

PMI South Florida Chapter

WORKSHOP Helps Chapter Bridge Academia and Business

ON 1 AUGUST, the PMI South Florida Chapter took part in a Florida International University (FIU) Distinguished CIO Lunch & Learn Session. Hosted by the College of Business Administration's Master of Science in Management Information Systems (MIS) Department, the Lunch & Learn workshops are usually held three times a year. They were launched to facilitate discussion among MS MIS master's degree students and some of the most prominent and dynamic CIOs in the South Florida, USA area on the state of IT today.

This was an outstanding opportunity for students to hear firsthand what is critical to the success of today's CIOs and learn how project management is of paramount importance to that success. It also provided an opportunity for these CIOs to interact with tomorrow's emerging leaders.

The August session had an excellent turnout with approximately 75 attendees. The chapter had been invited by the department's representative, Dr. Weidong Xia, assistant professor for decision sciences and information systems, to co-sponsor a panel presentation titled "Project Management and Business Community: Challenges and Benefits."

CIO Panelists Share Their Insights

The chapter provided panelists for the event: Doris Crain, vice president/CIO of the North Broward Hospital District; Conrado Morlan, PMP, PgMP, portfolio manager for Latin America for DHL; and Raj Rawal, CIO of Burger King.

In addition, two chapter board members served as panelists and represented the chapter. They were Myra Patino, PMP, director of outreach education, marketing; and Samir Wong, PMP, director of certifications, education and professional development.

The panel discussion was moderated by Dr. Kaushik Dutta, associate professor for decision sciences and information systems, and covered five topics:

- Organization-wide portfolio management;
- Management of specific projects;



Participants in the August FIU Distinguished CIO Lunch & Learn Session included (from left): Conrado Morlan, PMP, PgMP, DHL portfolio manager for Latin America; Monica Tremblay, MS MIS faculty member at FIU; Dr. Kaushik Dutta, associate professor for decision sciences and information systems at FIU; Myra Patino, PMP, PMI South Florida Chapter director of outreach education; Samir Wong, chapter director of certification; Doris Crain, vice president and CIO of the North Broward Hospital District; Raj Rawal, CIO of Burger King; and Dr. Weidong Xia, assistant professor for decision sciences and information systems at FIU.

- Management of offshore projects;
- Career paths for project managers; and
- Project manager certification.

Dr. Dutta asked the panel to explain how potential projects are selected for funding. Ms. Crain detailed the selection process at North Broward Hospital District, where a technical advisory committee, made up of key department directors and C-level executives, is presented with a business case based on return-on-in-

vestment or quality of health care generated. A grid is then created with specific weighted criteria that are aligned with the district's business plan. Projects are voted on and ranked using this grid, and the budget is allocated to each project following their ranking order until funds run out for that fiscal year.

Dr. Dutta inquired about the major challenges organizations face in managing projects and how to deal with the risks and changes encountered once the project has launched. Ms. Patino emphasized the importance of having a strong business case, since it sets the foundation for a successful project.

Changes should be addressed immediately, and one should always revert back to the scope management plan and the original purpose of the project.

Mr. Wong added to this discussion by saying that in this downturned economy, the ability to negotiate for resources has become more critical. Being able to elicit information from customers, and the ability to manage stakeholders' expectations and communication between customers

and stakeholders are also key.

The discussion of offshore projects centered on specific challenges in managing these types of projects. Mr. Rawal mentioned that some of the challenges are the same as with an on-site team, but there may be hesitation or resistance due to time zone or cultural barriers. Mr. Morlan added that the ability to understand and interact with the local culture is important in order to get the best synergy with the team.

What Makes for a Good Hire

The senior-level executives on the panel were asked what skill sets they looked for when hiring a project manager. Ms. Crain stressed that although knowledge about healthcare information is important in her industry, a viable candidate must be, first and foremost, a good communicator. In addition, her organization also looks for a candidate with strong leadership and organizational skills, good listening skills, and the maturity and experience to know when to take someone else's lead and not be afraid to ask questions, since these are attributes of a good project manager.

Mr. Rawal added that one should get to know people, so people get to know you; they then will trust and have confidence in you and want you on their team. Mr. Morlan mentioned that, in addition to seeking out the right certifications and credentials, a project manager should not only learn the technical aspects of a job but also learn how business works and be able to cross-communicate between these two worlds.

During the panel discussion, students were encouraged to ask questions. One student asked about the tools being used from a technology standpoint to achieve successful projects, and panelists presented details.

The event was perceived as a success by all parties involved. FIU acknowledged the contribution that PMI South Florida Chapter made toward the event being successful and encouraged continued education outreach by the chapter including a student competition to be scheduled during the fall semester. In addition, there has been student interest in forming a PMI student chapter on campus.

The event not only allowed PMI to gain exposure within the university community, but also provided students with an opportunity to express their interest in learning more about PMI, the project management profession and volunteering for the chapter.

—Myra Patino, PMP
Director of Outreach Education
PMI South Florida Chapter

PMI Japan Chapter

“Change! Change! Change!” Seminar Urges Participants

“CHANGE! CHANGE! CHANGE!” was the theme of the PMI Japan Chapter's second Summer Festa, which was held 13-14 June. This year's event had 18 sessions, and attracted 400 participants.

The seminar was highlighted by sessions on the “Tokyo Olympic 2016 Bid Project” and “The Difference Between A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide)—Third Edition and Fourth Edition.” Those sessions were led by Shantanu Bhamare, PMP, vice president of the PMI Pune-Deccan India Chapter, who was a member of the content contributor and content reviewer teams for the *PMBOK® Guide* revision. The sessions were highly regarded by attendees.

The Festa was run by 20 PMI Japan seminar committee members and 10 other staff members. The chapter expresses its thanks to all participants and staff for their commitment, and is working toward the next festa, creating more changes.

