

PMI Latin America Research Working Session

“The Future of Project Management”

10 August 2008

Session Background

The afternoon session entitled “The Future of Project Management” aimed to connect current macro business trends with trends in project management and facilitate discussion on the impact these business trends will have on project management in the near future.

Background was provided based on numerous surveys conducted on global business trends and project management trends. The highlighted project management trends came from a 2008 Baseline Magazine Report:

- More PM training
- Pressure for faster projects
- Emergence of critical thinking as a PM competency
- Increased relevance of the PMO
- Increased overlap between PM and BA tasks
- More PMs taking leadership roles
- Increasing communication challenges
- More PM certification

The highlighted macro business trends were based on recent studies from McKinsey & Company Consulting, IBM, futurist Jim Carroll, Gartner and Forbes Magazine:

- Great opportunities for more customers in new (global) marketplaces
- Unlimited connectivity leads to unlimited information
- Next level of globalization (building real global work forces and partnerships)
- Corporate social responsibility (CSR) as a competitive advantage
- More experts on more topics (specialization)
- Collapse of time
- Long live customer relationship management (CRM)

Teams of session attendees were asked to focus on one of the macro business trends and discuss its potential impact on project management. Specifically, teams were asked to consider which project management trends would be most impacted by the macro business trend, what new project management trends would result, how this would impact project management practitioners and how PMI could best support the profession in light of all the above.

Summary

In general, the teams concluded that most of the current project management trends identified will continue or intensify over the next 3-5 years. Especially noted to intensify were "an increase in employer support for project management training", "an increase in project managers assuming leadership roles" and "an increased overlap between the role of a business analyst and a project manager".

When asked how the general macro business trends highlighted in the presentation would impact project management, the teams commonly noted the following:

- There will be an increased need for agile/flexible project management processes due to the ever-increasing speed of business and the consequently shorter project life cycles. This will in turn facilitate the need for specialized training on these processes and on rapid product/service development and deployment techniques.
- Knowledge management (project lessons learned) will need to solidify as a result of the increased risk inherent in faster projects. This will be supported by the increased availability of information collection and sharing technologies, but will require disciplined processes in order to maximize the usage of those technologies.
- Human resource management (relative to project management) will gain greater priority as people skills and leadership skills are recognized as equally important to the more technical aspects of project management.

Group Breakdown Summary:

Group 1

Trend 1: CSR as a competitive advantage

Question 1: Will current PM trends continue over next 3-5 years?

- Yes, it will undoubtedly strengthen.
 - It will impact the image (brand) and the value of the enterprise
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Question 2: What new PM trends will develop?

- CSR will be a new restriction for projects
- Additional PM competencies
- Long range and short range visions (sustainability)
- Focus analysis and management stakeholders
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Question 3: What does this mean for project management and PM practitioners?

- Increases the complexity of projects
- Project Manager must know the context of the project
- Capacity for conflict management and negotiations

Trend 2: Unlimited Connectivity carries unlimited information and PM increase of communication challenges.

Question 1: Will current PM trends continue over next 3-5 years?

- Yes, the communication challenges will increase

Question 2: What new PM trends will develop?

- Validation of the generation, quality and ethical use of information

Question 3: What does this mean for project management and PM practitioners?

- Greater ethical use information
- More and better communication tools, skills and resources
- More cultural sensitivity

Question 4: How can PMI best support organizations and practitioners in light of these trends?

- By the development of standards on: ethics, quantitative analysis and communication tools

Group 2

Trend: Communication and Quality/Pace Speed.

Question 1: Will current PM trends continue over next 3-5 years?

- Yes in communications and quality/pace speed

Question 2: What new PM trends will develop?

- Training
 - PM
 - Communications, tools and skills
 - Common language
 - Preserve natural resources

Question 3: What does this mean for project management and PM practitioners?

- Challenges/Support
 - Tied directly to question number 2
 - Growth in PM
 - Change in practices
 - Scope challenges
 - Rapid growth
 - Change control
 - Organizational change
 - Education for organization

Question 4: How can PMI best support organizations and practitioners in light of these trends?

- Speed to membership on best practices
- Feedback from members
- Education
- Lessons learned
 - Survey
- Web tools
- Web seminars
 - Free/low fee
 - Free access to PMI libraries
- Corporate discount
 - 10 members=90.00
 - Tiered 0-10, 11-25 etc.
- Translate material
 - Top 5 languages
- Keep standards open for commentary

Group 3

Trend: Next level of Globalization

Question 1: Will current PM trends continue over next 3-5 years?

- Next level of Globalization
 - The following trends are important in regards to the trend above:
 - More PM training
 - Increased overlap between PM and BA Tasks
 - Increasing communication challenges

Question 2: What new PM trends will develop?

- Increasing Integration Challenges
- More training in risk management
- Increasing HR management challenges (virtual times, social responsibility, sustainability)
- Knowledge management (more training)

Question 3: What does this mean for project management and PM practitioners?

- More availability of specialized resources (equipments, professionals, methodologies...)
- More resources for cost/budget management

Question 4: How can PMI best support organizations and practitioners in light of these trends?

- PMI has the tools:
 - Must expand (increase) the number of activities (work groups, congress, research, focus on new trends)
 - Find sponsorship to reduce costs to individual participants (cheaper books and congress registration, etc.)
 - Facilitate global participation in PMI activities

Group 4:

Trend: Collapse of Time

Question 1: Will current PM trends continue over next 3-5 years?

- Yes, all of them will continue

Question 2: What new PM trends will develop?

- Change management
- Faster, flexible processes
- Better knowledge rolling
- Wave planning

Question 3: What does this mean for project management and PM practitioners?

- Specialization in focus areas

Question 4: How can PMI best support organizations and practitioners in light of these trends?

- Develop new standard guides in area #2