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ViewPoints

Projectability's monthly newsletter

February 2009 - Vol 1, Issue 2

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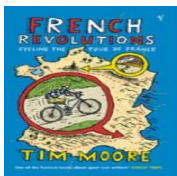


[Project Workout](#)

This book provides you with a useful route to improving your PM skills. It is arranged in concise chapters that are supported by workouts, case studies, points of interest, definitions, principles, key points, cartoons and pithy quotations that help get the point across.

I have had cause to refer to it on numerous occasions over the past 8 years.

Reading for Pleasure



[French Revolutions](#)

This book combines my love of cycling and fascination for the epic feat of endurance that is the Tour de France with my sense of humour.

The author transports you to a place where crying out loud with laughter is impossible to avoid.

Dear Collague,

Hello once more,

I hope you found issue 1 of interest - I'm very pleased with the feedback and results and am now wondering why I didn't get around to doing a newsletter ages ago. I guess we all have projects where there are some things we know we should do but always find the excuse to avoid taking action.



I was inspired to produce this newsletter on the valued advice of John Niland who not only introduced me to PumpAid but also runs a highly effective development programme, "[The Outstanding Professional](#)" - which provides practical ways to increase referrals and revenues, leverage time more effectively, plan with confidence and invest wisely in the future. if you don't already subscribe to his newsletter I would thoroughly recommend it.

In addition to the main items this issue includes a new section - "[Ask the Expert](#)", I hope you find it useful and that you even find time to ask me a question about Microsoft Project that has been bugging you for a while. If you know of anyone who would find what we have to say of interest you are more than welcome to:

[Forward to a Friend](#)

Happy Planning - Dominic

Soccer & Projects - Developing an Outstanding Team

I was out walking the dogs recently and happened to pass the local football pitch where a game was in progress. I was struck by how both sides were turned out in professional looking kit complete with shirt sponsors and "coaches" bellowing support from the touchlines. The game has changed a lot even at grass roots level compared to my teenage memories as a player.

Whilst the two teams looked equally matched I smiled at the realisation that there is a huge gulf between their abilities and those of the players of a Premiership football team.

This got me thinking about the transition from simply playing the game to excelling at it and how this relates to our experiences in managing projects and their teams and how this can impact on the business itself.

If you watch a junior team playing the performance can be erratic and unpredictable, almost a free for all with 20 kids

[PumpAid - Water for Life](#)



We are enthusiastic supporters of this charity and were delighted to see it nominated as one of the charities supported by **The Times** newspaper in its Christmas appeal.

As a result, our regular contribution to [PumpAid](#) was trebled through the generosity of AquaAid. The great news is that the appeal raised £750,000.00 for the charity.

running as one after the ball. As players mature they become more aware of their role in the team and are more likely to perform in a consistent fashion, trying to make the right moves in the game based upon their experience and the training they have had.

In a junior team there can invariably be a "**star**" player who really makes a difference, if they move on the impact on the team can be significant. More mature teams will have players of a more consistent nature as well as reserves who can fill the void should a key player be unavailable. These teams can also be a magnet for talent by means of their reputation.

If a junior team suffers a bad result they will often have no idea why or seek to blame a scapegoat. A more mature team will look to learn from the experience and to improve their tactics for the next game.

Across the UK there are tens of thousands of people who play the game in amateur leagues with varying degrees of success. The pyramid of talent in the game reflects the hierarchies that exist in business.

For a premiership team at the top of the pyramid the level of preparation is phenomenal with every aspect of the players physical and mental condition being honed to perfection. These teams focus on their performance and analyse it rigorously. They have a self-perpetuating quality where they aim to operate at optimum performance whilst continuously developing the individuals in the team and developing new players from within the club. At this level the rewards are incredible but there is also amazing pressure and expectation imposed upon the team by the owners, the management, the media and of course the fans.

We cannot all be premiership teams but we can aspire to improve our performance by learning from the experiences in our projects, appraising individual performance, applying lessons learned, looking to develop new team players for the future and having a reputation that is a magnet for talent.

Here's to you and your team, I wish you continued success in your projects.

"Winning is not a sometime thing; it's an all time thing. You don't win once in a while, you don't do things right once in a while, you do them right all the time. Winning is a habit. Unfortunately, so is losing." **VINCE LOMBARDI**

CTRL+ - Handy Microsoft Project Keyboard Shortcuts



Keyboard shortcuts are a useful way to improve your efficiency in using Microsoft Project. Each month we will highlight one of the shortcuts available and the benefits of using it.

This month's shortcut is **CTRL+Home** - this will take you to the top left hand corner of any table you are viewing in Microsoft Project. This can be handy if you collapse a list of tasks or assignments down to level 1 and are confronted by a "blank" list or have applied a filter and are wondering where all your data went.

Apology - last month I got a bit carried away and included an error which I wish I could say was deliberate, top marks to the reader who pointed it out to me. **CTRL+F3** re-applies the last filter you had applied, **F3** on its own will display either All Tasks or All Resources.

Ask the Expert - Varying the Cost Rate on Assignments in a Project



One of the unexpected results of our first newsletter was a flurry of questions from readers wanting advice on how to achieve more in their use of Microsoft

Project. I was particularly pleased at this outcome as it indicates that people are using the tool to help them manage their projects more effectively. I answered the questions as I am always happy to do and then figured it would be great to have this as a regular feature of the newsletter.

This month's question was "We have different resource costs for differing types of project, how can I change the charge or cost rate for all assignments in a project from the default A cost rate tab?"

I provided an answer by email for this question and then thought about an even simpler way to answer it. Here it is.

Open the project where you wish to make the change. Make sure that you switch to the Task Usage view and that you also have all assignments visible, the easiest way to ensure this is happening is to click once on the Task Name column to highlight the column and to then click both the "Show all Subtasks" and the "Show Assignments" buttons on the formatting toolbar. You will also want to ensure that you are showing "All Tasks" - use the **F3** keyboard shortcut.

Having performed these actions go to the Edit Menu and select the replace option. In the Replace dialogue box enter the A value in the "Find What" section, enter B in the "Replace With" section and then select "Cost Rate Table" from the "Look in Field" section. Make sure the test value is set to contains and then click the "Replace All" button. This will then switch the cost rate on every assignment from the A to B tabs.

If you have a question you would like answering and are happy for others to benefit from the answer provided send an email to [ask the expert](#).

This answer and answers to other frequently asked questions will be archived on our website, feel free to take a look.

European Best Practise SharePoint Conference - April 6th - 8th 2009 London

EUROPEAN BEST PRACTICES

SHAREPOINT CONFERENCE

My friend Zoe Watson at [Combined Knowledge](#) the SharePoint experts has asked me to publicise this event - please click on the image to find out more.

Next Months Issue

If you have enjoyed this newsletter please feel free to pass it on to a friend or colleague using the Forward email option at the foot of this email. We will be keeping an eye on just how far this newsletter gets and hope to publicise just how far ViewPoints has gotten around the globe in future editions.

In the next newsletter we will be focusing upon some of the benefits of the Microsoft Project Server 2007 Enterprise Project Management (EPM) solution. Until then I wish you and your projects the very best.

[Dominic Moss](#)

Principal Consultant- Projectability

Projectability have been helping people and organisations achieve more through effective Project Management and the use of the Microsoft Project scheduling tool since 1996. Our full range of offerings can be viewed on our Website.

If you wish to contact us to see how we can help you please contact us using the details below.

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