

SENIOR FELLOWS AND FRIENDS

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Recap of 3/25/20 discussion: How the PMIAA relates to changes in the project management industry

Dear Senior Fellows and Friends,

Last Wednesday evening, we had a lively discussion of two big changes that have begun coming in across sectors:

The implementation of Public Law 114-264, the Program Management Improvement Accountability Act (PMIAA)

Important changes that are currently taking place in the project management industry, led by the Project Management Institute (PMI)

The plan was to review the Act's impact on the current PM environment and to discuss how these two changes are interacting to shape project management across sectors. The discussion was enhanced by questions posed by two federal employees who are likely to take the Project Management Professional (PMP) certification exam this year. Their questions elicited a flood of insider knowledge

that revealed the shifts under way in the U.S. and other countries that recognize the PMP. For example:

Contracts are requiring contractor staff to have PMP certifications, not just be able to manage projects. Up to this point, government staff more often have been required to have the Federal Acquisition Certification for Program and Project Managers (FAC-P/PM). However, feds are advised to pursue both certs in order to “learn both languages,” enabling them to bridge the acquisition and project management disciplines. It would be a career-enhancing move.

That led to a discussion of the program and project management competencies that were transmitted to the CXO Councils by OPM on April 5th, 2019, which are similar to the lists maintained by the Federal Acquisition Institute. The bottom line is that employees must have the general and technical competencies that enable them to manage projects and programs well. Too many projects are late and over budget or fail to meet the original intent. Data from PMI’s [2020 Pulse of the Profession](#)® show that over 11% of investment is wasted due to poor project performance.

Starting in January 2021, the PMP exam will be 50% agile. There will be an emphasis on understanding which software development lifecycle model, agile or traditional waterfall, is more appropriate when. In fact, five “flavors” of agile will begin being taught, as well as a hybrid of waterfall and agile, to make it possible to choose an alternative that fits well with project type and organizational preference. The new exam came out in draft last week. Since the PMBOK is an ANSI standard, it must be updated every 4 years to reflect evolving global best practice. People who are studying the current Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) are urged to take the test before December, while the current exam is still in effect, since drastic changes will occur next year.

The next version will reflect the maturation of agile practice and inculcate more understanding of business value: “What is a good definition of ‘done?’.” Getting projects to end has been hard. There will be more emphasis on aligning stakeholder expectations and project requirements, requirements management objectives and action steps, and communication. “The whole world of PM is changing.” Artificial intelligence is on the horizon.

Career-building note: Dave considers the [PgMP \(Program Management Professional\)](#) to be a level up from the PMP. Visit that page to see why.

Developing flexibility will be important for careers. One way to do that is to study Improv. (One resource is Michelle James, who has been offering [Business Improv](#) in Charlottesville and DC for years.) Dave and Lisa's creativity class using Tinkertoys has also been popular. Their bottom line: "We'd like to teach PM so that people can actually do it." It's hard to argue with that.

Lisa emailed the following message for the recap:

It was a pleasure to meet everyone and discuss the PMIAA and the PMI. We have attached some reference material. While there are differences between industries, and many certifications out there, the common thread that runs through them all is that to be an effective leader we need to serve with love and treasure our relationships. We hope you will all stay safe and look forward to a bright future in the Project Economy! Regards, Lisa and Dave

Participant affiliations

AFWERX
Architect of the Capitol
ASPA National Capital Area Chapter
Department of Labor
Leadership Techniques, LLC
MIT Lincoln Laboratory
U.S. Army

Participants joined from Honolulu, Colorado Springs, the DC Metro Area, and Concord, MA. Please consider joining us in the future. See links below for further reading.

Sincerely,
Kitty Wooley



David B. Newman and Lisa Hammer are co-founders and principals of Leadership Techniques, LLC based in Frederick, Maryland. Specializing in leadership and project management training and consulting, their public speaking experience includes workshops at PMI's SeminarsWorld®. They are members of 8 PMI chapters in the DC metro area, and Lisa serves as VP-Programs for the Baltimore chapter. While often asked to intervene in challenging scenarios, they always try to inject positivity and happiness into the environment and look to reduce stress for employees while driving results for all stakeholders.

Our speakers provided the other attachments on the SFF web page. Also see the items below.

- [OMB memo M-18-19](#), Improving the Management of Federal Programs and Projects through Implementing the Program Management Improvement Accountability Act (PMIAA). **Figure 1 shows the relationship of project and program management competencies across various levels of the organization.**
- [Memo for CXO councils](#), Program Management Improvement Accountability Act – Program and Project Management Competencies. **The attachment lists and defines Program and Project Management Competencies.**
- [GAO-20-44](#), Improving Program Management: Key Actions Taken, but Further Efforts Needed to Strengthen Standards, Expand Reviews, and Address High-Risk Areas. **The overview shows progress toward implementation as of December 2019.**

- [New case studies highlight the importance of federal program management](#) **The article documents last fall's event hosted by PMI and the Partnership for Public Service.**
- [A Framework for Improving Federal Program Management](#) - IBM Center for the Business of Government. Researched by a NAPA Fellow and scholar. **Tables, figures, and examples are very useful. Figure 4 shows how PMI certifications for project and program management relate to the framework.**