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Across the Board

Overcoming Challenges from the Start

By **Angela Plummer**

April has arrived and with it the arrival of a new board. Upon converging for our first official board meeting we were immediately met with our first challenge. Our regularly scheduled meeting location was closed for repairs. This presented us with our first opportunity to see how we would both work together as a group and gauge our level of commitment to the Board.



Angela Plummer

Without much deliberation we decided to find another location to meet that was nearby and delay the start the meeting. This effectively would delay the end of the meeting as well. I find this decision to be impressive since one of our options would have been to return home on a lovely Saturday afternoon. Led by our commitment to the Chapter and eagerness to get started we made our way across town to a different location and got to work.

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Enhance Your Digital Footprint

Everything you post online — from your Facebook status to your Twitter tirade — is accessible to future employers. Don't let digital dirt derail your job search.

Whether they realize it or not, project managers have an online reputation — and it could dictate whether or not they land that nice new job they've been looking for.



“Your résumé is no longer just a piece of paper. It’s what people find out about you on search engines,” says Michael Fertik, founder and CEO of *ReputationDefender*, an online reputation management service based in Redwood City, California, USA.

That includes everything from a blog post about your less-than-friendly boss to an impromptu tweet about a surly stakeholder.

“Your online impression is a composite of all the traces you leave online — and I mean all. Your website, your blogs, your tweets, your Facebook updates, your reviews, your arguments and comments in forums, plus a whole lot more,” says Sam Deeks, founder of mukaumedia, a Devon, England-based reputation consultancy.

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5 Ways to Boost Your Project Management Career

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.

1. Map Out Your Future

Create a personal development plan that lists your career goals and outlines how to achieve them, says Ali Kaabi, PMP, general manager of global practice at MSC Mobility Solutions, a mobile technology company in Sydney, Australia.

“Start with your three- to five-year plan, either creating a list of organizations you’d like to work for or a list of positions you’d like,” Mr. Kaabi says. “Then conduct the necessary research to draw a career map to the top. Recently, I created a similar plan for my team members. I drew up an eight-level plan that started at project coordinator and tracked them all the way up to project management office (PMO) director.”

At each level, identify the skills, certifications and individual competencies associated with the position. This will help you pursue the right development opportunities and make strategic career choices along the way.

2. Strategize and Specialize

Having an area of expertise is a great way to stand out from the crowd. And if you can develop a specialty that will stay in demand, that’s even better. For instance, in the United States, the need for project managers in business services and healthcare is expected to increase in the near future, according to PMI’s Project Management Talent Gap Report.

“Leveraging the experiences that are gained from taking on a specialty can prove really beneficial,” says Angel Cutruzzula, PMP, manager of implementation operations at HR software company Zenefits in Phoenix, Arizona, USA. “Not only does it allow the project manager to bring unique value to the team, it offers them an area where they can educate others.”

3.) Team Up with a Mentor

If your organization doesn’t have a formal mentoring program, ask someone who has a job on your career map if they’d be willing to take you under their wing. This way, you can better

understand what it takes to succeed in a position you'd like to have one day.

"I received excellent advice from a vice president who was willing to mentor me, and she really helped me think outside of my particular role to have a bigger vision within the organization," Ms. Cutruzzula says.

4. **Network, Network, Network**

Surrounding yourself with passionate project managers is a great way to pick up skills that can help you jump to the next level in your career.

"Participate in like-minded groups, such as your local PMI chapter or another specialty interest group," Mr. Kaabi says. He also recommends setting a networking goal. Whether you aim to reach out to one connection each month or attend two networking events per quarter, this helps make sure you're constantly expanding your professional reach.

5. **Walk Away from Work**

Spending all your time in the office can sap your inspiration and lead to stale project plans. Recreational distractions that take your mind off of your project can provide some much-needed perspective, Mr. Kaabi says.

"It's important to have a release to take your mind off the problem of the day," Mr. Kaabi says. "I do that by participating in a team sport or listening to my favorite music while I take a walk. It's necessary to refresh your mind and start the next day on a productive note."

While nothing can take the place of long-term planning and preparation, these simple steps can show your supervisors you have the potential to make a great project leader.

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Did You Know...?

that the PMI-ACP® exam is getting an additional Domain titled Agile Principles and Mindset and content will appear in the exam starting July 15, 2015?

and did you also know...

you can receive a 20% rebate on your exam fee if you take the test between July 15 and August 16? [PMI-ACP Exam Content Outline](#)

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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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