



Executive Summary

With more than 500 employees, and nearly all of them struggling to get their ongoing projects off the ground, Gerry Aquino, Organizational Development and Learning Manager at Össur implemented the *Project Management Essentials* course as an opt-in training for all employees. Aquino has seen team meetings drop from an average length of 2 hours to 30 minutes. Projects are getting completed, moral has increased, and quantifiable savings have exceeded \$75,000 per year.

Background

“As I performed annual needs assessments, I found it was consistent across the board that our employees were lacking project management skills,” Aquino said. Gerry found even PMP certified employees at Össur were struggling to finish projects.

When Aquino asked why, they explained they were finding not much of their certification was translating into the realities and the requests of the company. In short, even they needed a refresher course.

Gerry and his PMP certified employees sat down together to look over Franklin

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– Gerry Aquino,
Organizational Development
and Learning Manager

Covey's PME course content. He wanted to ensure the skills taught would actually carry weight in the issues his employees were facing with project management. They found PME included everything they needed to get projects off the ground and completed successfully. They determined the context of PME would arrive at the required management skills faster than a two-year certification would, and its design, which allowed participants to focus on projects already in process, was optimal for reaching anticipated results quickly.

"When I learned about Franklin Covey's *Project Management Essentials* course, I had high hopes that it would finally give us the tools required to hit the ground running with our projects."

Results

Recently, Össur experienced a remarkable success due to Franklin Covey's *Project Management Essentials*. It happened as PME graduates worked to plan the Holiday party. In years past, the event was planned by the HR team. With little time to devote to planning, price-shopping, or promotion, the annual party was held at a hotel and the cost of the event was upwards of \$100,000. Average attendance was 90 employees.

With the PME graduates in control of the planning, they put the initiate process into full swing. Stakeholders were able to vocalize the expectations for the event, and the project team

was asked to meet a budget of \$25,000—a \$75,000 reduction. This drastic decrease of budget could have resulted in a less than stellar event, but the team brainstormed an event that was outrageously creative. The food, the decorations, and the music all followed a Mardi Gras theme. The project team created a fun atmosphere and honored the hard work put in by the company employees throughout the year. The plans for the Holiday event spread through the company and attendance jumped to nearly 300. The project team met the budget, and through great planning, understanding of key stakeholder expectations, and creative thinking, employees have raved about the success ever since.

Aquino expected he would have to walk his employees through the project process, but with the tools they acquired with PME he found his involvement was nothing short of a "fly on the wall" during meetings. The project team had everything they needed to plan a spectacular event.

The Holiday party is just one success of PME at Ossur. Company leadership is recognizing the overall morale of the company improving. People are finding value in their contributions and are taking ownership in their outcomes. They are seeing their own potential to apply what they have been taught and they are eager to prove themselves.

One employee in particular signed up to coordinate the Halloween event. Her social skills were wanting, and nobody in the company wanted to work with

her on the project. Traditionally, she was someone who kept to herself, and all were surprised to see her taking a chance with a leadership position. With some extra coaching and encouragement, she was able to find a team to help her out. They found that rather than her personality running the organization of the event, she was able to use PME tools to guide her interactions. She depended highly on the people around her to meet the project deliverables, and kept a close eye on what needed to be done. She delegated where necessary and encouraged the team to remain accountable to the success of the project. Employees say that for the first time, she really shined. Her interest in her fellow-employee's experience was evident as she pulled off a great event adding a slew of elements that had never been thought of in years past. If it weren't for PME, her managers don't believe she ever would have taken on such a responsibility or met it with such success.

Aquino says this about PME, "About 6 weeks after an employee graduates, I see PME take on a different tone. They start to see that it is working and begin customizing the framework to their needs."

"Experiencing these kinds of wins, seeing the projects, and the ease of process as hours spent in meetings decreases, but productivity sails... all of these things make this course invaluable to our company. Regardless of where employees are injecting these skills—it always adds value, and we can see it."



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