

Things That Successful Project Managers Never Say



Kelly Smith works at [CourseFinder](#), an Australian online courses resource. She also provides career advice for students and job seekers.

Project managers are creators, leaders and supervisors. It is in their hands to ensure a project plan has been prepared with exceptional

attention to detail, each group member has taken charge of their part, and the team is ready to give their best. In short, the job of a project manager is one characterized by high risk and high responsibility. If you're willing to take that risk, read on to learn about the things that never come out of the mouth of the project manager whose endeavors always end in success.

1. "We'll work it out. Somehow."

You have taken the lead, so you take the responsibility. Singling out the key idea and a clear goal of the project should mark the initial step of project preparation. Next, creating a detailed plan and polishing it in fine detail, including potential risks and their prevention, has to make the "to-do" list of a project manager. Also, not taking time to double check and make sure everything is in place is a recipe for disaster, not success.

2. "I think it's going to create profit. I hope so, at least."

One of the main components that make a great project manager is an ability to build a plan that, once implemented, is bound to create profit. Its leader has to not only be absolutely certain of the project's inevitable success, but also believe in pushing boundaries and breaking records – unless these traits are there, the manager may want to rethink their purpose in the company.

3. "We've got plenty of time to bring this project to life."

Time is money. A project manager who is set on making profit for the company lives their professional life by this motto, and makes sure the executive team is right there with them. This is why it's crucial for a project manager to emphasize the elusiveness of time and its value. And lastly, remember – the competition never sleeps! Don't let them take your spot.

4. "This project is going to be an experiment."

There is no room for misunderstandings, inaccuracies, ifs and buts. Taking up a certain task has to be backed up with a solid plan and actual conviction that it's going to work out. Each and every detail and specific feature of it has to be thoroughly thought over and reconsidered.

5. "Can you look at the project in your spare time?"

The current project that is being worked on and prepared for implementation is, by default, the priority. No project manager who is aware of the value of time as well as regular, and therefore effective, work can think otherwise.



It is the project manager on whom the potential "make or break" of an endeavor depends almost entirely. Equipped in this knowledge and the right approach to a given task, any project manager can be ahead of the game and face their new challenge in hopes, or rather in complete confidence, that it is going to pay off and bring the much expected profit.

"The Critical Path" Inside this Month's Issue

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Letter from the President



On behalf of the new PMI Westchester Board, I welcome all the members of PMI Westchester chapter to our new session of 2014-15. We kick off our next session on 9th September with speaker, Carol Summerfield – “Tips and Tricks for Effective Conflict Management.” As usual, our program team has a great line of speakers for the year. We are also planning to organize new networking sessions and education classes.

We are very proud to (shortly) share our new website with our PMI Westchester members and entire project managers’ community. This has been one of our topmost priorities since this past year and lot of hard work and coordination efforts were invested into getting this website up and running. I will like to thank our website managers, Rob Candee, and Edmond Ariori for their excellent team work and dedication for getting this project completed. I would also like to congratulate Brendan Horton, VP of Communications, who led the entire project from getting the requirements from all the board members, testing of the website and final deployment. All of our board members worked as a team during requirement gathering and testing. And finally, I will like to emphasize that this has been a total internal effort from our volunteers from initiation to the final deployment. Our new website is a great example of team work by our team of PMI Westchester volunteers.

Our fall education programs include our PMP Exam Prep Course (IONA College) and a two day Agile Course by Experis IT at Fordham University campus. Our PDD team is already working on the next year’s venue and theme for 2015 PPD event. We will share more news about the event during our next month meeting.

The next PMI Global congress will be held in warm and sunny Phoenix, 26th-28th October. It provides an opportunity to join professionals in project management from all industries and different levels of experience for this premier knowledge and networking event. I hope many of you will be able to join this event.

Our chapter is devoted to help our fellow project managers to build professionalism and excellence in the field of project management. We invite all of you to join our regular monthly event or other education offerings from our chapter. You can also contribute to this chapter by considering volunteer role to any of the leadership opportunities.

See you at the September Chapter Meeting!

Pawan Kumar, PMP
President
PMI Westchester

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Innovation is a Must for Project Success



Lisa Anderson, President of LMA Consulting Group, Inc., www.lma-consultinggroup.com, is a senior supply chain and operations executive and management consultant. To sign up for her free monthly newsletter containing tips and techniques for improving business performance, [click here](#)

In today's new normal business environment, innovation is a must for project success! Often, I hear my clients think "I've designed this project for success; now I'll hand it over to the worker bees to execute"; however, this approach is no longer enough. No wonder we have so many unfinished projects and disheartened project team members scattered throughout my clients! Instead, we must create a culture of innovation to ensure project success.

We must find a way for execution and innovation to live hand-in-hand in business, from the executive suites to the shift workers on the production floor. Certainly one possibility is to embrace the lean culture; however, I find there is almost more confusion than clarity among organizations in how to ensure all these "great" concepts yield results. Instead, think of innovation as deeply rooted in your culture. It is not complex or confusing. Innovation must start as culture change.

According to "Inside Steve's Brain" by Leander Kahney, a book about the late Steve Jobs and creative innovation, innovation doesn't have to be complex: *"Creativity is just connecting things. When you ask creative people how they did something, they feel a little guilty because they didn't really do it, they just saw something. It seemed obvious to them after a while. That's because they were able to connect experiences they've had and synthesize new things."*

Thus, innovation is not some complex, non-understandable phenomenon. In addition to pure creativity, it's about re-packaging—literally and figuratively—by connecting the dots in a new way and seeing trends and hidden profit opportunities. Who is typically the best suited to find these types of opportunities? Not the executive suite! Not managers! Yes, it is the people who perform the work – project team members. Thus, why would we think it would work to give them "what is best", tell them to execute and typically, although we voice support, we don't support with our actions when it gets tough (such as cross-functional turf battles or ideas affecting month-end performance)?

So, instead of following this path to work hard yet leave many half-finished projects hanging around, we need to create and implement a culture of innovation. How do we go about doing that? There are three basic ways: 1) Focus on the customer. 2) Value your project team members' input. 3) Support trials & failure 4) Encourage flexibility

Focus on the customer. No project sponsor would say they aren't thinking about the customer's needs but do they? Are they doing what they think the customer wants or are they asking those closest to the customer (project team members) and the customers themselves? Instead of assuming you've completed this step, take a step back and talk with the project team members who interface directly with the customer and those which directly support customer needs. You'll be surprised what you find.

Value your project team members' input. It might sound strange for a discussion about innovation; however, the best people will create innovative ideas, products, and services. Ask your project team members for ideas, input, threats etc. Do NOT ignore them when they push back. See your team members as your customers and dig into what they tell you. Listening is the 80/20 of creating a culture of innovation.

Support trials & failure – One of the best ways you can show that you value the ideas of your project team members is to give them room to try them out. The quickest way to kill a culture of innovation is to encourage ideas but not follow through and support them. It is much harder to implement than it sounds! In my experience, the first time an idea fails and causes month-end issues or customer problems, innovation is stifled.

To counter this, we must reward mistakes as it is a critical component of cultivating a culture of innovation. At best, I see this philosophy at 20% of my clients. If it were easy, we'd all have a culture of innovation. Give your employees the tools and knowledge and get out of the way. Celebrate failure. If they haven't failed, they haven't pushed the envelope far enough. This will encourage further innovation.

Encourage flexibility: Do not become married to one idea, one product, one customer's perception, etc. Instead, create solutions that build in flexibility — think of the nontraditional "and" of two, seemingly opposite ideas. For example, instead of thinking that shortening the project timeline will require an increase in resources for the project; consider thinking about ideas for achieving the "and" – shortening the timeline without requiring more resources. Perhaps there is an overlooked idea which can be uncovered if the project team brainstormed. What if you encouraged a devil's advocate process to bring out potential roadblocks upfront? Ask your project team to think about how to build flexibility into the process. It will give you many more alternative paths to success when you run into an obstacle or the situation changes due to external forces (which happen daily in the vast majority of my clients).

Think about creating a culture of innovation, and you won't be disappointed. No one can do it alone; why not get your entire team thinking of how to "win"?

Why Do You Need Agile Skills Today?



Greg Smith is an Agile coach and trainer who specializes in the practical adoption of Agile methods. During his career Greg has held positions as a Product Manager, Program Manager, Development Manager, Scrum Master, and Project Manager. Greg has helped several Fortune 500 companies and major institutions move to Agile including Exxon Mobil, JP Morgan Chase, StubHub, Stanford University, First Data Corporation, Fannie Mae, Expeditors International, Lexis Nexis, The Joint Commission, and TD Ameritrade.

Why do you need Agile training today? Agile has become important because it is no longer a niche methodology. We know Agile has become mainstream because it has received support for use by the federal government. A 2012 report from the U.S. Government Accountability Office found that Agile practices are effective, even on government projects (<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-12-681>).

PMI has also recognized the value of Agile, establishing Agile Practitioner credentials and embracing the use of Agile in parallel with PMBOK.

I believe the statement above is paramount to success when using Agile. As project managers we need to understand that Agile provides numerous best practices for software projects, but also understand that Agile does not cover a complete project management lifecycle. Numerous traditional techniques should be used in parallel with Agile to ensure project success. Too many people move to Agile and throw away all existing practices. Agile was never meant to be one-stop shopping for all practices related to project management.

Guess Who Fills in the Gaps?

		Process Group				
		Initiating	Planning	Executing	Monitor/Control	Closing
Knowledge Management Area	Integration	Charter	Create Plan	Direct and manage execution	Monitor/control work Integrated/Change Control	Close project/phase
	Scope	Initial Scope	Elicit requirements Refine Scope Create WBS			
	Time		Define Activities Sequence Resource Estimates Create Schedule			
	Cost	Funding for Planning	Cost Estimates Prioritize Budget			
	Quality		Quality Plan	Perform Quality Assurance work	Quality Control	
	Resource		Resource/Staff Plan	Acquire project team Develop project team		
	Communications	I.D. Stakeholders		Distribute information	Manage stakeholders Performance Reporting	
	Risk		Risk Assessment/ Risk Planning		Monitor/Control Risks	
	Procurement		Plan purchases	Request seller responses	Manage procurements	Close contracts

PMBOK® is still good, mmmkay?

Figure 1 - PMBOK still provides value when using Agile
 Agile is also important because it works. Figure 2 lists the benefits noted by companies using Agile (VersionOne Agile 2013 Survey).

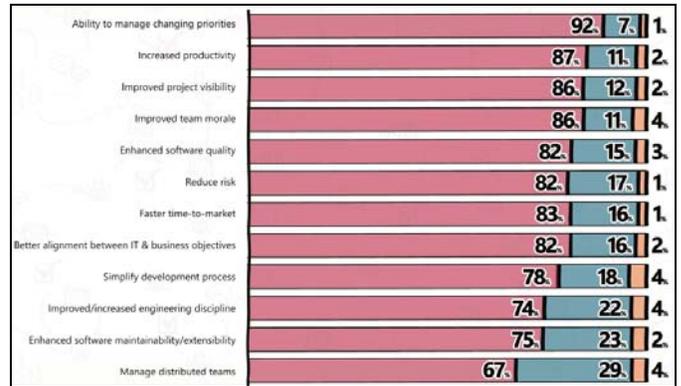


Figure 2 - Teams using Agile attest to the value provided

So why aren't more project managers and teams using Agile? Because teams often believe they need a perfect environment to use Agile. Perfect is often construed to mean everyone sits in the same room, the customer lives with the team, team members only work on one project at a time, and so on. These are good team attributes to set Agile up for success, but these attributes are not required to use Agile. I often work with teams that cannot support ideal conditions and we still achieve many of the benefits listed in Figure 2.

Lastly, you should use Agile because it works in practice, not only in surveys. In the last ten years I have worked with teams using Agile from non-profits to Fortune 500s to start-ups. I have seen Agile work in the energy sector, commercial software, eCommerce, online trading, government agencies, universities, banking, healthcare, and food/beverage. When applied within the context of a given business, Agile will help you deliver sooner, with reduced waste and improved quality.

PAI Project Administration Institute Planning, tracking, and reporting for project managers & executives

In tough economic times we need to take advantage of economies of scale. Consolidating multiple MS Project responsibilities in the hands of a single expert can save \$100K's per year!

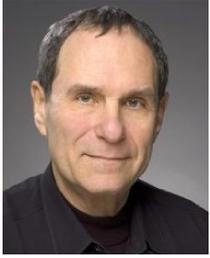
1. Call or email for our simple Excel cost/benefit analysis.
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Take a Break to Improve Your Effectiveness



George Pitagorsky, PMP, is a master of process who understands the way process, technology and people come together to accomplish objectives. He has advised organizations on the implementation and improvement of project management practices and methodologies. He has extensive experience in the creation and

implementation of process improvements in financial, manufacturing, government and professional service environments. He advises and coaches individuals to help them to achieve and sustain optimal performance.

You are working in a high profile project. Your team has been working long hours for several months, including a good number of weekends, and doing a great job.

Vacations have been put off until the project is done (another six months, if things go well). The project is on schedule and budget. Remaining activities are to finish the development work, perform quality assurance and roll out the product to its users.

The phone rings and it's your project sponsor. There has been a change at the highest levels; some political issues coupled with a new project that is in the wings and needs to be expedited makes it necessary for you to get done in three months instead of six.

What do you say?

- Yes sir
- Are you nuts? No way.
- Let me take a look at the options and I'll get back to you
- Nothing. You hang up on her and cry.

Clearly, your best choice is 3. You are smart and experienced. You know that a change like this needs some clear thinking and some quality time to do it.

What do you do next?

- Polish your resume and call your favorite recruiter
- Take some time to relax, meditate and/or work out
- Assemble your team and give them the news
- Immediately review and begin changing the plan

The Best Answer - Take a Break

Here, the best answer is 2. Take a break. This is counter intuitive to most people but it is the right thing to do because you need a clear and relaxed mind to address the situation in the most effective way. Stressing about it and trying to figure it out in the shortest amount of time is counterproductive.

The Effect of Rest and Recovery on Productivity

"Paradoxically, the best way to get more done may be to spend more time doing less. A new and growing body of multidisciplinary research shows that strategic renewal — including daytime workouts, short afternoon naps, longer sleep hours, more time away from the office and longer, more frequent vacations — boosts productivity, job performance and, of course, health." Tony Schwartz, February 9, 2013 in the NY Times

Relax! You'll Be More Productive. Let go of the attempt to figure out complex problems (after a reasonable amount of effort) and solutions will emerge.



It is widely accepted, though less widely practiced, that rest and recovery is necessary to allow the body and mind to integrate the effects of exercise and to rejuvenate after an exercise or work session. Pushing through fatigue, whether using aids like caffeine and sugar or just raw will power may work in the short term, but the results are an increase in fatigue and a reduction in productivity and performance.

For project managers, and knowledge workers of any kind, mental acuity and the productivity it brings to creativity and decision making are critical to success. Rest and recovery increase mental acuity.

In addition, problem solving, planning, designing and other creative tasks are best done while relaxed and open, as opposed to exclusively focused on intellectual and analytical effort. Breakthroughs often occur in the shower or on a walk in the country while not thinking about the problem in a left brain, linear and analytical way. Letting go and letting the often untapped right brain, intuitive and holistic mental functions operate leads to AHA moments. AHA moments lead to creative solutions and effective decisions.

Productive Breaks

We can divide breaks into long, intermediate and mini categories. The long term break is a day or more off. The intermediate break is an hour or more. The mini break can be as short as five or ten minutes.

All three are important and all three have similar benefits - rest, relaxation and recovery from intensive work and mental clarity.

Vacations and retreats are periods when you get out of the work mindset and let the mind refocus and the body rejuvenate.

(Take a Break To Improve Your Effectiveness continued on page 6)

Take A Break To Improve Your Effectiveness

Lunch hours and breaks are as important as longer breaks. Get away from your desk and take a walk or run, meditate, do some yoga or other exercise, take care of personal errands, take a nap or sit under a shady tree. The distance these breaks provide from focused thinking and working changes your perspective. Physical exercise, a nap and some healthy food renew your energy.

The mini break is a quick stepping back from intensive work. Every hour to hour and a half make it a point to stop, get up, move around and relax. Just a few minutes will give you the moment you need to refocus, relax and go back to work refreshed and with a more effective perspective on what you are doing and how you are doing it.

Meditation

If you meditation into your breaks, they will be even more powerful. Meditation is a mental exercise that cultivates a calm mind, results in physical health benefits, enhances concentration and cultivates the ability to objectively observe what is occurring in and around the meditator's mind. Focusing on the breath or another mental object while letting go of any thoughts that might arise is a technique that is a powerful addition to anyone's personal productivity tool box.

Stepping Back and Being in Flow

Breaks provide rest and recovery which enhances energy. Of at least equal importance is the stepping back to change your perspective.

There is great power in getting totally focused on a task, getting lost in it, being in flow or in the zone and experiencing what Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi described as "being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you're using your skills to the utmost."¹

As long as you are in flow and your flow is taking you in the right direction, there is no need to step back. But flow is not sustainable for very much longer than an hour or two. After a while, fatigue sets in and the concentration required to sustain the flow experience is lost. When this happens, the time is right for a break. Instead, many people push on and end up working less efficiently, often finding that they have to rework whatever they have accomplished during that forced march period.

Consciously step back. Review what you have accomplished. See it in the context of the bigger picture of the project as a whole. Clear your mind. Refresh your body and then, when you are ready take on the next task or continue the one you took a break from.

PMI Westchester New Members & Certifications!!!

PMI Westchester would like to welcome the following new members to our chapter family.

Carlos Serrano	Chaquanna Cotton
David Corcoran	David Varon
Eileen Fanfarillo	Emanuel Marescot
Frank Steinebrunner	Glenn Marchi
Joseph Ewoodzie	Kenneth Leeman
Lalit Jagtiani	Leigh Richardson
Lyle Hendrick	Manivasakan Palaniyandi
Mark Baron	Michael Shost
Richard Antash	Sharon Gorman
Sheila Tortorici	Stephanie Mann Marinello
Victor Madubuko	

And... we also like to congratulate the following members on their new certifications!!

Project Management Professional (PMP)

Margaret Cavalluzzi,
Paul Cregan,
Kathleen Irwin,
Kim Snyder

Certified Associated in Project Management

Richard Antash

Chapter Meeting – September 9, 2014 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Topic: Tips And Tricks For Effective Conflict Management

The very nature of project management brings conflict. We constantly see conflict over resources, scope, approach, deliverables, roles, and priorities. Conflict is often dreaded - but it doesn't have to be. Managed well, conflict improves project success. In this session a model of conflict management will be provided, along with some tips and tricks for more effectively managing conflict as project manager.

Featured Speaker - Carol Sommerfield, Ph.D., PMP, SPHR

Dr. Carol Sommerfield loves change and transformation and heads a practice that helps individuals and organizations do both well. On the individual side Carol is a full service career consultant providing a wide range of services to help people at any point in their careers. On the organization side Carol works with organizations to unleash the potential and power of their greatest asset – their people. She specializes in increasing productivity and engagement through mentoring, coaching, team building, managing organizational change, and using personality assessments to increase individual and organizational effectiveness. Carol is also the co-founder and a vice president of Sparkup, a career and entrepreneurship accelerator for women.

Location

The Royal Palace Restaurant

77 Knollwood Road, White Plains / Greenburgh, NY 10607
(at the south end of the Greenburgh Shopping Plaza)
Phone: 914.289.1988

Agenda

- 6:00 | Registration, Networking & Dinner
- 6:45 | Announcements, Introduction of Program
- 7:00 | Guest Speaker or Internal Program (1 PDU)
- 8:00 | Participants network
- 8:15 | SIG programs; PMO, Quality (1 PDU)

Meeting Sponsors

- Academy Leadership
- The IT Metrics & Productivity Institute (ITMPI)

Fees

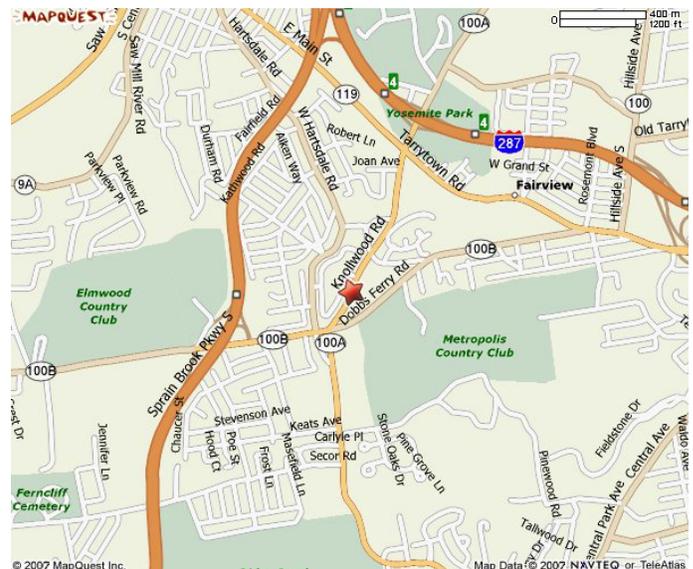
- Chapter members – \$20
- Non-members – \$30
- We accept cash or checks. Sorry, no credit card

Directions:

From I-287

- Take I-287 to exit 4.
- At the end of the exit ramp turn SOUTH and go 6/10 of a mile to the traffic light at Stadium Road (sign may not be visible).
- Turn LEFT onto Stadium, go 50 yards, then RIGHT into the unused end of the plaza parking lot.
- Go to the far right hand corner of the lot where it connects to the part with the stores. Pass the stores and the movie theater on your left until you come to the Royal Palace.

Map to Royal Palace Restaurant



Upcoming PMI Westchester and Other Educational Events

September 2014 Breakfast Roundtable Meeting

Topic: Skills for Running a Virtual Meeting -- (This is a REMOTE ONLY Breakfast Roundtable! You must register by 26 May 2014 - e-mail tcsmithsr@verizon.net)

Facilitator: Paula Cancro, Assistant Professor, The College of Westchester: Business/Office Technologies, General Education

Date: Tuesday, September 25th - 7:30 to 8:45 AM

October 2014 Chapter Meeting

Topic: What Drives You? Improve Relationships by Uncovering Motivational Value Systems

Date: Tuesday, October 14, 2014

Speaker: Wayne Botha, MBA, PMP

Location: The Royal Palace - 77 Knollwood Rd Greenburgh, NY (in Greenburgh Shopping Plaza, next to Cinema 100.) Phone: (914) 289-1988

October 2014 Breakfast Roundtable Meeting

Topic: Quality management - area of knowledge, how different people interpret it.

Please join our discussions and share your skills for how best to run a virtual meeting -- (This is a REMOTE ONLY Breakfast Roundtable! You must register by 26 May 2014 - e-mail tcsmithsr@verizon.net)

Facilitator: Joanne Guerriero, PMP

Date: Tuesday, October 28th - 7:30 to 8:45 AM



COMING IN NOVEMBER 2014 – PMI Agile Certified Practitioner Preparation Class

PMI Westchester has asked Experis IT to provide a PMI Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP) Prep Course in West Harrison, NY for both members and non-members. Learn the skills necessary to lead Agile projects in the workplace in this intensive 2-day course which also prepares participants for the PMI Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP) certification exam. This a non-technical course that focuses on what you need to know to prepare for the PMI-ACP certification exam, including:

Date: 13 November 2014 – 8:00AM

Location: Fordham University – Westchester Campus, Room 142, 400 Westchester Avenue, West Harrison, NY

Fees: **Through 15 October 2014:** \$995 for members of the Westchester Chapter and other PMI Chapters, \$1095 for non-members. **After 16 October 2014:** \$1095 for members of the Westchester Chapter and other PMI Chapters, \$1195 for non-members.

Registration CLOSING 30 October 2014!!!

COMING IN OCTOBER 2014 - PMP Exam Preparation Class

The PMI Westchester Chapter is pleased to announce another PMP Exam Preparation course with instructor John Sherlock, who will assist the PMP Certification candidate in preparing for the PMP Exam. This course will be offered on the Westchester campus of Iona College in New Rochelle, NY.

Date: Saturdays, 18 October through 22 November 2014 -- 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Location: Iona College Hagan School of Business, Room 101, 715 North Avenue, New Rochelle, NY

Fees: **Through 18 September 2014:** \$700 for members of the Westchester Chapter and other PMI Chapters, \$800 for non-members.

After 18 September 2014: \$800 for members of the Westchester Chapter and other PMI Chapters, \$900 for non-members.

Payment must be made in advance via PayPal or by check (payable to PMI Westchester). This fee includes:

- The Andy Crowe textbook "The PMP Exam: How to Pass on Your First Try" (a \$99 value),
- The associated course workbook,
- A 6-page Quick Reference Guide (\$19 value) study flash cards (\$29 value),
- "Conversations on the PMP Exam" - a 5-disc CD set (\$49 value), as well as
- A 6-month subscription to the Velociteach InSite Practice Test A (\$89 value).

The student will be required to purchase separately the PMI PMBOK (Project Management Body of Knowledge) - Fifth Edition, on which the PMP Exam is based.

The Critical Path

The Critical Path is PMI Westchester's free monthly newsletter, published as a service for members and non-members alike. We're always looking for your contributions. To submit an article for publication, please contact the newsletter editor listed below:

Brenda Horton – Chief Newsletter Editor
newsletter@pmiwestchester.org

Kathy Steuber – Co-Newsletter Editor
ksteuberpmp@aol.com

Nat Postrigan – Co-Newsletter Editor
postrigann09@gmail.com