

**Author**  
Peter de Jager

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Plexus Consulting Group, LLC  
1620 Eye Street, NW  
Suite 900  
Washington, DC 20006  
Phone: 202-785-8940  
Fax: 202-785-8949  
Email:  
[info@plexusconsulting.com](mailto:info@plexusconsulting.com)

# Exponential Growth

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Take a look at the graph above. It's known as the "exponential curve" and is usually used to illustrate uncontrolled population growth, the effect of compound interest on life long savings, or to hype skyrocketing prices of things like gasoline or Medicare costs.

What if I told you we can use this graph to illustrate, without an ounce of exaggeration, the membership growth of a specific Assn over the past decade?

In these days when most Assns are having an incredibly difficult time merely retaining existing members, never mind growing their membership, there is an Assn which is experiencing unheard of growth in membership. That Assn is the Project Management Institute (PMI) based in Newton Square, PA ([www.pmi.org](http://www.pmi.org)).

In 1995 they had 17,058 members; in 2005 they added 57,924 new members for a grand total of 207,428 members worldwide. (These outrageous, unbelievable numbers were verified directly with PMI HO).

How is this possible? For a clue as to what they're doing, pick up any newspaper and take a browse through the employment section. Keep an eye out for this three letter acronym "PMP", it stands for "Project Management Professional". My guess is that regardless of where you live, you're going to be surprised at how many times you run across the phrase "PMP Required".

PMP is PMI's certificate of competence. It is the new bona fide of the modern project manager and without it; the unemployed are destined to remain unemployed. PMP is engine driving their unparalleled growth over the past decade and which will ensure their success in the coming years.

True, they've cheated (only kidding) in a way. They've formed an Assn with no restrictive boundaries. Every organization runs projects; therefore every organization has a need for qualified Project Managers. Not every organization has Doctors, or plumbers, or lawn care specialists etc. etc. PMI is an organization with potential members in every organization on this planet. And when we get to the Moon, there will definitely be a Lunar Chapter.

Certification by itself isn't enough. There are far too many Assns with some sort of certification programme. What many of them lack is credibility, mainly because their focus is too local. For example, the basis for the PMP certification is a weighty tome entitled the "Project Management Book of Knowledge", fondly known to PMI members as PMBOK. It is available in about a dozen languages including French, Arabic, Japanese and Spanish.