

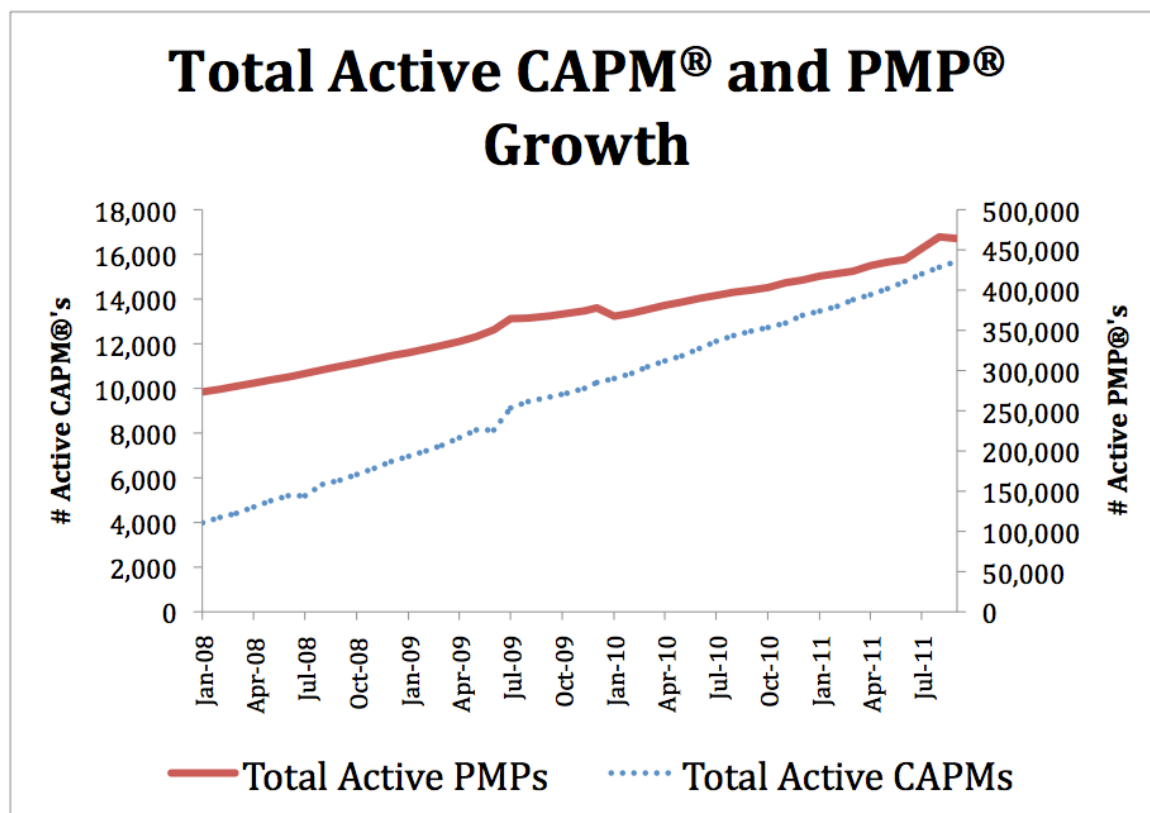
## PMP®- Better than Gold

*By Michelle LaBrosse, PMP®, Chief Cheetah and Founder of Cheetah Learning, and Kristen LaBrosse, CAPM®, Co-Author*

This time of year, many of us are thinking about decorating for the holidays. You might decorate your house with wreaths, your children with bows, your spouse with gold jewelry, or your table with turkey. Decorations lift our spirits, and put us in the holiday mood. This holiday season, don't forget to decorate your name as well, with a professional certification.

By adding a dash of PMP® or a sprinkle of CAPM® to the end of your name, you are showing your peers, employers, or potential employers, that you have what it takes to ring in the new year with success.

The CAPM® and PMP® are both powerful credentials, and their popularity and relevance within the Project Management industry has been growing over the past four years, as the graph below illustrates.



From January 2008 to September 2011, the number of PMP holders grew 69.7% to 464,168 PMPs in September 2011. In this same time period, the number of CAPMs grew 293.5% to 15,695 CAPMs in September 2011. Project Management credentials are now, more than ever, a standard for PM professionals in industries all over the world.

For the PMP® credential specifically, the benefits far outweigh the cost and time commitment it takes to earn your credential. It only takes a quick [Expected Monetary Value](#) demonstration

(<http://www.cheetahlearning.com/accpmp/risk1.pdf>) to see that studying for and earning your PMP® pays for itself immediately. Once you have invested your resources to obtain this credential, what should you expect? Cheetah Learning interviewed 70 Project Management Professionals with various levels of experience, and here is what we learned.

**Life after PMP Certification.** Everyone has their own reasons for sitting down to that four-hour exam and earning a PMP certification. Maybe you are a project manager who finally wants recognition for your knowledge and skills. Maybe you are seeking a new job or a new position within your company. We polled our project management group to see how earning a PMP has changed their careers. Following are the top three outcomes:

1. Enhanced reputation within PM community (21%)
2. Promoted within current organization (17%)
3. Obtained a new job (16%)

Others reported answers include increased confidence and capabilities. As these results show, obtaining a PMP certification produces not only monetary rewards, but also the intrinsic reward that comes from feeling good about your standing within your industry.

**Money Money Money!** We know that many of you wish to obtain your PMP certification for the same reason that our polled group did: to earn a reputation for yourself within the PM community. But who can blame you if you also want to be compensated appropriately?

We polled our same trusty group of PMs to see how earning the PMP credential affected their earnings, and the results were impressive. The average reported increase in annual compensation after obtaining a PMP credential was \$24,556 (ranging from an annual increase of \$5,000 to \$63,000). What would you do with an extra \$24,556 this year?

**Looking for Work? Look No Further.** Searching for a new job can be either challenging and exciting, or stressful and tiresome. This greatly depends on the length of time that you are looking before you are able to land a job.

When we asked our professionals how long it took them to find a job if they found themselves unemployed post PMP certification, 77% of them said they were never in this situation, as their PMP provided job security and a career path that allowed them to be fulfilled in their current position. The remaining 23% who did need to make a career change reported that on average, it only took them 1.5 months (ranging from 0 months to 7 months) to find a new job.

This year, make sure to differentiate yourself with credentials that are worth their weight in gold. Decorate your name with PMP® or CAPM®, and bring on the holiday cheer.

## 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 more than 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.

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.

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