

# Project Management Institute Willamette Valley Chapter

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# NEWSLETTER

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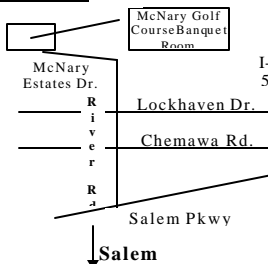
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### Directions:



**From downtown Salem:** Proceed north on High St. This street will change its name to Broadway. Continue north. As you enter Keizer the road changes to River Rd. Continue north to McNary Estates Dr. Turn left at the traffic signal and proceed to the restaurant.

**From I5:** Leave the freeway at exit 260A coming from the north or exit 260 coming from the south. Turn west toward Keizer. Follow Lockhaven to River Rd. and turn right (north). Proceed to McNary Estates Dr. Turn left at the traffic signal and proceed to the restaurant.

### Message From Our President:

**I am not  
Difficult!**



An insane boss, a peer who threatens to go over your head, someone who routinely throws office hissy-fits, someone who won't negotiate, or grandstanding coworkers. Some people, even when not stressed to the max (like you) just seem to like humiliating people and causing pain. How do we maintain working relationships with people we don't like -- or who don't like us?

Each of us has a "difficult" person hiding inside. Some have it well hidden and only let it out on rare occasions, still others, despite best efforts at self-control, are just one step away from being the case study at some workshop on difficult personality types.

"Difficult" is a term that is really a broad definition for a bunch of different hard to deal with traits. Most people exhibit at least one of the traits; some display a lethal combination on a regular basis. When asked what he was willing to pay the most for when hiring employees, John D. Rockefeller immediately shot back, "The ability to get along with people."

Dealing with difficult people begins with identifying and naming the behaviors that are so exasperating -- you know the types of behavior that drive you nuts that trigger a strong reaction in you. Then try to identify which behaviors you exhibit, this may be even harder.

The following is a list of behaviors that commonly set us off.

1. **Bad attitude.** Complains constantly, blames others, exhibits negativity without signs of taking responsibility.
2. **Space Invaders.** People who "invade your space," seem to not notice implicit social boundaries, who assume you want their (unsolicited) advice, or who try to "fix" you without checking to see if you think you're in need of repair.
3. **Knee-jerk Resisters.** People who polarize automatically, who oppose new ideas or outside in-

fluences without listening, without considering the objective facts.

4. **Anger addicts.** People who wear anger like a habit -- moody, edgy, hostile, or aggressive ... even when they're not upset about anything in particular. (also called passive-aggressiveness).
5. **Nit Picker.** Being harshly or tactlessly critical; picky, is the unpleasant perfectionist ... for whom nothing is adequate, nothing is enough - this chronic complainer holds a pity party.
6. **Megaphone.** Overly talkative types who want to "process" everything, for hours, when you just want to get on with it. Which reminds me of a story ... you know, the other day ...
7. **Avoiders.** People who seem to go out of their way to avoid confrontation, prefer to keep things vague, refuse to be pinned down to a commitment.
8. **Accommodators.** Folks who say "yes" to keep the peace or who withhold their honest perceptions
9. **Bubble Buster.** Deflates everyone's enthusiasm. Authoritarian bullies who compete for the one right answer, are "seldom wrong but often mistaken," who condescend, sometimes treating others like children.
10. **The Sherman Tank.** Will run over you if you let him and they have a temper like Mt. St. Helens.

Recognizing and identifying the behaviors in others, as well as in ourselves, helps us to learn how to maintain working relationships and become better leaders. Research or take a class in learning to deal with these behaviors and let's make sure to work on our own.

People tend to model what they see others doing -- not what they hear espoused as corporate philosophy, but what they actually see demonstrated each day. Our efforts will reduce the chances that the organization will develop "difficult" people in the first place while helping to circumvent troublesome behaviors before they spread.

**Julie Mallord, President**

### Requests:

1. Please send your preferred email address to [pmiwv@open.org](mailto:pmiwv@open.org) in order to receive timely email messages regarding upcoming opportunities., and
2. If you **no longer wish to have a paper version** of our newsletter mailed to you please let us know at [pmiwv@open.org](mailto:pmiwv@open.org) so we can use our financial resources wisely.



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*The next lunch meeting is:*  
**Friday September 21.**  
 (The third Friday of the month at Noon)  
**Location: McNary Restaurant**

**Speechcraft Series**  
**Starts: September 26.**  
**(Earn 12 PDU's)**  
**Location: Oregon State Library**  
 Times: 8:30 AM —10:30 AM each session.



## September 2001

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### September Program: Process Improvement Projects with Tim Avilla and Heather Falk

Process improvement projects must be planned and managed just as any other project. September's luncheon presentation will outline a practical work breakdown structure for a process improvement project and offers a strategy for implementing new processes in an organization. The presentation will also define the products for a process improvement project and offer insights into the difficulties of bringing about organizational change.

The Information Systems Section of the Oregon Department of Transportation established the Process Improvement Program in 1998 with the mission of facilitating process improvement initiatives for system development with a long-term goal of obtaining the benefits of a Capability Maturity Model (CMM) Level 3 organization. This team established a governance structure, completed a formal CMM assessment in December 1999 and outlined a plan of action to improve performance in key processes identified as lacking. Before embarking on a series of process improvement projects, the team recognized the need to establish an infrastructure that could be used, repeated and improved in completing process improvement projects. That need resulted in the concepts offered in this presentation.

ODOT Information Systems' experience has found that process improvement is best accomplished and organized around a PI project that is defined, managed and run using solid and proven project management principles. More casual, less organized approaches to process improvement can produce results, but results will lack focus and will not disperse adequately across the organization. ODOT has tried a casual approach, and results were random and short-lived. In addition to improving processes in the organization, ODOT is attempting to change the organization's culture. Historically, good processes were developed and used by focused individuals striving to do their jobs better and more consistently. These processes spread like folklore across the organization. They were shared casually and often faded away upon the sage's retirement. ODOT's Process Improvement Program is striving to collect this process information, create a process-knowledge repository, make ongoing improvements and promote repeatable processes across the organization. The presentation outlines a practical work breakdown structure for a process improvement project and offers a strategy for implementing the process in the organization. The presentation will also define the products for a process improvement project and presents insights into the difficulties of bringing about organizational change.

Tim Avilla has more than 22 years of experience with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and is currently the program manager for ODOT's Process Improvement Program for Information Technology. Tim is an experienced project manager and has led many highly visible projects, including technical implementation of the Oregon digital photo driver license.

Heather Falk provides software configuration management for Oregon Secretary of State with 16 years of experience in project management, software engineering and process improvement. Special interests include software configuration management, process architecture and information systems project management.

### Announcements

1. **There will be a full day educational event sponsored by the PMIWV chapter on Friday, November 16. Please stay tuned for further details coming in the near future.**
2. **TIME IS RUNNING OUT!!!** Registration for PMI's Annual Seminars & Symposium on "**First to the Future**" being held at Opryland Hotel in Nashville, TN will close at 5:00 p.m. (US Central Time) on Friday, September 28. This Seminar will be held in early November. Call (610) -356-4600 for more information. REGISTER TODAY!!
3. Candidates for the PMP® Certification Examination were previously notified that an additional performance domain, Professional Responsibility, was scheduled for inclusion on the Certification Exam beginning September, 15, 2001. Unfortunately a software-related bug was very recently discovered by Prometric during final testing which requires them to postpone the transition to the new examination. As a result, the existing exam and domains (initiating, planning, executing, controlling and closing) will continue in use, both inside and outside **North America**, through at least December 31, 2001, and until such time as they are able to provide sixty (60) days notice.
4. Remember to turn in your ballots if you are a PMI member!