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## Welcome to our May Newsletter!



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

Hi all! I think it's time, as Stacy Munechika said to me recently, to start building an ark. The rain is incredible, even for Rochester standards.

Our topic this month is Work Breakdown Structures and with the rain and the thoughts of the ark, it crosses my mind how Noah might have gone about breaking down the steps to build his ship. Do you think he used the 8/80 rule (see Al's Article below)? Do you think his WBS encompassed the entire scope of the project or do you think there might have been scope creep? We know from the Bible that Noah had to put up with some critical stakeholders who attempted to negatively influence his project, but Noah was a

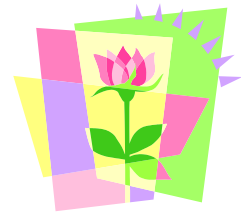
good PM and persevered. We know the end result was a success—it would have been good to have interviewed him to learn how he went about breaking down and decomposing the work in this project.

We have a podcast this month from PM expert Bill Duncan and a couple of WBS templates, one in excel and one in word.

Note we have NO AM on PM this month as the PDD is on May 12th, the day before. Therefore we'll pick up there on June 10th.

You'll notice that this newsletter is a little leaner (20%) which is probably a good thing.

Have a great and productive month!  
-Enjoy  
Joanne



## Al's Angle — Defining the work package

A question I often hear is "what is the maximum time I should allocate to a task"?

First we need to define a "work package". It is the act of breaking down deliverables in to successively smaller chunks of work to be completed in order to achieve a level of work that can be both realistically managed by the project manager and completed within a given time frame by one or more team members. Work packages are the lowest level of the WBS and are pieces of work that are specifically assigned to one person or one team of people to be completed. This is also the level at which the project manager has to closely monitor all project work.

Most project managers concur that this varies by project, but can usually be measured using the 8/80 Rule. The 8/80 Rule says that no work package should be less than 8 hours or greater than 80 hours.

A work package at the activity level is a task that:

- can be realistically and confidently estimated;
- makes no sense practically to break down any further;
- can be completed in accordance with one of the heuristics defined above;
- produces a deliverable which is measurable; and
- forms a unique package of work which can be outsourced or contracted out

One more point to remember is to develop the project budget first before deciding on the elements for the WBS. **Without the money there is no project.** The "BUDGET" has to consider the tasks in general and the materials, resources and even the estimated time to accomplish the project. Take the time to plan the budget, remember your tasks should follow the

8/80 rules and your project schedule should then be on sound footing.

AI

Please send comments to agubiotti@theprojectsolvers.com

**AM on PM Forum on Scope Management June 10th – Work Breakdown Structures**

Our June forum will feature a demo of the tool WBS Chart Pro by Critical Tools and how it integrates with MS Project. Additionally we'll be discussing the benefits of using a WBS and the various methods for creating one.

Date: Friday, **June 10th**

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@projectsolversofameric a.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?**

I want to both welcome and thank **Stacy Munechika, PMP** as our newest PMP/CAPM Boot Camp instructor. As I'm writing this he is finishing up a Saturday boot camp series at St John Fisher College. We appreciate the contributions he's made thus far—he's already added some innovative ideas to the boot camp. Look to see Stacy again on Saturdays in September.

Congratulations go out to **Ann Marie Klosko**, of Health Now. Ann Marie is a recent PMP Boot

Camp alum and she's passed her exam! Way to go, Ann Marie.

PMI Rochester's Professional Development Day is coming up fast and you'll see our booth there on May 12th. Please stop by and say hi. Stacy will be presenting there as well!

MPUG is meeting again on May 18th and we encourage you to go. I won't be there unfortunately as I'll be driving back from Buffalo but perhaps AI will be there representing us.

In June we're heading to the Albany chapter for the Regional Leadership

meeting in (as both attendees and as a vendor). We'll do twitter updates and post pictures to keep you informed.

AI 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.

**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 management 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 Project Manage-

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

**Podcast of the Month** - A Six-Step Process to an Effective Work Breakdown Structure

Bill Duncan is the featured speaker in this month's podcast from pmllessons-learned.com. Our podcast is from this past February and brought to us by Henry Will who provides a monthly PM podcast.

Bill Duncan explains how PMI's version of the WBS is slanted towards the variety used by the DOD and acknowledges that it may not be appropriate for all projects. He therefore describes

what a WBS would be like in more of an agile-like environment.

If you join yahoo groups you can download the presentation that goes along with the podcast. The yahoo group can be found here: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/pmlLessonsLearned>

This podcast is about an hour and 15 minutes so if you listen to the full podcast you will earn one PDU!

[To hear the podcast click here](#)

**Said at April's AM on PM Forum:**

"I think of it as change anticipation."

- Mark on the certainty of there being changes to the requirements rendering the term 'change management' insufficient.

**PM Tool Tip of the Month: Free Templates**

Here's a free MS Word [template for a Work Breakdown Structure](#) that was created by PCubed. Below and to the left is a part of the template that itemizes the uses of a work breakdown structure.

**Work Breakdown Structure Purpose and Limitations**

[Replace this text with a statement of the purpose and limitations of this worksheet, or use the following sample.]

The purpose of this worksheet is to:

- Identify the work to be done.
- Identify the types of resources required for the work.
- Develop estimates for each work element.
- Identify storage locations.

This worksheet does not address:

- Who will perform the work.
- When the work will be completed.

**Work Breakdown Structure Outline**  
(task numbering optional)

PROJECT NAME
1 Activity
1.1 Task
1.1.1 Sub-Task
2 Activity
2.1 Task
2.1.1 Sub-task
2.1.2 Sub-Task
2.2 Task
2.2.1 Sub-Task
2.2.2 Sub-Task
2.2.3 Sub-Task
3 Activity
3.1 Task
3.1.1 Sub-Task
3.1.2 Sub-Task
3.2 Task
3.2.1 Sub-Task
3.2.2 Sub-Task
3.2.3 Sub-Task

*Process:*  
Use a top down approach to identify the major components of work to be accomplished

*Break each major component down to an appropriate level of detail*

*Name each activity/task with a verb and a noun to describe the work and the tangible result*

*Gather information from:*

- other team members
- other project managers who have done similar work
- previous project reviews
- other appropriate groups
- expert opinion
- existing Work Breakdown Structure examples

To the right is a template in Excel from [Project Management Advisor \[Click\]](#) :

## AM on PM April Summary, Requirements Panel

[Excerpt from LinkedIn AM on PM Breakfast Forum group]

This month we had the pleasure of hearing from three senior level PMs as they recounted their experiences, good and bad, with the requirements creation and management process. We heard from Warren Grosjean, an IT expert, and Linux enthusiast, who specializes in bringing IT tools to companies in order to enable them to compete effectively in today's marketplace. We also heard from Tom Leahy, PMP, a 26-year Kodak with a MSCS from RIT, whose worked with digital picture frames, digital cameras, and cell phone applications. Our third panelist was Whin Melville, who much like myself, has worked in a number of companies, including Kodak, Veramark (I was in both of these two as well!), RTEmd, and Vanteon and is now with Intrinsix Corp as the Design Center Manager for the Rochester office. Whin, a PMP with a MSEE from Cornell, has a background with Micrographic office equipment and now works with the design of custom integrated circuits.



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I asked the panelists to describe the challenges they've had collecting requirements as well as tips for eliciting good requirements. Everyone agreed that the one of the biggest challenges is that they're always a moving target. Warren pointed out that this is sometimes because customers don't always know what they want

until they see a prototype in front of them. This helps them to clarify what it really is they're looking for. He said that it is key to

[\[click for full text\]](#)



## 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](mailto:joanne@theprojectsolvers.com) .