

# Pathways to Project Success

JUNE 2009

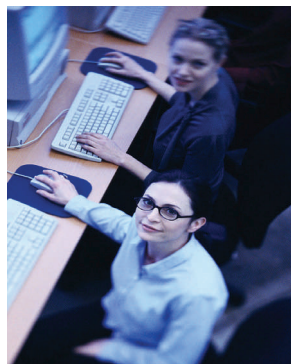
## Federal Project Director (FPD) Corner:

### Using the PMCDP Certification and Equivalency Guidelines (CEG) to Achieve Success

One of the biggest challenges that PMCDP certification candidates face during the certification process is how to properly answer the multitude of competency statements/questions required for each level of PMCDP certification.

Some candidates have noted many of the competency statements are vague. They have also expressed their confusion concerning the different types of criteria that will satisfy the various “entry-, working-, and expert-level knowledge” requirements many of the different competency statements highlight. In addition, many candidates with

prior training, education and experience are unaware – or otherwise un-



sure – as to whether their prior skills will translate to the PMCDP requirements in lieu of formal PMCDP training.

In an effort to better streamline the certification process, the PMCDP has recently published the revised Certification and Equivalency Guidelines (CEG). The CEG will aid Program Secretarial Officers and aspiring/incumbent FPDs when preparing certification packages for the Certification Review Board (CRB) consideration. Although the new CEG has many competencies that will not take effect until January 1, 2010, the document is very helpful and should be used by all seeking certification.

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***It is with great sadness*** the DOE and PMCDP family mourn the sudden loss of our colleague, co-worker and dear friend, Anne Manfre. Anne passed away on May 25, 2009, after suffering a massive stroke.

Anne worked tirelessly for the FPDs and the PMCDP. She was one of the original team members who designed and implemented the program. Without Anne, the PMCDP would not be the exemplary program it is today.

When her colleagues were asked what they would remember most about Anne, everyone came back with praises about her high professionalism, loving kindness and never ending generosity. As a professional, Anne was over the top. She was diligent, timely and one of the hardest workers we have ever known. All those who have ever worked with Anne commented on her incredible energy, dependability, hard work ethic, high intelligence and finely-tuned skills.

But most of all, we will always remember Anne's glorious smile, happy demeanor, wonderfully caring generosity, endless compassion, love and gentleness. Because of Anne, we have learned to be more humble, caring and giving. Our lives have been truly blessed by knowing her.

We will truly miss our dear friend and co-worker.

# Corrective Action Plan (CAP) Corner

## Earned Value Management – Disciplined Project Success

By Cynthia L. Seiter  
OECM

Federal Project Directors (FPDs) have the responsibility to successfully complete their projects to meet scope, cost and schedule success metrics as defined in the Department of Energy's Root Cause Analysis Corrective Action Plan for improving contract and project management. One of the tools FPDs must understand and effectively use is their contractors' Earned Value Management (EVM) Systems.

An EVM System is an integrated set of policies, procedures and tools designed to support project management. EVM, the discipline, is a systematic approach to the integration and measurement of cost, schedule and technical (scope) accomplishments on a project. A disciplined

EVM approach provides for identification of responsible management levels, detailed project planning, realistic application of resources, development of critical path schedules, development of a performance measurement baseline with objective measurement of performance during execution, forecast of cost and schedule at completion and control of project scope, schedule and funding changes.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) notes that the two main purposes for implementing EVM Systems are to: 1) provide effective cost and schedule management control systems; and 2) allow the customer to rely on timely and accurate data for determining contract status. To be effective, an EVM System should constitute management processes that serve as a comprehensive tool for integrating planning and execution across cost, schedule and technical disciplines. In essence, an EVM System should

provide the means for planning, reporting, and analyzing performance.

EVM provides both the government and contractors the ability to examine detailed schedule information, critical program and technical milestones as well as cost data. It provides standard data elements from a contractor's management system that relate time-phased budgets to contract tasks, integrates cost, schedule and technical performance and measures work progress objectively.

In other words, EVM data provides the FPD with an early and accurate identification of trends and problems and an accurate picture of project status. This information provides a basis for course correction to complete the project on schedule and cost. Demonstrating successful project completion to the Office of Management and Budget and GAO will hasten the Department's removal from the GAO High Risk List.



### Questions or Comments?

General questions and comments about the newsletter should be directed to: [PMCDP.Administration@hq.doe.gov](mailto:PMCDP.Administration@hq.doe.gov). Or visit our website at [http://management.energy.gov/pm\\_certification.htm](http://management.energy.gov/pm_certification.htm). For further information about the OECM PMCDP or Program Management Career Development Curriculum contact:

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The new CEG provides extensive detail in regard to the different types of education, training and experience each competency statement will require. It also includes many sample answers that provide readers with a better understanding of how each of the aforementioned criteria can be used to satisfy the different competencies. These sample answers were developed by the PMCDP's independent reviewers in hopes it will save time for candidates when responding to the competency statements. These samples provide candidates with a better understanding of how to craft their responses in a way that detail their experience in manner the reviewers – and the CRB – can best gauge candidates' qualifications.

The CEG is available in the PMCDP Module in the Employee Self Service (ESS) system, and is also available for download on the PMCDP Web site (see link in box below).

<http://management.energy.gov/1576.htm>

## Referencing the CEG When Working in ESS

Due to technical constraints, the ESS system does not have the ability to list each of the competency statements verbatim and does not contain the different sample answers as highlighted in the previous section. In many cases, the competency statements in ESS are abbreviated. Thus, it is advantageous for the candidate to consult the CEG when answering each competency statement. The CEG will not only provide the candidate with better information, but will assist the candidate in preparing a better-quality answer consistent with

the criteria each competency statement lists as needing to be met.

For example, competency 1.1.1 in the current ESS system reads as follows: Demonstrate a working-level knowledge of the Federal Project Director's roles and responsibilities **OR** successfully complete the following PMCDP course or its equivalent: *Project Management Systems and Practices in DOE*.

You may think if you have not taken the aforementioned PMCDP course, you must simply demonstrate a “working-level knowledge” of the FPD's roles and responsibilities. Not necessarily. Many candidates simply put down what they think would best qualify as “working-level knowledge”, but that will not always answer the question. If you consult the new CEG, you will notice that it goes a step further in terms of providing you with information.

For example, competency 1.1.1 in the CEG reads: The certification candidate must demonstrate a working-level knowledge of the Federal Project Director's roles and responsibilities. Fulfillment of this competency may be achieved through the following: 1) the successful completion of the PMCDP core course, *Project Management Systems and Practices in DOE*; OR, 2) a description of the candidate's demonstrated equivalent experience and understanding of the Federal Project Directors roles and responsibilities (since there is no equivalent class to *Project Management Systems and Practices in DOE*, you must demonstrate equivalent experience).

The justification of the fulfillment through experience should demonstrate the following knowledge covered in the requisite PMCDP course:

- The FPD's responsibilities relative to the Management & Operating (M&O) or Management & Integrating (M&I) contractor.
- The purpose and operation of the IPT.
- Ethics requirements for project directors.
- Understanding of DOE Headquarters (DOE HQ)-Field relationships and Lead Program Secretarial Officers (LPSO).

## What's Coming Soon to ESS

The ESS system is preparing to undergo a major overhaul in the coming months to be more user friendly and better reflect the revised CEG in terms of the expanded definitions that it provides. On January 1, 2010, the competency statements in the system will be modified to reflect the new competency statements and requirements the CEG highlights, and will provide readers with the exact page number that they can reference in the CEG for each of the respective competencies. A few changes have already been made, specifically to competency 1.5.1, which is detailed in the “Question of the Month” section of this newsletter.

## Upcoming PMCDP Courses

### June

- 9-11 Systems Engineering (L3), Las Vegas
- 15-19 Program Management and Portfolio Analysis (L3), Las Vegas
- 16-18 Facilitation Techniques and Conflict Resolution (L3), Idaho
- 16-26 Orientation to Project Management in DOE, DC/Germantown
- 23-25 Contract Administration for Technical Representatives (L1), Oak Ridge

### July

- 7-9 Contract Administration for Technical Reps (L1), Washington, DC
- 13-16 Planning for Safety in Project Management (L1), Richland

20-24 Advanced Leadership (L4), Chicago

20-23 The Federal Budgeting Process (L2), Las Vegas

### August

- 3-5 Environmental Laws and Regulations (L2), Oak Ridge Y12
- 4-6 Earned Value Management Systems (L1), Richland
- 11-Sept 22 (Blended Learning) Advanced Concepts in Project Management (L2), Onsite in Richland
- 11-13 Scope Management/Baseline Development (L2), Las Vegas
- 18-October 8 (Blended Learning) Project Management Essentials (L1), Onsite in Richland

18-20 Advanced Risk Management (L4), Savannah River

18-19 Planning for PBMC (L1), Oak Ridge

25-27 Executive Communications (L4), DC

25-27 Contract Administration for Technical Reps (L1), Savannah River

### September

- 8-11 Planning for Safety in Project Management (L1), Las Vegas
- 15-17 Strategic Planning (L4), Oak Ridge
- 29-Oct 1 Acquisition Strategy and Planning (L1), Germantown, MD

**Please be aware that course dates and locations sometimes change.  
For the most up-to-date course schedule, please visit:  
<http://colleagueconsulting.com/content/view/51/> and click on "Current Training Schedule"**

### Question of the Month:

**Question:** In the April PMCDP newsletter, I noticed the CRB recently determined all current FPDs are required to complete the PMCDP Level 1 core course, "Planning for Safety in Project Management", no later than January 31, 2010. Since I am an incumbent FPD who is not currently being brought forward for an additional certification, does this requirement pertain to me? Also, since the "Planning for Safety in Project Management" course is a Level 1 course, are FPDs with higher levels of certification required to complete this course as well? If so, are there any methods in which I can satisfy this requirement without having to enroll in the course?

**Answer:** Yes on all fronts. All current and aspiring FPDs are bound to this requirement, regardless of their level of certification. On the other hand, the CRB – and the CEG – have defined alternative methods for satisfying this requirement to include: the successful completion of the DOE course, SAF-220, Senior Technical Safety Manager Overview; possess a current Senior Technical Safety Manager or Certified Safety Professional certification; or, demonstrate equivalent, hands-on experience.

Candidates who choose to demonstrate equivalent hands-on experience in lieu of formal training will be required to demonstrate their understanding and practical application of the following knowledge covered in the requisite PMCDP course:

- The importance of safety to projects and DOE's image and viability.
- Emphasis of centrality of safety to every project even if it is not central to the mission.
- Identification of safety requirements and considerations at each Critical Decision (CD) level.
- The FPD's role in safety throughout the CD process.
- The importance of alternatives analysis and conceptual design.
- How to:
  - perform and conduct a failure mode and effects analysis;
  - control environmental safety hazards and worker safety hazards;
  - conduct a hazards analysis;
  - evaluate the final design in reference to safety; and
  - manage safety during construction.