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#### Current Vacancies

For the most reliable, continuously updated job board concentrated specifically upon the project managers in the UK, the Live Vacancies page from Arras People is always your home for roles ranging from project to programme management, concerning pmo/support, project office, risk management, and many, many more.

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#### Benchmark - More Than Just Salaries

Take Part Today



#### Greetings!

What will 2010 hold for the project management sector? That's what we intend to scale through with the latest edition of Project Management Tipoffs.

We have predictions from the Arras People staff and also from guest contributor Ron Rosenhead. Another way to predict the new year is through your taking part in the leading survey among Project Management personnel nationwide - the 2010 Project Management Benchmark Survey, which our own John Thorpe will summarise for you. Lindsay is back with another book review, this time concerning a title about PMOs. Our Q&A session delves into a New Year's Resolution to change the way candidates seek out jobs.

Happy Holidays from Arras People, and here's hoping these forecasts are a welcome gift to you and your team!

#### The 2010 Project Management Benchmark Report - Six Important Minutes For Your Colleagues

With December upon us and the end of the noughties nigh, it is time once again for us to collect a snapshot of the UK Programme and Project Management landscape in order to compile the **5th Annual Arras People Project Management Benchmark Report**.



As ever we are dependant upon the PPM community for the base data and we hope that this year we will continue to have your support.

For the uninitiated, the original **Project Management Benchmark Report** came to be about five years ago as we couldn't find any data that provided a snapshot of the UK PPM scene. We were halfway through the first decade of the new millennium and wondering what was happening! Since that first report our processing skills and tools have improved and it is now an annual event that we all look forward to in terms of preparation and then collation of the results into the final report. We feel the report has evolved and is more than just a salary survey, offering insights into the PPM world and initiatives that may impact us all as practitioners of this fine art.

Last year's report was especially interesting as we moved officially into a period of recession and the effects of the banking meltdown began to impact across parts of the PPM community. The report highlighted that;

- **Recession has hit the project management market, with the majority of professionals fearing some redundancies and cuts**
- **Over a third of all respondents said they were "worse off" last year and 22% of freelancers experienced decreased rates, with a significant number (11%) experiencing a cut of more than 10%.**
- **Twice as many contractors as employees saw their earnings go down by 10%.**

Looking back at 2009 it has been a year of mixed fortunes and I am sure that this will be borne out in the results that we gather this year. From our perspective we have certainly seen a significant decrease in the number of permanent and contractor opportunities especially in the private sector. Where there has been hiring, the process was generally quicker and much more focused with clients very clear about their expectations of the candidates. Towards the end of the year we have seen an increase in inquiries, but as yet this is not converting into hires as the roles are being "filled internally" or "re-evaluated". This fishing is quite interesting and could indicate people are looking at hiring plans for 2010 or testing the market to see what "stock" is available if they secure additional business in the New Year.

**The Project Management Benchmark Survey is not just about salary information.**

What we were looking for when we tabulated the data from the Project Management Benchmark Survey originally revolved around things like salary/remuneration in the earlier editions. But that four to eight minutes of the project management professional's time has since become a dartboard for all issues great and small within project management that provide answers only the PMPs are facing themselves.

[Take the Survey](#)

Like an evolving stage act, the Benchmark Report cannot be pigeonholed as a single identity - it remains fresh, reincarnate in its focus, and above all, relevant to the times in which we live.

Take, for example, this year's survey. There are several issues the Benchmark Survey has taken a particular interest in, including:

- Green Issues
- PPM Competencies
- Project Failure
- Experience
- Accreditation
- Current Business Climate

[Take the Survey](#)

It's all relevant, all topical, and always current. because we want to be the finger that measures the pulse of the UK project management landscape. The issues to Arras People are worthy of our utmost concern and attention. But we can't decipher what's on the line without you.

**Do you want to address the issues facing project management pros today?**  
Click [here to take the 2010 Benchmark Survey](#).

**Quick Links...**

- [The Arras People Website](#)
- [Job Vacancies](#)
- [Careers Advice](#)
  
- [Careers Clinics](#)

I also get the impression that 2009 has seen very distinct groups in terms of impact of the recession.

- Many in the Public sector have had their annual increases (many being moderate) and retained a sense of job security with spending plans firm through to 2011. At the same time they have had the upside of cheaper money (e.g. mortgages) and the government stimuli such as VAT reductions. Though we are seeing latterly some tightening in this sector, pay rises are (at this time) set to continue next year and it looks like it will be 2011 before the pinch may well be applied.
- There are many people who have unfortunately found themselves out of work either losing permanent roles or being unable to secure a new contract assignment. For this group it has been extremely tough with increased competition and many potential employers being very strict in terms of their hiring criteria. We have seen increases in applications for all roles with many attracting between 100-150 candidates, I have also heard of stories where roles are attracting up to 300 candidates. Some organisations also see this as an opportunity to reduce rates / salaries on offer to make the most of what they consider to be a buyers market.
- The final group we have seen are those with niche and specialist domain knowledge and skills who as ever have been able to demand a premium. Whilst many organisations have cut back on projects that were focussed on expansion or business as usual, others have been looking at restructuring, cost saving and even new product offerings for the changing and emerging markets. Premiums have been paid not only because the organisation can see a payback but also due to the reduction in availability as many people have decided to "see out 2009 in a safe port" rather than remain active in the market (a fair risk based strategy).

We look forward to see if respondents' experiences align with this and also to being able to build an outlook as we move into 2010.

As well as remuneration the previous surveys have looked at and commented on the major initiatives that are happening in our chosen domain of PPM. Last year we looked at **P30** and its impact (or lack of) and we set an estimate of there being **"80,000 Project Managers in the UK"**. The latter causing some consternation and interesting discussions with the training and accreditation providers and also the professional bodies! Over the years we have also looked at;

- Training and Accreditation where Prince2 seems to have well and truly won the marketing war and created a de-facto standard;
- The challenges faced by Women in Project management and **the ongoing Gender Gap when it comes to remuneration;**
- Work/life balance and the fact that nearly a quarter of all respondents claimed that theirs was "Unacceptable".

This year we will once again be probing to get a view on topics such as Project Failure, PPM Competencies and Green Bling amongst others.

I would personally like to invite you to contribute to this year's survey in the hope that we can continue to develop this important body of work that offers a valuable insight into the UK's Programme and Project Management community. We recognise that it is a broad church, but believe that the survey and subsequent report address it as such and cover all aspects and roles within the community. I would like to think that we can attract as many people to complete the survey as read the report so we can all have an even better view of our community.

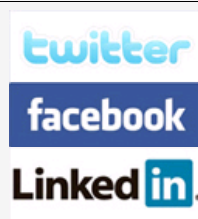
Six minutes of your time, that's all we ask!

Do something for your project management community - take the [Arras People 2010 Project Management Benchmark Survey](#) today.

**The Arras People Project Management Predictions for 2010**

In talking about the

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#### Social Media Roundup

#### Blogs / Articles

- [10 Technology Predictions for 2010 - InfoWorld](#)
- [People Skills Are important - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- [Liz Harrin cites the 2009 Benchmark Report - PMTips.net](#)
- [Breaking Down 'Must Have' vs. 'Nice to Have' - Maratz.com](#)
- [Groups Won't Wait for Warming Treaties - San Diego Union-Tribune](#)

#### Websites

- [pposig](#)

#### Podcasts & Vodcasts

- [The PM Podcast](#)
- [The pm411 PM Podcast](#)
- [PMThink!](#)
- [PMO Podcasts - BOT International](#)

#### Arras on Twitter

- [projectmgmt](#)
- [PM\\_StrayDogg](#)
- [PMOcentric](#)

#### Latest News from Arras People



#### Arras' Annual PM Survey Is Back!



main items project management personnel should be prepared for in 2010 one day last week, we opened the forum up to everyone in the home office in Heywood. What they came up with might surprise you.



#### • The Current Case for Project Management Earning Chartered Status Will Fall Short

The Association for Project Management informed Arras People last year that we could expect a decision on the Royal Charter for project management professionals "by mid-year 2009". With not only mid-year but the entire year all but gone, coupled with the fact that no recent news from the APM about Chartered Status on their website or through regular membership communications, it's looking likely that 2010 will also be news-free.

#### • Graduates Will Struggle Even More

There's no point in sugar coating the fact that the recession is far from over. And with looming budget cuts all but forcing public sector roles to accept a salary/remuneration freeze in the near future, it seems unlikely that newer graduate-level roles will become available in the public sector. Ergo, opportunities will have to arise from somewhere in the private sector to compensate. And that seems unlikely - a [BBC News report](#) in July highlighted a survey that showed graduate jobs for the top 100 employers are down 13.5% on 2008. Even more alarming, another story from May even suggested that [graduates should consider working abroad](#) for the time being. In support of this suggestion? Both the government and the National Union of Students.

#### • There Will Be More PMO-Qualified People Than Ever Before

There is a new exam to be made available for project management office certification to be offered in 2010, thus creating a burgeoning market of card-carrying members of the new PMO revolution. If other recent certification updates and popularity are any indication, the P30 Practitioner exam may have to circumvent labels of being a "money grab" by ensuring a high standard. Likewise, the certified themselves would do well to combine the exam success with real-life PMO success.

#### • The Jobs Will Go To The Best Self-Marketing Candidates, Thus Increasing Frustrations of Possibly Better Qualified Candidates

The job candidate who does the best job of promoting and self-marketing may be in with a better shot at success than the perhaps better qualified candidate who can't get people to look at them with the same gusto. Undoubtedly this will alienate and upset the better candidates. But if it leads to such candidates developing their self-marketing for the sake of their career betterment, the frustration could be a blessing in disguise.

#### • Identity Crisis - Proving Who You Are Will Increase

It's never a good idea to fudge the details on your CV, as you are certain to be found out. But the finer details - dates you worked on a particular project, accreditation you've attained - are becoming fine-toothed more than ever. For potential employers the matters of liability in checking out the credentials of new hires/ interviewees could land both sides in hot water. While blame may now extend to the hiring entity more than ever, by no means is the candidate/hiree off the hook. Rule of thumb: if you've got it in there, be sure you can back it up. In addition is the 2010 update of the [Criminal Records Background check](#) scheduled to roll out 26th July. For those who apply for roles that require a CRB check, you will now be able to pay for your own check rather than go through the process of having it administered by another entity. Having the CRB certification to hand in interviews will be the new way of applying for related roles from July onwards.

> [Take the Survey](#)

Back for its fifth installment, the 2010 Arras People Project Management Survey will soon be ready for project managers eager to share the extent of happenings and issues faced by the PM industry today.

Over the last five years, Arras People's renowned annual surveys have used information culled from project managers throughout the UK to determine the trends and issues faced by the project management field. Cited by a variety of field experts as a commendable and reliable source of what project managers are thinking at present. Previous survey questions have addressed issues including work/life balance, the contractor job market, the permanent job market, age groups, PM accreditation, ageism, salaries, day rates and bonuses and many other professional issues.

The [new survey is now open](#), so please be sure to give us your take on the issues that concern today's project management professional.

### JobSearch Support Service for Newly Unemployed Professionals



Arras People have been working with Job Centre Plus across the country to provide practical help and advice to project managers who are currently out of work

There's further in-depth details on how to access the service via [the blog](#) or via [the website](#)

Please pass along the details to any friends you know who may be able to benefit from the service

### ● Momentum for Green-Related Change Will Remain Stagnant

Although green issues seem to have risen in public consciousness in recent years, the central entity that can provide the forceful impetus for adaptation to global warming strategy remains yet to be found. Some of us surmise that currently there exists a gap around training, which in turn can lead to uncertainty as to solidifying a sound carbon footprint with each project undertaken. Who is the leader, then, that will face the issues head-on and ensure guidelines and standards for sustainable project carbon footprint governance? An individual? Government? A governing body? One thing remains certain: without someone or thing to provide the impetus, talk about green initiative will remain cheap and toothless.

### ● Projects Will Continue to Fail

This is an issue that doesn't seem to show signs of being fixed, thus earning a heavy dedication of questions on the 2010 Project Management Benchmark Report. To date, a Google search will reveal a variety of blog pieces and expertise about project failure - 275 million entries come up on Google.co.uk. And yet, figures today show that around **75 PERCENT OF PROJECTS STILL FAIL!** When will the lessons of project failure finally be turned into practical application that prevents those lessons having to be re-learned? Why do we pay the matter lip-service when it obviously hasn't borne out better results? Who or what can fix it?

## What Project Management People Can Expect in 2010



from Ron Rosenhead

I arranged to meet a friend in a local coffee shop. He was late and sent a text message saying he was held up in traffic. While waiting, I started to think about what project management should be prepared for in 2010.

What was on my list?

### Having a strong project office

Organisations need to take a more strategic approach to project management. This will mean a range of different things to different companies; however it should include development of a project list with associated priorities.

Only key strategic projects should be worked on and delivered - 'nice to have' are no longer nice, monitored by senior executives but managed by the project office.

The project office should ensure consistent project management practices are used throughout the company. They will also help identify needs and prescribe appropriate training.

### Project executives

Feedback from course members suggests that this group's involvement in the project management process is at best 'mixed'.

If key strategic projects are to be delivered then it will mean senior executives will need to play a more active part in project management. Their role in projects is business critical and has even led to a qualification here in the UK [here in the UK](#). Training of this group needs to step up a gear to enable them to play their role more effectively.

The 'orphan' project manager can no longer drive the overall strategic change needed. Senior managers need to be more engaged with project management and quickly.

### Stronger people skills

Project management (and companies) can no longer ignore the power that great people skills will bring to the project manager (and projects). Project managers get work done through others; they motivate, they cajole and borrow resources to deliver projects

We've got testimonials to back up the quality of our service:

*"Generally informative and professionally led discussion with some good tips - Many Thanks!"*

*"I would like to personally thank Mick Hides for all his sympathetic council and professional career advice, in my book he is a credit to Arras People."*

effectively. This means they need a skills set much wider than managing projects; listening, questioning, influencing, leadership and more, many more are needed. People skills step forward!

By this time I was on my 2<sup>nd</sup> cup of tea and a 3<sup>rd</sup> arrived with my colleague. We discussed my 'manifesto' for 2010 and he was OK with the ideas.

Now, there is nothing new of course with these suggestions, simply a re-emphasis of what is needed for companies to ensure that companies do the right projects right, deliver effectively and realise project benefits.

My friend came up with one final suggestion; *deliver*. He said project managers must deliver. We both see 2010 being a difficult year which can only be aided by delivery of key projects.

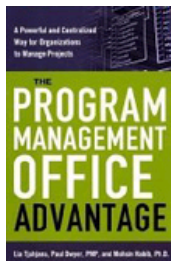
So, there you have what project management should be prepared for in 2010:

- have a strong project office focussed on ensuring delivery of the overall company strategy
- have more involvement by senior executives in the project management process and more training for this business critical group
- develop stronger people skills for project managers
- deliver; project managers must deliver. Of course, the above 3 points will help!

What are your thoughts?

**Ron Rosenhead is has been involved in project management in some way shape or form for at least 15 years. This includes training, consulting, coaching as well as speaking at conferences. Rosenhead works on any number of projects on an individual, group or organisation-basis. Ron offers his views on the project management landscape at his self-titled blog, [ronrosenhead.co.uk](http://ronrosenhead.co.uk).**

### **Book Review - The Program Management Office Advantage: A Powerful and Centralized Way for Organizations to Manage Projects**



**Author:** by Lia Tjahjana, Paul Dwyer and Mohsin Habib

**Length:** 272 pages

**Publisher:** Amacom

**See details on how to win this book below**

PMO (Programme Management Office) is still relatively new in the field of programme and project management, a browse through the business books tell us that it's an area which is still under represented. For people working within the field of PMO there has been a distinct lack of guidance and for some people they often feel like reluctant pioneers. We know that there is "no size fits all" for PMOs, there are no "off the shelf" templates for setting up a PMO and there are no right or wrong answers. The PMO professional knows they need to carry on learning and developing, watching and listening and using their skills, experiences and lessons learnt in the environment they work in. In 2008, the OGC launched the P3O (Portfolio, Programme and Project Offices) guidance which pulled together much of the information and knowledge that existed, both "out there" in the public domain and from seasoned professionals. A thorough guidance, it was well-received in the PMO community by the practitioners.

The Program Management Office Advantage is a new text which also brings something to the PMO table. Ideally it should be read alongside P3O if you're a practitioner, or given to senior management if they prefer a business book that not only delivers an overview but also just enough depth to be useful in decision making.

The Program Management Office Advantage delivers nuggets that are thought-provoking and written specifically to "guide readers to find the answers". Covering the overview of the PMO, in Chapter 1, which includes the definition, the justification and the role the PMO plays within the organisation. The scene is quickly set and fully understood from the clear and well articulated text, as well as the supporting case studies which run throughout the book centred on

one organisation's journey. Part 2 focuses on the core competences of the PMO and includes areas such as Customer Management, Vendor Management, Project Knowledge Management and Project Resource Management. The Customer Management section was of particular interest as it is an area which should receive a lot of focus (how many new and existing PMOs face customer resistance?). The chapter gives some food for thought, especially in customer service excellence. It certainly made me think about the "customers" of the PMO further and the types of relationships I would be looking to build as users of the PMO.

The terminology is a little off in places for a UK audience but don't let that distract you: As you continue reading it becomes much easier to put it into your own context. The authors have also been careful not to cover certain project management topics in detail. For example, project scope, resource management, etc., have all been covered in other project management books. After reading a few chapters and thinking about certain aspects of what I'd just read, it did lead me to do a little research elsewhere (the Knowledge Management section was particularly of interest, just how do we gain use from lessons learnt?) And that's what The Program Management Office Advantage does: it points you in the direction of what is important in PMOs and allows you to think about how you can apply them to your own situation.

Apart from the concepts there is also a whole host of practical advice and "how to" guides. There are example documents and checklists in areas such as project selection, quality audits, things to consider when thinking about a project management system, various ingredients to consider when implementing a PMO, example PMO chapter etc. The chapters continue by looking at the processes (selection, control, monitoring and audit) and the PMO as a business division (establishing a PMO, implementing a PMO, PMO leadership and careers in the PMO).

Compared to the P30 manual, the text flows easily and it is an easy to read and understand book. It covers pretty much the same areas as the P30 guidance but I preferred the case studies in The PMO Advantage (they felt much more in context with the text and helped drive some points home). There are a lot of new thoughts in PMO, too: I especially like the change management approach when setting up a PMO and the leadership style of the PMO Manager. Both are areas which are not covered in much depth in the P30 guidance. The PMO Advantage is also pretty much methodology independent (there are some mentions of PMI and OGC but not overly) and doesn't rely on readers having PRINCE2 or MSP (the P30 guidance is very MSP heavy when describing how to set up a PMO). Currently priced at around £16, it's also a book which I found provided value for money and should definitely be picked up by the PMO practitioner and added to their library.

- Reviewed by Lindsay Scott

#### **Want a chance to win this book?**

Tell us what is the most recent thing you've learnt about PMOs. [Email us](#) with your response and you could be in with a chance of winning.

#### **Next Month**

Arras People reviews Simon Moore's recent release, "*Strategic Project Portfolio Management*".

#### **Write Your Own Book Review!**

Want to review a book for Project Management Tipoffs? We'll send a lucky reader *The Project Success Method* by Clinton M. Padgett to review for a future issue. [Email us](#) today to find out more.

#### **Q&A**

***I'm a job seeker. I want to try something new in terms of my search for vacancies for 2010, perhaps in terms of where and how I look for vacancies. Can you help?*** - Joe, London

***Though currently employed, I'd like to find a new role in 2010. As part of my New Year's resolution, I thought it best to find new ways or avenues to search for a job. What is your take?*** - Manjit, Aldershot

Thanks for your questions and comments. As these two examples surely denote, we at Arras People get a lot of questions along the lines of finding new ways and manners to look for jobs. Often, this

is because previous tried and tested don't seem to be yielding the desired results.

Here's just one example of doing things differently, yet professionally. Let's assume both Manjit and Joe are already using the popular job websites and national press. It is always a worthwhile exercise taking a look between the lines - research local businesses and see what is in the public domain about them. For instance:

- Are they expanding?
- Are they partnering with another organisation?
- Are they donating money to charity?
- Are they moving location?

Wherever there's a change there's an opportunity. Once you have targeted a company you would like to work for make sure you "dig deep" to find out just why the changes are happening and how you can add value. Ensure you write a bespoke speculative letter and avoid the "me, too" cover letters which tend to not contextualise your specific experience to an organisation. This approach has proven to be very successful - not only are you being proactive and demonstrating your enthusiasm towards the targeted organisation; you are also demonstrating key skills in research and understanding of business change and its requirements.

For more examples like this and/or further help & advice regarding extending your search and creating professional and effective cover letters refer to our [careers clinic](#) / [job search support service](#) / [careers advice](#).

Got a question for us, [contact us](#) today.

Sincerely,

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Arras People - Project Management Recruitment