



Interview with Mark Langley CEO of PMI



Mark Langley CEO PMI



Ed Naughton Inst. Director General

Mark Langley is President & CEO of the Project Management Institute (PMI®). Mark became PMI's President and CEO in December 2010 after serving more than eight years as Executive Vice President and COO. In the chief executive role, Mr. Langley is responsible for overseeing and serving as the lead advocate for PMI's complex global organization, consisting of more than half a million members, certification holders and other stakeholders in more than 185 countries. In support of the PMI Board of Directors, Mr. Langley's primary responsibility is leading the organization's alignment to and execution of PMI's strategic plan through the development and implementation of its operating strategies and organization. In his previous role, Mark led PMI's stakeholder base to grow five-fold and transition from primarily North American to a global representation. During that time, PMI also introduced additional professional certifications, developed program and portfolio management standards, and published several practice guidelines. Mr. Langley joined PMI in 2002 as Director, Finance and Administration. Prior to joining PMI, he served as Chief Financial Officer for ChemLogix and held senior leadership positions with AssetTRADE.com, Quala Systems, Inc. and Castle Energy Corp. He began his career at Price Waterhouse (now PwC) and is a Certified Public Accountant. He is a graduate of St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA.

Editor's note: This interview was conducted in Dublin, Ireland in May 2011 by Ed Naughton, International Correspondent for PMForum and PM World Today.



PMI EMEA CONGRESS DUBLIN MAY 2011

During the PMI EMEA congress in Dublin in May 2011, former Vice President of IPMA and Director General of the Institute of Project Management Ireland, Ed Naughton, met with PMI's CEO Mark Langley. Beth Partleton, current Chair of the PMI Board of Directors, also attended the meeting.

After welcoming them both to Dublin, Ed asked Mark a set of questions about his plans for PMI, PMI certifications, and trends in the project management profession.

Ed Naughton: What are some of your main goals for the next 1-2 years for the organization?

Mark Langley: Mark stated that among his major goals over the next one to two years was to deliver ever greater value to PMI members as well as inspiring lasting and loyal relationships with members, volunteers and other stakeholders that helped advance the profession and drive customer satisfaction in worldwide markets. The current amount of collateral on the website, the electronic publications, the work in the areas of the Global Academic Council, Career Path supports and the Educational Foundation are just some examples of the continuous drive in the in this value initiative.

Naughton: The theme of this congress in Dublin focused on Social Media for Project Management which one might consider has two distinct components - use of Social Media for Professional PM Organizations and its use the for PM Practitioners. Do PMI see valuable opportunities to assist and deploy the emergence of new media?

Langley: Innovation through new media is timely and necessary in today's rapidly changing business world. Social networking sites are emerging as critical communications tools for project managers. LinkedIn, for example, features over 3,000 groups related to project management, serving more than three million people who list project management in their professional profiles. Other social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, are finding a place in project management as well, alongside a range of online enterprise collaboration tools.

When what organisations do is not exclusive, how they do it becomes a competitive advantage. In the face of cost constraints, tighter deadlines and shareholder concerns, companies need more innovative ways to achieve organisational success. Knowledge sharing and project visibility are critical as more organisations look to project management as a strategic competency that drives new ideas and achieves business results. In a professional context, social



media gives companies the ability to quickly identify, organise and deploy teams, collaborating across borders and between departments.

Naughton: The project management community appears to be re-defining its core offering of “Project Management” to “Project, Programme and Portfolio Management “. Do you believe that this message is or could be undermining the generic brand “Project Management” and have PMI considered doing any market research around this issue?

Langley: PMI believes that the emergence of interest in these themes is a natural progression for the development of the profession. As organizations develop their PM skills and become more mature in practice, the natural progression is to see the formulation of their projects in the context of programmes and portfolios. It is an accepted reality that the terms programmes and portfolios are used widely outside of the project management arena. The term portfolio for example, is often primarily associated with the world of finance. Its role in the project management discipline however, as a vehicle to help ensure the delivery and implementation of the organization’s strategy is without question. The project management profession is now visible on a much broader landscape and it is important to accurately reflect its expansion into the programme and portfolio space. This expansion can be comfortably accommodated without undermining the generic brand of “project management”.

Naughton: The PMP credential continues to experience healthy annual growth. However, it is over three years since the PgMP credential was launched and only circa 500 individuals have attained it. Why do you think this is so when the potential market (400,000 PMPs) is so large and do you think that PMI will launch a PfMP credential?

Langley: The market response to-date to the PgMP credential has not been too far out of original expectations. The growth in the last year has been encouraging but it is recognised that the price point could be considered expensive in the current economic climate. It is also believed by some to be a difficult and onerous task on the individual to undertake this accreditation. At this point in time, there is no plan to launch a Project Portfolio Management Professional (PfMP) credential.

Naughton: With regard to the portfolio of credentials currently offered by PMI there appears to be fragmentation taking place with separate credentials for Risk and Scheduling, for example. Do you expect this trend to continue with possibly a separate credential for each knowledge area - Cost, Procurement, etc. ?

Langley: PMI regularly surveys project practitioners to further understand how they practice project management. After due consideration, PMI responds to the requirements identified for particular roles to be accredited. While the overall number of credentials awarded in the Risk and Scheduling categories are relatively low (400 and 600) respectively, Risk has encountered 143% and Schedule a 56% growth in the year ending 2010. There is no accreditation envisaged in the Cost area as this is well served with the credentialing



programme from the AACE (Association for the Advancement of Cost Engineering).

The latest accreditation to be launched by PMI is Agile Certification. Organizations are seeing value in Agile Methods to deliver projects more quickly. At the same time, practitioners are being exposed to this demand for Agile practices and are eager to learn to apply Agile methods. PMI's research showed that 68% of those organizations using Agile methods would value an Agile certification for project management practitioners.

Naughton: How do you see PMI's leadership role evolving on a global basis? .

Langley: PMI is driven by a clear mission and an underlying set of values that guide how we act and influence the expectations of our stakeholders. Our core purpose is to advance the practice, science and profession of project management throughout the world in a conscious and proactive manner.

The chief executive has responsibility for overseeing and serving as the lead advocate for PMI's complex global organization, consisting of more than half a million members, certification holders and other stakeholders in more than 185 countries.

In support of the PMI Board of Directors, the CEO's primary responsibility is leading the organization's alignment to and execution of PMI's strategic plan through the development and implementation of its operating strategies and organization. Demonstrating the value of project management to practitioners, organizations and governments as well as collaborating with volunteer leaders, and working with communities to advance the profession of project management is a core component of this remit.

PMI also values engagement through encouraging diverse viewpoints and enabling individuals to contribute to the project management profession.

Mark recently met with the current IPMA chair, Brigitte Schaden in Brussels. The current memorandum of understanding with IPMA has evolved in the direction of collaboration in the areas of research and education via the Global Academic Council and PMI look forward to a continuance and enhancement of these initiatives by both parties.

Editor's note: At the conclusion of the above interview in Dublin, Ed Naughton presented Mark Langley with a gift on behalf of IPMA, a Waterford Crystal Clock – made in Ireland.