

When Passion Meets Recession

By Michelle LaBrosse, PMP®, Chief Cheetah and Founder, Cheetah Learning

Think of the recession for just a moment as a person, let's say Mr. Recession, and that person is someone who has been visiting your house for too long, and you want Mr. Recession to leave and go back to where he came from. In a typical household, how might we get Mr. Recession to leave? We might ask the kids to turn up the volume on the things they love to do that drive us crazy. Crank the Metallica up extra loud for ultimate vibration. Practice Guitar Band while Mr. Recession is listening to more doom and gloom on the news. If you don't have kids, but you live with your sweet heart – ignore the fact that Mr. Recession is even in the house and get busy being passionate with whatever you love to do. You get the picture. Basically, unleash your passion and do what you love – who cares about what the lingering lout Mr. Recession is up to?

Whether you can get Mr. Recession to leave tomorrow, or if he decides to stick around for a while longer, just get on with your life. Use whatever it is you're passionate about to propel you forward, and if your passion is Project Management, this is a tool that can actually help you capitalize on volatile times. Yes, you can actually capitalize on the recession with Project Management.

Top Five Ways to Profit from your PM Passion

- 1. Create goals with gusto.** Your goals need to inspire you and your team, and they need to be clear and focused. Once you've written down your goals – either personal or for a project – ask yourself what are the biggest barriers to success? How you will jump over those barriers needs to be in your project plan. Don't shy away from what's standing in the way of your success. Instead, call out the barriers clearly and focus every day on how you will overcome them. Be clear and make it measurable because a wise woman once said, "What gets measured, gets done!"

- 2. Track time and dollars spent with exacting enthusiasm.** Dollars always matter, but when times are tough, they matter even more. It's hard to make decisions about where to cut costs if you can't clearly identify where they are. When you can show your boss and your team exactly where you are, both in terms of time allocated and actual dollars spent, you're speaking their language. Nothing makes upper management more confident than knowing exactly where they are on a mission-critical project.
- 3. Get that deadline buzz.** You know how good it feels when you're meeting deadlines. It's the buzz of accomplishment, no caffeine necessary. Set deadlines that are real and have impact, so when they are met, they have meaning. Avoid false deadlines. They are the business version of "Crying Wolf." Always use deadlines to measure progress and as an open forum for discussion about what is and isn't working on a team or within a project plan. When you understand what impedes meeting deadlines, you can get answers that not only put your project back on track, but save your organization time and money.
- 4. Become a project archaeologist.** When you unearth the hidden gems in your project agreement and documentation, you are digging out valuable information for your team going forward. Too many people mistake documentation as busy work instead of using it to get at its real value. When you close out a project, don't literally put it to bed. Instead, ask these questions: Did you have enough resources allocated to this project? At what points did this project falter and why? What was behind the cost variance between our original budget and actual budget? If you don't capture the intelligence in your documentation, understand it and share it, you've missed a huge opportunity to make you and your team more productive, effective and efficient.

5. Create a consistent and standardized approach to Project

Management. I know this seems like a no-brainer, but I see companies every day that expect their people to learn Project Management by osmosis. I know you've seen this too: "Let the new people shadow Susan for a few days because she's a great project manager." This is a good start, but you can't have enterprise-wide impact from Project Management unless you have a consistent way of approaching Project Management. This is why the PMP certification has become important to many businesses and government. These organizations have started to see the value of having whole teams and whole departments and even entire companies working from the same body of knowledge.

Hug the Bottom-line like Your New Best Friend

So, plug into your PM passion and see what happens when Passion Meets Recession. Think of your bottom-line like the ally it is, and use your PM skills to boost it. The bottom-line is not just for accountants and executives. It's a sure-fire way for project managers to show their value and make themselves a valuable player in any financial discussion.

Get 20% off our Capitalize on the Recession course (this teaches how to profit from PM skills in tough economic times).

Take our **Capitalize from the Recession course** and put the unsavory houseguest Mr. Recession to work. Use PROMO CODE "pmcapitalist" and enjoy 20% off when you register by April 15, 2009.

Chief Cheetah Podcast Is Yours for the Downloading

Want to hear what Michelle LaBrosse, PMP, and Chief Cheetah has to say about the power of Project Management? Download our podcast at <http://podcast.cheetahlearning.com/podcastgen/> and hear the words straight from the Cheetah's mouth.

About Cheetah Learning and the Know How Network

The Know How Network is a monthly column written by Michelle LaBrosse, the founder and Chief Cheetah of Cheetah Learning. Distributed to hundreds of newsletters and media outlets around the world, the Know How Network brings the promise, purpose and passion of Project Management to people everywhere. Visit www.cheetahlearning.com to learn more about Cheetah PM, the fastest way to learn about Project Management and get your PMP. You can also get your career in gear with [CheetahWare](#), free Project Management tools from Cheetah Learning.

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 30,000 people have become “Cheetahs” using Cheetah Learning’s innovative Project Management and accelerated learning techniques.

Recently 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 was previously recognized by PMI as one of the 25 Most Influential Women in Project Management in the world.

Michelle’s articles have appeared in over 100 publications and web sites around the world. Her monthly column, the [Know How Network](#) is carried by over 400 publications, and her monthly newsletter goes out to more than 50,000 people. Her radio program, [Your World Your Way](#), is a weekly broadcast that is an inspiring and practical look at how Project Management fuels success.

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

She lives in Nevada with her family and likes to rejuvenate in Alaska where you'll often find her kayaking, hiking, and riding her motorcycle.

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