

Why Project Management Is a Must-Have Skill

By Michelle LaBrosse, CCPM, PMP®, PMI-ACP, Chief Cheetah and Founder of Cheetah Learning, and Megan Alpine, CCPM, Co-Author

Are you feeling “stuck” in your job? While an all-out career change may be a good choice for some, you don’t need to make such a drastic move to breathe new life into your current position. Developing skills in Project Management – even if you’re not a Project Manager – empowers you to make the most of your abilities and deliver greater value to your organization, setting you apart from the crowd. According to the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the typical person is only working at 50 percent of his or her potential. Even making a modest improvement in how you do projects in your job can help you quickly rise above the mediocrity. *In nearly every industry and job type, Project Management has become a must-have skill for anyone looking to advance in their career.*

Project Management allows you to create more value for your organization – even if you’re not a “Project Manager.” With knowledge of Project Management principles and processes, you can complete projects (any temporary endeavor undertaken to produce a unique outcome, with a clearly defined beginning and end) in less time and to a higher standard of quality. The key word here is *completion*. By being able to complete projects –fast – employees with PM skills deliver tremendous value to their organization.

In a recent edition of the Project Management Institute’s (PMI) annual publication, *Pulse of the Profession*®, the report’s authors find that “[h]igh-performing organizations successfully complete 89 percent of their projects, while low performers complete only 36 percent successfully. This difference in success results in high-performing organizations wasting nearly 12 times less than low performers.” Employees with PM skills – which include the ability to manage time effectively, delegate responsibilities, manage risks, negotiate for resources, and adhere to a project budget and timeline – have the know-how to successfully bring their projects to completion.

As leaders in the field of Project Management education, here at Cheetah Learning we’ve seen first-hand how PM training helps employees deliver greater value to their organizations. After twelve years of service to some of the biggest, most successful publicly traded companies in the US, 90% of our clients increased their profitability and 85% of them increased their growth rate in the year immediately following retaining Cheetah Learning for their on-site PM training needs.

Creating more value for your company gives you leverage to advocate for advancing your position.

PMI’s 2013 salary survey found that Project Management salaries in the US are consistently high, and will likely stay that way. The survey reports that the median annual salary for Project Managers in the US was \$108,000; even PMs with three or fewer years of experience had a median annual salary of \$70,000. Additionally, 74% of PMs responding to the survey reported that their compensation had increased in the past 12 months and 75% of respondents indicated that they expected their compensation to increase further in the next year. The detailed survey

shows median salaries above \$100k for all industries (including construction, engineering, R&D, and many others), across all sizes of organizations, and for all project team sizes. Our point is: Project Management is a lucrative field, and even those just starting out can expect to be compensated generously.

Many successful Project Managers advance to their positions from other career tracks within their organization; 46% of the salary survey respondents reported that they followed an “informal” PM career path in their organization, and only 25% of respondents followed a PM career path that was “clearly defined in writing.” So even if you’re not formally a “Project Manager” in your organization, developing PM skills – and earning credentials to prove it – is one of the smartest steps you can take to advance your career.

Project Management skills are transferable across many job types and industries.

In today’s world, there is an expectation that as a functioning professional in any industry, you know the basics of getting things done (aka, Project Management). And more so, it is an exploding career field, with people holding PMI’s Project Management Professional (PMP)® credential being some of the highest paid middle-level managers in organizations worldwide. Check out a few of the larger online employment websites; do a search for “Project Manager” and you will find many employers seeking various credentials in Project Management. Check back routinely and you will find that the number grows almost daily.

One of the best ways to get started in Project Management is with PM education and credentials. Cheetah Learning is a PMI Registered Education Provider (voted PMI-REP® of the year in 2008) offering courses in-person and online to both experienced PM professionals and those new to the field. When you learn Project Management the way Cheetah Learning teaches it, you don’t just learn Project Management best practices – you learn how to learn fast. You move to the top of the pack faster than everyone else once you become a “Cheetah,” and you help any organization you work for do the same. If you’re ready to advance your career with Project Management skills, Cheetah’s [Introduction to Project Management online class](#) is a great place to start. Visit www.cheetahlearning.com for more information.

About the Author:



Michelle LaBrosse, PMP, is an entrepreneurial powerhouse with a penchant for making success easy, fun, and fast. She is the founder of [Cheetah Learning](#), the [author](#) of the [Cheetah Success Series](#), and a prolific [blogger](#) whose mission is to bring Project Management to the masses.

Cheetah Learning is a virtual company with 100 employees, contractors, and licensees worldwide. To date, more than 50,000 people have become “Cheetahs” using Cheetah Learning’s innovative Project Management and accelerated learning techniques.

Honored by the Project Management Institute (PMI®), Cheetah Learning was named Professional Development Provider of the Year at the 2008 PMI® Global Congress. A dynamic keynote speaker and industry thought leader, Michelle is recognized by PMI as one of the 25 Most Influential Women in Project Management in the world.

Michelle’s articles have appeared in more than 100 publications and websites around the world. Her monthly column, the [Know How Network](#), is carried by over 400 publications.

She is a graduate of the Harvard Business School’s Owner/President Management (OPM) program and holds engineering degrees from Syracuse University and the University of Dayton.