This month, our members-owners will elect new Board Members who will help drive the direction of our local PMI Chapter. The San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of PMI is the 15th largest chapter of over 200 worldwide, with more than 2330 members.

During the month of February, the Board and Operation’s Leadership teams met for a Team Building and Strategy Session which culminated in a list of priority action items for the next 100 days. Among the initiatives was a management reorganization to streamline operations with fewer positions to bring sharper focus on the Board’s key strategic initiatives. The change in Operations realignment will result in team members focused on member ownership linkage to increase program events and business development to respond to the San Francisco Bay Area job market, pool of volunteers and predominance of Project Management.

At this time, we want to thank the current outgoing Board members for their service and commitment to the chapter.

- President, Malika Malika
- Treasurer, Scott Merillat
- Secretary, Angela Plummer

These officers, over the last year, have represented the Chapter’s member-owners with strategic thinking and tireless efforts to increase the credibility and visibility in the project management community.

As an all-volunteer organization, your dedication and that of all of our volunteers, makes a significant difference and is very much appreciated. As a volunteer, you will develop your leadership skills, learn more about a particular facet of business and help drive the direction of our Chapter’s future. If this sounds interesting and you’d like to know more or get involved we encourage our member-owners to attend any of our regularly scheduled board meetings, which occur in the morning on the third Saturday of each month.

Email bod@pmi-sfbac.org for monthly meeting location information. To familiarize yourself with recent board activities and governing policies, please visit our board governance page. We look forward to seeing you at an upcoming board meeting or at one of our many chapter events.

Regards,
An Introduction to Ethics and Project Management

By Michael Wood

Every major profession—accounting, law, medicine and yes, project management—subscribes to a set of ethics and supporting code of conduct. Ethics is a broad and extensive concept. Universities like Warton and Harvard even offer masters and doctoral programs in ethics. There is much similarity in each profession’s definition of ethics and professional conduct, and yet they are not identical. This raises the question as to whether ethics is an absolute concept or is relative to the culture, organization, profession, environment, times and more.

In addition, there are different philosophies related to ethics ranging from the pragmatic to the situational interpretations. Clearly, within a profession, compliance to each’s code of conduct is critical to maintaining your professional standing in that space. This applies to those credentialed in project management; short of a formal complaint or review by the credentialing organization happening, there is much grey area that needs to be explored as to what constitutes ethical behavior within the day-to-day oversight and management of a project.

For me, ethical professionals–beyond being honest, responsible, respectful and fair–share some common traits when it comes to acting on and resolving ethical issues (definitions adapted from Merriam Webster’s dictionary):

- **Clarity and discernment**: The ability to grasp and understand situations clearly, accurately and objectively.
- **Superior judgment**: The act or process of forming an opinion or making a decision after careful thought based on accurately discerning the facts, issues and impact of the decision made on the future.
- **Integrity**: Being honest and fair.
- **Intestinal fortitude**: The inner strength of mind and will that enable you to act in the face of adversity.
- **Courage to do what is right**: The ability to do something that you know is correct and appropriate regardless of the risk to yourself.

To be sure, the sum of these traits sets leaders apart from those who are merely in charge. However, they only can be observed through a person’s actions and behaviors, not merely their declarations. This brings us to the concept of ethical behavior and decision making. At businessdictionary.com, ethical behavior is defined as follows: “Acting in ways consistent with what society and individuals typically think are good values.”

Most situations we encounter each day have easy answers related to doing the ethical and right thing. But sometimes in projects—as in life—we find ourselves in a situation that is complex, intimidating and troubling; where we are not sure of what the right decision and action should be. This is often called “being on the horns of a dilemma.” It doesn’t
matter if we are in charge or merely aware of the issues in play. What does matter is that we believe that our actions can make a difference to the outcome.

For a person of high ethical integrity, these situations haunt them until closure is reached. These situations often are fraught with tradeoffs, risks and consequences that can have dire impacts on self, others and organizations. Questions like…

- Should I say something?
- Is it really any of my business?
- If I do nothing, am I too at fault?
- What if I am wrong?

…can flood our minds and emotions. Beyond that, we might even find ourselves trying to rationalize the situation in order to justify that it’s okay. The Ethics Scoreboard Rule Book provides a list of typical rationalizations as follows on its page entitled “Ethics Fallacies, Myths, Distortions and Rationalizations” (see the link for a more complete explanation of each):

- The Golden Rationalization: “Everybody does it.”
- The Gore Misdirection: “If it isn’t illegal, it’s ethical.”
- The Compliance Dodge: hiding behind rules or regulations
- The Biblical Rationalizations: “Judge not, lest ye not be judged,” and “Let him who is without sin cast the first stone” Or “Who am I to judge?”
- The “Tit for Tat” Excuse: Responding to unethical behavior with more unethical behavior; getting even (“They had it coming.”)
- The Trivial Trap (also known as “The Slippery Slope”): “No harm, no foul.” The cause is just.
- The King’s Pass: The person involved is too important.
- The Dissonance Drag: Dealing with the unethical or wrong actions of someone you respect; looking the other way.
- The Saint's License: “It's for a good cause”
- The Futility Illusion: “If I don't do it, somebody else will.”
- The Consistency Obsession: It is the dogma to be followed.
- Ethical Vigilantism: “The company owes me. I am entitled.”
- Hamm’s Excuse: “It wasn't my fault.”
- The Comparative Virtue Excuse: “There are worse things.”
- Woody’s Excuse: “The heart wants what the heart wants.”

And of course, although not listed above, this is one of my favorites: “It wouldn't be politically correct to say or do something.”

When you find yourself invoking these types of rationalizations, it is a sign that you perhaps need to step back and challenge your own premises, fears and motivations.

For those in positions of authority and power–like being a project manager–the actions taken can have far-ranging implications. Luckily, when project managers find ourselves on the horns of an ethical dilemma–where their soul searching still leaves them in doubt–there are resources that can help them work through the complexities and hopefully help them come to a prudent and ethical decision.
PMI provides one of these resources via its paper entitled “Ethical Decision-Making Framework.” The publication presents a process you might find useful in reaching an appropriate course of action as follows (taken directly from the publication):

1.) Assessment: Make sure you have all the facts about the ethical dilemma and ask these questions:
   – Does it abide by the law?
   – Does it align with the PMI Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct?
   – Does it agree with your employer’s and client’s code of ethics and conduct?
   – Does it align with your ethical values and those of the surrounding culture?

If it does not abide by the law, seek legal counsel. If the answers to the above questions provide substantial facts to make a case, go to the next step. If you are not sure, you may need to gather more facts or ask a trusted person for advice.

2.) Alternatives: Consider your choices by asking the following questions:
   – Have you listed possible alternative choices?
   – Have you considered pros and cons for each possible choice?

If the answers to the above questions result in a viable solution, go to the next step to analyze your candidate decision. If not, you may need to gather more facts and complete your research.

3.) Analysis: Identify your candidate decision and test its validity with these questions:
   – Will your candidate decision have a positive impact or prevent harm to project managers, PMI staff or volunteers, clients, your employer’s organization, other stakeholders, the environment, or future generations?
   – Does your candidate decision take cultural differences into account?
   – Looking back, will this decision seem like a good idea a year from now?
   – Are you free from external influence to make this decision?
   – Are you in a calm and unstressed state of mind?

If the possible impacts are acceptable, proceed to check your decision against ethical principles in the next step. If not, consider taking time to test another candidate decision, review your options and/or your case.

4.) Application: Apply ethical principles to your candidate decision by asking these questions:
   – Would your choice result in the greatest good?
   – Would your choice treat others as you would like to be treated?
   – Would your choice be fair and beneficial to all concerned?

If these or other traditional philosophical questions evoke doubts or seem to create a new dilemma, you might need to reconsider your decision, review the facts, the options and the implications.

If the answer is “yes” and your candidate decision seems consistent with other ethical principles, move to the next step to decide and take action.

5.) Action: Make a decision after considering these questions:
   – Are you willing to accept responsibility for your decision?
   – Could you make your decision public and feel good about it?
– Are you ready to act?

If you are comfortable with your decision, take action. If not, retrace these steps to discover a better solution.

Having practiced as a CPA and having worked as a project manager for over 40 years, I have come to believe that those of us who serve in a professional capacity, who garner the public or organizational trust need to take ethics and ethical behavior seriously. For me, it is a question of character that shapes who I am.

- What are your thoughts on the role ethics should play in our personal and professional lives?

– What issues and hard choices have you faced when caught in the throes of an ethical dilemma?

Your thoughts and insights matter.

© 2016 Michael R. Wood. Michael is a Business Process Improvement & IT Strategist Independent Consultant. He is creator of the business process-improvement methodology called HELIX and founder of The Natural Intelligence Group, a strategy, process improvement and technology consulting company. He is also a CPA, has served as an Adjunct Professor in Pepperdine’s Management MBA program, an Associate Professor at California Lutheran University, and on the boards of numerous professional organizations. Mr. Wood is a sought after presenter of HELIX workshops and seminars in both the U.S. and Europe.


Ethics: The Guiding Star

By Deepa Bhide

Mohit lay still on the bed, his mother holding on to the life in his still body, hoping that he would, in his usual babble, utter a word that beckoned her. Her gaze was riveted on Mohit, and my gaze was riveted on her, as it seemed only yesterday that she had brought Mohit as an infant to my clinic.

“How is my baby, doctor?” she asked, keenly observing my expressions as my eyes scanned Mohit’s reports.

I looked up and said, “Well, I first have some questions for you and your family. Can we schedule some time to go over the details?” I had evaded the answer.

“Oh, is there any problem in my baby? He is slow but smiles and plays!” She seemed persistent to get my assurance.

“Let’s plan to talk about this during our conversation. I will be able to give you a better picture then.” With that, I tapped the bell to signal the next patient in my cabin.

Mohit was the first child of the couple. Mohit’s mother had been unwell for the most part of her pregnancy and had an unusually difficult delivery, too. At birth, Mohit was diagnosed with a case of severe cerebral palsy with mental
disability (damage to the developing brain causing impairment of movement and below-average intellectual abilities). This was going to be difficult for the parents to accept.

Mohit’s parents and his family were prompt in arriving for our scheduled conversation. During an hour-long discussion, we went over the history, tests and baby’s development. I found it difficult but not impossible to convince the parents about Mohit’s abnormality. Surprisingly, they seemed to have accepted the diagnosis and wanted to know more about the special care that was essential.

I created a plan of care for Mohit and delineated each of the activities, such as referrals to other specialists (physical therapists, counselors, etc.), follow-up protocol, dietary needs, signs/symptoms that parents needed to watch out for and so on. I also gave them an idea of quality of life and cost implications.

“How long will Mohit survive, doctor?” Mohit’s mom asked, trying to wipe her tears.

“Well, that’s a difficult question. As you see we will do our best,” I assured her. Mohit’s mother was regular in getting Mohit for the follow-up visits. The family followed the care plan diligently and it was heartening to see the support, both psychological and financial, that parents enjoyed from their family and community. During these visits—apart from going over Mohit’s condition, his medications and care needs—we would also go over Mohit’s care plan and assess his needs of preventive and therapeutic interventions (vaccinations, etc.), and additional resources/expertise needed.

At times, I did see Mohit’s mother vexed as she would charge in my cabin, holding Mohit in her hand: “Doctor, Mohit doesn’t listen to me and vomits the food! Does he not know how much of my effort is behind it? Please tell him. Now!” insisting that I convince Mohit, in spite of knowing very well that I couldn’t.

The second time, she said, “You know what doctor, Mohit just called my name. He recognizes me and knows how to call by my name. I knew he will improve.” I would listen to her, amazed and overwhelmed! In spite of regular follow-up care, the disease was surging ahead and Mohit had frequent hospital admissions. Every admission rendered him weak. As Mohit shuttled between emergency room and ward, his family’s distress to see his suffering had not escaped my eyes.

Soon Mohit was 10 years old… he had become the whole and soul of his parent’s life. And then one day, the eventuality knocked at the door. Mohit aspirated his meal and started to gasp for breath. Barely able to breathe, he had to be admitted in the emergency room. An x-ray revealed a patch of pneumonia that was consequent to aspiration. Our assessment of Mohit’s condition backed by examination and reports suggested that the recovery, if at all possible, was going to be slow and painful. The prognosis was guarded.

Mohit’s life could be prolonged with medications and the overall treatment, but it would also compromise his already compromised quality of life. It would put added pressure on parents and family from a time, effort and financial perspective. Yet, as a physician, by following the protocols, I was going to treat Mohit and save his life.

I remembered my professor’s words: “When faced with challenging situations, having a good insight into patient’s status (nature of the disease and prognosis), the right approach in treatment–empathy while talking to both the patient and his family, and serving in their best interest–is critical”

My team in ER suggested: “Mohit is unable to breath and needs assisted ventilation. We will set up an intensive
monitoring for him and keep you informed of his condition. We have also informed Dr. Rao, and he will be here any moment.” I agreed with their assessment and stepped out of the ER. Mohit’s vitals were fluctuating, and his latest reports suggested a multi-organ failure. Medications had become futile. We knew that Mohit did not have much time now.

Seeing me stepping out of the ER, Mohit’s mother jumped at me: “How is Mohit?” I sat down in a chair next to her, realizing how difficult it would be for her to accept the reality. As a friend, I was not blind to the suffering that Mohit and his family were undergoing; but as a doctor, I was committed to follow my ethics—to try my best to treat the patient.

“Mohit is serious, very serious. But we are trying. Please be assured that our team is doing its best. I would like to discuss Mohit’s condition with one of you.” And with that I walked out of the waiting hall with Mohit’s father in tow. My assistant and I went over with him on Mohit’s condition. We showed him the latest reports and scans and explained the prognosis to him.

“I know what you are saying doctor, and I can understand. I must thank you for all the support and commitment that you and your team are giving us in these final moments. Mohit has been an integral part of our life for the last 10 years, and it will be difficult to accept that he will be no more in us. There will be a void that cannot be filled. You have done your best, doc. Thank you for helping us out, keeping us informed about Mohit’s condition and guiding us all through out so far. You used your expertise and skills to help us manage Mohit.

You created an environment of empathy and warmth, and we felt safe in handing over Mohit in your hands. We understand that Mohit’s case was a complex one, and all throughout, you involved us in the decision-making process. That boosted our confidence in your capabilities. I am sure you knew this moment was the reality of his life, but you lent us hope while still avoiding any false assurances. You are a friend and a doctor, and you have lived up to both the capacities. Thank you very much.” And with that, he left the room.

What had I done? I had followed my ethics and standards of practice. In my capacity as a physician, I had tried my best in treating Mohit. Tears welled in my eyes as saw him leaving. Within a few hours from my talk with Mohit’s father, Mohit succumbed to the illness, and it was all over.

Mohit was a case of severe cerebral palsy with both physical and mental retardation with a life-threatening respiratory failure. Guided by evidence-based medicine protocols, we had done our best in treating Mohit, right from the time of his diagnosis. Eventually, the disease process had claimed his life.

**The Code of Conduct**

The Project Management Institute’s Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct are meant to guide a project manager in his/her day-to-day work and help him with tough decisions. The codes offer guidance in the way a project manager can conduct himself in the face of adversity.

In events of seemingly unfavorable project outcomes, principles such as responsibility, fairness and honesty can help project managers uphold integrity/credibility with the client and his team. Adversity in a project can challenge team motivation. The client confidence takes a toll, too. In such situations, it is important to both work with the client to reinstate his lost confidence and—by presenting a realistic picture—be able to get him to work on options seeking a positive outcome.
The project manager is seen to be the leader by the client and team alike. The added responsibility could be overwhelming. In such situations, the project manager should maintain equanimity and avoid pressing the panic button. Focusing on the best practices of project management backed by the right behavior/ethics is usually the right way to manage and successfully sail through these challenges.

Defining the current state/prognosis of the project with the team, creating a definitive action plan, working collaboratively with the client, periodic assessments and decision making are, in my opinion, a few proven and helpful techniques. In conditions of constraint and compromise, consistent efforts to plan, investigate and engage with complexity can help the project manager in giving an ethical mandate.

Mohit was gone, but his father’s words had reinforced my trust in my profession and its codes of ethics!

© 2016 Deepa Bhide. Dr. Deepa Bhide, PMP is a physician and currently an independent healthcare IT and project management consultant. She has a postgraduate degree in Pediatrics and Neonatology from the University of Health Sciences, India. Deepa is an advocate of using project management in healthcare and related domains. She has worked extensively in the confluence of clinical medicine, IT and project management domains with hands-on experience in managing projects from conception to closure.


Ethics and Project Success

By Michael O’Brochta

Michael O’Brochta

I have concluded that ethical behavior is required for project success; more than a “nice to have,” but absolutely required. My conclusion stems from decades of managing projects in organizations where the outcomes depended not just on me, but also on myriad other team members, sponsors, customers and stakeholders. My conclusion stems from considerable study of the leading contributors to project success, and it stems from a lifelong interest in the subject of ethics (I am currently serving as the Chair of the Ethics Member Advisory Group for the Project Management Institute).

My thinking is that a successful project requires leadership, which requires followers, which requires trust, which requires ethical behavior. Therefore, an absence of ethical behavior undermines project success.

The Leadership Component

Let’s jump into the middle of that line of progressive thought to the leadership component. Since most projects are structured as some form of a matrix where the project manager has less formal positional authority than responsibility, success will come down in large measure to the project manager’s ability to lead.

In matrix environments, followers and (for that matter) stakeholders in general have numerous choices for how they spend their time. Indeed, multiple projects may simultaneously be competing for their time. At the end of the day,
followers gravitate toward leadership.

In his bestselling 1998 book Leadership Skills for Project Managers, Jeffrey Pinto stated that “the best scheduling techniques, risk management, scope development, project control and resource provisions will not ensure project success in the face of poor project leadership.” I am delighted that this observation is currently reflected in the PMI Talent Triangle, where leadership receives equal prominence with technical project management, and with strategic and business management.

It’s All About Trust
The Leadership Challenge written by James Kouzes and Barry Posner, which continues to be a bestseller after four editions and 20 years in print, is the gold standard for research-based leadership and is the premier resource on becoming a leader. The text informs us that leadership requires trust: “It’s clear that if people anywhere are to willingly follow someone—whether it be into battle or into the boardroom, the front office or the front lines—they first want to assure themselves that the person is worthy of their trust.”

It is an absence of trust in leadership that is making headlines regarding the tainted water crisis unfolding in Flint, Michigan. In that horrible situation, we learned that citizens have been drinking water tainted with poisonous levels of lead, and we learned that they were given false assurances about their water quality by many of the very officials entrusted with responsibility for water safety.

Corrective action was not taken until a persistent university professor and his independent team of scientists tested the water and sounded the alarm. The loss of leadership trust by the residents of Flint was so great that some of them took to the streets in protest. One sign protested the business the city wanted to hire to test the water—and instead supported the independent university professor (whom they trusted) who sounded the alarm.

Additionally, it was just over 100 years ago when the Titanic sank in the North Atlantic Ocean after colliding with an iceberg. History informs us that, like the current water disaster in Flint, an absence of leadership trust was at the heart of the Titanic disaster. One of the Titanic’s passengers noticed a mariner filling a bucket with tap water and asked why he was doing that. The mariner explained that he was supposed to take the seawater’s temperature to assess the likelihood of it freezing into icebergs; since the rope was not long enough to reach the sea, he was filling the bucket with the only water to which he had access! The ice detection test was worthless. This mariner could communicate what he was doing and why to the passenger, yet he didn’t think he could tell his senior officers because he feared a reprimand—no trust.

Ethical Values
In both the Flint situation today and the Titanic situation from a century ago, trust was lost because the leaders compromised values. They did not do what was right. In the Flint situation, the value of honesty was compromised; citizens were misled and lied to about the water quality. In the Titanic situation, the values of responsibility and respect were compromised; the crew lost respect for a captain who had been undercutting crew and passenger safety, and the crew shunned their responsibility to perform meaningful ice detection tests.

These values—responsibility, respect, honesty and fairness—constitute the heart of the PMI Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. It is interesting to note that the current version of PMI’s Code is now celebrating its 10th anniversary—and hat the amount of ethics-related content on the PMI website has recently expanded tenfold.
The way I see it, ethical behavior builds trust with the broad and diverse set of people upon which the project is dependent for success. That accumulated trust serves as the basis for effective leadership and project success in an environment characterized by limitation of authority.

http://www.projectmanagement.com/articles/318380/Ethics-and-Project-Success

Ethics: A Means to an End?

By John Reiling

While ethics is all about “doing the right thing,” the “right thing” might mean one thing to you and another to me. Furthermore, the “right thing” is often applied to how something is said or done, and there are many shades of gray that make ethics a challenge.

Every individual is unique, and while we have a lot of things in common with a lot of people, we don’t really have everything in common with anyone. Hence, there will be conflicts—in vision for the future, how to execute a task, in priorities, in values, in what is fair, etc. It can be incredibly complex and potentially overwhelming.

That’s why “people skills” are so important for project managers. It often comes down to weighing alternatives that are not black and white...and this place where the weighing of alternatives happens is generally where you and I as the project manager reside.

Your “Situation” as a Case in Point

So, with the intersection—often collision—of all of these things in mind, let’s take a look at a real life situation in which you might very well find yourself.

You are assigned to a program that is ongoing, and are going to manage a portion of it. As you dig in and get up to speed, you begin to uncover “issues”—and you wonder if certain people might not be forthcoming with information, and if projects are stalled or are not producing what you would expect. You also wonder if, while this is happening, the projects are still muddling along and burning cash. You begin to sense that there are power struggles—among different stakeholders in the organization’s matrix organizational structure—to maintain or gain control over certain aspects of the program.

As you dig, you observe that linkages among related programs are hazy and weak at best—and conclude that they need some work. You also find that it is not clear to you who is in charge, and the funding seems like a bit of a patchwork—making you wonder about accountability. To add to your drama, you are concerned that even the funding
for you is unclear—and you have a sudden jolt of worry about who has a hand in your funding on the program.

Personally, you like a challenge, want to do an effective and honest job, want to make a positive difference and want to make a living for your family. It’s all quite a balancing act—and you want to “do the right thing” and act ethically.

**Ethics and Ambiguity**

We all naturally seek certainty in situations—we want to know. Even those of us who have a high tolerance for ambiguity have limits. And as a project manager, our job is the cleanup—and to provide clarity and organization in messy situations. But it’s not always so straightforward.

So what do you do when you run up against such a wall of ambiguity? Where do you begin to straighten everything out? And is it even possible?

In situations of uncertainty, you do need to rely on your internal compass—and that’s where ethics comes into play. The PMI Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct states that “PMI members have determined that honesty, responsibility, respect and fairness are the values that drive ethical conduct for the project management profession.” This is a little different from the “framework” provided in A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide), or from the “prescriptive” guidance provided by PRINCE2. We are left a little more on our own when it comes to exercising ethical judgment.

**Applying the PMI Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct**

So how would you handle the precarious situation that I described above? I don’t know, exactly. And the reality is that you never know how things might turn out. But you do have access to “rules for living.” Based on the PMI Code of Ethics, you can ask yourself in each situation, “What is the honest thing to do?” You can also take responsibility for each decision you make, and action you take. Along the way, you can do your best to show others respect and treat everyone fairly.

But let’s go a little deeper and see what you’ll be up against:

**Honesty:** This is probably the most important and foundational, but honesty cannot stand along without the others below. You simply must be honest—with yourself and others. And that’s not as easy as it may be in day-to-day life. The complexity of the organizational challenge you are facing leaves the truth not so apparent. You will need to think clearly, learn who to trust and—above all else—seek the truth. Be determined to accept nothing less, and demand it of others around you. In this sense, honesty for you is—as least in part—navigating a “journey to the truth.”

**Responsibility:** This may sound overwhelming to you; I’m not sure. Keep in mind that you are not responsible for everything! But you do need to take responsibility for thinking about everything, ensuring that people are informed and making sure that people know the consequences and tradeoffs. You need to take responsibility for identifying gaps, shortfalls and bottlenecks—and communicating them where appropriate, identifying the risks. You need to take responsibility for knowing what’s going on, finding out what you don’t know, and presenting alternatives to managing the processes and risks that will get the desired result.

Respect: You can be the most honest person in the world. You can take responsibility. But if you don’t respect your peers, subordinates, superiors and other working partners, you won’t get anywhere. It’s a deep and profound responsibility, and not always as apparent as it might be in simpler situations. It’s much more than courtesy. You will need to acknowledge and show people respect for their experience, knowledge and values. To do that, you will need to be interested and get to know them at a deeper level.
**Fairness:** Like respect, you can be honest and responsible, but if you don’t create an environment of fairness around you, your other efforts will not produce much fruit. As with all areas of ethics, fairness has its shades of gray—maybe more than any other area, for fairness is often in the eyes of the beholder. There is a lot of truth in the saying that “life is not fair!” But what you can do with everyone is give them a fair shake. Give everyone the benefit of a doubt. Don’t make unnecessary assumptions. Have faith in people…and fairness will melt away as an issue and blend with your efforts at respectfulness, taking responsibility and demonstrating honesty.

But is there something more? From an ethical standpoint, I don’t think so. It may sound simple—but actually it’s not. As you dig through the complexities of the project—as you are striving to understand, to communicate, to guide, to plan—ethics will always be there.

**Conclusion**
As a project manager, you are driving toward goals…but you don’t always have control of how it will all turn out. You do, however, have control over how you conduct yourself along the way, which is just as important—maybe more (actually, it’s an absolute, with no compromise)—than where you are going. That’s where ethics comes in. Because of ethics, the end does not justify the means. It’s not just important what the final result is—how you get there is at least as important.

© 2016 John Reilling. John is a versatile, results-driven technologist and manager and is recognized for leveraging his broad business experience, technical knowledge and analytical skills to drive change and help organizations achieve their strategic objectives. John loves sharing ideas through his articles and is eager to hear feedback from the community. John is also the President of PMTrainingOnline.com.

Did You Know…?
Did you know… More than 90% of organizations perform some type of project postmortem or closeout retrospective. (Source: The Standish Group: CHAOS Research Report 2013)

Did you know… 64% of organizations say they frequently conduct risk management? (Source: Project Management Institute: Pulse of the Profession 2015: Capturing the Value of Project Management 2015)

Did you know… 30% of project managers break up large projects into smaller segments, with deliverables and evaluations at the end of each segment? (Source: InformationWeek: Enterprise Project Management Survey 2014)

**Membership Certification**

**By Mark Franks**
Professional development is all about the long game. But you can get noticed in the short-term with these simple career hacks. Building the skills and experience organizations look for in a project leader takes years of focused effort. But there are also small steps you can take in the short term to position yourself for success.

Here are five project management career hacks that can help you showcase your skills — and stand out from the pack come promotion time.

Acknowledging Chapter Members’ Achievement of PMI Certification

by Mark Franks, PMP
As PMI members almost all of us are familiar with the PMP certification — in fact, we try to publish monthly the list of members who have recently achieved their PMP certification. What has gone under appreciated until very recently is that many of our members are attaining the other PMI certifications. Due to the membership database structure we cannot easily distill monthly data for these achievements; however, acknowledging the effort and accomplishment of these successes is important. We will strive to recognize our fellow Chapter members’ achievements semiannually by listing all those that attain certification at the newsletter link.

Scopemasters — Develop your Communications Skills

By Chuck Siu

Toastmasters is not just a forum for better speaking skills, it’s also a great venue for discussing, practicing, and perfecting communication techniques for all types of situations, from meeting facilitation to professional networking. The Scopemasters chapter adds a project management focus to the mix, and the result is a valuable, PDU earning, meeting that can pay big dividends for the time invested. If you are interested in finding out more about Scopemasters please send an email to scopemasters@pmi-sfbac.org and include your contact information. We’ll get back to you with more details about how to be a part of this exciting organization.

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