

PM WORLD TODAY – FEATURED INTERVIEW – JANUARY 2009

Interview with Russ Archibald

Project Management Pioneer

Part IV – The Later Years: Consulting, Research and Thoughts on the Current State and Future of Project Management



Russell Archibald, PhD (Hon), PMP, PMI Fellow, is a globally-recognized author, consultant and lecturer on project management. With a career spanning more than 50 years, Russ has broad international experience in engineering, operations, program and project management. He has experienced three project management related careers: Management Consultant, Corporate Executive, and Military/Aerospace. In recent years, He has consulted to a wide variety of large and small organizations in many industries and in 12 countries on 4 continents. Russ Archibald is a Fellow and Certified Project Management Professional (PMP) of the Project Management Institute (PMI®) (member No. 6, one of the five original trustees), an Honorary Fellow of the Association of Project Management (APM/IPMA) in the UK, and is listed in Who's Who in the World. In 2006 he received the PMI-College of Scheduling "Jim O'Brien Lifetime Achievement Award."

Russ is the author of 3 editions of the best-selling book, "Managing High- Technology Programs and Projects" (1976, 1992, and 2003, also published in Japanese, Italian, Italian, Russian and Chinese) and the co-author of "Network Based Management Information Systems (PERT/CPM)" (1967). Russ has presented many papers over the years at PMI and International Project Management Association (IPMA) conferences in North America, South America, and Europe, and is widely published in periodicals on professional project management. He holds Bachelor of Science (University of Missouri) and Master of Science (University of Texas, Austin) degrees in Mechanical Engineering. As a pioneer in the field, Russ received an honorary Ph.D. in strategy, program, and project management from the Ecole

Superieure de Commerce de Lille (ESC-Lille) in Lille, France in August 2005. Currently residing in Mexico, Russ Archibald's personal website can be found at www.russarchibald.com.

Editor's Note: *Russ Archibald is a founder of PMI and one of the pioneers in the field of professional project management. He has been an active supporter of PMForum and PM World Today for many years. A recognized supporter and mentor for many professional leaders around the world of project management, Russ is well known throughout North and South America, Europe, Russia and elsewhere for his global knowledge, research, professionalism and personal warmth. Part one of our interview with Russ, published in the September edition of PM World Today, dealt with the first part of Russ' career as he witnessed and participated in the beginnings of the professional project management field. (see Part 1 at.) Part 2 of the interview with Russ focused on his participation in and knowledge about the formation and early years of the Project Management Institute and the PM profession in North America. (see Part 2 at.) Part 3 included Russ' memories and knowledge of the early years of the PM profession outside of North America. (see Part 3 at.) Part 4, below, deals with Russ' recent research, observations about the current state of the project management world, and predictions for the future of this field.*

PM World Today (PMWT): You sometimes describe your career as having been in three parts, with the third stage being consulting for the last 26 years. What kind of consulting have you been engaged in over that period? Are you still doing any consulting work?

Russ Archibald: I took early retirement (as Vice President of Planning for Bendix International) from the Bendix Corp. in 1982 at age 58 and have kept pretty busy since then as an independent management consultant specializing in strategic and project management. I believe that I could have built up a consulting group or company, but I consciously decided to stay independent. I had my fill of both large and small consulting companies in prior years (including Booz, Allen & Hamilton, CPM Systems, Inc.) and did not want to spend my time managing a bunch of consultants rather than working directly with clients.

Bendix retained me as a part-time consultant for six months after my 1982 retirement to assure that their joint venture in India (that I described in Part 3 of this interview) would stay on track. Within a month or so after that 'retirement' I began working as an expert witness on the first of a series of nuclear power plant "prudency reviews." A law firm in Washington DC put together a rather strong team of PM experts working together on these post-completion project reviews, including PMI Fellows **Prof. Dave Cleland** and **Jim O'Brien**, plus other PM consultants whose names don't come to mind at the moment. (This law firm saw my name and reference to my 1967 book in a footnote in a 1974 book written by **J. Ronald Fox** titled "Arming America: How the U.S. Buys Weapons" when they were looking for experts to respond to Fox's testimony regarding the San Onofre (CA) Nuclear Power Plant as an expert witness for Pacific Gas and Electric, the owner of that plant. The law firm tracked me down and asked – coincidentally during my last month with Bendix! -- if I would be interested in helping the rate-payers of California.) Our clients for these reviews were the Public Utilities Commissions of the states of California, Illinois, Texas, and Arizona. We looked at the PM aspects of these projects and other experts looked at the engineering design and construction practices to determine how much, if any, of the costs of managing, designing and constructing a number of specific nuclear power plants should be disallowed from the rate bases because of imprudent project management, engineering, or construction practices. In all but two cases we recommended

disallowances of very significant amounts of money. The Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant in California was a particularly interesting project, as it had a rather troubled history. Our team submitted voluminous testimony on this project, but just before we were to appear in court and be cross examined the case was settled out of court – without public disclosure of the settlement terms. All of these plants continue in apparently good operation today, by the way.

For a similar prudency review of the multi-billion dollar Trans-Alaska Pipeline System, the Alaska Public Utilities Commission also retained, through the same law firm, a team of over 30 consultants that included senior people from Bechtel Corporation, which initially was a contractor on this pipeline but withdrew voluntarily early in the project. Again our assignment was to determine what costs, if any, should be disallowed from the base cost due to imprudent management, design, and construction practices, for purposes of calculating the royalty payments by the oil companies to the State of Alaska on the oil transported through the pipeline. I presented my testimony in 1984 in Washington, DC to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission/FERC, along with a number of other consultants, and the case was settled ‘out of court’ prior to a final ruling by the FERC. Our consultant team testified that about \$2 billion dollars was imprudently spent on the pipeline and should therefore be excluded from the royalty rate base. The settlement terms were not publicly disclosed.



Marion and I moved from Detroit back to Los Angeles in 1984 and I joined the Los Angeles Chapter of PMI. At one of my first LA chapter dinner meetings I happened to sit next to the late **Dan Ono** from ATT Corp. Within a week Dan accepted my proposal to consult to ATT and facilitate project start-up workshops for his telecommunications projects across the U.S. These projects included, as examples, replacing the entire telecommunication systems on the USC campus in LA, and for the entire state government in Texas. I think I facilitated over 30 such projects over a ten-year period, while at the same time developing in-house capabilities for ATT to facilitate these project team planning start-up workshops themselves. You can read more about this powerful method to get projects started properly in Chapter 11, “Project Team Planning and Project Start-Up,” in my 2003 book **Managing High-Technology Programs and Projects**. **Dan Ono** and I co-authored and co-presented a paper on this subject at the PMI Congress in San Francisco in 1988, and we also co-presented another paper at PMI’91 in Dallas titled “*Achieving Quality Teamwork Through Project Performance Reviews.*”

I also had consulting assignments, presented a number of training seminars and workshops, and lectured in MBA courses in the 1980s and early 1990s in Denmark, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Italy, Japan, the Philippines, Pakistan (in the Northwest Frontier Province), India, Brazil, Canada, and the United States. I gave a keynote address (with **Dr. Steen Lichtenberg** from Denmark) at the IPMA World Congress in Florence, Italy, in June of 1992, and also participated in the IPMA Expert Seminar in March 1990 (as keynote speaker, presented another paper, and co-authored a published report on the seminar) in Zurich-Rushlikon.

I took a sabbatical from actively consulting from 1994 to 1999 when I ‘burned out’ on consulting (and traveling!) and we moved to San Miguel de Allende in the central mountains of Mexico. During that time the Internet really matured and I got reconnected with the world of project

management, and by 2000 was once again actively consulting and training. Through your kind introduction, **David Pells**, I met **Vladimir Liberzon** in Moscow in 1999 (while Marion and I were on a tourist river cruise from St. Petersburg to Moscow.) Vladimir arranged the translation of my 1992 book (2nd edition) into Russian in 2000 and soon I made the first of a number of trips to Moscow and Kiev. I then produced the third edition in 2003 of my **Managing High-Technology Programs and Projects** book, which was also published in Russian (as well as in Italian and Chinese).

Since then I have continued to be fairly active in the PM arena, primarily writing and conducting seminar/workshops, but also occasionally doing some real consulting. As you know, David, I am on your PMForum Team together with you, **Wayne Abba** (from the U.S.) and **Miles Shepherd** (from the U.K.) as advisors to the Global Threat Reduction Program for the U.S. Dept. of Energy. I am also working with **Prof. Dr. Jean-Pierre Debourse** on a research project on the subject of “Project Managers as Senior Executives?”, co-sponsored by the ESC-Lille School of Business and PMI. Since 2000 I have added a few more countries to my list, including Poland, Hungary, Portugal, Mexico, Colombia, and Peru.

Last month at the IPMA 2008 World Congress in Rome you presented (brilliantly, I must say!) the paper that you, Wayne Abba, Miles Shepherd and I co-authored titled “*The Power of Independent PM Reviews for Global Programs: The GTRI Example*,” and I presented a paper at that Congress on “*The Interfaces Between Strategic Management of an Enterprise and Project Portfolio Management Within the Enterprise*”.



Also that same week in Rome I presented a keynote paper titled “*Project Management in Support of Public Administration: Reflecting the State of the Art in International Project Management*” at two conferences sponsored by the Istituto Italiano di Project Management/ISIPM.” (These papers can be downloaded from my web site at www.russarchibald.com.)

(Photo: Russ Archibald presenting keynote paper at the 22nd IPMA World Congress on Project Management in Rome, Italy on 11 November 2008.)

Although in January 2008 I will celebrate my 85th birthday, I plan to keep going, albeit at a slightly slower pace, for a while longer – as long as it is fun and interesting. Who knows when it will end?

PMWT: What have some of your more interesting assignments included?

Archibald: The prudency reviews of the Alaska Pipeline and the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant projects were quite fascinating, although they involved a lot of tedious reading of historical files. The ten trips I made to Pakistan for the World Bank to give training seminar/workshops to middle managers and engineers with the Pakistan Water and Power Authority at the Tarbella Dam and Power Plant were quite challenging and educational for me. I think I mentioned earlier (in Part 3 of this long interview) the hair-raising 2-day ride up the

famous K-K Highway from Peshawar to the city of Gilgit, in the Himalyas near the borders of China, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Tadzik (a former Soviet Union Republic), with 30 of my bearded and mustachioed students in native garb. It is always a challenge to explore new cultures and see whether you can successfully convey in an effective way the principles of project management, despite the language and cultural barriers.

Working with **Morten Fangel** from Denmark for several years in the 1980s on project start-up workshops was always fun (his humor is infectious!), and getting letters from our workshop participants telling me how effective the start-up team planning workshops were in practice back home in their organizations was very rewarding.

The Global Threat Reduction Initiative/GTRI in the US. Department of Energy that I have been privileged to be involved with as a member of your PM Forum Team is as exciting as it is important to us all.

PMWT: You are also an accomplished and well recognized author of project management books and papers. How many books and articles have you authored over the years? Just a ballpark estimate.

Archibald: I have written 4 books, including the 1967 book co-authored with **Richard Villoria**, plus 12 chapters in 9 books edited by others, and the preface to a 2008 book. I have presented 8 papers (2 of which were keynotes) at PMI World Congresses (or earlier 'Seminar/Symposia'), and 23 papers at PMI Chapter and College meetings (to 15 chapters in 5 countries on 3 continents, 2 of which were keynotes.) With IPMA I presented 11 papers in as many countries, 4 of which were keynote presentations (starting with Stockholm in 1972), plus 5 papers at as many IPMA Expert Seminars.

I also presented papers at 23 other professional meetings over the years and had 15 papers published in other professional publications. In 1967 I wrote a proprietary **Project Manager's Manual** for Booz, Allen and Hamilton which I used in presenting many 5-day seminar/workshops in PM for Booz, Allen during my 2 years with them. Another publication was the proprietary **Program/Project Management Guide** that I produced while with ITT Corporation in 1972. Finally, I have presented extensive written expert witness testimony on the five legal cases that I mentioned earlier.

PMWT: How did you go about creating your acclaimed book "Managing High Technology Programs and Projects" in 1976. What was the inspiration for the book? How long did it take you to create it?

Archibald: At ITT I took on the task of creating the corporate **Program/Project Management Guide** mentioned above in addition to my full-time duties as an internal consultant to several ITT subsidiary companies, as I described in Part 3 of this interview. I developed a draft of this manual based on working with and visiting 8 or 10 of the leading ITT companies in project management (all in either aerospace or telecommunications,) and then circulated this draft (180 pages in a 3-ring binder with 11 tab dividers) for review and comment to those companies as well as to about 200 other ITT subsidiaries around the world.



The final **Guide** included revisions that reflected comments and questions received from that review. In my preface to the 1976 first edition of **Managing High-Technology Programs and Projects**, I said “Grateful acknowledgement is given to the ITT Corporation for permission to incorporate a large part of the *ITT Program/Project Management Guide* (which in turn grew out of the previously mentioned seminars) in the present book.”

I also mentioned a number of other people in that Preface who were very helpful to me over the years. My wife Marion typed the manuscript for me while we were living in Mexico City in 1974, when I was still with ITT and managing a big country-wide telephone switching retrofit project. So the book was a culmination of over 10 years of cumulative effort and experience. Its publication took about 1 year after completion of the manuscript. Incidentally, I added the “high-technology” to the title in an attempt to differentiate it from books on managing design-procurement-construction projects/DPC, because of the many differences I had experienced between those two basic categories of projects. True, we use high-technology today in aspects of DPC (I prefer to call them “facilities”) projects, but the details in life cycle models and planning and control procedures for facilities projects are very different than the details presented in my books.

PMWT: Managing High Technology Programs & Projects is now in its 3rd edition (2003). The second edition was published in 1992. What changes were made in the 2nd edition, and again for the current 3rd edition?

Archibald: I think I will take the lazy way out on this question, and refer you and your readers to **Max Wideman’s** very thorough comparison of my first (1976) and third (2003) editions at <http://www.maxwideman.com/papers/hitech/hitech.pdf>. Max has done an excellent job of comparing the differences between the two editions that were published 27 years apart. Some chapters are very much the same, and others have changed quite a bit, plus I have added a number of chapters to elaborate on things I have learned over the years. I don’t think there is very much that is “new” about the principles and practices of project management, but of course we have all learned much more about what project management really is (and always has been!) There are new IT tools, of course, that help us do the same things we have always been trying to do in managing projects: integrating all pertinent information from beginning to the end of the project.

PMWT: How has your 3rd edition been received? How many copies sold? Is it available in translated versions and, if so, in what languages?

Archibald: The 2003 edition is available in English, Russian, Italian and Chinese. It has sold almost 2,000 copies in English, which isn’t too great. I don’t have specific information on copies sold in the other languages, but the royalty numbers indicate that they are rather substantial, even though the prices are much lower (under \$20 in China and Russia, and around 50 Euros in Italy.) I think the publisher priced the English edition much too high (it is now listed at \$145, but Amazon’s price is \$116.) Many of my consultant friends say they would use it in their seminars – except for the price!

The 1976 edition sold 17,669 copies and the second 1992 edition sold 7,128 copies. (Many authors will not disclose their numbers, but at my age I don't mind telling it like it is.) Of course there are now huge numbers of books on the market in project management, with many specializing in IT, new product development, and other projects. The reviews of my 2003 book have generally been very favorable, with one reviewer saying "It is by far the most comprehensive, practical and easy to understand reference book on project management principles that I have seen to date." Jeb Riordan, Editor, PROJECT magazine. Full review at <http://www.projectmagazine.com/reviews/79-books/102-managing-high-technology-programs-a-projects-3rd-edition> .

Here's another reviewer quote: "It is a unified presentation of forward-thinking principles and practices that bridge senior executives, project managers and project teams and defines an integrated path to improved project management performance and success." Kenneth H. Rose, PMI Book Review Editor, PMI *PMNetwork* July 2003 p 67.

PMWT: In your opinion, what is the main message of the 3rd edition? If you were to point to a few key elements of the book, what would they be?

Archibald: I directed Part 1 of the book to executives and managers of project managers, and Part 2 to those who are project managers or are specialists who support project managers. Of course, Part 1 is useful to the second group as well. I guess my main message throughout the book is that you need all three of what I refer to as the basic concepts of project management: 1) designated points of integrative responsibility (that includes but is not limited to the project manager), 2) integrated planning and predictive control, and 3) integrated team work. I hope that I explain these three concepts in an effective way, and also provide some useful, specific ways to apply them in real, practical situations.



PMWT: You have also been involved in some serious research related to program and project management in recent years. What are some of the main subjects of your research? Can you identify or describe any recent research projects with which you have been involved? Did you have research partners or teams for those efforts?

Archibald: A few years ago I tried (unsuccessfully) to get a global, virtual team together to develop a systematic method to categorize projects, with the help of **Vladimir Voropaev**, President of SOVNET, the IPMA member organization in Russia. I have written a few papers on that subject, but much more work needs to be done there. (See www.russarchibald.com – go to 'author' then 'recent papers' and scroll down to find the appropriate paper titles.) A year or so ago I agreed to join **Prof. Dr. Jean-Pierre Debourse** on an interesting research project on "Project Managers as Senior Executives?", which is co-sponsored by ESC-Lille Business School in France and PMI. This project has suffered a few delays for political and health reasons but should be completed in 2009. See <http://www.russarchibald.com/files/PMI-ESCLilleResearchonPMSasSeniorExecutives.pdf> .

PMWT: With respect to your research and writing with Mr. Darci Prado in Brazil, can you please expand a little on the subject and results? Have you presented any papers, articles or presentations to share those results? If so, at which conferences or in which publications? (Sorry to tax your memory if the answers are not readily at hand.)

Archibald: Since 2005 I have been involved in a very successful research project that uses the Prado PM Maturity Model, developed by Darci Prado in Brazil. Darci has an excellent team of volunteers doing this work in Brazil to demonstrate the use of his simple but powerful MCPM/Maturity by Category of Project Model to measure PM maturity for specific project categories, as I have recommended.

Anyone can download the presentation that Darci and I gave at the 5th International Workshop on Project and Programme Management at ESC-Lille, France in August, 2007, at <http://www.russarchibald.com/files/PresentationLille2007MaturitySuccessITProjects.pdf>. The details of his model are available for downloading free, and the link is given in that presentation. I believe that this research supports very strongly my opinion that PM maturity in an organization is meaningless unless it is tied to specific project categories.

I gave a similar presentation on November 13, 2008, at a conference in Rome, Italy, that was sponsored by ISIPM (Istituto Italiano di Project Management), and ISIPM is now planning to translate and publish Darci's book on his Maturity Model in 2009 in Italian and to promote similar research and application of the model in Italian governmental agencies.

PMWT: Another topic that I know you have much interest in is the "categorization of projects." Can you please expand on that topic? Why is it important? What additional research is needed on this topic?

Archibald: For those who interested, please take a look at my paper on this subject at <http://www.russarchibald.com/files/PurposesandMethodsofProjectCatLille2005ModMay282007.pdf>. Also, read my letter to the Editor in the December 2008 issue of PM World Today.

Ten of the "most interesting" papers from the 2008 PMI Biannual Research Conference, held in Warsaw, Poland last July, are printed in the Project Management Journal Volume 39 Supplement (September 2008). Of these ten, two are devoted to IT projects, plus one to "...Managing Complex Systems Projects," and one to "...Best Practices on Innovative and Non-innovative Projects." The rest do not identify the categories of projects that are the subjects of the research, and as a result I believe this greatly diminishes the usefulness of the research results. One mentions IT projects, but does not specifically limit the results to IT projects.

There is a strong inference in several of these that they are really referring to IT projects, but this is not clear. One is titled "*Governance Frameworks for Public Project Development and Estimation*," but in the Abstract the authors say they have investigated "three public-investment-project governance frameworks." The phrase "public-investment-project" most likely refers to capital facilities, which are design-procure-construct projects, but this is not made very clear. My point is that many people who write about "projects" and "project management" are unconsciously referring to one or a few project categories, and are assuming that their ideas apply equally to ALL categories of projects. Until we have an agreed, globally accepted,

systematic method of categorizing projects for each of the several purposes for which we actually do categorize them in a *de facto* manner, we will continue to act just like the blind men and the elephant.

PMWT: What other research are you planning or already involved in that others might be unaware of?

Archibald: Right now I'm not planning to get involved in anything else. Pretty soon I am really going to retire!

PMWT: What other aspects of project management deserve further research and/or development, in your opinion?

Archibald: I believe that the anatomy of projects and programs within the several project categories needs to be studied more. We already have a large number of "project life-cycle models" (predictive, adaptive, and no doubt there are others), already in use and no doubt there are some waiting to be discovered or developed. What about "heuristic life cycle models"? When we have good representations of these life cycle models then we can apply systems thinking for their improvement. I don't think we have all the answers in hand regarding the various and possible life cycle phases and how they inter-relate most effectively and efficiently.

There are no doubt many other aspects of program and project management that need further research. The list of "hot topics" created by the recent PM Expert Forum session in Washington, DC on December 19 2008, reported in your recent Breaking News item on PMForum, gives an idea of some of the topics that need exploration today.

PMWT: Do you have an opinion about the state and nature of PM research currently underway around the world? Is there enough? Is it the right research? Is it being adequately supported?

Archibald: I don't feel well-enough informed in this area to properly answer these questions. Maybe someone should undertake a research project to answer them! Perhaps some of the subscribers to PMForum or PM World Today would like to give you their answers to these important questions.

PMWT: In 2005 you were awarded an honorary Doctorate in Project Management by the Graduate Programme in Project and Programme Management at the Ecole Supérieure de Commerce de Lille (ESC Lille) in France, now one of the best known universities in the project management world. You received the honorary doctorate, along with Alan Stretton of Australia, for lifetime achievement in the field of project management. Can you tell us what that meant to you, and something about the experience?

Archibald: This was certainly a thrilling and very pleasant surprise to me when it happened. **Prof. Dr. Christophe Bredillet** had invited me to his annual International Workshop at ESC-Lille for the preceding several years, and I had met **Prof. Dr. Jean-Pierre Debourse** there in 2004. This Honorary Doctorate Award has a deep significance for me, especially so because these distinguished gentlemen and the ESC-Lille Business School, one of the *Grande Ecoles* of France, are so experienced in and devoted to the field of project and program management. I

guess this award, together with the PMI College of Scheduling giving me the Jim O'Brien Lifetime Achievement Award in 2006, indicate that I have made some useful contributions to this field over these five decades after all!



(Photo: ESC Lille Professor **Christophe Bredillet**, Dean and General Manager **Jean-Pierre Debourse**, Russ Archibald receiving honorary Doctorate degree in 2005 – see story at <http://www.pmforum.org/blogs/news/2005/08/esc-lille-awardshonorary-degrees-to.html>)

PMWT: You have been attending the annual International Graduate Workshop each August at ESC Lille, organized by Professor Christophe Bredillet to bring globally recognized leaders from the PM field together with doctoral students in their Graduate Programme in Project & Programme Management. Can you offer any comments about those annual workshops? Are they fun, useful, interesting?

Archibald: This is a wonderful combination of old-timers from many parts of the world with experienced professors and practitioners plus highly motivated, eager graduate students from a number of countries. I personally have never experienced this combination in any other setting, and I find it to be extremely stimulating. On top of that, the modern ESC-Lille campus – in a high-rise building in the center of the beautiful and historic city of Lille, near the French border with Belgium, provides interesting and enjoyable opportunities for sight-seeing and for experiencing many gourmet delights. Christophe arranges for us old-timers to get to know the students at selected restaurants and auberges each evening during the week, always with a final night out in the country where, after a delicious dinner, we always have a national competition singing contest. Great fun! I'm sorry that I missed this event in August 2008 because I was recuperating from a major surgical event and unable to make that 11 hour flight from Mexico City to Paris.

PMWT: Generally speaking, what is your feeling about the state of the project management professional world? Just a few reflections or thoughts?

Archibald: It is great to see that the recognition of the benefits of what we now call modern project management – which might more properly be called systematic project management – has spread so widely to all corners of the world and that PM is being used effectively in practically all forms of human endeavor. It remains to be seen whether PM continues to stand more or less “on its own” or whether it joins overall management methods in the manner that financial management has. I tend to think the latter: PM is something that every manager above a certain level must know and use when appropriate, while at the same time many managers must become experts in the field of project management, in the same way that all managers must know and use financial management concepts and methods, but the comptrollers, treasurers, Certified Public Accountants (inb the U.S. and their counterparts in other societies) and auditors must become expert in the intricacies of the financial world.

There seems to be a tendency among PM zealots to push the idea that “project management will rule the world,” or will take over the total management of just about any organization. There is a distinct difference between the strategic management of organizations and what project

management does to achieve those defined strategies through the planning and execution of programs and projects. What I call “Strategic Project Management” includes the identification, selection, prioritization and funding of an organization’s programs and projects – project portfolio management in other words. These tasks are the responsibility of the strategy managers of the organization, not the project or program managers. For more detail on this topic please read my recent paper on “The Interfaces Between Strategic Management of an Enterprise and Project Portfolio Management Within the Enterprise” on my website, as referred to in my response to Question 1 above.

PMWT: During 2008, the world saw a lot of turbulence in financial sectors, banking and energy, especially in North America and Europe, but affecting people and PM professionals everywhere. You have lived through past economic downturns and recessions. Have you any advice for our colleagues around the world for weathering the current economic storm?

Archibald: Each person’s situation is rather different, so what I am doing is probably not the best thing for everyone else. I am the eternal optimist, so I don’t believe that all business and industry is shutting down and the world is going to hell. The big question for me is “How long will it take to turn things around?” We have a large community of well-traveled Americans here in San Miguel de Allende, and the mood here, in Washington DC, across the USA, and in Europe is very hopeful as a result of Obama’s amazing and inspiring election. I think our discipline of PM can be, and hopefully will be, very instrumental in planning and executing the rebuilding of the USA that appears to be in the works over the next several years. I urge your readers to watch for the appearance in the next few weeks of the **Project Management Manifesto** as related to the Rebuilding of America phenomena that will soon be launched.

PMWT: How do you think project management can help the world recover – and to grow and prosper in the future?

Archibald: **IF** our leaders have the political courage, discipline, and strategic wisdom to select the right programs and projects, **then** project management can be extremely important and effective in planning, executing, and controlling those programs and projects to obtain the most benefit from the money invested. It is up to us to demand that good project management methods be used in the coming Rebuild America era.

PMWT: What is the real value of modern project management, in your opinion?

Archibald: Modern project management is “management by objectives” on steroids and digitalized. Its real value is in 1) pin-pointing integrative responsibilities and accountabilities at every level in an organization and even in a society, 2) enabling effective planning, scheduling, and controlling of specific efforts (that is, projects and programs) to reach the desired objectives, and 3) getting all the affected people working together in harmony and as a team to reach those defined objectives, under the leadership of program and project managers.

PMWT: One last question – how can PMForum be of most value going forward? What advice can you give us for providing services to the PM world, to really offering something of value to our readers and subscribers?

Archibald: The most value offered by PMForum – and the Internet in general – relates to these fundamental things, in my opinion:

- Reliable, accurate and useful information about our field of interest and its real and potential impact on our society.
- Visibility to our global community of what is happening in our chosen field and what is important in all corners of the world.
- Rapid and economical access to knowledge and the sources of knowledge about all aspects of project management as it applies to the many different **categories of projects** and **areas of application** (governments, industries, business sectors, and types of organizations) everywhere in the world.

Editor's note: *We want to thank Russ Archibald for the time he took to answer these questions, answers that reflect developments worldwide from the exciting early days of the project management profession up to now.*



Photo: PM World Today Managing Editor David Pells & Russ Archibald, July 2008, Washington DC

Read the entire interview with Russ Archibald:

[*Part I – The Early Years*](#)

[*Part II – The Formation & Early Years of PMI*](#)

[*Part III – The Early Years of the PM Profession
Outside of North America*](#)