

IPMA Education and Training Series¹

IPMA Expert Seminars

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1. History

The International Expert Seminars of IPMA originally started in 1970's and were hosted at the Gottlieb Duttweiler Institute (GDI) near Zurich until the late 1980's. Each Expert Seminar had a theme which was introduced by the Chairman and discussed by about 30-40 experts, predominantly IPMA (at that time called INTERNET) members.

The term "seminar" is related to sowing and to nursing plantations. The participants contribute to the topics by asking questions, presenting views and proposing conclusions. There is a robust interaction between research and practice.

2. Relaunch in 2008-2012

In 2008, IPMA and Swiss Project Management Association (spm) decided to revive this kind of competence development event for project management experts. It was felt that no other comparable product of this quality was on offer on the marketplace.

A revised format of the IPMA Expert Seminars with a general forward looking title and investigations in four different Themes was introduced. The Themes provide clear directions for the presentations and discussions.

One Theme is provided and managed by the IPMA Young Crew. The results are brought to the plenum each day. Experts from various sectors of the economy and university institutes as well as different cultural backgrounds explain the issues and trends for each Theme. These are presented, discussed and recommendations developed based on various case studies, research results and theories.

The IPMA Expert Seminars can be considered as a part of the knowledge management of the participants and their organisations and during the seminar knowledge transfer and enrichment takes place.

- The keynote speeches explain the Themes and additional topics
- The Papers contribute to the Topics by offering theories, views, practices and case studies

¹ This series of articles is by members of the IPMA Education and Training (E&T) Board on the subject of project management education, training, careers and related topics. More information about the IPMA E&T can be found at <http://ipma.ch/education>.

- The statements in the discussions contain questions, evidence, logic and conclusions to the Topics

3. Objectives and conditions

The IPMA Baselines provide frameworks for the Expert Seminars. The presentations and discussions can be related to them thereby giving an orientation and platform to compare with existing knowledge and experience.

The format precludes restricted thinking and the discussion of details in a rigid framework. It encourages participants to understand other views, to be aware of the context and to see new perspectives.

The method of the multi-dimensional thinking, networking and the different cultures participating actively in the IPMA Expert Seminars provide a stable condition for professional practical work and research in different context conditions.

The international exchange, the self-confidence and the competence of combining the PM-technical, the PM-behavioural and the PM-contextual aspects are favourable for observing new trends.

Finally, the result orientation leads to progress beyond the current status, new insights and acquisition of knowledge. The strategic thinking adds priorities and a future perspective is promoted by sustainability requirements.

4. Process

Probable trends are selected by the scientific committee which promotes innovative suggestions. This leads to the Themes.

The Themes are described and Chairmen for the Seminar and the Themes are assigned. The announcement of the next IPMA Expert Seminar and the Call for Papers is published. Subsequently, the abstracts are collected and evaluated.

The Expert Seminar is conducted with its presentations and workshops. The Proceedings are established, the Expert Seminar is evaluated and the lessons for the next cycle are learned.

5. Characteristics

- Small groups discuss selected Themes and topics.
- Active participation is expected. Participants come from different cultures and speak different languages.
- Teaching is not intended, participants are not beginners.
- The face-to-face discussion in groups during about 8-10 hours and 2-3 days outside the participants' workplace provides the climate for the profound knowledge gain and social contact.

- A merging of academic and practical competence.
- The Expert Seminars are repetitive and familiar to many participants. They meet at the same effective venue in every Expert Seminar. The focus is on evolution rather than revolution.

Through the IPMA Expert Seminars, science, practice and education converge and the resulting direct, personal knowledge gain is a key value for both the individuals and their organizations.

6. Proceedings History

2008: Values and ethics in project management, Miles Shepherd

- Values of projects, persons, teams and organisations
- Project objectives and deliverables in an ethical context
- Risks and opportunities in projects
- Code of professional conduct

2009: Behavioural and Contextual Competences for project management success, J Rodney Turner

- Technical, behavioural and contextual competences
- Assessment methods
- Experience with the ICB Version 3.0 and NCBs derived from it
- Training for developing behavioural and contextual competences

2010: Survival and Sustainability as Challenges for Projects, Tom Taylor

- Role of the investor
- From expectations to results
- Responsibility for sustainability

2011: Future Trends in Project, Programme and Portfolio Management, Nino Grau

- New ICT tools for project management
- Image and reality
- Standards and standardisation
- Risk management

2012: Future Trends in Project, Programme and Portfolio Management 2012, Jesus Martinez-Almela

- Project organisation
- Behavioural and contextual competences
- Project content
- Changes

2013: Pause, no Expert Seminar

**2014: Future Trends in Project, Programme and Portfolio Management 2014,
Reinhard Wagner**

- PP&P roles and responsibilities
- Intercultural Project Management
- Service Contracts
- Managing projects in the new societies

Pictures



IPMA Expert Seminar in Zurich, Switzerland, 2011

For more information about the IPMA Expert Seminars, go to

<http://ipma.ch/education/expert-seminars/>

About the Author



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Hans Knoepfel is an IPMA Fellow and Honorary President of the Swiss Project Management Association. He has been responsible for the Advanced Study Courses in continuing PM education at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts in Lucerne. His teaching and research engagement include Universities in Europe, the United States and Asia. He has published about 75 papers on project management in German, English and other languages. He has been an active contributor to the development and continuous updating of the IPMA Competence Baselines, the IPMA Certification Systems for Individuals and Organisations and the IPMA Expert Seminars. Dr. Knoepfel can be contacted at kn@rpag.ch