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not a member, yet?

from the President

Julia Checchia (PMI Sydney Chapter President), Mal Smith (PMI Canberra Chapter President)



PMI Sydney and PMI Canberra Chapters together, paving the way to Talent Management

The 2015 PMI Sydney Chapter Board (PMISC) and I have just returned from the Project Management Institute Asia-Pacific Leadership Meeting (AP LIM) held in Indonesia. Over three days we immersed ourselves in learning more about PMI's vision, mission and research results about our chosen career. There was a lot of discussion on collaboration with our sister Australian chapters and other Chapters in the region. On behalf of the board, I can safely say that we came back even more inspired and re-energised to deliver great services to our members, local practitioners and regional chapters.

To kick off the collaboration, this edition of the Critical Path will be the first of many combined project management newsletters reaching out to other chapters. During the AP LIM, Canberra and Sydney Chapters discussed the possibilities to extend services to our respective members and partners in view of the true spirit of PMI's Talent Management direction.



The PMI Talent Triangle

According to [extensive market research](#) published on www.pmi.org and supported by feedback from certification holders and organisations, the skill areas that employers need of project practitioners now and in the future are shown in the PMI Talent Triangle.

You may be thinking at this point “what does our collaboration with the PMI Canberra Chapter have to do with Talent Management?” Well, the 2015 PMI's Pulse of the Profession® notes that “high performing organisations are significantly more likely to focus on talent management, establishing ongoing training, and formal, effective knowledge transfer.” To quote [Helen Keller](#), “Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” With these in mind, expanding the reach of our services to both membership bases

extends the opportunities available to us all in travelling the ‘talent journey.’

One of the very important PMI components that support talent management is certification and the [Continuous Certification Requirements \(CCR\)](#) associated with maintaining your certification. You may be aware that there are upcoming changes to the CCR that align professional development activities, specifically Education activities, with the PMI Talent Triangle. The major objectives of these changes are to:

- Elevate the global recognition and value of PMI certifications.
- Enhance the value of project management within the workplace.
- Strengthen the CCR program around professional development by introducing the PMI Talent Triangle skill areas into the Education portion of the CCR.
- Create consistency in promoting professional development.
- Improve the online CCR system used to record educational courses and PDUs.

These changes will take effect in December, 2015. For more information, please click on the hyperlinks within this article or read the information release from [Peak Performance PM](#) for useful summary of the changes.

The PMI Sydney and PMI Canberra boards are looking forward to the many collaboration opportunities, upcoming local events and workshops. Members of both chapters are welcome to enjoy each other's services, connection network and the excellent possibilities for volunteering. Please check out the chapter websites for further details.

Mal Smith (PMI Canberra Chapter President) and I would like each member of the PMI Sydney and Canberra

Chapters to encourage a colleague to join PMI and the respective chapter. This will help them to further develop their career, stay relevant and extend their local and international network. As we say, “Good things happen when you join PMI”. We want you to experience plenty of these good things happening within your chapter.

Congratulations to Amany Nuseibeh for her new role on the PMI Ethics Member Advisory Group and our thanks to her and the Nominating Committee for their contribution to the PMI Sydney Chapter. Amany, Angela Chellas and Peter O’Driscoll have just released the Post Implementation Review report that the fantastic 2015 Nominating Committee developed, which has many good ideas for chapter maturity development.

Congratulations also to our Communications Director, Alison Evans and her wonderful team of volunteers. They have completely redesigned the PMISC website and it is fabulous! So, “do yourself a favour” and have a look to see what is happening in your chapter.

On a final note, according to the [2015 PMI’s Pulse of the Profession®](#), “All change in an organisation happens through projects and programs – by many different names. When a project and program mindset is embedded into an organisation’s DNA, performance improves and competitive advantage accelerates.”

This is also true for PMI chapters in Australia. We continue to work towards inter-chapter unity, building close collaboration toward one PMI team in Australia. This is exciting and challenging work and all of the PMI Australian Chapter Presidents are honoured to be part of this journey.

It is my honour and privilege to lead the PMI Sydney Chapter as president for 2014–2015 and together with the 2015 board of directors, help over 1,600 members to re-ignite the passion and value of Project, Program, and Portfolio Management in their careers and organisations. We hope that you had a fabulous Easter with friends and family, and have returned re-energised for an exciting adventure of talent development for the rest of the year.

Regards,

Julia Checchia

PMI Sydney Chapter President

Mal Smith

PMI Canberra Chapter President

PMI National Conference 2015 - Brisbane

The PMI National Conference at the Brisbane Convention Centre May 25-26th 2015 is shaping up to be an un-missable event for anyone who leads, works on, or sponsors projects. Visit <http://pmiac.org.au/>

Conference Features – Meet Our World Class Leaders & Experts

- Keynotes Ann Sherry, Bernard Salt, Graham Quirke, David Hood and PMI’s own Antonio Nieto Rodriguez
- 21 Breakout Sessions and Workshops for Executives, Practitioners, Academics and Students – (covering all facets of project management, leadership and business change)
- Interactive debate (Q&A style) including leading researchers, senior practitioners and academics
- Learn through hands-on workshops, round table discussions, and leading project management case studies

Conference Theme: Project Management for Economic Growth

Our 2015 theme of ‘Australia taking our place in the world’ is about PMIAC15 providing the skills, knowledge and networks for Australian PMs to dig deeper into world-class project management.

We’ll be looking at the future trends facing Australia, and the part professional project management has to play in meeting them.

Most of all we’ll be connecting nationally, making new friends, and learning from the best Australia and PMI Internationally has to offer.



Award to all PMI Sydney Chapter Members

Julia Checchia

Dear member, please find below a copy of the Asia Pacific Region PMI Chapter Retention Award received by PMI Sydney Chapter. This award is a tribute to your commitment to professional development and network consistency.

In any chosen profession, the only constant denominator in a dynamic career, is the professional organisation. On behalf of the PMI Sydney Chapter board, I can assure you, we value your commitment to the PMI SC and we will continue to work hard to bring innovative services to ensure you continue to be relevant in your chosen profession.



Dear PMI Sydney, Australia Chapter Leaders,

The PMI Chapter Retention Award recognises and honours PMI chapters in each size category and by region that through its programs and initiatives have made the greatest improvement in their retention rate at the end of 2014.

I am pleased to declare that for the Asia Pacific region, PMI Sydney, Australia Chapter is the winner of the 2014 Chapter Retention Award in Category C (chapters with 1000 or more members) !

The Sydney, Australia Chapter had the highest increase in membership retention rates in your chapter category between 2013 and 2014 as follows:

2014 Retention Rate	2013 Retention Rate	Difference between 2014-2013
69.21%	62.92%	6.29%

Congratulations to all the PMI Sydney, Australia Chapter volunteer leaders on this outstanding accomplishment! On behalf of PMI, thank you for all your hard work and efforts toward fostering and supporting the project management community in your region.

In honour of your achievement, the chapter will receive customized pins for each of your chapter members, as well as a chapter tablecloth with the retention award logo. We will be following up with you separately on this shortly.

We extend our best wishes to the chapter for a prosperous year ahead and look forward to your continued growth and success.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'So Hyun Kang', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

So Hyun Kang

PMI Chapter Development Manager - Asia Pacific

from the Communications director

Alison Evans

I hope by now you have all seen our fantastic **new website!!**

I am very proud of it and I hope that you are too. We have given it a sleek design with a more modern look and feel and have added some new features and functionality to help provide more value to our members and visitors.

Some of the features we have implemented are:

- The site is automatically optimised for viewing on any platform, be it your desktop, laptop, or tablet, as well as your smartphone
- Improved interfacing for Social Media
- Seamless integration with the PMI global web site through Single Sign-On (requires third-party cookies) which also provides links for frequently used services from PMI:
 1. myPMI (PMI Profile),
 2. VRMS (global volunteering),
 3. CCRS (Record your PDUs),
 4. LOGOUT (exits you from the chapter website).
- We also have an alternative login method for those who cannot, or don't wish to use third-party cookies. This will not integrate with the PMI global web site but will allow you to login to the PMI Sydney Chapter site and take advantage of the discounts and special offers available only to Chapter members.

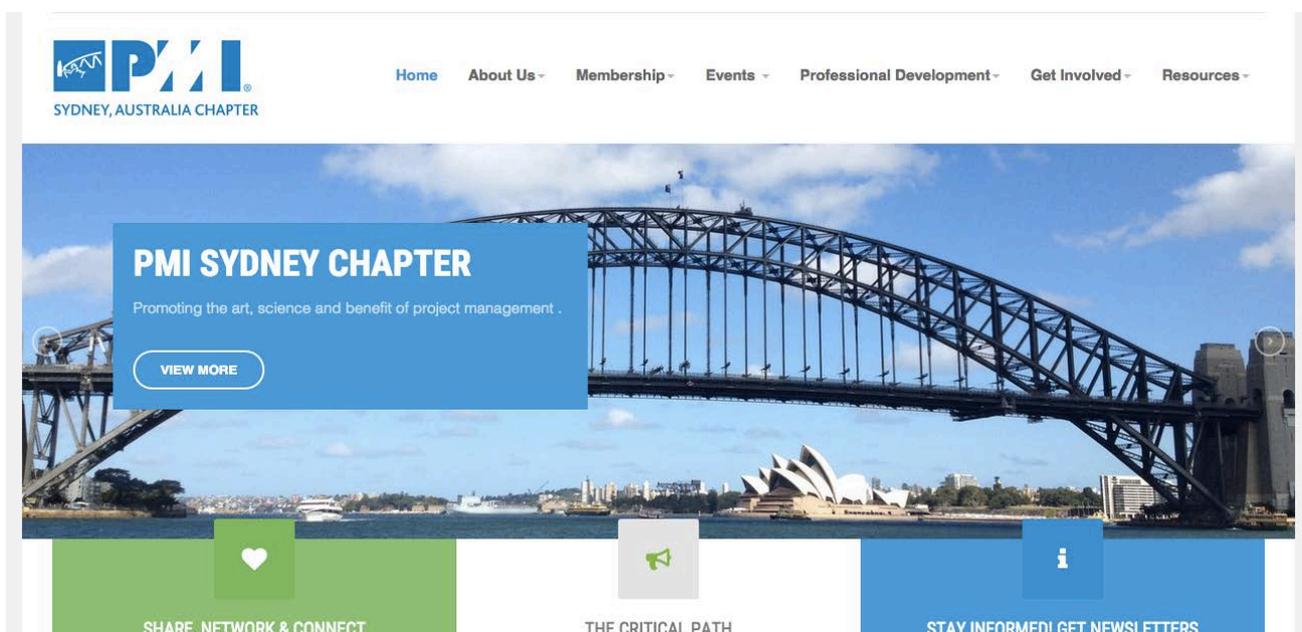
We are very excited to bring these new features and functionality to our website and would welcome your feedback and ideas to make it even more brilliant!

This was a great team effort and special thanks go to our technology partners, Proteon, who provided their technical expertise and guidance and were very patient with my questions and (many) changes of mind during the process.

I would also personally like to thank Ashish Tilara, our AD Technology, who gave his time while overseas with his family to provide some great design ideas and create all the new slides and quicklinks. Much appreciated 😊

I hope you all take a look and let me know what you think. We have kept the original menu structure and content, but I have a feeling we'll making some enhancements in this area soon as well.

Enjoy!



Building Bridges of Academia

Louis Taborda (Director, Academic Outreach)



The academic market is increasingly viewed as a key part of PMI Global's strategy and at the Asia-Pacific Leader's Institute Meeting; academia was presented as PMI's third focus-area after individuals and organizations. Tertiary institutions such as universities and colleges are being recognized for providing both researchers into project practices, as well as source of the next generation of project professionals.

As well as providing future PMI members, there is an opportunity for our current membership to become actively engaged in the education of

project managers and influence the nature of the training they receive. While that might sound like a noble cause that others (not me or you!) can pursue, there are simple ways we can all participate in building a bridge between practitioners and the academics, for both personal and professional gain.

I have some personal experience of the challenges faced when one attempts to cross the practitioner-academic divide. As a mid-aged PhD candidate a few years back, I re-entered academia intent on exploring the fast-paced, dynamic (aka high-stress, burnout) projects I had worked on. However, few organizations felt that formal research was going to provide any answers to their problems. I understood, but it was ironic, as most of these organizations happily paid exorbitant amounts for heavily marketed or hyped products and services from big solution vendors – like the one I had become frustrated working for – with no real evidence of their success.

My experiences suggest that many organizations here in Australia do not have great respect for academic institutions. Certainly, many individuals who identify as PMs today, have come up the ranks. There might therefore be a tendency to believe that a project's focus on "getting things done" is incompatible with research, and cannot be taught in a classroom. After all, graduates from universities did not originally populate the PM profession - at least no one graduated with a degree in project management! Rather, PMs were often the do'ers who came to the field from other disciplines and their career path was based on experience and performance rather than one relying on formal qualifications. The PMP certification might be acceptable since it was essentially created to recognize these practicing project managers, irrespective of how they entered the profession – but a degree in project management?

The reality is that undergraduate course in project management, along with a multitude of post-graduate degrees, are on offer at many tertiary institutions today. While the next crops of PMs are likely to be well versed in PM theory, they will not have the same level of practical management experience. Institutions recognize this challenge and are looking for our help. Real-world projects, which can be performed by students, are essential to give these future PMs a chance to apply the techniques that the courses teach.

PMI Sydney has initiated eight projects, which students will be conducting in the first semester of 2015. You can participate in these projects by attending some requirements workshops, which can gain you PDUs, but more importantly allow you to share your experience with the next generation of PMs. This is one, small step towards building the bridge between practitioners and the academic institutions. More is needed of course and we will be communicating progress in future Critical Path issues. For now, your willingness to give just a couple of hours of your time and participate in an upcoming requirements workshop would help future PMs to gain some practical project experience. Simply email me at bbf@pmissydney.org. I'd be most keen to hear from anyone interested in some bridge building.

from The Events Director

Philip Reid

“What is your next shot?”

By the time you read this we will be one third of the way through the year. How well have you tracked on your New Years' resolution? Don't worry, 92% of New Year resolutions fail by the end of January! One of the main reasons is that many people make unrealistic resolutions. If you play tennis or golf you will know it's not just a physical game its also a mental game and you must focus on your next shot ignoring what has happened in the past or could happen in the future.

The same analogy can be used in goal setting and I'd ask you “what is the next shot you should take in your career?”

In my first article as Events Director I talked about our focus this year on leadership and that performance is dramatically increased when people have fun.

Since the start of the year there have been 2 Chapter events and 6 PMI sponsored meetups. To highlight a few of these; In our inaugural Chapter event for this year we had great talk by Julio De Laffitte on entrepreneurship who called Project Managers the “Glue” between entrepreneurs and successful businesses.

In the PMO Meetup group, Ralf Finchett presented “The Golden Thread – Portfolio, Project and Agile Planning” and at the PMI Sydney Meetup, 138 people registered to hear Dipesh Pala, Agile Capability Lead for IBM Australia and New Zealand, present “Unleashing the Full Potential of your Agile Teams”.

The meetup groups are our “Communities of Practice” for the Chapter and I'm hoping to launch other groups later this year aligned to particular interest groups. Success of the groups is dependant on passionate volunteers and if you would like to “incubate” a group, please let me know what area you are passionate about.

In looking to the Events “next shots”, in April, James Bawtree and Malcolm Dunn propose, “What is a complex project” and aligned to our aim to have fun while learning, in May, Phuel will host an experiential simulation on leadership at their offices in Artarmon. Also in May for the PMI Sydney Chapter Meetup, Rowan Bunning will present “More Agile and LeSS dysfunction in Large Programs and Product Development”.

So in closing “what is the next shot you should take in your career” and I hope I have given you some ideas that attending a PMI Sydney Event could be one of the best “next shots” you can take.



from The Professional Development Director

Benjamin Howell

I hope you are all refreshed after your recent Easter break. Most of the PMISC Board has just returned from the PMI Asia-Pacific LIM where we had a fantastic opportunity to hear directly from PMI Board members the existing strategy from a global perspective, and to ask questions of them. Furthermore, it was a great opportunity to share knowledge across Chapters from countries all around APAC as to how we do things so that we could build upon and improve upon what we already do. It was also great to be sought out by the Mongolian Chapter who has requested assistance from PMISC in building up their capability in the Professional Development space (as well as others). However the key item relevant to my portfolio was that of upcoming Continuing Certification Requirements (CCR) Changes.

CCR Changes

PMI Global in March sent around an e-mail to go through the important updates to the CCR which will be **effective from 1 December 2015**. These changes were discussed at the recent APAC LIM in Bali.

This should promote relevance in an ever changing world, but to also broaden our skill sets as project practitioners making enabling us to deliver even greater impact within the portfolios, programs, and projects in which we work. Additionally, differentiates PMI credentials from alternate offerings and adds value and makes you “stand out” as a certified PMI credential holder.

This is all built around the PMI Talent Triangle (right), which you should all make yourselves familiar with.

- **Technical Project Management** – relates to knowledge, skills and behaviours related to specific domains of Project, Program and Portfolio Management. This is traditionally the space where the PMI certifications have been based and from where PDU’s come from.
- **Leadership** – relates to knowledge, skills and behaviours specific to leadership-oriented, cross-cutting skills that help an organization achieve its business goals.
- **Strategic and Business Management** – relates to knowledge of and expertise in the industry or organization that enhances performance and better delivers business outcomes.

The overall number of PDUs that you need to acquire is the same. The change is around how many you can earn / claim in what areas, and the fact that you have a minimum number of PDU’s from the areas of *Leadership* and *Strategic and Business Management*.

Extensive detail on all of the above can be found in a central location at: <http://www.pmi.org/Certification/ccr-updates-pra.aspx>

Bookmark it and go check it out! The ‘Know the Details’ and ‘FAQs’ tabs are particularly useful.

Volunteers

We are still on the lookout for more volunteers in the Professional Development portfolio, particularly in the Education, and Certification & Training teams. For the latter, I’m particularly interested in volunteers with training experience AND that is PMI certified in the PgMP, PMI-ACP, PMI-PBA, PMI-RMP, and PMI-SP credentials.

Thank you to those that approached me after the recent Volunteers evening. For those that spoke with me that evening and expressed an interest in volunteering in my portfolio but had not contacted me since, please get in touch so we can find a place for you!



from the Professional Outreach Director

Kate Morris



PMI Asia Pacific Leadership Meeting – Bali 27 – 29 April 2015

I have been lucky enough to represent our Chapter in many different conferences over the years and always in such beautiful locations. Our recent Asia Pacific LIM held in Bali Indonesia brought together our chapter leaders to learn from each other and build stronger connections throughout our region.

The conference kicked off with PMI Global CEO Mark Langley and Director & Chair of the 2015 Board Steve DelGrosso talking about PMI's strategy and what our big rocks for delivery are. They referenced a presentation from Michael Porter, which was presented at the recent PMO Symposium (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CKcSzH1SvCk>) - "The worst error in strategy is to compete with rivals on the same dimensions. This makes it a zero-sum competition". We should not aspire to "be the best", but rather we should aspire to be "unique" in our products and services. Michael reminds us when building a strategy its all about making choices and looking to deliver unique value. This was followed by a rare opportunity to hear from and pose questions to several PMI Board members who also attended the LIM, building our understanding of the global strategy and priorities so that we can ensure that our Chapter is aligned to these.



Figure 1 A typical sunrise in Bali - Nusa Dua

We were treated to an inspired keynote speech from futurist Mike Walsh (<http://www.mike-walsh.com>) who challenged our thinking of the future and how we will lead in a new and changing landscape. "When we think to our next leaders, that have never lived in a world without smart phones or high speed digital connections – they are a living challenge to all of us to rethink the way we do business". Bringing this back to the Sydney Chapter (and something I am passionate about) is how we are attracting the next generation of project managers. Our understanding of what drives and motivates them will determine how our strategy and ongoing service offering changes and adapts to their needs. It also highlighted our need to look at how we analyse and utilise data within our chapter to help shape what we will look like in the future; to continue to meet the demands of our changing membership base and the evolving work environment.



Figure 2 Our PMISC Secretary Chris McCloon with traditional Balinese Dancers

Of the 21 breakout sessions held, PMI Sydney Chapter (PMISC) had representation at 19 of the sessions (90% coverage) which is a brilliant outcome. The conference sessions are shown below:

Saturday, 28 March 2015	0900 - 10:00 The Essential Connection between Strategy and Volunteer Connection at PMI <i>Steve DelGrosso and Mark Langley</i>							
	10:00 - 10:45 Leader-to-Leader: Meet the Governance Committee <i>Steve DelGrosso, Antonio Nieto-Rodriguez, Mark Dickson (Aust) Deena Gordon Parla, Mark Langley</i>							
	11:15 - 12:45 Opening Keynote: "Flex - Business Re-Imagined" <i>Mike Walsh, Author of Futurtainment</i>							
		Academic	Leadership Development	Volunteer Engagement	Association Governance	Professional Development	Chapter Volunteer Roundtable	PMI Updates Tools and Resources
	13:45 - 14:30	Developing and Engagement Strategy for your Chapter with Colleges and Universities <i>Garry Miller & Helen Telford, PMI New Zealand Chapter</i>	Leading Multi-Cultural Team: Lessons Learned from Mongolia <i>Colin Murphy, PMI Mongolia Chapter</i>	What's the Secret Recipe for recruiting Volunteers for Your Chapter <i>Nailil Muna & Fauzi Yusuf, PMI Indonesia Chapter</i>				
		Louis	Vikas, Kate, Ha, Jordan, Sandeep, Malcolm, Phil	Chris, Ben, Julia				
	14:45 - 16:00				Strategies for Onboarding: How to Accelerate through the Transition Process <i>Dr. Shaligram Pokharel, Chapter member Advisory Group & Nilanjan Chanda, PMI West Bengal Chapter</i>		Chapter Roundtable by Role: Membership	How to attract PMI Certificants to PMI Chapters <i>Brian Weiss, VP, PMI Practitioner Markets</i>
					Chris, Vikas, Kate, Ben Louis		Ha, Malcolm	Sandeep, Phil Jordan
	16:30 - 17:15	PMI Connect: Academic Outreach Opportunities for Chapters <i>Julia Checchia, PMI Sydney Chapter</i>	Emotional Intelligence: A critical path to being a successful leader <i>Sangita Zaporde, PMI Pearl City, Hyderabad Chapter</i>			Take the guesswork out of selecting and managing speakers to create an Amazing Experience for Your Chapter, Speakers and Attendees <i>Annie Sheehan, PMI Melbourne Chapter</i>		
		Louis	Vikas, Ha, Kate, Sandeep, Malcolm, Jordan			Chris, Ben, Phil		

Sunday, 29 March 2015

09:00 - 10:00 2015 Global Priorities and Initiatives <i>Brian Weiss, VP, PMI Practitioner Markets</i>						
	Chapter Volunteer Roundtable	Marketing	Membership	PMI Updates Tools and Resources	Governance	Leadership Development
10:30 - 11:45	Chapter Roundtable by Role: Professional Development	Effective Strategies for using Social Media in PMI Chapters	Membership Retention and Volunteer Engagement for your Chapters			
	<i>Joanne Lynch, Mgr PMI Volunteer Programs and Services & Tejas Sura, Chapter Member Advisory Group</i>	<i>Anca Slusanschi, Social Media Advisory Group & Syed Nazir Razik, PMI Chennai Chapter</i>	<i>Rona Ptschelinzew, PMI Melbourne Chapter & Galen Townson, PMI Mentor Region 10</i>			
	Chris, Ben	Sandeep, Kate, Jordan	Malcolm, Phil, Louis, Ha			
12:00 - 12:45	Strategies for Making Volunteer Programmes Successful in your chapter		The First 500 Challenge: Growing and Engaging membership of Smaller PMI Chapters	PMI Chapter Innovation Program: Developing and Sharing Ideas of Value		
	<i>Girish Kadam, PMI Pune Deccan India Chapter</i>		<i>Tobias Keohler, PMI Honolulu Hawaii Chapter</i>	<i>Reseena Abdullah, Chapter Partner Regions 11 & 15, and Galen Townson, PMI Mentor, Region 10</i>		
	Chris, Louis			Malcolm, Ben, Kate, Vikas, Ha, Sandeep, Jordan		
13:45 - 15:00		Chapter Roundtable by Role: Marketing			Financial Management for Chapters: Keys to Success	Leaders Choice: Five Steps to Ethical Decision Making
		<i>Andrea Greene, PMI Marketing Manager & Dr. Shaligram Pokharel, Chapter Member Advisory Group</i>			<i>Tejas Sura, Chapter Member Advisory Group</i>	<i>Alankar Karpe & Amany Nusibeh, Ethic Member Advisory Group</i>
		Vikas, Ha, Malcolm, Kate			Chris, Jordan, Ben	Sandeep, Louis
15:15 - 16:30	Chapter Roundtable by Role: Presidents	Marketing Communications 101: Effective Tools and Techniques for Chapter Leaders				Chapter Leadership Development through Scenario Based Learning
	<i>SoHyun Kang, Magager PMI Chapter Development A-P, & Dr. Shaligram Pokharel, Chapter Member Advisory Group</i>	<i>Andrea Greene, PMI Marketing Manager</i>				<i>Jararam BG, Region Mentor, Region 11</i>
		Ben, Kate, Louis				Chris, Sandeep, Jordan, Ha, Vikas, Julia
16:45 - 18:00 Closing Keynote: "Be an Influencer" <i>Vinh Giang, Entrepreneur, Speaker and Magician</i>						

The breakout sessions gave us the opportunity to hear from chapter leaders around the region on their initiatives and how they are building their chapter's success. We were able to see how a social media campaign can be easily started just by connecting to the current network of tweets and posts from PMI Global as well as Chapters around the world. We were able to share our insights into the great initiatives PMISC have been running and how we can share that knowledge with the new and smaller chapters in Region 10. Many of the PMISC attendees were touched with the story of the Mongolian Chapter (started by a South Australian, Colin Murphy working for Rio Tinto) and by the spirit and determination they have shown in getting the chapter registered and now thriving.

The closing Keynote speaker Vinh Giang (another Aussie!) was a refreshing end to the conference. Sharing his personal journey of following his dream and daring to believe he could achieve it while being constantly faced with detractors in his circle of friends and family was inspiring. Mixing his message with fantastic sleight of hand magic, it was an engaging way to convey his message and leave us inspired to dream big and go after the things that truly make you happy.

We have all come back re-energised and focused to deliver our strategy to our members. We know we are aligned with the PMI Global strategy and we have taken away new ideas to bring even more success to our region.

I will always remember our Bali adventure as a great time away connecting with friends old and new celebrating our love for all things project management. It really does ring true – “ Good things happen when you get involved with PMI”



Figure 3 Some happy snaps from the networking dinner

Let's unleash the power of Volunteers - PMI Sydney Chapter calling...!

Mohammed Mansoor – PfMP, PgMP, PMP, PBA, RMP, SP, PMI-ACP, PRINCE2, ITILV3 - (1st PBA from Australia)



Volunteering with us is easier than ever and Sydney Chapter would like to welcome you to contribute and unleash the power of Volunteering...

There is an opportunity for those who wish to excel in Project Management to join as Volunteer for the PMI Sydney Chapter. We are constantly looking for people to assist with a diverse range of activities

I was humbled by the opportunity to present this event as Master of Ceremonies (MC) before the esteemed PMI Sydney Chapter Board and members presenting their portfolios and strategies for 2015

It was an electrifying volunteering event on 19th March 2015 at CURTIN UNIVERSITY with 80 plus volunteering participating with soaring high adrenaline levels and ready to contribute to the PMI Sydney Chapter community and opportunities for “SCHMOOZE”

Despite a hectic schedule we had our esteemed PMI Sydney Chapter President **Julia Checchia** address the raring volunteers and share her experience with PMI Sydney Chapter.

Our Vice President **Malcolm McFarlane** introduced the PMI Sydney Chapter members with PMI Sydney Chapter Mission– why do we exist?

“We help individuals, organisations and communities to enhance value through the application of Project Management principles and practice”

The vision for the chapter 2014-17 is: “PMI Sydney is the thought leader and foremost authority on the discipline of project management in NSW.” With the key Objectives of

1. Engaged membership
2. Collaborative Partner Relationships
3. Professional Connector
4. Recognised industry leader
5. Effective and efficient use of resources

Philip Reid (Director: Events) spoke about engaging and attracting members through segmented and focused events and meetups, Our Overall aim is to drive new member attraction and retention.

Ha Nguyen (Director: Membership and Volunteering) presented the plan for Membership consisting of initiatives such as Member Value Framework, Enhance New member experience, enhance membership services, Volunteer Induction and Engagement, Volunteer Recognition Program, Volunteer Progression Framework, Corporate Member Value Framework, Corporate Member Engagement Plan and Operations

Vikas Patole (Director: Marketing) presented the focus areas for Sponsorship / Partnering, raise Brand awareness, Corporate Outreach, Registered Education Provider (REP), Registered Consultant Program (RCP) and Professional Associations programs.

Alison Evans (Director: Communications) presented the plans for website Upgrade, Chapter Newsletter, Chapter Blog, Social Media (Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook)



Volunteers are not paid – NOT because they are worthless, but because they are priceless!!

Benjamin Howell (Director: Professional Development) presented the plans for Mentoring (Mentor / mentee pairings) Certification & Training, Education and introduce expanded PMI certification offerings via Prep Class / FastTracks (PgMP, PBA, PMP, SP) & Intensives (ACP, PBA).

Dr Louis Taborda (Director at Large: Academic Outreach) presented initiatives for PM Student Projects, Research student workshop/focus group on creating a supportive community for their research

Kate Morris (Director at Large: Professional Outreach) presented initiatives for Career Development Strategy and Process, Job Board, Specific 'Millennial' Strategy, Industrialized Adhocracy for our PMI Sydney members

I would like to thank Ha Nguyen and the volunteer team for providing her leadership and unconditional support and making this event successful at a short notice

The room at Curtin University was buzzing with enthusiasm, connection and innovation. I firmly believe that this will drive a fabulous year for the chapter and our members.

What are you waiting for – Login to the PMI Sydney Chapter website and send a note to the Board of Directors expressing your burning desire to contribute towards PMI community and champion the change.



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If you are looking for a sign – this is it.

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The annual PMI Australia National awards recognises the exceptional work of the project management profession. The awards will honour outstanding individuals, projects, project teams, and sponsoring organisations that have the following:

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The following awards will be presented in 2015:

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PMI Sydney Chapter - Meet up



For more information on Meet-Ups go to www.meetup.com for general information or www.meetup.com/Sydney-Project-Managers for the Sydney group. As ever, for Chapter and Breakfast events please check out the Chapter website at www.pmisydney.org and log-in to register. Have a look at what we have happening, sign-up, join in and be part of the growth of project management in Sydney and New South Wales.

Registration & cancellation

We aim to present informative and relevant speakers at our events and Meetups, so it's no surprise to know that our meetings can reach capacity very quickly. Members are encouraged to register for events early to avoid disappointment. At the same time, we highly appreciate a courtesy email notifying us of cancellations well ahead of the event date. The requirements we receive from our venue organizers include firming the numbers a few days before the event. This will give those on the waiting list an opportunity to attend and ensure every seat is filled, maximising members' exposure and minimizing waste. If in doubt regarding availability at an event please email me at events@pmisydney.org and I will do my best to accommodate your request.

PDU's

Remember, you are entitled to claim 1 PDU for every PMI Sydney Chapter event that you attend. Details of how to claim your PDUs as per the new categories are on our website.

Why Great Managers Are So Rare – Gallup

Randall Beck and Jim Harter

Companies fail to choose the candidate with the right talent for the job 82% of the time, Gallup finds.

Gallup has found that one of the most important decisions companies make is simply whom they name manager. Yet our analytics suggest they usually get it wrong. In fact, Gallup finds that companies fail to choose the candidate with the right talent for the job 82% of the time.

Bad managers cost businesses billions of dollars each year, and having too many of them can bring down a company. The only defense against this problem is a good offense, because when companies get these decisions wrong, nothing fixes it. Businesses that get it right, however, and hire managers based on talent will thrive and gain a significant competitive advantage.

Managers account for at least 70% of variance in employee engagement scores across business units, Gallup estimates. This variation is in turn responsible for severely low worldwide employee engagement. Gallup reported in two large-scale studies in 2012 that only **30% employees are engaged at work**, and a staggeringly low **13% worldwide are engaged**. Worse, **over the past 12 years, these low numbers have barely budged**, meaning that the vast majority of employees worldwide are failing to develop and contribute at work.

Gallup has studied performance at hundreds of organisations and measured the engagement of 27 million employees and more than 2.5 million work units over the past two decades. No matter the industry, size, or location, we find executives struggling to unlock the mystery of why performance varies from one workgroup to the next. Performance metrics fluctuate widely and unnecessarily in most companies, in no small part from the lack of consistency in how people are managed. This "noise" frustrates leaders because unpredictability causes great inefficiencies in execution.

Executives can cut through this noise by measuring what matters most. Gallup has discovered links between employee engagement at the business unit level and **vital performance indicators**, including customer metrics; higher profitability, productivity, and quality (fewer defects); lower turnover; less absenteeism and shrinkage (i.e., theft); and fewer safety incidents. When a company raises employee engagement levels consistently across every business unit, everything gets better.

To make this happen, companies should systematically demand that every team in their workforce have a great manager. After all, the root of performance variability lies within human nature itself. Teams are composed of individuals with diverging needs related to morale, motivation, and clarity -- all of which lead to varying degrees of performance. Nothing less than great managers can maximise them.

But first, companies have to find those great managers.

Few managers have the talent to achieve excellence

If great managers seem scarce, it's because the talent required to be one is rare. Gallup's research reveals that about one in 10 people possess the talent to manage. Though many people are endowed with some of the necessary traits, few have the unique combination of talent needed to help a team achieve excellence in a way that significantly improves a company's performance. These 10%, when put in manager roles, naturally engage team members and customers, retain top performers, and sustain a culture of high productivity.

It's important to note that another two in 10 people exhibit some characteristics of basic managerial talent and can function at a high level if their company invests in coaching and developmental plans for them. In studying managerial talent in supervisory roles compared with the general population, we find that organisations have learned how to slightly improve the odds of finding talented managers. Nearly one in five (18%) of those currently in management roles demonstrate a high level of talent for managing others, while another two in 10 show a basic

talent for it. Combined, they contribute about 48% higher profit to their companies than average managers do.

Still, companies miss the mark on high managerial talent in 82% of their hiring decisions, which is an alarming problem for employee engagement and the development of high-performing cultures. Sure, every manager can learn to engage a team somewhat. But without the raw natural talent to individualise, focus on each person's needs and strengths, boldly review his or her team members, rally people around a cause, and execute efficient processes, the day-to-day experience will burn out both the manager and his or her team. As noted earlier, this basic inefficiency in identifying talent costs companies billions of dollars annually.

Conventional selection processes are a big contributor to inefficiency in management practices; they apply little science or research to find the right person for the managerial role. When Gallup asked managers why they believed they were hired for their current role, they commonly cited their success in a previous non-managerial role or their tenure in their company or field.

These reasons don't take into account whether the candidate has the [right talent to thrive in the role](#). Being a successful programmer, salesperson, or engineer, for example, is no guarantee that someone will be adept at managing others.

Most companies promote workers into managerial positions because they seemingly deserve it, rather than have the talent for it. This practice doesn't work. Experience and skills are important, but people's talents -- the naturally recurring patterns in the ways they think, feel, and behave -- predict where they'll perform at their best. Talents are innate and are the building blocks of great performance. Knowledge, experience, and skills develop our talents, but unless we possess the right innate talents for our job, no amount of training or experience will matter.

Gallup finds that great managers have the following talents:

They **motivate** every single employee to take action and engage employees with a compelling mission and vision.

They have the **assertiveness** to drive outcomes and the ability to overcome adversity and resistance.

They create a culture of clear **accountability**.

They build **relationships** that create trust, open dialogue, and full transparency.

They **make decisions** based on productivity, not politics.

Very few people can pull off all five of these requirements of good management. Most managers end up with team members who, at best, are indifferent toward their work -- or, at worst, are hell-bent on spreading their negativity to colleagues and customers. However, when companies can increase their number of talented managers and double the rate of engaged employees, they achieve, on average, [147% higher earnings per share](#) than their competition.

Management talent could be hiding in plain sight

It's important to note -- especially in the current economic climate -- that finding great managers doesn't depend on market conditions or the current labor force. Large companies have approximately one manager for every 10 employees, and Gallup finds that one in 10 people possess the inherent talent to manage. When you do the math, it's likely that someone on each team has the talent to lead -- but chances are, it's not the manager. More than likely, it's an employee with high managerial potential waiting to be discovered.

The good news is that sufficient management talent exists in every company. It's often hiding in plain sight. Leaders should maximize this potential by choosing the right person for the next management role [using predictive analytics](#) to guide their identification of talent.

For too long, companies have wasted time, energy, and resources hiring the wrong managers and then attempting to train them to be who they're not. **Nothing fixes the wrong pick.**

PMQu: A Quality Tool for Project Information in MS Project

David Pratten



The open source add-in for MS Project called “PMQu” assists project managers to create, and maintain, quality-checked project information. Earlier in this series of articles, I [argued](#)¹ for greater coherence between the WBS and Schedule Network, and then in the [second article](#)² introduced the means to automate this coherence by applying the new Schedule Network 100 percent rule and the Add and Prune Dependencies algorithm. This article introduces PMQu, a MS Project add-in that implements this rule and algorithm and other best practice quality checks. Firstly, we review the benefits of quality checking project information, and then, after pointing to the sources of the quality checks, the PMQu add-in is introduced and the article concludes with a short invitation to explore next steps.

Context, and why perform quality checks?

Managing quality, including that of project plans, is a challenge involving both people and process. PMQu will automate just one aspect of process, which is, checking the conformance of plans to pre-agreed quality standards. This is an activity which is impractical to perform manually on real-world plans.

PMQu is intended for the professional PM and PMO where each project’s WBS and Schedule Network may be contained within a single stand-alone MS Project plan of up to 300-350 activities. There are at least four reasons for checking the quality of project information. Quality checking can:

- Reduce, or eliminate, many common WBS and Schedule Network mistakes,
- Improve the flexibility of schedules under rolling wave planning,
- Improve the transferability of project plans between project managers,
- Assist managers to induct new project managers to use a common style for project information.

For this context, from where has the author drawn the quality checks?

Sources of Quality Checks

Firstly, PMQu checks the coherence between the WBS and Schedule Network using the Schedule Network 100 percent rule and the Add and Prune Dependencies algorithm that were referred to earlier.

Secondly, and equally importantly, PMQu performs quality checks according to best practice guidance found in the following six recommended sources:

- *Microsoft Project Advanced Workshop* presented regularly by Angela Chellas,
- *Forecast Scheduling with Microsoft Project 2010* by Eric Uyttewaal,
- *Work Breakdown Structures: The Foundation for Project Management Excellence* (2008) by Norman, Brotherton, and Fried,
- *Secrets To Mastering The WBS In Real-world Projects* (2010) by Liliana Buchtik
- *Practice Standard for Scheduling and Practice Standard for WBS* by PMI.

Naturally, not every piece of advice is checked. Instead, PMQu checks an integrated set of guidance drawn from all these sources.

¹ Pratten, D. (2014). Having a common definition of “deliverable” in both WBS and the schedule network *The Critical Path*, 5(6), 16-17. Retrieved from http://www.pmisydney.org/index.php/document-repository/doc_download/908-critical-path-december-2014

² Pratten, D. (2015). WBS and Schedule Network coherence at scale *The Critical Path*, 6(1), 14-16. Retrieved from http://www.pmisydney.org/index.php/document-repository/doc_download/986-criticalpath201502volume6issue1

PMQu Add-in for MS Project

The PMQu open source add-in for MS Project 2010/2013 reads the current project and creates a report in the user's browser covering 42 separate checks. PMQu does not alter the current project. Table 1. contains a breakdown of the quality checks by area with some examples:

Quality Check Area	# of Checks	Example Checks
Task Identity	4	Every task must have a unique name.
Work Breakdown Structure	7	Every summary component will have a minimum of two child components. The WBS will be coherent with the Schedule Network.
Schedule Network	12	Summary Tasks may not have dependencies. All tasks will participate in the Schedule Network.
Resources	4	Summary Tasks may not have resources assigned.
Scheduling	10	All tasks must have a duration specified.
Progress	5	Milestone's %Complete must either be 0% or 100%.
Microsoft Project settings	18	Schedule From [Project Start Date].
TOTAL	42	

Table 1. – A breakdown of the quality checks with some examples

Next steps

You are invited to install, and use, PMQu under the open source MIT license. The software itself, a list of all the checks, sample plans, and the installation and usage instructions may be found on GitHub at <https://github.com/DavidPratten/PMQu> . Your comments and questions are welcome via GitHub issues.

The author relies on the PMQu add-in for MS Project to check project information quality for his projects. How will you use it? The MIT license for the software means that you are free to use the intellectual property in this software for anything, including running your projects, as a resource for your PMO, for training project managers, and creating commercial opportunities. Go for it!

About the author: David Pratten (*PMP, Certified PRINCE2 Practitioner, Certified ProSci Change Manager, Master of Management - IT*) leads IT-related change projects for Wesley Mission in Sydney. This article arises from David's passion for the practical application of best practice guidance. David may be contacted at: [linkedin.com/in/davidpratten](https://www.linkedin.com/in/davidpratten)

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7 Questions Every PMP Exam Student Asks Their Coach

Cornelius Fichtner PMP CSM



When students start their Project Management Professional (PMP)[®] exam prep (for the first time, or again after having failed the exam), there are a number of questions that come up time and time again. In this article we share the top 7 questions that every student asks us in our role as their PMP exam coach. Whether you have a coach or not, knowing the answers will help you get started more quickly with your own exam preparations.

Let's dive straight in with the first question

1. Why did I fail the PMP exam when I studied so long and so hard?

Everyone is different, but you probably became overwhelmed during the exam as you didn't approach it with the proper preparation and mechanics for taking the test. It's not enough to go online and gather tidbits from other people about how to study. A Google search for "How should I study for the exam?" may tell you what to memorize and you'll find some tips that have worked for other people. Reading the PMBOK[®] Guide really isn't even mandatory for the exam, let alone reading it two or three times!

The scenario-based questions you faced in the exam are in depth and difficult, and you also need to be able to manage your time during the 4 hour exam. It's hard and when you see the nature of the exam and the nerves kick in... all that leads to sub-optimal performance on the day.

Using a range of resources like videos, practice questions, flashcards, study guides and PMP tutoring can all help boost your chances of passing next time, if you combine them with practical preparations and test-taking strategies.

2. I am terrible at mathematics and at formulas. How will I ever be able to do all these earned value questions?

Have confidence! It's not rocket science. If you've had an exposure to something like high school level math then you have the skills to do the math questions. It is just a matter of approaching these math questions in a formulaic kind of way.

First, memorize the formulas that are most likely to show up on the PMP exam – a PMP exam coach can help you identify which ones those are. When you have a theoretical understanding of these formulas and can see whether they are talking about planned vs. actual, variances or forecasts -- you will be able to understand the logic behind the math. At that point, practice, practice, practice! This is rote learning and with enough practical exercises and repetition you will achieve an "AHA" moment! Once you have done them often enough you'll see the math is no longer a problem for you.

3. I took a few practice tests and I did OK with them so why I did I fail the PMP exam?

You probably weren't using a very good set of practice questions. Make sure you are using the best quality question banks you can and take plenty of practice tests. Some practice tests aren't the full length of the 4 hour exam, so be sure to attempt a few full length practice exams too. This will help you plan your time and develop test-taking strategies.

You really need to be dealing with practice PMP tests of 200 multiple choice questions and scoring 80 per cent or more. The reason for that is because there will most likely be a number of factors that could cause your score on the real test date to drop below what it was in your practice exams. Don't forget that you might be nervous and you will be in an environment that is not comfortable to you because it is not where you did your studying. If you are only just above the passing threshold or achieving mediocre scores on your practice exams then you may drop below the success mark on the actual day.

PMP exam tutoring can help you identify the most realistic sets of PMP-style practice questions and with preparing for the rigors of the test environment.

4. Can you help me with Risk and Quality please?

Yes! These topics must be mastered for the PMP exam. Review all those little things like the 7 basic quality tools and the difference between quality assurance and quality control. Go through all of those risk processes and make sure you understand the whole sequence from planning risk all the way down to creating risk responses and the differences between qualitative and quantitative risk analysis.

Start there and drill down deeper, making sure that you understand all the concepts of risk and quality because they are going to make up a good percentage of the questions that you see on the exam.

5. What do I have to score in order to pass the exam? And can I get below proficient in more than one category and still pass?

The actual score to pass the exam isn't made public and any passing percentages anyone mentions are just their best guess.

You should be aiming to score Moderately Proficient or Proficient in all process groups and an excellent PMP exam simulator will provide you with those scores. However, it is believed to be possible to pass the exam even if you are below proficient in more than one category.

6. How long should it take me to study effectively and pass the exam?

It depends! Everyone has different things going on in their lives from work, family and other commitments, so the time available to you to study is going to be personal depending on your circumstances. This will influence the length of your study schedule.

We see good results from students who can attack their studies aggressively and spend around 1-2 hours per day studying for the exam over a 1-2 month period. Students who put together long study plans of 4-6 months tend to see diminishing returns on their ability to pass. But remember that everyone is different. Working with a colleague who is already a PMP, a fellow student or a professional PMP coach can help you put together a personalized schedule that is realistic for you.

7. Do I really have to read the PMBOK® Guide twice like everyone says?

No, you do not, but it may help! The PMBOK® Guide is a useful reference guide and every good project manager should have one. You can also use a PMP prep book, a dedicated series of learning videos or the skills of a PMP tutor and have the PMBOK® Guide on hand to clarify further any concepts that you might not understand fully.

There you have it. These 7 questions are the most common questions that students ask their PMP coach when they start out with the PMP exam studies. Asking the right questions helps you prepare more effectively so if you are struggling with something related to your PMP exam prep, ask a colleague, a professional PMP tutor or another trusted individual for their advice. Knowing the answers will make you feel more confident and ready to face the exam and in turn, increase your chance of success on the day.

About the author: Cornelius Fichtner, PMP, CSM is a noted PMP expert. He has helped nearly 26,000 students prepare for the [PMP exam](#) with the Project Management PrepCast and offers a [PMP exam simulator](#).

Free PMP® Exam Sample Question

Cornelius Fichtner



Question

You are a project team member on a project being managed by one of the senior project managers in your company. You are responsible for the Quality Assurance of the project. You have found some serious issues with the procedures the project team is following. If these problems are not corrected, the project may end up being a disastrous failure. What is the best way for you to deal with this situation?

- A. Do nothing as it's the project manager's responsibility to rectify problems
- B. Issue a change request for the recommended changes to these processes
- C. Talk to the project manager in confidence and ask him to rectify the situation
- D. Informally report your findings to the project sponsor

Question provided by The PM Exam Simulator: www.pm-exam-simulator.com

Answer & Explanation

Correct Answer: B)

As you are currently responsible for the Perform Quality Assurance process, it is your responsibility to officially report your findings and recommendations to the concerned authorities. In this case, you must officially issue a change request for Change Control Board (CCB) review.

Reference: PMBOK Guide 5th Edition, page 247

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Risk Doctor Briefing

SCALING THE PEAKS OF COMPETENCE

© August 2014, Dr David Hillson & Dr Ruth Murray-Webster

david@risk-doctor.com



How can you know if you are competent to perform in your role? Many professional organisations produce competence frameworks which attempt to answer this question. Unfortunately most of these frameworks are limited to assessing **what you know** or **what you can do**. But knowledge and skills are only two of the elements which are required for a person to be competent in a role.

To provide a more complete description of competence, we have developed the **PEAKS** framework. This defines the factors that separate truly effective individuals from the rest.

PEAKS is a general competence framework that can be applied to a wide range of job roles, including risk management, executive leadership, project management, facilitation, software development etc. The **PEAKS** framework includes:

- Five essential **elements** that contribute to competence
- Specific **attributes** under each element, describing competence in a particular role
- **Assessment mechanisms** for each attribute

The **five PEAKS elements** are:

- **Personal characteristics** (“Who am I?”) – natural traits/preferences that are essential for the role
- **Experience** (“What have I done?”) – relevant personal time spent practising this role or a similar role
- **Attitude** (“How shall I respond?”) – chosen responses to situations encountered in the role
- **Knowledge** (“What do I know?”) – facts, principles, processes that are learned through formal training and education or on-the-job
- **Skill** (“How do I apply the other elements?”) – putting it into practice and learning through experience

To develop a **PEAKS** framework, a family of job roles is examined to define the set of attributes for each **PEAKS** element. These attributes outline the things that are most important for performing each role in the particular organisation.

Each of the attributes can exist at different levels of maturity, and each role in a job family will require a different mix of maturity levels. For example, a risk analyst will need a high degree of competence in performing detailed quantitative risk analysis, but it is less important for a risk manager, and a Chief Risk Officer (CRO) might not need to know how to perform a risk analysis at all. On the other hand, understanding business strategy might not be necessary for a risk analyst, a risk manager will require some strategic awareness, but this would be essential for a CRO. So developing a **PEAKS** framework needs first to define the **required attributes** under each of the five **elements**, then for each job role we must determine the **level of maturity** that is required for each attribute.

The **PEAKS** framework can be applied practically to identify and measure current individual competence as a baseline from which to manage personal development. It can also be used to support recruitment by detailing the attributes required for a particular job role. Finally **PEAKS** can support team formation and development, by ensuring that each member has all the elements of competence needed in a high-performing team.

[This article represents Ruth Murray-Webster’s personal views and not those of KPMG and it is not intended to be interpreted as such.]

To provide feedback on this Briefing Note, or for more details on how to develop effective risk management, [contact the Risk Doctor \(info@risk-doctor.com\)](mailto:info@risk-doctor.com), or [visit the Risk Doctor website \(www.risk-doctor.com\)](http://www.risk-doctor.com).

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PMI commenced in Australia in 1997 and held its first Chapter Meeting on 15 April 1997. Today the Chapter has over 1,700+ members from a mixture of industries including, but not limited to: construction, engineering, banking, insurance, finance, IT, telecommunications, consulting and pharmaceutical. Approximately 50% of Australian PMI's members are PMPs. PMI is strongly supported by a majority of companies in Australia and internationally. The Sydney Chapter conducts regular chapter meetings, education and certification courses and runs an annual conference in an effort to promote the profession of Project Management within NSW and Australia.

The Critical Path is published bi-monthly by the PMI Sydney Chapter and is distributed to approx. 3,000 people. A limited number of advertising pages are accepted in each issue. For all advertising queries please contact the Communications Director at communications@pmisydney.org.

Visit our website for further information on *The Critical Path* - Publication & Content Dates for 2015.

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“A project without a critical path is like a ship without a rudder.”
(D. Meyer, Illinois Construction Law)



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