

PMI's new incoming CEO looks to the future

By Carl Pritchard

Mark Langley reflected positively on the North American Congress in Washington DC in an interview with *Project Manager Today*. The incoming President and ceo said that beyond the sheer size of the event and its networking opportunities, it was a great opportunity to leverage the location.

'Since the backdrop was Washington, DC, we were able to focus on the Federal sector and to point to some of the major developments in the federal sector. [We] gave them a real insight and introduction to the importance of PM in the private and public sectors.'

Langley also took pride in the other events that led to the PMI Congress. He says the Global executive council, who held their inaugural meeting in September, really adds a new level of member involvement to PMI. The group, an association of executives responsible for project management at the executive level, affords PMI new ways to have a community with 'safe harbour' to share information in a non-competitive way. He hopes they'll be bringing forth a research agenda to support the project management community at large.

As he prepares to take the helm, Langley says outgoing CEO Greg Ballesteros did a good job of making PMI a more effective global organization. 'He was a tireless advocate for PMI and spent a lot of his time and energy building the brand.'

Years from now, when Langley is ready for retirement, he hopes to leave a similar legacy. 'I hope that they remember my name. I rarely think in terms of myself but in terms of the organization. What I'd like everyone to recognize is that project management will have been firmly established in organizations as the strategic competence—not just a way to manage change, but as the way to manage change.'

He says there's a lot of work that remains to be done, and that PMI has touched only a small slice of the workforce. He says the work that PMI is doing is 'still in the early stages.'

Langley says the multi-year strategy of PMI focuses on value-based relationships with organizations. He says his efforts are to make organizations aware of PM and to support development of their capabilities.

While some wonder if there is a potential for a project management glut, Langley believes the opposite is true and that PMI has a role in preparing new project managers to join the field. He says the organization needs to 'continue to fill the pipeline and prepare the profession for the gap that will widen between supply and demand for project professionals.' He says they'll be working both with universities and schools to prepare the project managers of the future.

Part of that process will include addressing the role of project management at the enterprise level. 'We're seeing organizations...with tighter integration between what is the project organization (the temporary organization) and the other business components as we go out and talk with organizations. Langley says it's creating a new dynamic for many organizations as they integrate project management. He says it's definitely a trend, particularly as organizations evolve through mergers and acquisitions.'

He says they'll be working to build benchmarks for organizations dealing with enterprise project management, as well as helping them establish career paths for project managers.

This doesn't mean he's wed to the concept of a chief project officer for every organization. 'If we don't get tied to that title, I think we'll see those people with a seat at the top table. I recently read an article where they're trying

Mark A. Langley becomes the new president and CEO of PMI upon Gregory Balestrero's retirement 1 January 2011. Langley has been executive vice president and chief operating officer for PMI since 2002. He joined PMI as director of finance and administration and was promoted in the same year to executive vice president and chief operating officer. Prior to joining the organization, he served as CFO for ChemLogix and has held senior leadership positions with AssetTRADE.com, Quala Systems, Inc. and Castle Energy Corp. Langley began his career at PricewaterhouseCoopers (now PwC) and is a Certified Public Accountant.



to lower the number of 'C' titles, but you'll at least see (project) individuals with a seat at that table. They'll report directly into the executive suite.'

Langley also believes there's a global trend in project and program management. 'Even back in 1969 they recognized that they were global. If I bring that forward, one of the things I'm interested in is how public and private sector are interacting more, globally. Langley says he's interested in how far that global perspective can go, and how project managers can prepare themselves to deal with that perspective.'

Synergy 2011 set to become the biggest ever European PM event

The PMI UK Chapter has just announced that on International Project Management Day next year in November they will be hosting a major new event, Synergy 2011, to celebrate the Project Management profession. It is expected to be the biggest event of its kind ever seen in Europe and will be held at an iconic central London venue and will be open to all comers.

Chapter President, Chris Field says, 'Project management is now a core discipline in many UK organizations; project managers are often the unsung heroes of the workplace and this event will be recognition of the work and successes of which we can all be proud.'

'Synergy 2011 will first and foremost be a celebration and we want to reach out to every organization, industry and individual touched by project management to invite

their participation in what we hope will be a fantastic experience for all those involved.'

Commercial events director, Kris Sharma, is equally enthusiastic: 'Project management touches every aspect of our daily lives and PMI has always been proud to lead the way, working with our partner organisations to deliver Thought Leadership. At PMI UK Chapter are looking forward to engaging with sponsors, advertisers and global speakers for this new event.'

More information in the New Year when tickets will go on sale. Contact: enquiries@pmi.org.uk