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Volume 3, Issue 8

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Welcome to our April Newsletter!



The Project Solvers' office is located at The Old Pickle Factory, Suite 216A, in Pittsford.

Hi all! It's April and we know what that means right? Getting the taxes done by the 15th. For those of you have taken classes with us or plan to) here's a tax tip that will hopefully ease the tax burden; education expenses are deductible. To deduct the cost of tuition, books, even driving to the school and back, you can answer yes to one of these three conditions:

- You are able to itemize your deductions
- The training is required by your employer or
- The training maintains or improves the skills required for your present job

You can refer to IRS Publications 970, 463, and 535 for additional info.

We segue to Scope Management this month and will be focusing on the requirements gathering process. We've a panel at our **April 8 AM on PM** who will be discussing this topic. We also have an article submitted by Dr. Edithe Drewery-Browne of CareStream on leveraging a Business Analyst to aid in requirements gathering.

Have a great and productive month!
-Enjoy
Joanne



AI's Angle — A checklist for determining requirements

There are numerous stories and articles written on projects that failed because all the requirements were not defined or determined. Project success depends on full disclosure of requirements and that signing off of the requirements by the sponsor, stakeholders and the team. Requirements are the "contract" with all those involved with the project and it must go hand in hand with a change control system and risk analysis.

Here is a quick checklist PMs' can use in determining the requirements for a project. This is by no means all inclusive but it gives you a good start in making sure you cover all of the bases.

- Scope is a part of requirements - if the scope is not defined how you can determine the requirements?
- Functional and Data requirements
- Look, Feel and Use of the product - how easy will it be to use
- Performance-speed, safety, reliability, availability
- Operational requirements - supportability, maintainability, etc
- Security - confidentiality, data integrity, audit
- Legal-Are there governmental requirements, copyrights, patents
- Standards of the industry or business
- Off-the-shelf solutions - software that is ready to go or components in place

- Solution constraints, external factors
- Future-Is there a phase 2? Will company growth affect the requirements.

Use these eleven (11) items as a starting point for focusing your team in determining how you will collect and verify at least these critical requirements.

-Al

Please send comments to agubiotti@theprojectsolvers.com

AM on PM Forum on Scope Management April 8th — Panel on requirements gathering

This month we have a panel who will be discussing the ins and outs of requirements gathering as well as fielding questions from myself and the floor. Look for Warren, Whin, and at least one Tom!

Date: Friday, **April 8th**

Time: 7:30am-9:00am

Location: Medaille College,

1880 Winton Rd, Rochester, NY

Cost: \$10

Pre-registration is appreciated for accurate headcount.

Bagels and Coffee Provided.

[Click here to register.](#)

Note: if you are having trouble with the web and cannot register then please send an email to joanne@projectsolversofamerica.com and you will be able to pay at the door. We do need a count however so please let us know. Thanks!



So What's New?

The Project Solvers will be hitting the road again soon. We will be at the PMI Upstate NY (aka the Albany Chapter) Professional Development Day's conference with a booth on May 2nd. The following week we will be at PMI Rochester's Professional Development Day, which is May 12th.

Then we'll be back to the Albany chapter for the Regional Leadership meeting in June (as attendees and as a vendor). We'll do twitter updates and post pictures to keep you informed.

Al and I have been working through the technical requirements of creating podcasts and we will have one soon to share—can't wait. We're very excited about that.

The Project Solvers were asked to sponsor the Upstate NY MPUG chapter meeting which took place last Thursday at the local Microsoft office. We brought pizza and listened to an interesting presentation on how to use Excel to update MS Project schedules. There were some really good door prizes given out—MS Project 2010!

The article below was submitted by **Dr. Edith E. Drewery-Brown, PhD, PMP, SSBB** and discusses how a Business Analyst can assist in the requirements process.

Requirements are an important part of the systems development life cycle process. Collecting and documenting business requirements and insuring you and your customer come to a common understanding regarding the requirements will insure your project delivers what the customer requested.

Leveraging a Business Analyst for Requirements Gathering (cont'd)

A skilled business analyst can ask the appropriate questions to drive out the requirements and insure a common understanding is reached between the customer and the project manager. If the customer doesn't know how to articulate a requirement, having a business analyst who specializes in facilitating your customer through the requirements generation process is important. As a project manager establishing the right set of roles and responsibilities on your project team

will be a key deliverable that sets the project on the proper path at the beginning. Part of that process is identifying the work the business analyst will perform on your project along with the roles and responsibilities of all the team members. If your definition is clear, and your BA and customer both understand what they are responsible for, in terms of requirements delivery, your project will start off in the right direction. At the project's conclusion, the BA should be able to use the scope list, requirements

traceability matrix and the list of deliverables to complete an assessment of whether or not the project has met its objectives as originally defined.

Assuring rigor in terms of project process and systems development life cycle methodology during the requirements gathering and analysis phase will go a long way to assuring your project delivers the customers requirements.

Upcoming Public Seminars



INTRODUCTION TO AGILE PROJECT MANAGEMENT— Earn 8 PDUs!

Next offered April 29th

You are familiar with the concepts of traditional project management and may have used the concepts to manage multiple projects. For projects in which the requirements are continuously changing, you may need a more proactive project management approach; Agile!

This course is intended for anyone who wants to efficiently manage projects that experience frequent changes in user requirements or desires to learn about Agile.

[<<Click here for info or to enroll>>](#)

'PMP IN FOUR' EXAM PREP BOOTCAMP— Earns 35 Contact Hours/PDUs!

Take the accelerated path to your PMP by way of our bootcamp in four consecutive weekdays OR four consecutive Saturdays. It's part of our 'PMP in Four' initiative which brings you alternate scheduling options that will fit your schedule. Note: we offer discounts for groups of 5 or more!

Watch the schedule for our next weekday boot-camp!

Our **May PMP/CAPM boot camp** is Thursday, Friday May 5th, 6th and Monday-Tuesday, May 9th and 10th.

[Click here for more on the March PMP](#)

offering.

We are also offering our CAPM bootcamp during the same week.

The Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM) is a fairly new credential and now you can get training for the exam here in Rochester. This course is designed for:

- The new project manager
- Those wanting to make the transition into project management

[Click here for more on the May CAPM](#)



MS PROJECT 2007, Basics and Beyond Earn 16 PDUs!

Next offered: TBD

Learn what's new in Project 2007. Learn the basics as well as advanced techniques such as resource sharing, creating budgets and tracking costs, customizing views, and interfacing with other applications. Note that [we are offering this seminar at a special rate if you are unemployed.](#)

Finance for PM Earns 7 PDUs

Next offered: April 28th, 2011—Save the date.

Learn financial concepts and understand how the money flows in your organization (including your project budget).

[Click here for more info or to register](#)

Have you seen our Online Training offerings?

ONLINE TRAINING:

Project Management for Information Technology (4th Edition)

Cost: \$499

25 PDUs!

Project management refers to the art, or science, of directing projects. This course, Project Management for Information Technology, focuses more specifically on how project management concepts can be applied to IT projects, as well as on project man-

agement issues that are unique to IT projects.... [more](#)

PMP 11 - PMP® Practice Examinations & Exam Strategies

Cost: \$90.00

This course contains two 200-question PMP® Practice Exams covering the Project Management Institute's standard, A Guide to the Pro-

ject Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide) . The practice exams provide a comprehensive review of the PMBOK® Guide . Learners will also review key... [more](#)

AM on PM March Summary, Critical Chain

[Excerpt from LinkedIn AM on PM Breakfast Forum group]

Our March AM on PM featured guests David Neale of Energy Wise Partners, LLC and Carla Kinder of Xerox. David, who is an expert on the Theory of Constraints (the underpinnings of Critical Chain) led the first half of our forum with an interactive and fun game that demonstrated why/how TOC works. The group was divided up into teams with two subteams each. Their work involved moving and organizing colored stones in a timed exercise of six minutes. The subteams were representing projects which were more or less occurring in parallel.



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Upon completion David led a postmortem asking the group how stressed they felt with two projects and what would happen if a third project had been added to the mix. "I'd quit." responded one person, reflecting the difficulty in keeping up and completing before the time ran out (much as in the real world). Another person commented that "Some people had to work harder than others." reflecting how the utilization of resources was not optimum.



Performance-wise teams completed their tasks anywhere between 2:50 and 8:50, with team 1 outperforming team 2 each time. What this showed was the impact of beginning new work before the previous work had completed (teams had start times which were offset). In order to best meet project objectives, work in progress needed to be allowed to complete in as optimum a timeframe as possible.



The second part of the forum was [\[click for full text\]](#)

Do you use LinkedIn, Facebook, or Twitter?



We have an AM On PM Group on LinkedIn! From linkedin.com simply do a search on groups looking for "AM on PM" as the keyword to search. Put in a request to join and we'll get you right in.

The AM on PM group serves as a repository for our summaries as well as a place to add to the discussion and get updates on the next session.

Follow Joanne on Twitter! My Twitter name is "**projectsolvers1**". I am using Twitter for Project Solvers' announcements.

send an email to joanne@theprojectsolvers.com .