

Citi Promotes PM Awareness

When you think of the Financial Services Industry, project management is typically not the first thing that comes to mind. Within Citi, however, the value that program and project management brings to the execution of strategic initiatives is becoming increasingly more visible. As a result, PMOs have sprung up throughout the organization to bring more projects to completion on time, on scope, and within budget. Since this career path continues to grow within the Industry, PMs thirst for knowledge, and equally important is the one question many employees not exposed to the PM world still have – What is Project Management?

In December 2009, John Petriano, Director of Citi's Operations and Technology Program and Project Governance team asked, "Why don't we have a PM Awareness Week?" Over the next six months, Klara Tansky, Ska Ska Morales, Sam Garcia, and Anna Marie Connally of the Operations and Technology Program and Project Governance team partnered with a team from the International Institute for Learning (IIL) to develop a listing of events targeted for a range of participants. Events were offered not only to those on a professional project management career track, but also for those who have minimal knowledge and experience with the profession.

The inaugural PM Awareness Week became a reality the week of June 21st. Over the course of five days, 20 events garnered over 1,200 participants from 21 different countries. Topics included a look at PM fundamentals, with "An Insight to Project Management" by IIL, overviews of PM Methods, Tools, Reports, and Capabilities within Citi's Operations and Technology, and Best Practices Calls with project managers from across the firm. While the majority of events were held via LiveMeeting and teleconference, 3 events were held in person.

On June 23rd, participants gathered in New York for a panel, "Current and Future Trends in Project Management." Greg Balestrero, President and CEO of PMI, Dr. Harold Kerzner, Senior Executive Director at IIL, and Dr. Al Zeitoun, Senior Program Management Expert at Booz Allen Hamilton, joined Joanna Durand, Director of the Citi Global Program Management Office and the Citi Program Management Council. What ensued was 90 minutes of lively discussion on the direction of project management as a career as well as its place within Citi.

Following the panel, Dr. Kerzner spent nearly two hours focusing on "The Next Generation Project Manager." He spoke about the move from standards and processes to frameworks and checklists. Dr. Kerzner also highlighted how PMs are no longer just order takers; they are vital to developing and executing on strategies for entire firms.

Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive on the inaugural PM Awareness Week. Joanna Durand "loved the week and [has] heard from so many people about the value and how incredible the week has been." Citi is hoping to continue PM Awareness Week as an annual event with more events and networking opportunities.

Special thanks to Greg Balestrero, Dr. Harold Kerzner, Dr. Al Zeitoun, A.J. Fillipas from PMI, and our partners at IIL for making PM Awareness Week a success.

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