



## Willamette Valley Chapter Leadership Team

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## Five Project Management Myths By Michelle LaBrosse, CEO, Cheetah Learning [www.cheetahlearning.com](http://www.cheetahlearning.com)

No matter what business you're in, we're all plagued by myths. They can be a system of beliefs in our organization, on our team or in our family. Project Management is no different. We also can get tangled up in myths about efficiency and saving time that can actually end up thwarting our success. Here are five common myths that I often see in Project Management and some tips on how to avoid them.

### Myth #1 We don't have time to back track

Let's face it, things happen. Customers change their minds about what they thought they wanted, market forces change, new threats and opportunities arise and new priorities surface. All of these changes can make the original goal of our project obsolete. Don't fall into the trap of forging ahead without developing a new project agreement and project plan.

In my experience, it's better to spend half a day re-launching the project based on the new project agreement then to create a final deliverable that no one wants, or to attempt to complete a project with inadequate resources and lack of support from the project sponsor.

Make your project agreement a vibrant, living document that is written knowing there will be changes. Make it a document that everyone understands and feels a part of. When you write a project agreement and simply file it, it doesn't breathe and set the stage for further communication and discussion through out the project.

When you're developing a new project plan from the new project agreement, you may also be able to use the interim deliverables you've already created for the new project, ultimately shortening the project cycle time for the new project.

### Myth #2 Working well together is fluff stuff

I'm not suggesting a group hug at every milestone. I'm talking about the impact on the project when people aren't working well together. The bad news is that an inability to work together towards a common goal can mean failure. The good news is that you can find the root of the cause and change behavior. Look for these gnarly roots: lack of commitment, lack of interaction, and lack of interest in constructively resolving conflict. Many projects also lose and gain people during the execution of the project. When this happens, it is important that the team spend a half hour together developing their new team guidelines and meeting protocols. With any new people joining the team, it becomes a new team. Re-developing your guidelines and protocols is done for the same reason it is done initially – to facilitate working relationships, to create a way to positively interact, and to prevent destructive conflict. Don't let "new" deter you, instead let new people bring new ideas and energy to the project.

### Myth #3 Document only what the boss wants to see

Selling up is always important, but don't stop document only what you want someone to see. It's important to include the good, bad and the ugly. Industry standard Project Management practices require a critical project closeout phase that collects lessons learned and gives your organization powerful historical knowledge from across the enterprise. Think of it as giving every project a chance to take center stage and be a stand-up for the day. A company that can learn and grow, rather than continually repeat mistakes will move faster. As an employee, it's frustrating to recreate the wheel. It's empowering when you see your work building upon others and vice versa.

### Myth #4 Don't beat a dead horse

When you have success, it's hard to overdue it with communication. People need to see, hear, smell and taste success, even small victories have a big impact. It's important to communicate and show success with early adopters, so people will understand what you're doing and how they can be a part of the ongoing success.

(Continued on page 2)

## August Lunch Program

### Team Management Master Tool for Implementing Projects Connie Plowman, PMP—Vice President, Cadence Management Corporation

**When:** Friday, August 19, 12:00-1:00pm (Networking, 11:45)

**Where:** Red Lion Hotel, 3301 Market Street NE, Salem OR 97301

**Topic:** Team Management Master Tool for Implementing Projects

When working on a project with your department, have you found that making a decision seems to take forever? Activities always seem to fall through the cracks? Only a few people seem to be doing the work? Well here are some answers, as well as relief! A team management tool just for you.

The Responsibility Matrix is a simple, graphic tool for building your project team, getting your team on the same page and obtaining real buy-in for who is responsible for activities on the project. It visually demonstrates the key players on the project, and keeps the size of the team manageable without compromising the quality of project results. It helps team members who are responsible for large tasks to manage an extended team of people effectively. The Matrix builds team identity and influences the formation of team cohesiveness.

Come and learn how the responsibility matrix can help you and your team!

**Speaker Bio:**

Connie Plowman is Vice President for Cadence Management Corporation, a company which helps corporations, government agencies and professionals manage their projects more effectively. Connie started with Cadence in 1988, after a successful career with IBM handling employee, customer and executive education. While at Cadence, she has done it all – from seminar coordination, account management to her current position as VP Global Accounts and a member of the Cadence leadership team.

Connie has the opportunity of talking daily with global clients about their project management needs and challenges. Projects are global, companies are worldwide, and business has become more complex. The Cadence focus is on taking the complex and making it simple. Cadence is a Global Charter Registered Education Provider (R.E.P.) for PMI, and has been an R.E.P. since the program was founded in 1999.

Connie is a graduate from Portland State University with a degree in Business Administration. She is a certified Project Management Professional (PMP) by the Project Management Institute, and an active member of PMI. Connie is a member of both the Portland and Willamette Valley Chapters, and currently serves on PMI-Portland's Board of Directors as Immediate Past President.

### **Five Project Management Myths** *(Continued from page 1)*

#### **Myth #5 That'll Never Fly Here**

Maybe you've been around the block, but don't disregard the ideas of your team. For people to communicate, they have to be in an environment that is safe and that allows for some blue sky and off beat thinking. If you foster an environment that shoots down ideas, then people will stop sharing ideas, and instead just take the easiest path with the least resistance. This is what we call mediocrity.

The next time you conjure up one of these myths, stop and rethink your approach. You can make changes – big and small – by beginning with your own awareness of them. Think of Project Management as a tool that clarifies, illuminates and unifies, and ultimately brings you closer to the goal that is just ahead.

#### **About the Author:**

**Michelle LaBrosse, PMP, Founder, Author of Cheetah Negotiations and Cheetah Project Management.** Michelle has been designing and teaching accelerated learning programs for business since the early '90's and traditional courses since the '80's. LaBrosse holds a B.S. Aerospace Engineering, and an M.S. Mechanical Engineering. She has done extensive postgraduate work with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Center for Advanced Educational Studies and the University of Washington Industrial Engineering Program in accelerating adult learning in corporate environments. Her research focused on using the Internet to accelerate adult learning and in determining effective adult learning strategies using accelerated learning with improvisational comedy.

In 1995 she prototyped the concept of accelerating learning using "virtual classrooms" and created online courses in business development. In the late '90s LaBrosse created and extensively tested a one-day approach to teaching Project Management while a corporate Research Scientist in Learning Techniques and Technologies for a large multinational corporation. Based on her accelerated learning and Project Management experiences, Michelle created a very fast way for launching projects called Cheetah Project Management. She is the leader of the course development team at Cheetah and sets the strategic direction for the company. In her rare spare moments, Michelle enjoys spending time with her children, friends, and dogs; golfing, hiking, kayaking, traveling, skiing, classical music, Broadway shows, and throwing parties for her family and friends in Alaska, Nevada and Connecticut. She's also been known to brew a batch of beer on occasion.

# Membership Corner

## PMI WV Lunch Program

Third Friday of every Month  
 Red Lion Hotel  
 Time: 12 - 1 PM.

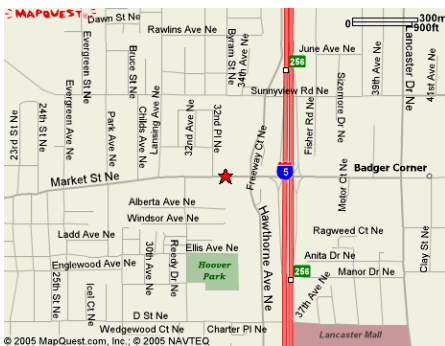
## August 2005

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

### Directions to Luncheon Meeting Location:

**From Downtown Salem:** Proceed east on Market Street, NE approximately 1.4 miles to Red Lion Hotel. Turn left to proceed into the hotel parking lot.

**From I-5:** Leave the freeway at exit 256, Market Street. Turn west onto Market Street, NE toward downtown Salem. Proceed to Red Lion Hotel. Turn right to proceed into the hotel parking lot.



### Parking:

Parking is available in the parking lot behind the building.

## Calendar of Events

### August 2005

- 19 PMI WV Lunch Program, 12:00-1:00 pm  
 Topic -- Connie Plowman, PMP – Team Management Master Tool for Implementing Projects  
 Location: Red Lion Hotel  
 3301 Market Street NE, Salem OR 97301
- 30 PMI Board Meeting 7:00-8:00am  
 Almost Home Restaurant (Market & I-5)
- 30-Sept 1 MS Project 2003 – Fundamentals-to-Advanced Portfolio Management.  
 8:30am-4:30pm  
 Tim Runcie – Advisicon  
 State Library Building  
 250 Winter Street NE  
 Salem OR 97310

Breakfast Roundtable for Portland, PMI Chapter is held on the first Friday of every month Location: Mentor Graphics in Wilsonville.  
 Contact Person: George Walker (Director of Breakfast Roundtables)  
 Contact Email: [georgewalker0614@aol.com](mailto:georgewalker0614@aol.com)



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**Hurry!**  
 There are limited  
 seats available on a  
 first come, first  
 served basis!

# MICROSOFT PROJECT 2003

## FUNDAMENTALS-TO-ADVANCED PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT

**AUG. 30-31 & SEPT 1, 2005 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM**

STATE LIBRARY BLDG. 250 WINTER ST NE SALEM, OR 97310

REGISTRATION FORMS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE  
 WILLAMETTE VALLEY CHAPTER WEB SITE  
[WWW.PMIWW.ORG](http://WWW.PMIWW.ORG)

This educational opportunity is sponsored by the **Project Management Institute-Willamette Valley Chapter**. This course will be held at the State Library Bldg, 250 Winter St NE, Salem. It is open to PMI and non-PMI members. We are very excited to be able to offer this 3-day course for the **low cost of \$599 for PMI Members** (\$750 for Non-PMI members)

**Our Instructor, Tim Runcie,** has over 20 years of experience as a project manager and is well versed in the use of Microsoft Project. Tim is considered a Most Valuable Professional (MVP) with Microsoft. This means that he has been recognized by Microsoft as one of the few people who have contributed to the community and are at the top of their field with Microsoft products.