IS contractors bid on such projects without any knowledge of the project size.

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Software cost estimating demystified

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- They are not like construction projects with built-in economies of scale as the project gets larger. Software projects have built-in diseconomies of scale – they get more difficult with size and increasing numbers of people who have to communicate.
- Their budgets do not follow the normal project curve. Over-runs are not countered by under-runs.
- For budget control reasons, there is a move away from large, integrated development projects to smaller, independent-but-related design/build projects.
- UML, extreme programming and an array of tools are being adopted for people skill estimating and standardization.

The chapter thanks Annette Cardullo of Sweetser, Inc. for an outstanding meeting.

-- Steve MacIsaac

Project Standard volunteers sought

PMI is looking for PMI members to participate on the team that is developing the Practice Standard for Scheduling, a comprehensive set of guidelines, processes and templates recognized as industry-wide best projects.

The scheduling standard team, led by Douglas Clark, CEO of Metier, Ltd., is actively looking for PMI members interested in pioneering standardization for accurate and effective project scheduling.

Please contact Kristin Wright at 610-356-4600 x1143 or Kristin.Wright@pmi.org.

PMI Maine Meetings 2003

*Meetings are at Wright Express,
South Portland,
unless otherwise specified.*

October 16

Corporate Competency of PM

Host: Steve Odden

November 20

Building Project Requirements

Mindjet Software Demo

Host: Jim Stevens

December 18

2002 Project of the Year

Presenters: The Co-Winners

Host: Jim Milliken

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