

# Stacy Goff Interview with Yanjuan Yu, Project Management Review Magazine, China; July 2018

Dear Stacy Goff,

Thanks for accepting our interview. Feel free to choose the questions you like, and you are welcome to add questions you are interested in. The deadline for the interview article is end of March, 2018. Thanks again.

## 1. You are a race car driver:-) Have you used PM knowledge in driving racing cars?

The experience of driving race cars and having a PM background is a two-way street—it offers benefits in both directions. First, I was successful as an amateur race driver because, in part, of my project management experience. I was always better-prepared than most other drivers; I was able to strategize, prioritize, and more intensely focus than others; it was easier to convince sponsors to support our effort; and we always attracted a strong team.

Second, as you suggest, racing improved my project insights: the excitement, risk and intensity of “driving at speed” gave me a much deeper understanding of the secrets of high-performance. And this was not just my own high-performance efforts, but also, those of my team. I even shared *some* of my secrets with my competitors, and those secrets worked for them, too!



You can learn more about these insights in my article, [\*Everything I know about Project Time Management, I Learned in Sports Car Racing.\*](#)

## 2. According to your observation, what are the core qualities of a competent project manager? Would you please introduce PM competence model of your company for us?

I will answer this great question in two parts. First, for the core qualities and competences of project managers *and* the other key actors who fill needed roles in projects. And then, I will speak to the competence model my company developed and has used since 1983.

### *Core Competences of Project Teams*

Working as a project manager in the early 1970s, I found very little information to be available about project management. I did benefit from workshops offered by IBM (International Business Machines), and by a construction engineering firm. Other than those sources, I very-much learned on my own. In working with other project managers, I noticed that some took a purely technical approach to project management. But those who were most-effective also focused on leadership, teambuilding, interpersonal skills, communication, stakeholder engagement, and other “soft-side” skills. So I emulated them.

Originally published in China, in PMR, the Project Management Review.

I found, early in my career, that these are essential qualities for most project managers. While the technical processes are an important foundation, they are worthless without the ability to lead and engage your entire team.

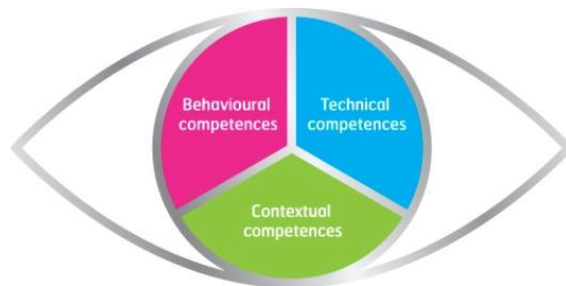
As I progressed in my career, I moved to a role of manager of a larger group, while still practicing in some multiple-organizational, complex projects. In this role, I became involved with strategic planning, organizational politics and power, and how to work effectively with staff functions, such as legal, procurement, human resources, finance, and others. As a result, I learned to focus on the business context, and the linkage of projects to strategies, and to business success through projects.

When I began my consulting firm in 1982, I applied that broader approach to project management. I joined the Project Management Institute, and found that they focused mostly on the technical aspects of projects. So I also formed alliances with the few consultants who understood the need for my broader range of 'core competences'. I also clarified with customers that it is not just project managers who need these strengths, they are also essential for core team members, resource managers (who prioritize initiatives and assign the right talent), sponsors, and executives. And, each role, in different sized projects (large, medium or small), has different most important developmental and performance improvement needs.

I harnessed those key differentiators, and expanded my strengths, by:

- a) Teaching that which makes a difference, rather than just what is easy to teach;
- b) Convincing executives that project performance improvement requires the right role-competences in all key stakeholders; and
- c) Demonstrating that different project roles have different developmental needs, and those are *never* filled by sending everyone to the same training.

In the late 1990s, IPMA (International Project Management Association) independently arrived at the same conclusion. Just as I had, they integrated technical project management with a clear understanding of the organizational context, and with leadership and behavioral skills. This was all branded with IPMA's unique Eye Of Competence (at right), with a certification system that used competence-based assessment (not just tests of knowledge-retention) of project managers. Starting in 2013, Project Management Institute also followed our insights, and so we now see their version of our vision, naming it the Talent Triangle.



Aside from the open question of whether these are just knowledge areas or demonstrated competences, the professional organizations are finally very-much in alignment. And it only took 40 years! That is my answer to the first part of your question: the core qualities and competences of project managers and other key participants are: technical, leadership and behavioral, and contextual/strategic. I will provide more details of the actions within those dimensions a bit later when I address Product talent.

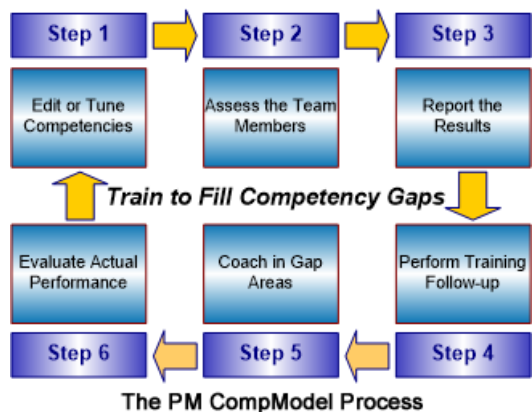
***PM CompModel, our Competence Model***

We based our firm's curriculum and project methodologies on these three major dimensions (mentioned above) of PM learning, with clear Learning Objectives. We offered different workshop series for different audiences. We also varied our workshop intensity for projects of different sizes, because, at certain key points in project sizing, completely different topics become 'most important.' For example, Small Projects require different key topics than do larger projects. Similarly, when a topic is shared in both curricula, the intensity, depth of coverage, and duration are very different in each.

This raised a key question: How does an organization decide which training (and how much training) is needed for each learner? In the early 1980s, a typical pattern was that everyone went to the same 5-day workshop or course. Many participants came away from those types of ill-suited training (the training was not scaled to their role or their projects' size), vowing never to have anything to do with project management. To target the right training to the right people, we developed another model for our clients: Content/Roles/Level. For all our Content, we developed a simple competence model, that grouped the major topics, with key learning objectives for each, along that Content/Roles/Level model.

We identified, for each content topic, which roles required that area of competence. Because different roles required different Levels of grasp, we used a scale that we based on Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning. We made this information available to our clients in the form of a simple, one-page survey; we suggested that potential learners should self-assess using the information, and then review their results with their manager. We provided the learner and the manager with our sample targets for each role, and they were able to use the information to identify the learner's greatest gaps. Those gaps showed the places where our targets and their assessments showed the largest difference.

In 1983 I was working on a training program with a nuclear power plant in Portland Oregon. My contact there observed that their nuclear engineers had rigorous competency assessments, mandated by the federal agency that manages those power plants in the USA. And he asked, "Why don't our project managers, who manage those engineers, have a competency assessment?" So I aligned my competency model to their unique situation, trained his senior staff in competency assessment, and helped them set up an internal Competency Center. For them, it was a very effective way to identify the right learning needs of each of their project managers—and it quickly became clear that the managers above them had learning requirements as well, and those requirements were different.



The result: The assessments showed, for each role, the topics and learning that would provide the greatest return on learning investment. And, the act of working together to evaluate the assessment brought manager and learner together with common objectives for attending a class. What did we do when someone fills multiple roles? Their target for each topic was the highest for each role they filled

At the 2006 IPMA World Congress in Shanghai, we offered an IPMA version of PM CompModel to all IPMA Member Associations. For more information about PM CompModel, you can access the paper we presented at that congress; it is available on our website: [\*Distinguishing PM Competence in Training and Development, Organizational Assessment and Certification.\*](#) Another paper, that I presented at IPMA's 2009 Expert Seminar, shows more details and examples from PM CompModel: [\*Improving PM Performance in the Classroom and Beyond.\*](#)

### *To Close This Response*

PM CompModel is not unique; the principles have been applied for many years in learning and development. But there are very few viable competence models in the world of project management. And, coaching in their use is important. Proper use of any competency model requires an effort between practitioners, their managers, and the organization's Human Resources group to tune any competency model to their needs, assess learners effectively, and most importantly, to follow-through with the resulting competency development plan. This requires an organizational commitment to performance improvement.

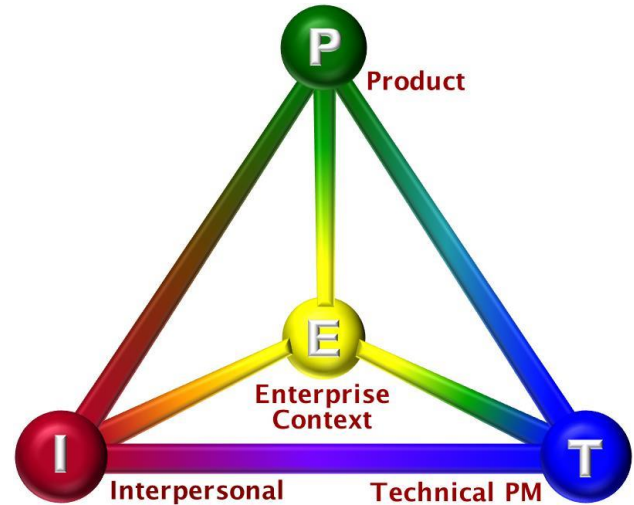
### **3. You add “product talent” to PMI’s talent triangle. What are the reasons for that?**

The original PMBOK® Guide, primarily authored by William Duncan, and published in 1996, intentionally omitted topics that were not unique to projects. That made sense, because leadership and social skills, and strategic alignment, are important in most professions. But PMI® recently added those ‘new’ factors (after decades of urging) to the PMBOK Guide, because they finally realized that they have more impact on project success than all the technical areas together. I think that naming the result the Talent Triangle is a smart move. But it is not enough for project success; I will explain why I also advocate for Product talent.

Most professional associations, including IPMA and PMI, tend to limit their scope to the domain they focus upon. They leave out factors that they will not use in certification or standards, even when those factors are crucial for project success. Consultancies such as ours have a different purpose. Over the last 36 years, we have been consultants to global organizations seeking project success, and business success through projects. To most-effectively assist them, we could not focus on just the professional associations’ project selections: We have always included **all the factors** that are required for project excellence.

**Product Talent** is one of four unique success-dimensions from all my project management methodologies, training, coaching and consulting. This talent comes from key roles in each project, including Project Sponsors, Resource Managers, top Executives, and *the right working team members*. Each role requires clear assignments, and delivered responsibilities for their projects to succeed.

Each of those roles has more impact on project success than the level of competence of the project manager. In fact, even the best project manager will fail if there are any flaws in the performances of those key roles. This fact, ignored by many, is evident in hindsight to all. In any project, it is Sponsors, Resource Managers, and Executives who prioritize and assign the right team members for each project.



**More About Product Talent**

<p><b>Technical PM</b>                  Project &amp; resource planning                  Scope &amp; talent management                  Quality assurance &amp; control                  Risk &amp; issue management                  Delegation &amp; estimating,                  Scheduling, cost control                  Contracting &amp; procurement                  Reviews, change control                  Status tracking &amp; reporting</p>	<p><b>Product</b>                  Objectives                  Business needs; requirements                  Problems &amp; opportunities                  Organizational change mgmt.                  Know-how (work area expertise)                  Testing, validation &amp; verification                  Documentation &amp; training                  Solution delivery, acceptance                  Evaluating business results</p>
<p><b>Interpersonal</b>                  Leadership &amp; Influence                  Sustaining the vision                  Relationship-building                  Personal communication                  Conflict, crisis management                  Results orientation                  Engagement &amp; teamwork                  Emotional intelligence                  Stakeholder engagement</p>	<p><b>Enterprise Context</b>                  Strategic alignment                  Formal/informal organization                  Power navigation                  Prioritization &amp; resourcing                  Benefit realization                  Cultural, values appreciation                  Alliance-building                  Supplier, contractor relations                  Political savvy</p>

The chart at the left lists the major PM talent dimensions, and some of the most-important work processes and results of each. The Product talent area lists items that have nothing to do with project management, but are absolutely essential to all successful projects.

**My Application of Product Talent**

In the 1970s, I appointed internal project customers as Business Analysts, then supplied them with training and coaching in the skills needed to complete the Product work listed at left. I then assigned them to each project.

Because of their business analysis (Product talent) efforts, our projects prospered. Ten years later, working with a business partner, we developed commercial project management/business improvement methodologies. We integrated those Product talent items in our methods, and in the training that supports them.

In the early 2000s, the International Institute of Business Analysis formed, instituted a Business Analysis body of knowledge, and introduced a very useful Business Analyst certification. Ten years later, PMI produced a similar effort. Both initiatives contribute to the success of projects today, by introducing more formal versions of our Product-oriented insights.

### ***Two Types Of Product Talent***

Look again closely at the Product talent list; one line in that list is different than all the rest. Most of the Product items produce artifacts: project understanding and documents that record such. Did you spot the different line? It is Know-how (work area expertise).

This Know-how is another essential factor in project success. Drawing from my Sports Car racing experience, mentioned in question 1, you can have the best driver, the best suspension, tires, and brakes, but what if the engine performs dismally? In projects, the *know-how of key team members* is the essential engine that powers project success.

An example illustrates the measurable impact of strong Know-how: Barry Boehm's work (*Software Estimation With COCOMO II*. Prentice-Hall, 2000) showed the difference on an Information Technology project between a team with one or more members having ***Very High*** Business Analysis skills and Application Experience, and another team with ***Very Low*** skills and Experience. The performance difference: About three times the cost, for the Very Low team! Many non-IT (Information Technology) projects have similar amplitudes of cost, time and quality impact. For a simple example, I recently completed a renovation of our main bathroom, including drywall, smooth skim-coat plaster, texture, and paint. The drywall part was relatively easy; the most challenging part was to achieve a very-smooth skim-coat (the thin plaster coat spread over the drywall to cover joints, nails, and installation imperfections); even the texturing was a challenge. The videos I watched showed how easy it all was—for a work-area expert!

Much of my consulting and training has involved working with information systems engineers, aerospace engineers, pharma researchers, and global consulting companies. I truly understand the power of Know-how and work area expertise—and their importance on small, large, and mega, complex projects and programs. Thus, two types of the right Product talent are the key to success. Don't start a project without them!

### ***To Summarize***

Yes, I added Product talent to my three other key dimensions needed for project success, and business success through projects. And, 40+ years later, the professional associations that reflect project management—and other business improvement disciplines—have adopted much the same idea, thus requiring me to find new ways to differentiate my company!

#### **4. I noted that you have expressed doubts about “doing more with less”. What leads to such doubts?**

I have a blog post on that topic from 2010, and the situation has not changed much since then. I will repeat some of my key thoughts here, and then provide a link to the full blog post.

We first heard it in the early 2000s—Executives and Managers saying, “We'll just have to do more with less.” Well-intended at first, for some it soon became a preferred alternative to managing effectively. While in some situations the statement can be temporarily true, we believe that those who perpetuate the myth that this is an appropriate way to manage, are demonstrating their failure to manage.

### ***How It Begins***

In challenging times, some businesses are afraid to add staff to meet current demands, so they continue to manage increasing business with existing staff. And even when they are not talking the tired “doing more with less” mantra, that is what it looks like to their employees. If you think this only affects project success, this affects the operations side even more than the projects side of the business.

### ***How To Honestly Do More With Less***

We heard the “Doing More With Less” mantra with increasing frequency, so we put together a presentation, aimed at Managers and Executives, about “Doing More With Less.” In that presentation, we made a number of assertions, including that most managers who proclaim the need to do more with less were usually rewarded with *much less with less*. In other words, they were killing efficiency and effectiveness, overworking exhausted team members, damaging morale more, negatively affecting the quality of the organization’s results, and damaging the business unit’s or government agency’s reputation. I’m not sure that is the *more* they were seeking.

We went on to coach Managers in the ways they really can do more with less. Not surprisingly, the same Successful Project Climate guidelines we have recommended for 35 years remain the best way to measurably do more with less—on a sustaining basis—and sustainability has been a recent theme in project management, so it makes sense to apply it to managing Projects:

- Prioritize better, then staff fewer current projects appropriately, completing each one better, faster and at lower cost, rather than fragmenting talent across too many projects.
- Place team members full-time on large projects, at least half-time on medium ones (see The Successful Project Profile at Stacy Goff’s website, StacyGoff.com).
- Eliminate project and ready response priority conflicts; reduce interruptions in project work.
- Position Managers to “carry the water” for the team, pushing barriers out of the way, and demonstrating that the organization works for the team, rather than vice-versa.
- Measure and manage both effort and results, and then, recognize and reward achievements.

These actions are nothing more than what competent managers of project managers and their teams have done all along, but they are even more important in difficult times. Those who have attended our workshops or presentations clearly understand that while teams could perhaps, at peak, produce 10%-20% more results, project sponsors, resource managers, internal customers and executives have the power to improve performance by 2x–4x in individual projects, and even more in the overall project organization over a 3-5 year period. Now **that** is an honest and measurable way of Doing More With Less.

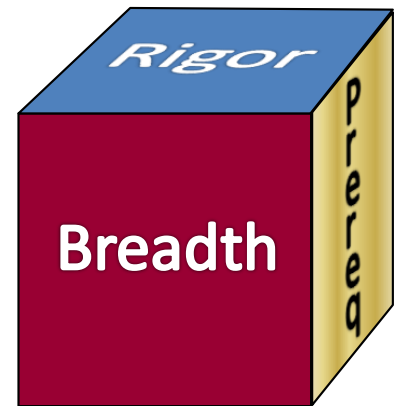
Here is a link to our related blog post: [\*Exposing the Myth of “Doing More With Less”\*](#)

**5. In one of your articles, you have made comparisons about different PM certifications. What’s your attitude towards certifications (their role, necessity, etc.)?**

**First, some background.**

Yes, the article you mention, **Comparing PM Certifications: Which Is Best For You?**, evaluates the top certifications in the world of project and program management. These range from exam-based certifications, to those that require professional assessment of demonstrated competences in actual initiatives. In the article, I identified three criteria for evaluating PM certifications:

- A. Prerequisites
- B. Breadth of Coverage
- C. Rigor of Assessment



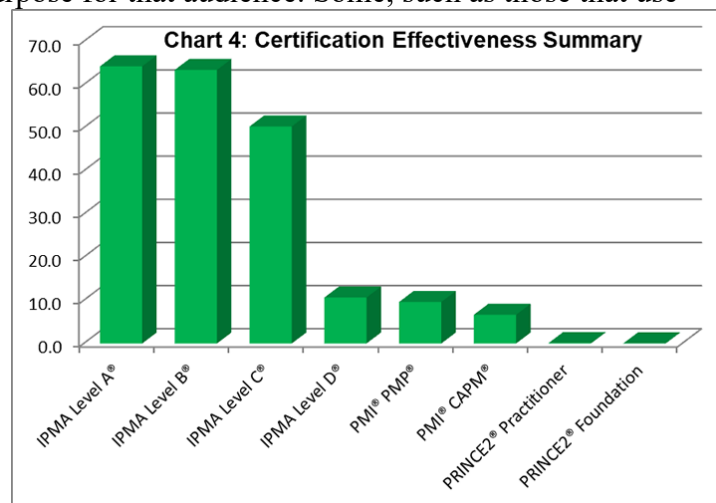
To write the article, I used independent research that evaluated a wide range of PM certification offerings, scoring each certification against the criteria above. I cross-multiplied the three criterion’s normalized scores to form what I named “The Certification Effectiveness Cube,” at above right. The key to each certification’s appropriateness (and thus necessity) is whether it matches the role, and level of experience, of the certificant, and of the certification.

See the resulting article on our website: [Comparing PM Certifications: Which Is Best For You?](#) Note that five years have passed since I wrote the article. The improvements of the top contenders have been very similar, so the result would change very little with an update. One addition should be the certifications of [Green Project Management](#), I believe they would score high; but the independent research is not available.

**More about your question concerning role and necessity...**

Each PM certification has a target audience, and a purpose for that audience. Some, such as those that use multiple-choice exams, are often designed for an entry-level audience: Those who are just beginning their career in project management. They do very little for more advanced practitioners.

Other certifications, with stronger prerequisites, higher breadth of coverage, and greater rigor, are targeted towards advanced audiences. These require more than memorizing for an exam; they require demonstrated competence or results in actual projects or programs.



There are many other certifications beyond those I evaluated. Some are university ‘certificates,’ rather than PM certifications. Others are merely money-making ventures. Still others may be very good, but are not popular enough to have independent research to verify their validity. In addition, some very good certifications are those developed by corporations and government agencies for their internal use. Many of these begin with one of the major certifications, and then expand upon them to meet their specific needs.



Are they necessary? Perhaps! Three audiences for whom a PM certification might be most-needed include:

- A. Those who are new to the practice of project management can benefit in two ways: first, in assessing themselves against a body of knowledge or competence, and finding where they need to study or learn more; second, in going through the preparation and testing process and being able to show their certification level.
- B. Those who meet the prerequisites, and have been working in the role, but are not recognized by their employer as a certified practitioner. This might be a higher-scoring certification, based on our article's criteria; but it should also be one that is recognized and accepted by the employer, or at least the employer's industry.
- C. Those who serve in advanced roles, who know their current employer well, but either a) cannot advance in their enterprise without additional recognition, or b) intend to compete internally or in another organization for a more advanced position.

A related scenario: Some practitioners find that they have fresh, new credibility—and thus more power to succeed—within their existing organization when they earn the right certification for their role and level. Here's a caution: There is a significant difference between training to take a certification exam, and training or learning for project performance improvement. The former tends to focus on short-term memory retention (which expires, if unused, within two weeks), and how to take an exam. The latter tends to focus on how to manage a complex initiative to measurably increase business results through projects. Today, there appears to be more money spent around the World on the former, rather than the latter. And then we wonder why so many projects fail!

The bottom line: Any PM certification that is credible, appropriate for the practitioner's role and level, and that has acceptance within the enterprise and industry, has the potential for benefit. Necessary? No, unless required by your customer; useful? This depends on whether it meets the needs of the practitioner, and his or her employers.

## **6. We can draw project management wisdom from China's culture. Do you agree with it?**

I totally agree. When I visit China, I combine speaking at a major event, discussing in-depth, project experiences with event participants; together with touring unique places, shopping, and enjoying the food. For an example of touring, one can read about the Terra-Cotta Warriors in Xian. But experiencing the magnificence of the site, and considering the massive project, first to build it, then to hide it, and now to reclaim it, gives new perspective and respect for the project engineers and artists of 2200 years ago.



In 2006, I travelled to Shanghai to speak at a Global Project Management conference. The photo at left is co-presenter William Duncan, doing his talk. Duncan arranged this engagement. My half-day session, *The Expert Project Management Office (PMO)*, included over 500 executives, PMO managers, PM consultants, and project managers. There was limited time for questions and answers during the day, but we also spent an evening in deep discussions about the subject area of successful PMOs, recent ad-

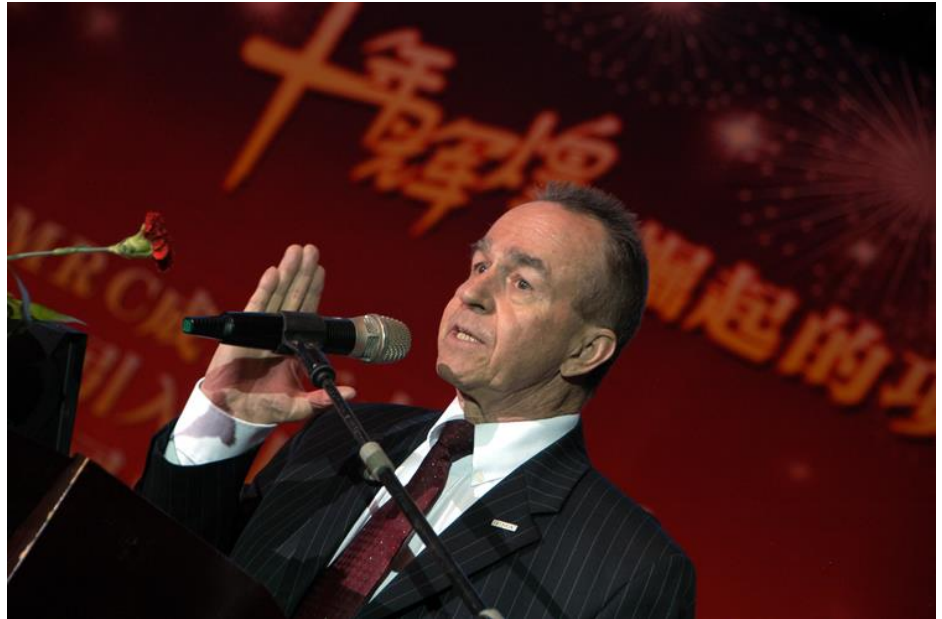
vancements, current challenges, and ideas for the future. My first China event was deep immersion into Chinese project culture... And I wanted more.

Just four months later, I was back for more. This was also in Shanghai, but with a follow-on trip to Beijing. I presented a paper about our PM Competency Model at the 2006 IPMA World Congress. I also performed a coaching session for IPMA's Young Crew, where the global participants were quicker learners.

I also served as a judge for the Chinese Construction Project Manager of the Year award. The finalists' papers had already been judged, and our panel's role was to ask the key questions that would help assess how well award candidates had applied their skills and learning to their projects. It was here that I reinforced my view about the exceptional insights and project management wisdom from these young (early 30s in age) experts in charge of USD billions of projects around the World. Examples included a sub-Saharan highway in Africa, a water-purification facility in Bangladesh, and a new, tallest-building in Beijing. Those building challenges in Beijing included how to supply such a massive construction project in traffic-constrained Beijing streets and highway routes. Bravo to these project managers, who overcame all challenges!

On one of my most-recent trips, I spoke in 2014 at an IPMA Research Conference in Tianjin. Immediately following my keynote, event organizer Anbang Qi spoke on Chinese Traditional Management Philosophy and Their Modern Project Management Style.

Anbang was IPMA's Research Management Board Chair, a leader in PMRC, Project Management Research Committee, IPMA's Member association, and he was Distinguished Professor of



Nankai University in Project Management. Anbang spoke of *The Book of Changes*, and its influences (and of others) on Change Management and Risk Management. Ronggui Ding, always a favorite, and Dean of Department of Management Science and Engineering, Shandong University, weighed in on Chinese Wisdom in Project Governance, citing Chinese dialectical logic, *The Book of Changes*, and many other useful insights. And Lixiong Ou, Professor at Northwestern Polytechnic University, and currently serving as IPMA's Vice President of Research, spoke of the Chinese project management body of knowledge, PROJECTICS. This is a far more sophisticated approach than others around the World. (Photo is Image 7)

I came away from this event with several impressions: First, that China brings cultural strengths into project and program management that other cultures cannot easily adopt. Second is that China is clearly in the process of refining its strengths, rather than merely adopting more of the practices of Western cultures. And third, that China's business executives have a far better understanding of the power of competent and performing project management, than do many Western executives.

The proceedings of this event, Theory Meets Practice in Project Management, including many other fascinating insights, are available in Chinese at amazon.cn: <https://www.amazon.cn/dp/B0188F3UHS/>.

### **7. You've mentioned the secret weapon of high-performing project teams is small projects. What is the logic behind this?**

For many organizations, small projects are an invisible 20-35% of their entire annual expenses. Funding usually comes from an operations budget, staffing is based not on prioritized portfolios, but instead, on 'who isn't doing anything important right now?' Most organizations don't even have a definition of what constitutes a small project, or apply a consistent approach for identifying, prioritizing, delivering, and evaluating their success.

I noted this in the early 1980s, as I was coaching my clients in developing portfolios of projects. I saw, in the most-advanced organizations, including global businesses and government agencies at national and local levels, an understanding that small projects needed different treatment than larger ones. For example, they often solved symptoms, rather than spending the time to understand underlying causes.

Many times, the same symptoms occurred dozens of times before finally, someone would realize it was far too expensive to continue doing repetitive ‘quick fixes.’ Then, they would finally understand the root cause, and permanently cure the problem.

I defined a taxonomy of project sizes, and surveyed my clients for the relative delivery efficiency of project results across those sizes. The analysis for each project size was very interesting:

- Small projects were the least efficient and least effective way to deliver project results.
- Very large projects, with multiple years of duration and more than 24 people on multiple project teams, were next-least efficient way to deliver results. (We did not have programs in our survey.)
- Large projects, six months to a year in duration, and one to three teams, were significantly more efficient than very large projects, and faced lower risk.
- Medium projects, three to six months in duration, and having three to seven half-time team members, were the most efficient way to deliver project results.

You can access this taxonomy, and additional ways to assure success, including the ideal duration for any project’s size, and the proper role of the project manager, in our whitepaper, [The Successful Project Profile](#).

Executives asked: Why the inefficiency was so high for the larger-project size ranges? Several reasons: First, the larger a project team, the more communication is required. And after you have more than one team in a project, the communication complexity expands significantly. Second, for core team members, many organizations apply part-time assignment across multiple projects. Above the medium project size, team members must be full-time assigned, at least during the period when their expertise is most-needed. Failure to follow this guideline results in excessive task-switching, and the resulting increased defects.

Then what factors make small projects the greatest opportunity for improvement?

- Insufficient problem or opportunity definition;
- A sense of urgency often limits time for planning;
- Changing priorities, as each new urgent emergency emerges;
- Difficulty in assigning the top talent to projects perceived as less-important;
- A wide range of skills are needed, but the small project team may have only one-to-three team members—who must fill all skill roles;
- The ‘project manager’ is most-often also the primary worker on the team, resulting in conflicting responsibilities;
- Each team member has many other responsibilities, including ‘their real job;’

Seeing an opportunity, we developed a methodology for managing small projects. It includes project planning and execution guidance, key roles and responsibilities, templates for capturing and conveying information, and essential actions for success. In the first offerings of the two-day training for the Small Project Guide, we were surprised to see that half the class were Aerospace and Defense Engineers of very large programs.

When I asked why they were participating in a Small Project Management class, the reply was always something like this: I've got great control of my program. It is the multiple small projects, over which I have no control, and that I totally rely upon, that are always the failure points for me." They figured that the class would help them establish that control.



Over the many people who have taken that course, managers of very large programs continue to be a significant audience. Aerospace corporations have licensed it for their internal class facilitators to teach. And, they have moved small projects from being their greatest inefficiency to a strategic and competitive bidding advantage. Are small projects strategic? Yes, for some!

### ***More About the Secret Weapons***

Indeed, small projects can become more efficient for those who manage them effectively. This insight about small projects, together with our Successful Project Profile whitepaper, mentioned above, has helped companies to win more bids, and make more profits on bids won. And, they hope their competitors don't discover their secret weapons. Some of our learnings from this experience:

- a. Most project managers and team members gain their first project experiences working on small projects. Thus, small projects can be the foundation for project talent in most organizations. Proper learning and practice are the keys to success in a career of project work. Inept early practices lead to consistent failure, or sub-optimization of learning.
- b. Lessons learned properly in small projects can scale gradually to medium, then to much larger, more complex projects and programs. As your enterprise project talent increases, their value-add becomes exponentially more powerful in supporting your strategy implementation.
- c. Project Oriented Enterprises quickly see the benefits of improving the way their teams manage small projects. Organizations that perform internal projects, rather than for profit, can quickly learn how to manage their small projects more effectively. This not only saves them the formerly wasted funds of small projects, it also reduces the risks for the large projects that depend on them.
- d. With this experience, this success also causes them to learn new ways to manage their portfolio of larger projects more intelligently, prioritizing and staffing them more appropriately.

So now, the secret is out. Let's see who will act on it!

## About Our Interviewer

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### **Yu Yanjuan, Beijing China**

Yu Yanjuan (English name: Spring), Bachelor's Degree, graduated from the English Department of Beijing International Studies University (BISU) in China. She is now an English-language journalist and editor working for Project Management Review (PMR) Magazine and website.

She has interviewed over sixty top experts in the field of project management. Before joining PMR, she once worked as a journalist and editor for other media platforms in China. She has also worked part-time as an English teacher in training centers in Beijing.

Beginning in January 2020, Spring also serves as an international correspondent for the PM World Journal. For work contact, she can be reached via email [yuyanjuan2005@163.com](mailto:yuyanjuan2005@163.com) or LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/in/yanjuanyu-76b280151/>.

## About Stacy

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**Stacy A. Goff**, the *PM Performance Coach*<sup>™</sup>, has coached and inspired tens of thousands of project and program managers, and hundreds of organizations, on five continents, for over forty years. A Project Management practitioner since 1970 and consultant since 1982, he has also been a strong contributor to professional organizations such as IPMA® and PMI® since 1983.

He is a co-founder and past-president of IPMA-USA, and 2011-2014 Vice President of Marketing & Events for IPMA, the International Project Management Association. In September, 2015, he was named an IPMA Honorary Fellow.

Goff's interest in project competence and performance began with establishing a PM Competency Center for a nuclear power plant in the early 1980s. It continued with international engagements during the 1980s and 90s as he helped organizations assess and improve their project and program performance. Today, he coaches, speaks and performs keynote speeches at major project-related events. And, he continues to pursue his interest in individual, project team, organization, and national and international PM performance.

Mr. Goff brings a results-oriented approach to Project Management coaching, consulting, and training. His insight for the needed PM Competences, and his delivery of effective training translate to improved project performance. In his working life, he combines his Project experience with sensitivity for the interpersonal skills areas—the human aspects of projects.

In his papers, presentations, workshops or in consulting, he combines his project experience with strategic linkage for all projects and programs. His insights and experience have provided competitive advantage for his clients for over 40 years. His business result: measurably increased **PM Performance**.

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