COMMUNIQUE

Newsletter of PMI's Chennai Chapter

August 2010

From the President's Desk

Dear Chennai Chapter Member.

Do watches and clocks have wings? Strange question, alright, but your Board would answer "Yes", for the simple reason that we believe time indeed flies! It seems it was only yesterday that the new Board took over. That was August 2009, and it is now already August 2010!

The past year has been frenetic in many ways. We have more than doubled monthly events, and event attendance thereby almost quadrupling PDUs awarded. We've more than tripled training programs. Similar ratios apply to member communications and many other areas.

Your Board has formed key strategic alliances with like-minded organizations such as the Software Process Improvement Network (SPIN), The Madras Management Association (MMA), and the Madras Chamber of Commerce (MCC).

In November '09, your Chapter won the "Best Volunteer Team" award for work with the Technical Papers Track of the first National Project Management Conference at Hyderabad.

There is much more we would like to have done and so much more still to do. However, bandwidth has been a severe constraint. To remedy this situation, we have recently expanded the Board, and plan to increase the strength of the volunteer team.

Join us in welcoming the three newly-elected Vice Presidents, Hari Prasad Thapliyal, KN Ganesh and Parvez Alam. With these three new Board Members, we are all raring to go, to increase the number of programs, membership benefits, improve member service, and much more.

The great poet English Robert Frost ended his beautiful poem, "Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening", with these words:

"… I have promises to keep,
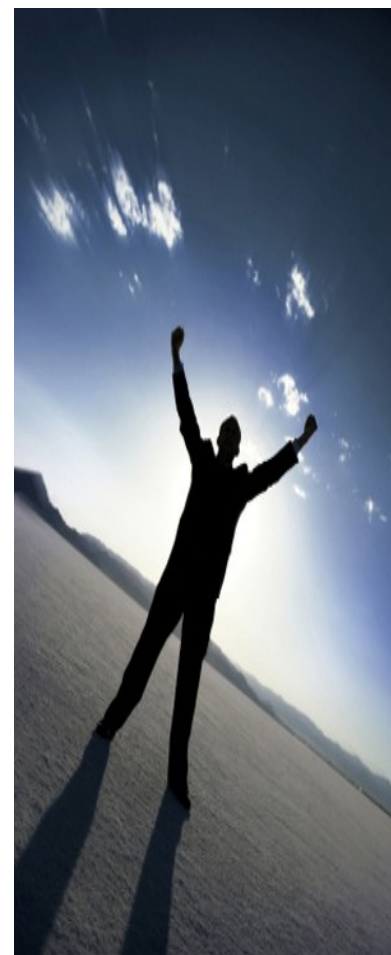And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep."

We believe that there are indeed many more miles to go and so much more to achieve to take the Chapter to new heights. You can rest assured we will do our best to reach these goals.

Do keep supporting YOUR chapter!

With best regards,

Karthik Ramamurthy, MCA, MBA, PMP
President.

PS: Do attend our Annual General Meeting on Saturday, 18th September. Listen to a special lecture on "Security Risk Management hear of our achievements in the past year, our vision for the year ahead. to give us your valuable feedback and to strengthen your Chapter. We firmly believe this is a Chapter "of" the members, "by" the members and "for" the members, and you attendance in large numbers will mean a lot to us.See you there!

Elections 2010

To deal with the severe bandwidth constraints, the Chapter expanded the Board with two new Vice President positions for "**Volunteer Development**" and "**Membership & Outreach**". The **VP – Education & Certification** vacated by N Dhamayanthi also had to be filled.

Interim elections were held from 10th August to 2nd September using the tried-and-tested online Election service, BallotBin.

We had a record 11 nominations, and all positions were contested.

We also had a record 457 votes, representing 44.33% of Chapter members. This is a very high number for any online election, and sincere thanks to everyone who voted.

The following were elected to the three positions:
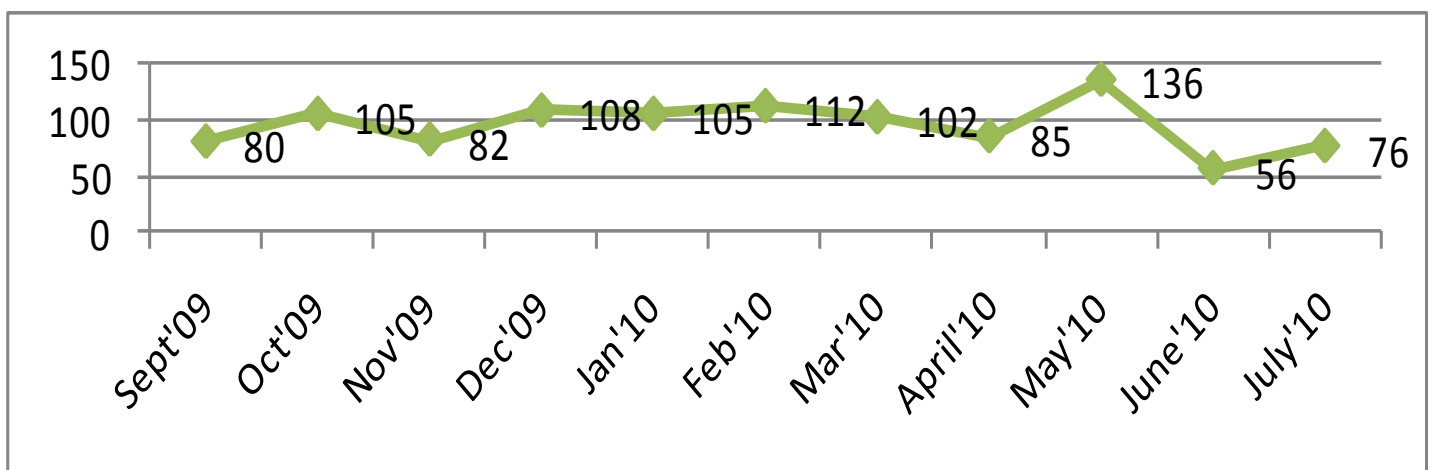**KN Ganesh** – VP (Education & Certification)
Parvez Alam – VP (Membership & Outreach)
Hari Prasad Thapliyal – VP (Volunteer Development)

Please join us in welcoming them on board and wishing their best in contributing to our Chapter's growth!

A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide) was first published by the Project Management Institute (PMI) as a white paper in 1987 in an attempt to document and standardize generally accepted project management information and practices.

Participation at Monthly Events

Month	Participation
Sept'09	80
Oct'09	105
Nov'09	82
Dec'09	108
Jan'10	105
Feb'10	112
Mar'10	102
April'10	85
May'10	136
June'10	56
July'10	76

PMICC's Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2010

The 8th Annual General Meeting of the Chapter is scheduled for 18/09/2010, at Hotel Deccan Plaza, Royapettah Chennai. Registration starts at 9.30 am with the meeting commencing at 10.00.

This is an important forum for members to get updates on the Chapter's performance and hear what is planned for the year ahead. It is a chance to honor our valuable volunteers and others who have helped the Chapter grow. The event lets members provide important feedback to help serve you better.

This year Mr. R Vittal Raj, an expert in Information & Systems Security is our Chief Guest this year. He will deliver a special speech on "Security Risk Management in Project Management."

Project "Movie Watching!"

I recently had a chance to discuss Project Management with a set of college students. I wondered how best I could relate PM to them so they understood and appreciated it. Not wanting to talk to them about work related projects, I chose to consider "Going to a movie with friends".

Having considered "Movie going" as a Project, I explained various aspects relating to the activities in going to a movie. After about 30 minutes of trying to shore up the image of a PM, I concluded the discussion by drawing a parallel to how Software Projects are managed, though I did mention that software projects were much, much tougher!

Though "Going to a movie with friends" looked like a Project from a 30,000 feet level, I wanted to get to the nuts & bolts to explore if it really qualified as a Project .

The PMBOK and many other Project Management books say that almost anything that is not repetitive in nature can be treated as a Project and hence "Going to a movie with friends" should qualify as a Project ... though, for some, it might not be a unique, time bound activity :). It IS a Temporary endeavour. It is Unique: every movie going experience is unique in nature. And the experience certainly has a definite beginning and ending.

With the "Going to a movie with friends" project, I wondered whether there are processes in all the process groups, Initiation to Closing (IPECC).

Initiation: Once we decide to go for a movie, we create an informal Charter then approved by all the stakeholders.

Planning: Nowadays, we just make a quick decision, go to the theatre and watch whatever movie we get tickets for. However, during younger days, when we had to get our parents' permission to watch a movie, remember the amount of planning that was involved! We spent quite some time planning on which movie to watch, the list of friends joining us, the time and place we would meet, how to get to the theatre and so on.

Execution: Assemble in a common place. Travel to the theatre. Purchase tickets. Watch the movie.

Control: In case you were didn't get tickets for your favourite movie, you'd choose an alternate. Or, if a friend was late – deviation from the original plan – one of you would wait outside with the additional ticket, and the others would go in. I remember, in very clear detail, the number of times I stood outside, cursing the person who did not turn up in time. :)

Closure: On reaching home, do a critical review of the movie and decide whether we should ever watch a movie from the same director ever. Or whether we would ever invite the late-coming friend again! [Lessons Learned]

The Process Groups are covered. What about Knowledge areas?

Scope: Identify which movie to watch, the list of friends joining, ways of meeting up and reaching the theatre. Also, what we would do in case tickets for the movie we chose were not available.

Time: Define the activities involved. For purchasing tickets, we would give the responsibility to someone to reach the theatre early. We'd also calculate the time it would take for each of us to reach the theatre and put together a schedule for all these.

Cost: Calculate the total amount of money [budget] and then decide on the class of ticket and rates in different theatres. These are very important aspects that help us decide whether we watch the movie in an Inox theatre or at Jayanthi!

Communication: Decide on how we want to communicate, in case the plan included a strategy of various friends going to different theatres to buy tickets for a Rajini movie during the first few days of release. How would the person who was lucky to actually get tickets communicate make sure the others knew? These were important considerations in the pre- mobile phone era!

Risk: One major risk was a situation where you would not get tickets to watch your chosen movie. This would be a "high impact" risk and the mitigation strategy would be to identify other movies to watch or buy a ticket at "black" rates. This used to be the only option to get tickets before multiplexes, and online booking came into the picture. Another big risk would be where you realized halfway through that the movie was terrible. In such a case you would accept the risk and either walk out, or stay and suffer the torture of watching the movie since you had already paid a hefty price for the ticket.

Procurement: Hey, there are 11 of us, but we have only five bikes. How do we go to the theatre? One of us becomes the savior and says, "I can check if I can use my uncle's bike" and procures the bike to go to the theatre".

Having gone through this detailed exercise, I'll conclude by saying that, of late, while doing anything, I've been thinking if it qualifies for a Project. The whole process is indeed contagious!

Subbiah Vallinayagam (PMI ID: 586507)

The MBQNA award

PM National Conference 2010

PM Conference, India is a three-day event jointly organized by the seven PMI Chapters in India.

The Conference provides an opportunity for thousands of professionals across all industries to exchange ideas on today's project challenges and emerging trends.

Project management methods have matured over the last few decades and now can be put to use for general development of industrial, business & economic activity.

The methods are useful not only for the efficient project management but can also be used for generating "Excellence, Growth & Transformation" of the organizations in the society at large.

This year's Conference is planned to be held at Mumbai between 19th & 21st November, 2010. More details are available at http://www.pmi.org.in/conference2010.

Monthly Event : January 2010
Topic : The Role of Business Excellence

The meeting invite for the monthly knowledge sharing event from PMICC started by saying: *Every organization wants to move from "Good" to "Great" and from there on to "Excellent". This should be true of your organization too. Your contribution towards organizational excellence will certainly help in your career success too. Come, join us early in the New Year, on 9th January 2010, to absorb knowledge on how you can benefit your organization.*

Dinesh Ganesan

Curious, as ever I googled to read what Infosys had to say about Business Excellence (B.E.), as the speaker Mr. Dinesh Ganesan, was from Infosys. It said: *Business Excellence is related to the capability of an organization to scale and showcase performance against established benchmarks.*

I still had some lingering questions in my mind as I approached the meeting: a. How is B.E. directly related to Project Execution? b, Does achieving B.E. give any benefits to the bottom-line of my project? c. Are business ethics and B.E. two sides of the same coin? D. Does an organization of professionals achieve B.E. (or) do B.E. models create more professionals in an organization?

As I walked into the meeting venue around 6.15 pm, it was good to see a full house. Hot coffee & vegetable bondas, served in true Chennai style, were a super combination!

Even as Mr. Dinesh began, it was clear that the topic chosen would require more than the allotted 75 minutes. Skilful as he was – he gave a wonderful overview of what B.E. is and how the MBNQA model helps in achieving this within the time stipulated. He kept the audience engaged and prompted questions in a lively manner. Some highlights:

1.   The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) was instituted by the National Institute of Standards & Technology, USA in 1987. The award is named after Malcolm Balridge who served as US Secretary of Commerce from 1981.
2.   Certifications like ISO:9000, Six Sigma & Capability Maturity Models stress on process improvement methods and/or process maturity, but don't address holistic organizational development. As such, Process maturity cannot guarantee business excellence.
3.   Market Leader does not essentially mean a World Leader.
4.   The MBNQA is awarded for manufacturing, service, small business, education, healthcare and non-profit organizations as well.
5.   The core values of the MBNQA model are Visionary Leadership, Managing for Innovation, Management by Facts, Focus on results and creating value, Corporate Social Responsibility and Business Ethics.
6.   For Indian entities, the CII-EXIM award is equivalent to MBNQA award.

The Balridge criteria for Performance Excellence Framework are: Leadership 120, Strategic planning 85, Customer focus 85, Measurement, Analysis & Knowledge Mgmt 90, Workforce focus 85, Process Management 85, Business results 450 Totals 1000. It was clear from the discussions and the Q&A session that while no organization can achieve 1000 points, any score above 650 is to be considered a major achievement. It is also not always essential to apply for the award to follow the model. Organizations can follow the model simply to improve upon & differentiate themselves from their competition.

At the end of the meeting, event organizers presented the performance statistics of the PMI Chennai chapter. It was heartening to see the performance of PMI – Chennai on par with or better than other chapters, in fact better than other chapters in some areas.

Keep up the good work, PMI Chennai. Though I seem to have found some clarity to my four doubts which were lingering in my mind before the event, I need to think more and read more to find answers and apply them in my work.

S. Vasudeva Sarma (PMI ID:1572606)

Monthly Event : January 2010
Topic : The role of KM in PM

While we all know "Knowledge is Power", this Chennai Chapter event held in February helped us understand how Knowledge Management (KM) & Project Management (PM) can be effectively applied for Smart Project Management.

The speaker, Lakshman Pillai, a 20-year veteran of the IT industry, is Founder & CEO of LPCube Systems with decades of experience in Knowledge Management (KM), WorkplaceTransformation (WT) & Information Technology.

The event started on time with a welcome note by Sripriya Narayanasamy. The opening of the session was remarkable since the speaker started out with a sincere attempt to understand the expectations of the audience.

Lakshman Pillai interactively walked through the concepts of Skill Matrix, Consumer Competence, Collaborative Learning and Metrics. He then touched upon the well known topic of "6 Thinking Hats", explaining in detail the 6 basic steps involved in Knowledge Management:

1. Organize to find right knowledge
2. Interact to harness collective intelligence
3. Think in teams to innovation
4. Learn in time with Talent gap
5. Perform through optimized process

The session ended with explanation of the paradigm shift in people management.

The Chapter's Performance Update were provided by Karthik Ramamurthy.

All new members to the Chapter were welcomed on stage to introduce themselves briefly. All members who had passed the PMP exam in the past month were also welcomed

Lakshman Pillai

on stage. They introduced themselves and discussed, in brief, their experience of preparing for and passing the prestigious exam.

Volunteers of the Chennai Chapter were then recognized, with the title, "Associate" assigned to them. These small touches encourage participants and motivates them to get involved in contributions to the Chapter.

The event ended on time at around 8:30 pm.

I went away with the impression that the Chapter is continuously improving itself in providing great service to the PM community.
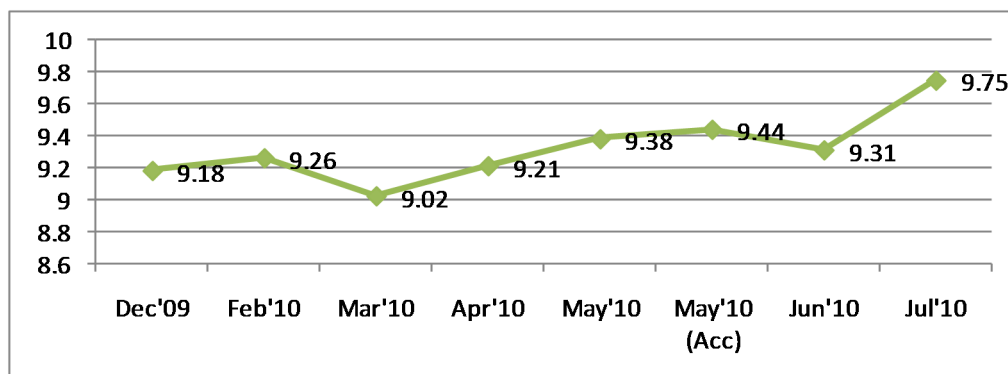
Chandralekha (PMI ID 1316197)

PMICC has conducted Knowledge sharing and networking event every month from September 2009 to July 2010. The average number of participants is almost 100.

PMP & Beyond Program: Faculty Ratings

Your chapter is keenly focused on maintaining the highest quality in our PMP & Beyond Program. As part of this effort, participants complete Faculty Feedback Forms after every session.

Ratings above 8.00/10.00 are considered great for any training program,.

You will be very happy to know that the Chapter has achieved average ratings of 9.32/10.00 over eight PMP Prep training programs held since December 2009, with record ratings of 9.75/10.00 for the July edition!

Key Factors in Project Success and Failure

According to the Bull Survey, the **key success criteria** identified by IT Project Managers were:

- Meeting milestones (51%)
- Maintaining required quality levels (32%)
- Meeting budget (31%)

Key IT **project failure criteria** identified by IT Project Managers were:

- Missed deadlines (75%)
- Exceeded budget (55%)
- Poor communications (40%)

Quote Hanger! Interesting Quotes on Project Management

"A project is only complete when it works for you rather than you working for it"

— Scott Allen

"You will launch many projects, but have time to finish only a few. So think, plan, develop, launch and tap good people to be responsible ...Trying to do too much yourself creates a bottleneck.

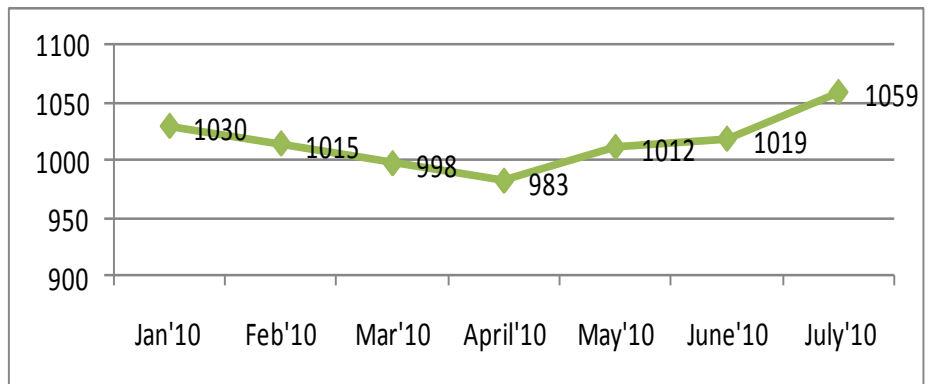**— Donald Rumsfeld**

Dilbert on Project Management

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Chapter Membership Trend

Our Chapter's membership averages 1016 over the first seven months of the year 2010.

This membership number represents the second largest of any Chapter in India and in our Region 11, which includes the countries, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh).

This number also puts our Chapter in the top 50 of PMI's 260+ worldwide Chapters.

However, our retention percentage (the number of members who renew their membership year over year) for the calendar year 2009 was only 43.8%
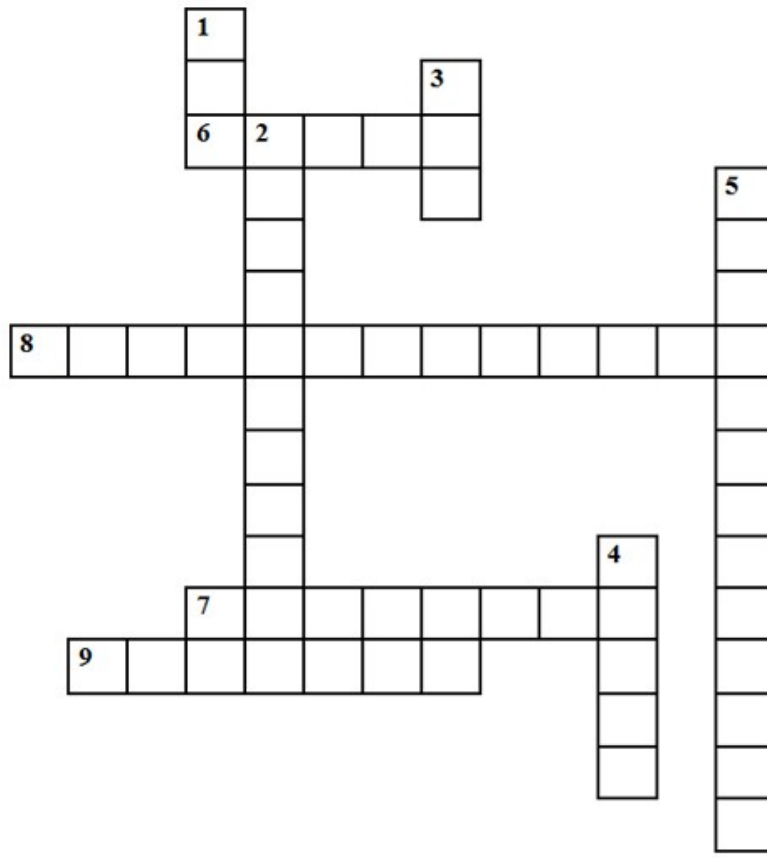
While this number represents the second best in in India and the third best of 11 Chapters in Region 11, this is an area we need to improve upon.

Project Management Crossword
By Vanitha Balachandran, PMP.

Project Managers do love challenges — the tougher, the better! Here's a Crossword Challenge for you. Every clue or answer is related, in some way, to Project Management.

Enjoy putting your grey cells to good use!

Clues Across:
6. Type of Agile mythology (5)
7. Curve model that is based upon the principle that the cost per unit decreases as more work gets completed (8)
8. Problem Solving — look at the facts, analyze them and find a solution) (13)
9. Strategic planning (7)

Clues Down
1. Breaks a project into smaller, more manageable components (3)
2. Type of Contracting which refers to a separate contracting office that handles contracts (11)
3. Organization providing centralized project management services (3)
4. Iteration-based SDLC methodology (5)
5. Typical belief that one's culture is superior to the foreigner's culture (13)

Did you Know?

The topics, location and timings of our monthly events are picked based on Opinion Polls of our members. The most popular timing is Saturday evening & the most popular area is Guindy — Saidapet. The second most popular timing is Friday evening and the second most popular area is Nungambakkam. To reach most members, we have been holding events across this set of choices. No wonder, our average attendance has doubled last year!

We were shooting!

A picture, it is often said, is worth a 1,000 words. Here are some photographs from recent Chapter events.

Chennai Chapter reps with Senior PMI Leadership

Monthly event in progress.

Dedicated Chapter Volunteers with the Board

Attendees of our Certificate Course in PM for Shasun

Our Chapter's Hardworking Volunteers

Vanitha Balachandran, PMP
PMI ID - 1433315. PMI member for 24 months now

Working with CNSI as Project Manager for the past 15 months. Apart from a strong passion for Project Management, her interests include reading books and listening to quality music.

Vanitha has been an active volunteer with the Chennai Chapter for over a year, helping out with Event Management. The Project Management crossword in this issue has been compiled by her.

V V Meganathan, PMP
PMI ID - 1433315. PMI member since 2005.

A Project Manager by profession, Meghanathan holds a Bachelors in Science Degree, and an MBA with specialization in Systems. He has worked in a number of well-known companies, inc;luding NIIT, Aptech and Mann India Technologies.

An extremely soft-spoken person, he has been an extremely diligent volunteer for over a year now, helping the Chapter in our PMP & Beyond programs, and with event management.

Chapter Leadership

Passion for Project Management and serving the PM community is what drives your Board of Directors to consistently strive to take the Chapter to greater and greater heights.

Karthik K Ramamurthy
President

Vajjiravelu Nemasayee
Secretary

M Palaniappan
VP - Treasury and Finance

P. Ramasubramaniam
VP - Programs & Public Relations

Subbiah Vallinayagam
VP - Communications & Coordination

Indira Porwal
VP - Publicity & Special Projects

K N Ganesh
VP - Education & Certification

Hari Prasad Thapliyal
VP - Volunteer Development

M. Parvez Alam
VP - Membership & Outreach

Help us to help you better!

We firmly believe ours is a Chapter "of" the members, "by" the members, and "for" the members. Please strengthen the Chapter by attending our meetings, contributing material for our Newsletter, and by volunteering in Chapter activities.
Most importantly, please do give us your valuable suggestions and constructive feedback to help us take OUR Chapter grow to greater heights.
You can always write to us at: board@pmi-chennai.org