



NEWS

APM CHARTERED STATUS

The APM CEO Andrew Bragg was interviewed in the March issue of 'APM's Project magazine'. He confirms that APM is committed to achieving chartered status in as short a time scale as possible.

LONDON

As well as operating its courses at Brands Hatch Kent and the Trinity Centre Cambridge, the MSC is launching in Westminster, London with an Introductory Certificate course on June 15/16. In November our first three-day APMP course especially for Prince2 Practitioners is scheduled.

COMPETENCE ASSESSMENT TOOL

On February 10th, 2010, the new Competence Assessment Tool (CAT) was launched. It was developed by OGC in partnership with the Association for Project Management (APM) and the PPM community. The tool, based on the APM's competence framework, provides a way for public sector project managers to assess their current competence levels and plan their career development.

COMMENTS FROM PREVIOUS COURSE DELEGATES

The overall course rating from the delegates is now running at 88% excellent - the top rating on a five-point scale from very poor to excellent. Pass rate for fee-paying delegates at the open courses is still at 100%.

The OGC Best Management Practice website now includes the new White Paper by Graham Williams entitled 'APMP for Prince2 Practitioners'.

See www.best-management-practice.com > [Knowledge Centre](#)

It is a follow-up to the book of the same name written by Graham Williams and published by the Stationery Office in 2008.

The nine-page White Paper was launched in January 2010 and written to help those with the PRINCE2 Practitioner qualification consider the merits of the APMP qualification.

PRINCE2 requires that candidates have a good understanding of the PRINCE2 Manual. Similarly APMP requires that candidates have a good understanding of 37 topics from the APM Body of Knowledge.

The two approaches are described as "sufficiently compatible to be considered ideal partners". Why is this?

The PRINCE2 manual explains how it excludes important aspects of project management - people management techniques, generic planning techniques and budgetary control.

These are examples of the emphasis placed by APMP on "how" things are actually done e.g. the details of how to produce a schedule and allocate resources to it, how to produce a budget and apply cost management.

The MSC agrees with the stance taken by Graham Williams and supports his attempt to relate PRINCE2 to the APMP qualification and his advice to PRINCE2 Practitioners - "hopefully you will be seriously considering improving your project management knowledge by studying for the APMP".

How can the MSC help?

The MSC is a specialist training provider in project management. It is committed to help organisations and individuals adhere to the professional standards adhered to by the APM and achieve best performance from their project management.

Thus it provides courses for APM qualifications (IC and APMP) and can help organisations who have adopted PRINCE2 and now require a more rounded training course in project management. The MSC specialises in providing tailored course materials or additional courses that cover the material omitted by PRINCE2.

MSC 2010 Open Programme

Brands Hatch, Kent in the M25.M26,M20 triangle - easy access from SE London, Essex, Kent and East Sussex

Introductory Certificate -
26/27 January, 23/24 March,
18/19 May, 13/14 July,
21/22 September, 16/17 November

APMP - 8-12 March, 7-11 June,
11-15 October

Trinity Centre, Cambridge Science Park at the centre of the high-tech businesses that have developed in science parks around the city.

Introductory Certificate -
30/31 March, 5/6 October

Westminster, London - the seat of government.

Introductory Certificate -
15/16 June, 26/27 October

APMP for Prince2 Practitioners
24-26 November

APMP exams are held on the Monday afternoon 10 days after the end of the 5-day course. IC exams are held at the end of the second and final day.

Jottings

How NASA builds teams - Mission critical soft skills for scientists, engineers and project teams

This is the title of a book by Charles Pellerin (2009), who is a former Director of NASA's Astrophysics Division where he led the team that repaired the Hubble Space Telescope. It describes a team-building process that is "proven, quantitative and requires only a fraction of the time and resources of traditional training methods."

A simple tool was developed to analyse team and individual performance. It was inspired by Carl Jung's theory of personality development published in 1905, where he described four functional types.

"This book is an extraordinary guide to building effective teams to solve technical problems. The insights reveal a deep understanding of how technical people interact and can be motivated to work more effectively."

Dr Len Fisk, Head of Space Science, NASA, 1985-92

NASA's Stephen Johnson wrote, "Frequently we find that the failure effects and proximate cause (of space mishaps) are technical, but the root causes and contributing factors are social or psychological."

So Pellerin's model starts from the premise that social context (ie relating to the interactions of people) drives behaviour and perceptions; flawed social contexts had been the primary problem in the Hubble Telescope mirror failure - "NASA's management of its contractor had been so hostile that they would not report technical problems if they could rationalise them".

His model is based on a two-by-two matrix and emphasises the social context rather than the individual's personality (cf Jung). Thus the basis of his approach is that each of the four quadrants which describe the social context must be addressed for effective leadership to occur - the balance, also referred to by Jung, is the important point to address.

In one dimension is 'How we make decisions (emotion or logic)' and in the other - 'How we gather information to make decisions (sensing and intuition)'. Each quadrant contains two behaviours:

Cultivating - caring deeply about other people:

- ★ Express authentic appreciation
- ★ Address shared interests

Including - emotional experiences - deepest from relationships with other people:

- ★ Appropriately include others
- ★ Keep all your agreements

Directing - organising and directing others:

- ★ Avoid blaming and complaining
- ★ Clarify roles, accountability and authority

Visioning - thinking about possible futures:

- ★ Express reality-based optimism
- ★ Be 100% committed

Working in all four dimensions is more important than these specific behaviours.

Perhaps surprisingly, limiting team assessments to the smallest number of important behaviors maximizes accuracy. Eight are assessed because he wants adequate coverage of all four Dimensions and two behaviors per Dimension does this.

Note that their eight-behavior assessment methodology using 10 questions is in stark contrast to the 93 questions in the North American MBTI assessment (88 in the European

version). Thus his assessments may take only 15 minutes each.

The Team Development Assessments (based on a minimum of five team members) are benchmarked against other data in their database. The results show performance against peers for each behaviour. These assessments were repeated at regular intervals. Results showed striking improvements at all levels of performance but particularly for those in the lowest quintile.

"Great projects demand great leadership. The 4-D process in this book has tools, attitudes and habits that will help make you a great project leader. Its really for any group that is tackling a challenging project."

Brad Parkinson, chief architect of the Global Positioning System.

Although based on NASA experience and adopted by NASA's Academy for Program/Project and Engineering Leadership, this is not just for scientists and engineers. The global challenges of global warming, nuclear proliferation, hunger and disease require solutions by teams from all disciplines - the way forward is via projects and programmes.

"By teaching us how to understand our customers' mindset and then to authentically shape our team's offering in response, Pellerin helped us win three major competitive proposals worth \$9 billion. His 4-D approach helps team members achieve superior results - and in the process live richer and more compassionate lives."

Greg Davidson, Northrop Grumman Space Technology

M MANAGEMENT SKILLS CENTRE Course Venues



**Brandshatch Place Hotel - in
M25,M26,M20 triangle**



2010	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Brands Hatch IC	26/27		23/24		18/19		13/14		21/22		16/17	
Cambridge IC			30/31							5/6		
London IC						15/16				26/27		
Brands Hatch APMP			8-12, 22 Mar			7-11, 21 Jun				11-15, 25 Oct		
London APMP - for Prince2 Practitioners											24-26, 6 Dec	



= Cancelled



= Hotel booked

2011	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Brands Hatch/ Leatherhead IC	25/26		15/16		17/18		12/13		20/21		15/16	
Cambridge IC				27/28						4/5		
London IC		15/16				1/2				25/26		
Norwich IC						14/15						
Brands Hatch/ Leatherhead APMP		30 Feb- 4 Mar, 14 Mar				6-10, 20 Jun				17-21, 31 Oct		
London APMP - for Prince2 Practitioners	19-21, 31 Jan			6-8, 18 Apr					28-30, 10 Oct			30 Nov- 2 Dec, 12 Dec