



Buscando un oasis en el desierto: Un diálogo de como implementar prácticas de PMI en un ambiente hostil o estéril



Victor L. Schroder
PMP, PE, MSME
Crater Lake Group



We have all heard the voices...

- “... o pagas la factura de gerencia en crisis o pagas por gerencia de proyectos.” - Enid T. Vargas, PMP, Project Management Partners
- “A solid project management office (PMO) is crucial to project and, therefore, organizational success.” - George Hunte, CA
- “Project management is the key to success.” - Ajay Parasrampur, Centre of Project Management at SPJIMR in Mumbai, India

If so many leading figures and companies around the world say that project management is important, why doesn't my company adopt a PMO or PMI project principles?





What is the story in Puerto Rico?

- What business are you in?
- Do you work for a multinational?
- Do you work for a large local business? A partnership?
- Is the company you work for family owned?
- Do you own the company?

Do you have a PMO at your company today?



My favorite Puerto Rico euphemisms

- “A nosotros no nos gusta la burocracia de mucha reunión.”- Traducción “Nosotros trabajamos a lo loco.”
- “Hay que ser flexibles.”- Traducción “Lo que empezamos a hacer no es lo que hace falta, cambio de planes.”
- “Hay que ser creativos.”- Traducción “Gastamos todo el presupuesto y tiempo en lo que no era, necesitamos resolver en un dia con \$1.
- “Hay que ser un team player.”- Traducción “Te toca a ti trabajar 24X7 para resolver la metida de pata gerencial.”
- “Estamos trabajando en eso.”- Traducción “Ni lo hemos tocado.”



Factors preventing the growth of PMO offices in Puerto Rico

- Lack of competitive pressures
 - With few exceptions, Puerto Rico is fairly insulated from domestic or international competition due to laws and regulations.
 - Pliable customer base, typical Puerto Rico consumers tolerate average products and services (i.e. government), there is no broad based demand for excellence.
- “Insularismo”
 - Management lacks multinational or working abroad experience.
 - Foreign managers are viewed as “stealing a local job”.
 - Foreign ideas are viewed as a cultural invasion- “aquí lo hacemos a lo Boricua”.



Factors preventing the growth of PMO offices in Puerto Rico

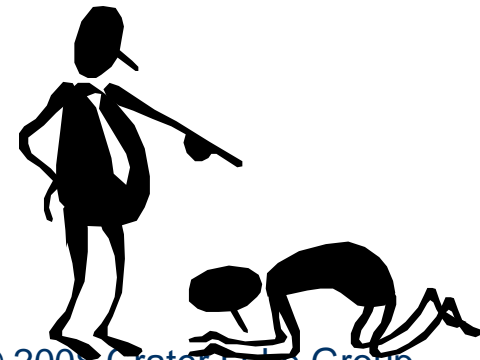
- Complacency/ No desire for growth/ No plan for growth
 - Company ownership is satisfied with their market position.
 - Company has locked-in contract or relationship that guarantees a revenue stream into the future.
 - Parent company has no growth or investment plans for your facility.
- The big enemy is Mr./Ms. Status Quo
 - If I got to this position doing things my way, why should I change?

If we are going to make a change in our companies we are going to have to change the company culture. To change the company culture we need influence. To gain influence we...



Gaining influence in your company

- Gaining influence is easier said than done. The tactics and techniques for gaining influence to change an organization vary between a regular employee versus a consultant.
- The ability to influence starts with interpersonal relationships. *In order to influence you need to build trust and a good reputation with key decision makers at your company.*
- In my experience there are three key behaviors that will help you in your pursuit for influence:
 - Read, Read, Read
 - Be a role model of what you are preaching
 - Speak your company's language





Gaining influence in your company

- Read, Read, Read
 - There is a wealth of information and best practices out there, use it to your advantage.
 - We are not famous...yet. Use recognized leaders and institutions to speak for you.
- Be a role model of what you are preaching
 - Start with the basics: take minutes, assign action items with an owner and a due date, create a milestone chart.
 - Incorporate one aspect of the PMI model into your work, even if management is not paying attention (they will soon).
- Speak your company's language
 - Is your company \$\$, time to market or compliance driven?
 - Use your company's buzzwords and terminology.



Gaining influence from the inside

- I have a budget and staff (“With great power comes great responsibility”- Spiderman’s uncle Ben).
 - The capacity to influence an organization is greatly improved if you have a budget and staff.
 - You are in a unique position to implement some of PMIs principles to advance company objectives with superior results. It does require some risk taking, as you are challenging the status quo.
 - As your department or division continues to excel in delivering results to the company your senior management will take notice. This is the time for a formal introduction to PMI methodologies across the organization (with you in charge of course!).



Gaining influence from the inside

- Starting from the bottom: “There is nowhere left to go but up...”
 - We need to gain influence the old fashioned way: work, work, work
 - Find an ally/sponsor in management who is already sold on PMI/PMO
 - Determine if this person is highly regarded among his/her peers. Allying yourself with a company outsider may not help your cause.
 - Understand what your ally’s goals and objectives are, make them your own.
 - Employ your ally/sponsor as a guide on how to navigate the political/cultural nuances of your company, learn it well and use it yourself!
 - Note- Your ally may be from a different functional areas from the one you work. You need to make sure you position yourself as someone who wants to expand his role versus someone who wants to change roles within the company.



Gaining influence from the inside

- Starting from the bottom: “There is nowhere left to go but up...”
 - If an ally/sponsor is not readily available, you need to find one ASAP. An axiom that always work for me is: People always respond to their own interests first or “What’s in it for me?”
 - Identify 2 senior managers at your company as potential candidates for helping you drive change in the organization.
 - Learn what their goals and objectives are and determine if there is overlap with your work area.
 - Approach your selected candidate with a plan to advance his/her agenda, not yours.
 - Call the corporate officer in charge of projects and create synergy with your selected sponsor (if available).
 - Pay your dues first
 - Play by company’s rules and show results, then say “ If you were to allow me certain changes I could give you bigger and better results.



Gaining influence from the outside

- Many of the recommendations for gaining influence from the inside apply to outside consultants as well. Having said that, the consultant has several key advantages /disadvantages that require a modified approach to gaining influence
 - Pros
 - Was brought in to fill a skill or resource not available at the company. There is an implied recognition of talent.
 - Is not competing for an internal job, no professional jealousy.
 - Nadie es profeta... works in favor of him/her.
 - Cons
 - You are presumed temporary (or why should I listen to you?)
 - There is no track record to leverage.



Gaining influence from the outside

- A consultant must role model the PMI planning model at all times.
- His/her goal must be to deliver superior results to those obtained by internal methods and processes.
 - You must resist being assimilated by the status quo.
 - Sometimes you have to say “No” to prevent management from making a mistake.
 - A consultant must document all accords, commitments, changes. This will become your supporting documentation to educate your client on how the PMI model would have provided superior results.



A Final Word

- We do not live in a perfect world. Sometimes, even if we do everything right, a company may not change its ways. It is important to recognize when this moment has been reached and a decision needs to be made
 - I leave my company.
 - I accept the current company culture and continue to work.
- If you are convinced that you can do it better, quit and start your company!





Summary

- Speak your company's language
 - Is your company profit (\$), time to market or compliance driven?
- Start small, then expand the concept
 - Ask for a change of business as usual for just one project
- Pay your dues- play by the company's rules to gain influence
 - Show good results, then use your new found credibility to sell a better approach
- Take Risks!!

Remember, companies are not interested in PMI or PMOs. You are selling higher profits, faster time to market, increased compliance using the PMI methodology.



Closure

Questions or Comments?

Thank You!