



A publication of the Diversity Specific Interest Group of the Project Management Institute

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The Diversity Special Interest Group has a website! Check it out! Go to <http://www.pmidsig.org> for a preview.

Earn PDUs! Submit an article for the next publication of the DSIG newsletter by **December 15, 2005.**

President's Message It is Election Time !!!

Stewart White,
2005 Diversity SIG President

It's time again for the PMI Diversity SIG component to begin the election process that will determine next year's officers. The PMI Diversity nominating committee will be sending out details to DSIG membership in good standing asking for nominations.

Are you up to accepting the challenge? Serving as an officer in the Diversity SIG component is a great opportunity to increase your leadership skills, knowledge and understanding of PMI, and the discipline of project management. It is a rewarding experience, both personally and professionally.

Your leadership can make a difference! Consider volunteering for one of the following positions:

- VP eTechnology
- VP Marketing
- VP Membership
- VP Programs

If you are interested and would like additional information on a specific position, please contact the DSIG president at presidentpmiversity@yahoo.com

Nomination and motion information, such as guidelines & requirements have been announced and will be accepted via email to: nominations@pmidsig.org

To communicate with DSIG Board of Directors, email the Diversity SIG President at presidentpmiversity@yahoo.com or call 901-375-6075.



Programs

Program in Review

The PMI Diversity SIG would like to thank Dr. Billy Vaughn for an enlightening webinar presentation on Wednesday, October 5, 2005 on the subject, "Global Project Management – Cultural Competence." The information provided insight and increased our understanding into the challenges of global project management. Dr. Vaughn led us into an exercise that caused us to reflect upon our cultural awareness, knowledge, attitude, and skills. The material stressed how important it is as project managers to develop global competence. The feedback was positive and very well received. We look forward to future DSIG learning opportunities to explore this and other related topics.

Up Coming Programs

DSIG December Webinar – To be announced

Future Events

International Project Management Day
November 3, 2005

DSIG Town Hall Business Meeting

November 17, 2005

11:00 am CT / 12:00 noon ET / 5:00 pm GMT UK



Diversity in Canadian Healthcare Project Management

Dr. Carla Simon, BSC, MD, MBA

There is a wealth of diversity available in Canadian healthcare project management, but numerous barriers to its optimization. Properly managing diversity using the wealth of tools available can result in many positive rewards. Meritorious examples include fresh new perspectives affording quality improvement, or improved understanding of customers in the face of increasing globalization. But change management is a major challenge in our publicly funded healthcare system, since every change of government tends to affect priorities and budgets. The situation is analogous to a Fortune 500 company which replaces its CEO every year, and suffers many difficulties as a result.

Teams in hospitals are often multidisciplinary, with representatives of differing educational and cultural backgrounds. For example, a team responsible for patients with eating disorders could be comprised of nurses, psychiatrists, psychologists, internists, social workers, students, volunteers, and administrators; from countries all around the world. But small, shrinking teams under pressure may experience a climate of distrust. In many cases, hospital departments represent functional silos. Overall, this may result in poor communication across the organization, and lower performance.

Recruitment and retention are also problematic. As the population ages, many experienced workers are retiring and there are dramatic shortages of new workers to replace them. The media is voicing concerns about who will care for us all 20 years from now. Immigration is actively encouraged by the Canadian government, further augmenting diversity. Outsourcing non-core functions (such as food or laboratory services) increases diversity even further. Our system is simply under so much pressure that we aren't fully taking advantage of our human potential.

Eeva Isaksson (an educational and process improvement professional with 10 years Canadian management and consulting experience) recalls one team of healthcare scheduling clerks with educational backgrounds ranging from PhD's to high school dropouts. Most employees were working under strict time lines, on different shifts, with unclear reporting guidelines. She notes that "having a very diverse group often hampers communications and leads to a less effective working environment [as there simply is not enough time to implement measures that] ensure effective team work".

In a one time-crunched process improvement project, Isaksson's team was tasked with conducting a large number of interviews and feeding the resulting data into a nascent computer model. Her Asian colleague with a PhD in computer science was learning English and as a result, "she was not very comfortable interviewing people. We solved this challenge by identifying some key client individuals who spoke Mandarin and my colleague



took charge of interviewing these people. The interviews she conducted gave her a sufficient understanding to start building the model." Ms. Isaksson then completed the remaining interviews in English. In this fashion, competency in multiple languages prevented data from being lost. Further, this tandem system improved the quality of data gathered by allowing the interviews to be focused and the model to be customized earlier in the process. Overall, the project was more efficient and concluded sooner.

This is only one example of how Canadian healthcare project managers are successfully utilizing diversity. Faced with so many challenges, I look forward to continuing to share our successes, learning from them, and applying them to improve healthcare project management.

Dr. Carla Simon, BSC, MD, MBA is a physician with 9 years management consulting experience.

Did You Know...

Member involvement makes a difference! *Volunteers are the lifeblood of PMI. Filling a leadership role or working on a project is a great way to gain professional exposure while making your PMI experience richer and more meaningful. As a volunteer you will not only make great professional contacts, you will also expand your knowledge and develop your leadership skills.* Interested candidates for DSIG can email the Diversity SIG President at presidentpmiversity@yahoo.com or call 901-375-6075.



An Example in Cultural Understanding in Projects: Strategies for a Better Communication between French and North Americans

Laila Dunham Kamoun
Knowledge Services Tools Deployment
Nortel Networks

One of the most overlooked subjects in the science of project management is “cultural understanding”. With projects more global and project managers dealing with different cultures in the same project, it is *vital* to develop our awareness of these cultural differences. This lack of understanding of cultural differences (and our unwillingness to address it) may be costing companies millions of dollars every year. Unfortunately there are no studies that clearly ascertain the extent of this loss.

Cultural differences have less impact when project managers are dealing with each other. The standardization of concepts, methodology and vocabulary as offered by the *PMBOK*® helps PMs across the world communicate and work better together. They have a common ground of understanding. However, the effect of culture must not be underestimated even then. Studies have shown that for example, an immigrant’s different relation to time (an important module in project management) can take up to 6 generations to wear off!!

It goes without saying that cultural differences are even more acute and hard to overcome with team members with whom we do not have a common body of knowledge to refer to and whose focus is more on technical expertise than getting on with people. In this global world, it has become more and more imperative for PMs to become budding ethnologists aware of cultural differences and willing to learn, and then adapt, in order to release the desired response. So what is culture? Culture is communication. Communication is complex even within the same family. But when 2 people from 2 different cultures meet, the odds of not understanding each other increases exponentially even when they speak the same language. Our unwillingness up to now to address this as an important module of Project Management has forced Project Managers working with global teams to learn the hard way through trial and error. Many global companies have local teams, so these kind of issues have not occurred yet. In telecommunication companies, showcasing their telecommunication solutions and a push to reduce costs by putting in place virtual teams has led to more and more global teams and thus more issues related to miscommunication between different cultures. The rewards of putting in place virtual teams and ceasing re-inventing the wheel projects surpass the issues, or the challenge rather, brought up by cultural differences.

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In this particular article, I would like to address the case of French and North Americans working together. The aim of this article is to give examples of successful strategies for North Americans and French to work together. This article will be useful to North Americans working with the French, French working with North Americans and can be of use to all cultures working with either.

First, let us address the areas where French and North Americans are complementary and gain from working together.

When I work with a multi-cultural team I like to look at the natural qualities of each culture and ensure that the best in each one of them is brought up. North Americans are often good team workers (mostly because of their educational system which develops these skills) and good communicators. By good communicators I mean that they tell you everything that needs to be said, you do not have to go and dig out the information. The French, coming from high-context cultures*, on the other hand are good at gathering information and building complex solutions. They often are not afraid of going off the beaten track and this is beneficial to projects when the solutions offered by the processes in place are clearly not working.

I have found that North Americans are better at being customer oriented, while the French get carried away by the intellectual challenge forgetting sometimes the purpose of the project. These broad generalizations show how interesting it can be to have both personalities in a same team. Provided the PM, like the conductor of an orchestra, brings out the qualities of both personalities and makes a greater effort to account for the shortcomings of each culture.

With the French extra effort will be needed in getting information. A simple e-mail requesting information is not sufficient. You either get inundated with irrelevant information or you do not get any information at all. The reason is that the French need to know a bit more about what you are looking for and a laconic e-mail not stating the context is often not enough. So this is an area a PM has to spend more time on. A PM who has only worked with North Americans can be taken aback by such behavior...

On the other hand with an American team member you have to spend more time highlighting the dependencies of other projects on the project, because he simply does not expect to be doing anything but focusing on his work.

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(Cultural Understanding - continued from page 6)

For a PM that has traditionally worked with high context cultures this can be puzzling, as it seems natural in those cultures to look for more context information...

The ground rule here for Project Managers, whatever the culture they have been used to working with, is to adapt and NOT to ask WHY questions (cultures are different and that is just the way it is) or worse, spend their time apportioning blame...Whatever the reasons, the PM is always responsible for communication in a project, so if something goes wrong he is responsible, especially when there is such a wealth of opportunities derived from differences. The key rule here for a PM is to ADAPT to each culture and bring out the best of each individual.

Second, let us address the differences between the 2 cultures, a source of misunderstanding in projects.

As said above an American will naturally provide you immediately with the required information (unless there are unaddressed political or organizational fit issues) and if you are specific enough about your question you will get a specific answer even if he does not know you very well. With a French person especially if team members are not co-located, a little more has to be done to release the required response. You need to call the person and establish a personal connection. Talk to them about the project in general, and ask them what they do on their project. This information might not be relevant for your particular request, but serves the purpose of making that person feel comfortable about you. If you are not too far away, make the effort at least once to go and see them. However a good telephone call can do wonders...in the next steps of the project you will get even more information than expected and that French person will be a vital individual in your team.

The difficulty sometimes can be to get an American team member to communicate effectively with a French team member and vice-versa. At one point you can find yourself being the crossroad of communication, even for subjects you would rather delegate. I have not found a better way than increasing awareness of team members of these cultural differences, thus the purpose of my article.

There is also a big difference in the relation to hierarchy between French and North Americans. For North Americans it seems natural to them that the PM, manager or other authority ask them for advice, for a French person a manager asking for advice is often interpreted as "he/she does not know what he/she is doing".

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(Cultural Understanding - continued from page 7)

Quite commonly you will even hear the direct answer “You are the boss, not me!!”. For a leader who perceives his role as enabler of talents rather than the holder of knowledge, this is a cultural difference that he/she must be aware of and communicate on right from the beginning as being his/her leadership style.

A lot more can be said on the opportunities and challenges of global teams and virtual teams, but I hope to have offered a glimpse on the subject, and have heightened the awareness that globalization calls for a better understanding of cultural differences, and to have helped understand that the mechanisms which release the appropriate responses in each culture are fundamental and crucial for humanity in many areas and will probably be one of the most needed sciences of the 21st century.

* High-context people are people who like to be well informed and maintain extensive information networks to ensure that they are aware of the latest information. They take the initiative of collecting the information from different sources rather than waiting to be given it through the official source.

Did You Know...

You can earn Professional Development Units (PDUs) by submitting an article covering a project management topic to be published in the newsletter! We'd like to hear success stories, best practices, and experiences from our members are managing projects in different parts of the world. The deadline to submit articles for the next DSIG newsletter is December 15, 2005. Send your articles to: pmifaye@yahoo.com

PMI Diversity SIG Member Paul Aaron Presents at *BIG Conference*



This photo is with a high school classmate, Fannie Gilyard, who attended the workshop and also works for the Department of Treasury

The 27th Annual Blacks In Government 'BIG' Conference was held in sunny Orlando, Florida from August 1 thru 5th 2005. This year's conference theme "Conquering the Challenges of a Changing Work Environment" tied directly to the presentation given by PMI Diversity SIG member Paul Aaron, PMP. The new directive for the Federal Government to change its approach in procuring goods and services was the featured topic presentation in which Paul spoke about that fascinated the audience in terms of outsourcing services as human capital. Paul emphasized that jobs, which could be commercialized, are being targeted for removal from the federal workforce. Project Management and Security are two areas the Federal Government considers inherently governmental and Mr. Aaron works in directly in both of these areas.

Paul works for the Department of Energy in the Office of the Chief Information Officer, Office of Cyber Security as a part-time Project Manager for the Homeland Security Presidential Directive-12, Personal Identity Verification Project. Although he is not the lead project manager for the project, he has a major role in getting the first phase policy drafted and signed by senior management. Paul asserts that the dynamics of the workplace are changing in terms of organizational and technical knowledge, personal skills, experience and management skills. For the first time the Certified Associate of Project Management (CAPM) was introduced as a viable option for those applicants who don't possess all the requirements to sit for the Project Management Professional Exam.

Paul is also the Assistant Vice President of Professional Development for the Washington DC PMI Chapter, which is the largest PMI Chapter in the world. BIG workshops are an excellent place for government workers to network, learn new competencies and exchange ideas.



PMI DSIG Membership Statistics

“Building professionalism in project management”

Welcome to 3rd Quarter New Members / Renewals July

New Members	Renewals	New PMPs
<p>Janis Braun-Levine, PMP Auburn Hills, MI USA</p> <p>Lia Briggs North Richland Hills, TX, USA</p> <p>Sheena Campbell Witham, Essex ENGLAND</p> <p>Carla Catalano, PMP CA, USA</p> <p>Quinta Favimar VENEZUELA</p> <p>Christy Crickenberger Succasunna, NJ USA</p> <p>Ken Davis Charlotte, NC, USA</p> <p>James Groark San Francisco, CA, USA</p> <p>Sarah Hartsfield Plano, TX , USA</p> <p>Joseph Hoffman Phoenix, AZ ,USA</p> <p>Charles Jackson Ashburn, VA, USA</p> <p>Kay Jacobs Horsham, PA,USA</p> <p>Melissa Johnson Bloomington, MN, USA</p> <p>Sharon Johnson, PMP Overland Park, KS, USA</p> <p>Veronica Johnson, PMP Frisco, TX, USA</p>	<p>Malcolm Coghlan AUSTRALIA</p> <p>Robert Keith Hampstead, NH,USA</p> <p>Terrall Lewis Kyle, TX , USA</p> <p>Robyn McGregor Round Rock, TX ,USA</p> <p>Jim Reily San Francisco, CA, USA</p> <p>Anil Thricovil Foster City, CA USA</p> <p>Rejoin Member</p> <p>James New Kansas City, MO, USA</p>	<p>Janis Braun-Levine,PMP Auburn Hills, MI USA</p> <p>Jefrey Elliott,PMP Chicago, IL USA</p> <p>Veronica Johnson, PMP Plano, TX USA</p> <p>LaRhonda Leonard, PMP Rochester, NY USA</p> <p>Tonya May-Avent, PMP Greenbelt, MD USA</p> <p>Lee Tian, PMP Fairfax,VA USA</p> <p>Timothy Wood, PMP Los Angeles, CA USA</p>



<p>(continued from page 10)</p> <p>Melissa Lally-Aboutaan Cape Coral, FL, USA</p> <p>Estelle Nieto San Francisco, CA ,USA</p> <p>Lori Norwood Atlanta, GA, USA</p>		
<p>New Members</p>	<p>August Renewals</p>	<p>New PMPs</p>
<p>Lee Tian, PMP Fairfax, VA USA</p> <p>Isaiah Kobblah Adonu Oro Valley, AZ ,USA</p> <p>Anthony Amos Dayton, NJ, USA</p> <p>Damon Anderson Lancaster, PA ,USA</p> <p>Donna Baggett Raleigh, NC,USA</p> <p>Maguerite Beirne Larchmont, NY, USA</p> <p>Marcella Black Bowie, MD, USA</p> <p>Marcel Carter Denver, CO, USA</p> <p>Pawan Chadha Alexandria, VA, USA</p> <p>Lessie Cofield Alpharetta, GA ,USA</p> <p>Jon DuBard</p> <p>Glen Allen VA, USA</p> <p>Gretchen Gentry-Shivers Pickerington, OH , USA</p> <p>Darrell Gilmore, PMP Fort Worth, TX ,USA</p> <p>Syed Hasan Broadview Heights, OH,USA</p>	<p>Liz Hall Bedford, ENGLAND</p> <p>April Hodson Groton, CT USA</p> <p>Albert King, PMP Chicago, IL USA</p> <p>Michael Lange, PMP Phoenix, AZ, USA</p> <p>John Mayberry, PMP Pittsburgh, PA USA</p> <p>Margaret Morton Atlanta, GA, USA</p> <p>Sandra Rowe Southfield, MI USA</p>	<p>Christy Crickenberger, PMP Succasunna, NJ USA</p> <p>Darrell Gilmore Fort Worth, TX USA</p> <p>Wesley Stephens, PMP Upper Marlboro, MD USA</p> <p>Jennifer Szopiak, PMP South Riding, VA USA</p> <p>Vic Terawskyj, PMP Rosalindale, MA USA</p>



<p>(continued from page 11)</p> <p>Fern Johnson Plano, TX ,USA</p> <p>Alix Jules Bayside, NY, USA</p> <p>Dave Lewis Chula Vista, CA , USA</p> <p>Christopher Maldonado Bellevue, TN,USA</p> <p>Alvis Montgomery Hagerstown, MD,USA</p> <p>Wayne Wilson Apex, NC ,USA</p> <p>Brett Wolfe Washington, DC ,USA</p> <p>Aileen Wrothwell Seattle, WA ,USA</p>		
<p>New Members</p>	<p>September Renewals</p>	<p>New PMPs</p>
<p>Karen Anderson, PMP 1712 Stockton Trl Plano, TX USA</p> <p>Gregory Clark, PMP 1281 Sharonbrook Dr. Twinsburg, OH USA</p> <p>Debra Evans, PMP 152 San Andreas Court Sunnyvale, CA USA</p> <p>Petra Hinds, PMP 2841 Island Point Drive NW Concord, NC USA</p> <p>Barbara Hunt 807 Seal Point Dr Redwood City, CA USA</p> <p>Lateef Johnson, PMP 2915 Overlook Trl Charlotte, NC USA</p> <p>Patricia LaPresta, PMP 1305 Culverhill Dr St. Louis, MO USA</p>	<p>Efrain Pacheco, PMP Btistow, VA USA</p> <p>Karen Scott, PMP Clarkston, MI USA</p>	<p>Walter Ashe Campbell, CA USA</p> <p>Nancy Baker West Bend, WI USA</p> <p>Ian Beeson Pahrn/Victoria AUSTRALIA</p> <p>Marguerite Beirne Larchmont, NY USA</p> <p>Tammy Campbell Fort Lauderdale, FL USA</p> <p>Roseann Castagnaro Falls, Church, VA USA</p> <p>Pawan Chadha Alexandria, VA USA</p> <p>Gregory Clark Twinsburg, OH USA</p> <p>Lessie Cofield Alpharetta, GA USA</p> <p>Rich Fleshman Tempe, AZ USA</p>



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Syed Hasan

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Charles Jackson

Washington DC USA

Lateef Johnson

Charlotte, NC USA

Alix Jules

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DSIG Newsletter

DIVERSITY in project management



Striving to promote the participation and advancement of individuals of diverse backgrounds, in the field of project management

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DSIG is currently composed of over 210 members from more than 14 countries.

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DSIG NEWSLETTER

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PMI Diversity Specific Interest Group (DSIG)

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