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PMI-GLC VP of Communications message  
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Great Lakes Chapter is sloughing off the summer doldrums and getting back into the swing of things for fall. First, we have Hans Jonasson speaking at our September dinner meeting (details below) and I'm sure it will be a great presentation, but I'm biased - Hans is a Director on my committee.

Second, we have an interesting article in this newsletter from Kevin Suboski; read down to see it. Third, we present to you two great options for preparing for your PMP exam through our Chapter's on-the-ground or online review class.

Finally, by the time you read this your Executive Committee will have chosen a President for 2007. We will let you know at our September dinner meeting, and in our next newsletter, who has been selected for that critical role.

Also, in our next newsletter, we will be able to tell you the results of your vote on our proposed revision to the Chapter by-laws. Election of the other officers takes place in a few months.

Regards,  
Scott C. Anderson, PMP  
VP of Communications

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PMI-GLC Announcement - September 11 Dinner Meeting  
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Dear GLC Members:

The Great Lakes Chapter is pleased to present Hans Jonasson. Hans is the founder of JTC Unlimited, has 25 years of experience in the areas of project management and project management training. He has managed all aspects of software development projects ranging from \$100,000 to \$10 Million for the automotive industry. As an instructor, he has taught courses on project management, requirements gathering, Rapid Application Development and process development, from introductory to advanced levels, to over 10,000 people at companies such as IBM, EDS, Ford Motors, DaimlerChrysler, General Dynamics, Citibank, JP Morgan Chase, and many others. He has been a Project Management Professional (PMP) and member of the Project Management Institute (PMIR) since 1996 and has been presenting his seminars at PMIR SeminarsWorld events for the last seven years. He is a member of the Great Lakes Chapter of PMIR and the International Institute of Business Analysis (IIBA). Hans will be presenting "Best Practices for Determining Project Requirements" at the September dinner meeting.

Early registration ends at 5:00PM on the Wednesday before the Dinner Meeting. Late registration ends at noon on the Friday before the dinner meeting. For registration questions, please call (248) 643-6590. For additional information and to register, please visit [http://www.pmiglc.org/pd/mtg\\_0609.html](http://www.pmiglc.org/pd/mtg_0609.html).

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PMI-GLC Announcement - Professional Development Event  
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It is now time to plan for your exam and there are two options available, both at an incredible price. Do not miss these opportunities to get ready for the PMI exam.

If you cannot attend a class, PMI GLC offers its online instructor lead course at the same price for members and non-members.

Date: October 7th - November 11th, 2006  
Times: Weekly virtual sessions for your convenience  
Credits: 42 PDUs  
Price: Members and Non-members \$495

If you prefer to attend a class, PMI Great Lakes Chapter still offers the Exam review class.

Date: September 25th - November 6th, 2006  
Times: Saturday 8am to 4pm  
Location: Madonna University, Livonia  
Credits: 42 PDUs  
Price: Members \$495/Non-members \$650

Please visit <http://www.pmiglc.org/pd/index.html> for additional information and to register.

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Sponsored Announcement - Affordable PDUs - Local Training Classes  
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JTC Unlimited provides local training in project management and business analysis at affordable prices. Earn the PDUs you need without breaking the budget by registering now for one of our upcoming classes in Troy presented by Hans Jonasson, PMP, a PMIR Registered Education Provider. Please visit [www.JTCunlimited.com/events](http://www.JTCunlimited.com/events) for more information.

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Sponsored Announcement - RMC Project Management  
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Upcoming PM Training Courses in the Detroit Area PMPR EXAM PREP (2 days, 16 Contact Hours), "Pass the PMPR - Guaranteed!"  
Detroit, MI October 26th - 27th  
Please visit [www.rmcproject.com](http://www.rmcproject.com) for more information.

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Sponsored Announcement - Achieve Your Career Goals with ESI Training  
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At ESI we offer more than 100 courses in Project Management, Contract Management and Business Analysis designed to help you achieve your career goals, all while earning valuable PDUs. We also offer expert courses and tools to help you pass the PMP Exam on the first try. Visit [www.esi-intl.com](http://www.esi-intl.com) today for more details.

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Sponsored Announcement - Pass PMP Exam or Your Money Back  
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No time to study for PMP Exam? Enroll in our popular 4-day PMP Exam Prep Boot Camp with a 5th day pass or money-back guarantee and join the thousands of PMPs who trusted PMTI and succeeded. To enroll in our classes offered throughout US and Canada or to find out if we provide the best value for the money, visit our website at <http://www.4PMTI.com>.

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Sponsored Announcement - MS Project for Improved Project Management  
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"Leveraging Microsoft Project for Improved Project Management" seminars. Whether you have never touched the tool, or if you would like to learn

how to make it do more for you, we have a seminar that will help, each worth 3 PDUs! To find out more, visit our website at <http://www.mympa.org/chapters/SEMichigan/public.aspx>.

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Sponsored Announcement - Masters Certificate in Project Management

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Take Your Project Management skills to the next level. The Masters Certificate in Project Management - Eastern Michigan University Livonia - Over 3800 graduates across North America since 1997! Eighteen days over four months - graduates are prepared for the PMI exam. Call 734.487.9158 or visit [www.ce.emich.edu/project](http://www.ce.emich.edu/project).

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PMO Design Principles: What really matters?

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Many organizations are expending enormous resources working to improve how they run projects. They see significant opportunities to improve the competitiveness of their organizations by improving what most consider dismal project performance. Project Management Organizations (PMOs) are being designed and implemented to lead these organizational efforts to improve project performance. While the success of these PMOs is often questioned, there is no doubt that tremendous room for improvement exists in organizational project practices and that, with experience and knowledge, PMO performance will improve.

Since PMOs are a relatively new phenomenon, it is reasonable that people who continue to ask the question, "Why aren't PMOs more successful?" often reach entirely different conclusions. That is the nature of the evolution of thought. The most resonant answer to this question is, "Because our mental models of what matters in projects are inconsistent with our experience of what really happens."

In 2004 Suboski and Company conducted a study exploring what really matters in project management. In this study, project professionals were interviewed using a technique called Appreciative Inquiry (AI), which focuses on what works rather than the much more predominant focus of other inquiries, what does not work. The interviews for this study also focused on experiential conclusions rather than analytical conclusions. Using these techniques we were able to circumvent the application of mental models and go right to what people experienced.

Mental models are representations of the world and how the world works which is different than the world. A map of a city is not the city, and sometimes the map is not consistent with what actually exists in the city. I live on a road that is misnamed on most maps. If I look up my address on Mapquest, it shows that I live 15 miles from where I actually live. In other words, if I am at the corner looking at the street sign while I have my WiFi laptop with Mapquest zoomed in on my street, the names are not the same. Which do I trust? While maps are simplifications that allow us to navigate much more widely than we would be able to without a map, in some situations we can become lost when our map does not match reality.

What we found from our 2004 study was somewhat surprising. While we anticipated that our mental maps of project management were inconsistent with the actual practice of projects, we were quite surprised with how complete the mismatch was. Prior to the study we conducted extensive research into the skills and practices people claimed contributed to project success. In essence, we searched for the mental models with

which people generally operated. We found that the community intelligence on the subject was weighted heavily towards things, mechanics and process. Our study found that what mattered most were skills and practices that had to do with mood, relationships of human beings and flexibility.

Those that participated in the study also reported surprise. They widely reported that they gained significant insight from the experience. They were surprised by what people reported as being most important and found that they became different, more effective observers of what matters most in projects.

We became curious to see what most influences people that are designing PMOs, the maps or the reality. We began to speculate about what sort of practices PMOs would focus on if you accepted the conclusions of our 2004 study as fact. In other words, if a team's mood is essential to project success, what organizational practices would be put in place to produce effective moods? In our exploration, we have yet to find a PMO that influences mood in a positive way. Actually, the organizational practices PMOs employ often seem to work to undermine the mood of people in projects.

If, as we learned from our 2004 study, project performance could improve by empowering people, do PMOs intentionally work to empower people? Again, the current standard appears to be the opposite - PMOs often work methodically and rigorously to diminish the authority and autonomy of individual Project participants.

While we do not claim that the conclusions of our 2004 study are facts, it is uncanny how orthogonal our results are from the practices of PMOs. Given that the results of this study are consistent with the results of many other Organization Development surveys and resonate with most people we encounter, we are confident that the results may not be exact, but they are directionally sound.

The domain of the PMO is still relatively immature. Many people are theorizing, practicing, and studying to improve the situation. There is still room for some wonder and speculation about appropriate design principles for building effective PMOs. To this end we have begun another study exploring which existing organizational practices contribute most to project success. This study extends our earlier work in that the 2004 study focused on a Project Manager's (PM) personal practices whereas this study explores which organizational assets, not personal PM assets, help the PM to achieve success. We anticipate that the results from this study will provide those who are designing PMOs with invaluable insights into what really works rather than what theoretically works. It will also provide those who participate with us an opportunity to explore the disconnect between their mental models and the real world.

The designs being used today to implement PMOs have a predominant focus on the mechanics of project execution and pay little attention to supporting the people involved. This has led to the widespread use of models that don't effectively leverage the most powerful assets in projects - the human beings who make projects work. As future designs for PMOs evolve, an awareness of the dissonance between what we think works, and what we have experienced that works, will drive the greatest advances in this art of producing projects.

The author, Kevin Suboski, has been studying linguistics, biology, chaos

theory, project management and philosophy for 20 years. His company has been engaged in project management consulting since 1994. Prior to the formulation of Suboski and Company, Kevin spent 9 years acting within projects. To find out more about the current PMO AI study, visit [www.suboski.com](http://www.suboski.com).

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#### The Jobs Board

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The chapter website has a self-service jobs board where companies in the area are posting jobs in the project management field. Visit <http://www.pmiglc.org/jobs/index.php> for more information.

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#### Mailing List Information

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To make changes to your email address, go to the National PMI website at <http://www.pmi.org> and login through the Membership section.