

PROJECT MAINE

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

NOVEMBER 2003

www.pmimaine.org

207-766-5511

Road map to better projects

Business mapping to get tryout at PMI Maine session

Object: Reduce project failures.

Method: Business mapping.

A hands-on tryout of a versatile project planning and tracking methodology will be the program at PMI Maine's meeting Thursday, Nov. 13, at Wright Express in South Portland.

Matt O'Brien of Mindjet LLC will engage attendees in management of a mock project using a technique called "business mapping" for developing project requirements in a way that reduces project failures.

"Developing Project Requirements Using Business Mapping" is based on O'Brien's convictions that most project failures can be traced to inefficiencies in defining, developing and communicating project requirements.

The interactive presentation will include creating a mock project and developing project requirements using the concept. O'Brien will compare business mapping to several other requirements-gathering tools, and will discuss how this single methodology can be used for many different functions in project management.

He will demonstrate uses of business mapping to brainstorm, develop and map project requirements. One document can be used to gather requirements, get buy-in

from stakeholders, assign resources and plan tasks for each part of the project. The same "map" can be used as a checklist and reporting tool for each person involved in the project.

O'Brien says the methodology can dramatically speed up projects, make it possible for them to run more smoothly and reduce use of financial and personnel resources.

O'Brien believes most project failures can be traced to inefficiencies in defining, developing and communicating project requirements.

Matt O'Brien is the East Coast major account manager for Mindjet LLC. Mindjet produces MindManager software, a visual tool for brainstorming and planning that integrates with leading project management tools.

The site of the Nov. 13 program, the Wright Express campus, is on Darling Avenue in South Portland. Detailed directions can be found at pmimaine.org.

Networking and sign-in will begin at 5:30, with an inexpensive buffet available. After a brief chapter meeting, the program will be at 6:30 and will conclude with a question period.

PMP shows how to 'projectize' an organization

Some of more hardcore project managers among us believe all good management is project management.

Steve Odden is among that number – and he has proved the point over the past several years at the Scarborough

headquarters of the big supermarket chain, Hannaford Brothers.

Odden, a PMP who manages the Project Management Office for Hannaford, presented the program "Strengthening Corporate Project Management Competency" at the October meeting of PMI Maine. He reviewed the transition the company has consciously undergone, and the reasons why it has done so.

After he had the PMI audience volunteer factors by which middle managers are measured, Odden noted the preponderance of *project management* processes (performance to budget, meeting goals, developing people under them, etc.) Yet, he noted, most such managers

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Making project management part of the company culture

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are drawn from the ranks of the organization in which their work has always been *task work*, entirely different from the process orientation of project management.

Placed in this new environment, the freshly designated managers “are given no project management tools – they just let ‘em mature in the job,” Odden said. “Some people are just *good* at it. Others could get better with some information.”

That’s where Odden’s Project Management Office comes in. “Our own deliverable is PROCESS,” he said.

Such a function is important in a large company. Odden estimated that 20 percent of the projects in Hannaford are large, and have traditionally been handled with some level of project management process. “Eighty percent are small, in terms of dollars,” he said. “They may *not* have less risk.”

That majority of company projects traditionally were managed by subject matter experts (SMEs), whose knowledge was strong in the business area in which the project was placed, but not in the skills of project management.

“The project manager has the ability to be above the trees – to see the bump ahead,” Odden noted. “The SME

doesn’t have that ability.”

Hannaford’s PMO took on that area, and over several years perfected a project management process that is working – in terms of spreading the value of the methodology throughout the organization.

One of its defining characteristics is that it has project managers teach workshops for other managers in their areas of expertise. “That way, they’re sure the method works.”

Another hallmark is the conviction that working in cross-functional teams makes people better in working in any environment . . . and also prepares them for eventual designation as project managers themselves.

They also provide just-in-time project training: As people are organized to handle an actual project, they are trained in the skills they need at various stages of the project.

Through the continuing program, Odden says, “now in cross-functional projects everybody ‘has the halo’ – project management knowledge. And the executives expect the documentation and formats . . . and expect projects to get done on time.”

PMI Maine Meetings 2003

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

November 13
Building Project Requirements
Mindjet Software Demo
Host: Jim Stevens

December 18
2002 Project of the Year Winner
Host: Jim Milliken

PMI Maine’s 2004 Meeting Schedule
Will be published in the December issue
of **PMI Maine**

PROJECT MAINE

Vol. V Nr. 03 November 2003

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