

The Lessons From History (LFH) Newsletter

October 2011

1. *News*
2. *Articles*
3. *Upcoming books*
4. *Featured authors*
5. *Interesting sites*
6. *Mark Your Calendars*

Welcome to the latest edition of the semi-annual [newsletter](#) showcasing new articles and deliverables from our departments and highlighting useful advice.

Here are some quotes to think about next time you are attached to a project:

Chilean Miners: 17 Days Buried Alive

“From the first day we were organized – a great team. We were all workers. There were no professionals there, just workers. If there’d been engineers, we’d be dead now. I’m sure about that, absolutely positive. An engineer would have waved his degree and ego around. And ego kills people.”

Mario Sepulveda ‘Perry’

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/8698731/Chilean-Miners-17-Days-Buried-Alive-BBC-Two-review.html>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/tv/2011/08/chilean-miners-17-days-b.shtml>

In 1913 a newspaper advertisement in the Times of London was looking for a special kind of individual for an Antarctic expedition to the South Pole.

Sir Ernest Shackleton will lead a new expedition to the South Pole next year

"Men wanted for hazardous journey. Low wages, bitter cold, long hours of complete darkness. Safe return doubtful. Honour and recognition in event of success."

Shackleton's failed to get to the South Pole after his ship was crushed in the pack ice. But through his heroic leadership and tenacity he managed to get rescue and oversaw the safe return of all his men.

In describing the Apollo Space program

"We were reaching beyond our grasp"

Professor Brian Cox, BBC The Horizon Guide: Moon

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00llgs8>

And one from Churchill:

"Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts."

Winston Churchill

1.) News

Report on IRNOP Conference June 2011 in Montreal

This year the International Research Network on Organizing by Projects (IRNOP) ran its 10th conference in Montreal for academics and researchers in the project management community. Importantly for Lessons-from-History one track created was based on the history of projects, and project management. The key objective of the workshop was to:

"provide a face-to-face forum for discussion and recollection of our common past and how that helps us construct the future of projects management in academia and in practice."

A gathering of 30-40 prominent researchers from the project management world attended the workshop. After some thought-provoking presentations on a few classic project management cases and readings, discussions reflected on:

What are the key readings in project management and 'big ideas'?

What can we learn from historical and monumental projects?

Looking at the past current developments, what could be the fruitful roots for the future?

Why is this important? As project management grows, there is a move to professionalize it in the same sense that a doctor, architect, lawyer, or engineer is a "professional." These are professions with accreditation where a practitioner can be struck off. These are also professions with a large body of knowledge and a deep history that goes back thousands of years. The general perception of most people is that project management is not an old profession like these. It is perceived to have started in the mid-20th century, or a bit earlier with Henry Gantt and his charts (1910s).

<http://lessons-from-history.com/node/130>

There were two papers submitted to IRNOP from the Lessons-from-History series:

Building the Case for Historical Project Management, Mark Kozak-Holland

This paper addressed common misperceptions about historical project management such as historical projects had an unlimited budget, predominant slave workforce, and unlimited time lines. These misperceptions leave an impression that what was practiced in the past is not relevant to today's projects. It sets the notion that these projects are so different, from a project management standpoint, they cannot be taken seriously for comparative purposes. It also infers that modern project management is unique, unconnected to the past, and started recently (twentieth century). This paper showed that historical projects dealt with comparable issues and had similar characteristics of modern projects: the multiple competing constraints of scope, schedule, budget, quality, resources, and risk. Some of these landmark historical projects delivered in timescales, and levels of quality that we would struggle with today. Hence, these projects should not be dismissed but embraced.

The paper was based on the book **The History of Project Management** which traces back and challenges the notion that project management was initiated and evolved in the 20th century.

<http://lessons-from-history.com/history-project-management/history-project-management-page>

Reviews of the book: <http://lessons-from-history.com/node/123>

If you would like to purchase this book in an e-book version go to:

<http://www.mmpubs.com/catalog/the-history-of-project-management-book-p-394.html>

For a hard cover version of the book go to:

<http://www.mmpubs.com/catalog/the-history-of-project-management-ebook-p-417.html>

If you buy the book you will get also get a webinar free (valued \$10).

The Polaris Project and Managing Risk and Complexity, John Byrne

The United States Navy's Polaris project was one of the most significant projects in human history. Its affects are still felt today in world politics. The purpose of this paper was to explore this project by examining the complex technical issues it faced and the part risk management played in the overall success of the project. This project was replete with complex technical and political issues that many wondered if these issues would cripple the project. Some wondered if the project was at all possible. In the end, though the development and use of various risks management techniques, the project was ultimately successful. The product of this project, the Polaris missile and submarine, has successfully influenced numerous geopolitical world events in the last 40 years. Though the exploration of this project, one can gain a better grasp of the use of risk management and insight into the management of complex projects.

Based on the book **Polaris** which is designed to make risk management easier, and less time consuming to perform. For more information go to: <http://lessons-from-history.com/node/116>

Reviews of book: <http://lessons-from-history.com/node/121>

If you would like to purchase this book in an e-book version go to:

<http://www.mmpubs.com/catalog/polaris-lessons-in-risk-management-ebook-p-399.html>

For a hard cover version of the book go to:

<http://www.mmpubs.com/catalog/polaris-lessons-in-risk-management-book-p-398.html>

Future Research (into the history of project management) - In June 2011 IJPM (International Journal of Project Management) called for papers to be published in Spring 2012:

"There is a growing concern in the project management community about the lack of historical understanding of the emergence of project management and the importance of landmark projects. To fill this void of historical research in project management, this special issue invites project management researchers interested in history, and historians interested in projects and project management." (Söderlund and Lenfle, 2010)

2.) Articles

New Articles and Videos:

The Project Manager's story about how projects so often go wrong and hints on what to look out for, from www.changequest.co.uk

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eVJuIzEIOXE>

Join the [LinkedIn](#) Lessons from History group.

<http://www.linkedin.com/groupInvitation?gid=2885686&invID=21616913&sharedKey=pp7zRST9&mboxItemID=1907018818>

YouTube Channel [Project Lessons From History](#) presents video recordings of selected conference presentations from the series. This includes a new video of The History of Project Management author's perspective which outlines the thinking behind creating the book.

<http://www.youtube.com/user/projectlessons#g/a>

3.) Upcoming books

The LFH series has the following books in its production schedule planned for 2012:

Manhattan

The Manhattan Project is arguably the most important project of the 20th century. Perhaps it is the most important project in human history. This project ushered in the atomic age. It took us from a time when many thousands of bombers were needed to bomb a city just to damage it – to a time when one bomber with one bomb could destroy an entire city. This project developed the atomic bomb and thus, ended World War Two.

If you think you have challenges on your project, imagine having a project in which you have to develop a method to convert rock into a weapon that can single handedly destroy any city on earth. And to make it interesting your enemy is trying to do the same thing. Whoever gets the weapon first wins!

What does it take to do such a project? Leadership! Without great leadership this project would not have been possible. Actually this project had three very different leaders: Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer, General Leslie Groves, and Dr. Ernest Lawrence. Each of these had their own individual leadership style.

Manhattan examines these different leadership styles and how these different styles contributed to the project's success. The book illustrates these styles by examining and exploring leadership, power, and motivation. This book begins in a small laboratory in California. It moves to places like Hanford, Oak Ridge, and Los Alamos. It finally ends in places known as Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Throughout the story we explore leadership; leadership and motivational theories; and how our three leaders led and motivated their subordinates.

If you want to improve your leadership style or to simply learn more about leadership, this book is for you! The book looks at leadership through the actions of these three great leaders that helped to end the Second World War.

<http://lessons-from-history.com/node/34>

Project Leadership: Skills Mastered by Washington, Lincoln and Churchill to Save the World

While leadership books have been written about George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and Winston Churchill, none to date have examined the inner and outer lives of these three leaders to distill a common leadership skill set and make it accessible to those aspiring to leave legacies of their magnitude. Washington abolished the idea of the painfully ostracizing class system which viewed people as inferior by category and unworthy of life's joys simply based on birth. Lincoln laid waste to the idea that all people were not created equal and set the dark and humiliating forces of discrimination on a path to eventual extinction. And Churchill forever put to rest the idea that not all people had a right to expect morality from their leaders and to be self-governed, putting tyranny on the run worldwide.

So what is the common skillset they shared? The answer will surely surprise you. Instead of blaming others, ultimately people who become great leaders begin to look inward in their early adulthood at times of failure. They begin to come to understand what drives them, both good and bad. Great leaders begin their journey by "Acquainting Themselves With Their Egos". This is a skill that all who seek to be both highly ethical and highly effective leaders can learn and centers on understanding one's own early adolescent psyche formation that laid the groundwork for ego insecurities in adulthood. For the purposes of this study, ego is subdivided into three categories to make for easier practical acquaintance. These categories are fear of death, fear of poverty and fear of social inadequacy.

After coming to understand the subconscious thought pattern scripting of their ego, the path great leaders take then centers on "Re-scripting Themselves Using Self-Reflective Writing". Old worn out and competing thought patterns must go and must be replaced with an updated integrated set of beliefs about themselves that allow a leader to make use of any circumstances whether the circumstances are desired or highly undesirable. This re-scripting is demonstrated and explained by examining series of correspondences of the three great leaders that illustrate how they gradually and forcefully replaced the ego that formed from their early adolescent experiences with an integrated set of thoughts that served them and their cause.

Finally, after a leader has mastered the ability to rescript their subconscious ego thought patterns, they then have the ability take the harsh circumstances that cause others to buckle and actually use the stress to "Transform Anxiety Into Leadership Greatness". Based on this full leadership skillset Washington, Lincoln and Churchill were not only able to change the world, they were able to save the world from reigns of hatred and violence and lay the foundation for societies to flourish. There has always been a question of whether great leaders are born or made into great leaders by the circumstances of their particular challenges. This book will not only answer that question, it will provide you with the exact steps you need to become leaders on the scale of Washington, Lincoln and Churchill. Great leaders are born just like everyone else. But they must then have the humility and tenacity to make themselves into great leaders. This book provides the means for us to do the same.

<http://lessons-from-history.com/node/34>

Henry V

People from all around the world will be acquainted with William Shakespeare's Henry V, whether from the work of Branagh(Ref) or Olivier(Ref) or even directly from the Bard's work itself(ref), through school studies, live performances, or even from reading the play for the sheer enjoyment of it. No doubt few have remained unmoved by Shakespeare's interpretation of how Henry motivated his army at the walls of Harfleur, or before the great battle at Agincourt.

This book explores what Henry V, and his "project team", did to gain a stunning victory at the Battle of Agincourt in 1415. It then compares this with good practice in project management. This is done through analysis of known historical records, consideration of the "spin" added by the media (in the form of William Shakespeare and his renowned play). Against all odds Henry took a small army across the English Channel and destroyed a French Army six times its size. The ferocious arrow storm which brought down a generation of French nobility, followed by the bloody mayhem of battle, left 12,000 French dead for a loss of 40 English soldiers.

How did Henry achieve this? What brought Henry and his army to this point? A review of history shows quite clearly that it was not good luck or coincidence, but rather it was effective planning and project management, with due regard to risk management, a clear rationale and authority to proceed, careful consideration of the balance between efficiency and effectiveness, a strong understanding of stakeholders and their needs, detailed analysis of resource requirements, and adequate resourcing. Henry had the ability to plan and organise, see ahead and forestall problems. He was not constantly checking back with the powerful clergy, but getting on with the job in hand.

<http://lessons-from-history.com/node/34>

Titanic - Lessons for Project Management (New Edition)

In the centenary year (1912-2012) of the ship this third edition continues the evolution of Titanic books in the series, and reviews the case study from entirely a project management perspective. Based on the latest research, brought forward by the Titanic community, it carefully examines all the phases of the project (initiation, planning, design, construction, testing, implementation & operations) using the modern lens of the Project Management Body of Knowledge. The Titanic case study covers all aspects of inadequate project management that can lead to project failures (or disasters) to name a few, meddling stakeholders, different agendas, compromises, a rushed job, more compromises, changes late in the project, improper testing, and a poor implementation. This is where the biggest learning lessons are for projects today.

Do you have a passion for history? Are you a budding author? Have you thought about collaboration? If so please **contact us at Lessons-from-History**.

To get a **20% discount**, for both these books, type "20percentoff" in the field marked "Discount Coupons." There is a **flat rate shipping charge of \$5** anywhere in the world

4.) Featured Authors

Joe Luttrell PMP

Joe is an 8-year member of the Kentuckiana Project Management Institute's board of directors and immediate past President. As President, Joe implemented a leadership framework that tripled board size, doubled meeting attendance & launched processes set to double revenues. As the Operations Manager for ASAP Supply Chain Automation in Louisville Kentucky, Joe manages 10 project leaders. Joe is working with the President to lead internal training to certify all of ASAP's PMs by the end of 2011. He is implementing Program & Project Management processes that meet PMI's OPM3 and SEI's CMMI level 3 standards. Joe teaches PMP Prep and Practical Application at the University of

Louisville Delphi Center and Innovative Management Solutions, LLC. Joe is CEO of EQ Seminars, LLC founded to help principled leaders with skills to transform team dysfunction into emotional intellect, mutual respect and financial security. His speaking credentials include two Dale Carnegie Awards, PMI 2009 and 2011 Global Leadership Institute Meeting presenter, worldwide webinars, i-tunes podcasts & seminar offerings in Columbus Ohio, Anchorage Alaska and Washington DC in 2010.

<http://www.eqseminars.com/1.html>

<http://lessons-from-history.com/authors/authors-page>

5.) Interesting books and sites

Once implemented, IT systems can evolve in ways that can be quite different from their original intent and design. One of the reasons for this is that enterprise systems are based on simplistic models that do not capture the complexities of real organisations. The gap between systems and reality is the subject of a fascinating book by [Claudio Ciborra](#) entitled, [The Labyrinths of Information](#). Among other things, the book presents an alternative viewpoint on systems development, one that focuses on reasons for divergence between design and reality. It also discusses other aspects of system development that tend to be obscured by mainstream development methodologies and processes. This post is a summary and review of the book.

<http://books.google.com/books?id=jb-vrAHmG0wC&dq>

6.) Mark Your Calendars

Upcoming events:

[Presentations on Polaris and Manhattan](#)

Thursday 1/12 at 12:00 pm CST

Thursday 2/2 at 1:00 pm CST

Thursday 2/23 at 11:00 am CST

Thursday 3/8 at 12:00 pm CST

Thursday 3/29 at 1:00 pm CST

[Presentations - Project Lessons from Titanic](#)

November 10, 15, 16, - APM UK Branches at Glasgow, Bath, Thames Valley – Reading

<http://www.apm.org.uk/events>

[Presentations – Churchill the Agile PM](#)

November 9, 17 - APM UK Branches at Leeds, and Wessex – Southampton and Webinar

<http://www.apm.org.uk/events>

If you are interested in having one of our authors present to your organization, send us a [note](#) describing:

The organization (business, PMI Chapter, etc)

The dates

The theme of the meeting

Your budget for speakers

We will respond to you with a proposal that will meet your needs.

"There's a Great Past in Your Future"

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