

Excellence on a Global Scale:

EMC Teams with PMI to Launch World-Class Talent Development Program for Project Managers

Background

As the world's leading developer and provider of information infrastructure technology and solutions, EMC helps organizations transform the way they compete in the marketplace by employing a critical philosophy: second only to its people, information is an organization's most important asset.

People, though, are an organization's number-one investment, which is the tenet that EMC lives by within its own organization. In order to help its clients design, build and manage flexible, scalable and secure information infrastructures, EMC's project managers, team members, and other employees must operate as a well-oiled machine: synchronized, systemized and speaking the same language, regardless of where on the globe they're located.

And EMC knows a thing or two about coordinating project teams across the globe. Its 40,000 employees—40 per cent of whom work outside the U.S.—work with organizations around the world, in every industry, in the public and private sectors, and of every size, from startups to the Fortune Global 500. Maintaining a consistent level of project and customer service excellence on such a broad scope—and in such a fast-paced technological environment—is an ongoing challenge that requires a

permanent commitment to training and talent development.

Tim Kress, Community Effectiveness Manager in the Global Program and Project Management Practice of EMC's Global Services division, recognized the need for this commitment to the talent development of EMC's project managers. However, he also saw that the needs of EMC's clients were changing: While they once looked to EMC's project managers to apply their technical and tactical expertise to individual projects, they were now turning to EMC for strategic insight into project portfolios and organizational alignment as well. Together with partners in EMC's Education Services Division and PMI Registered Education Provider (R.E.P.) the International Institute for Learning, Kress decided to create and launch a world-class project management training program that targeted both the technical and strategic business demands on its project managers so they would be better equipped to meet evolving client needs.

Challenge: Diverse Workforce, Diverse Clients, Diverse Projects

Kress knew he had his work cut out for him. "Because we're in the business of both hardware and software, our projects range from

extremely complex in the range of tens of millions of dollars to small-budget two-week installations," he said. "Our project managers need to be able to successfully implement projects at the smallest and largest levels, depending on the project and the customer."

The division's globalized distribution, one of its greatest assets, also presented one of the greatest challenges when it came to training. Kress and his partners needed to create a program that emphasized consistency amid an inconsistent client base and business needs. It also had to be scalable and provide all of its project managers with a baseline of project management and professional skills training. And just as importantly, it had to actively engage its participants in a way that not only benefited EMC and its clients, but also benefitted its project managers at an individual professional level.

Solution: PMI's Global Standards Provide Framework for Ongoing Professional Development

Based on PMI's standards and in close collaboration with PMI's team, Kress and his team leveraged the company's existing education services organization to create a professional development program that provided a competitive

advantage for EMC, aligned the company's field organizations with the rest of the company and enhanced community effectiveness. The program consisted of three tiers:

- **Project Management Essentials**, including the use of best practices to complete projects of all sizes on time and budget, speak a common, global language and successfully work on virtual project teams on a global scale.
- **Professional Skills**, including financial expertise, emotional intelligence, the ability to proactively identify opportunities for customers that would improve their businesses, and expanding beyond tactical duties to become a project strategist and business partner.
- **Technical Education** on EMC's hardware and software, and on the systems that EMC's clients use.

The team developed the project management training program relying on PMI for standards, procedures and policy expertise. Project managers participate in a combination of instructor-led classroom and virtual training, along with web-based training and podcasts.

Most importantly, however, is the employee requirement. "Internal resources are an absolute necessity," said Kress. "A key element of this program is that our project managers are required to complete up to 40 hours of training per quarter, with no exceptions."

Results: Successful Projects, Successful Project Managers, Satisfied Clients

By implementing PMI's project management standards, EMC has been able to deliver consistent, scalable training to its project managers using a globally recognized framework and best practices to align its field offices and headquarters. It has also enabled EMC to evolve its services beyond the implementation of its own products to include strategic project and organizational insight that helps clients better navigate their business challenges. At the same time, the program maintains a laser focus on EMC's core competency – successfully implementing the tools and technologies, regardless of size or scope, that help clients release the power of information.

"EMC has been ahead of the training curve in many ways for a long time," said Kress. "Our new program goes beyond that, though, by providing a consistent drive and consistent alignment. PMI complements our existing methodology and works with us to deliver the highest value to our customers in the most efficient way possible. Our relationship with PMI enables us to be more effective for our stakeholders, more effective for our employees and, most importantly, more effective for our customers."