



CASE STUDY

The Benefits of a PRINCE2 Certification for the Project Manager

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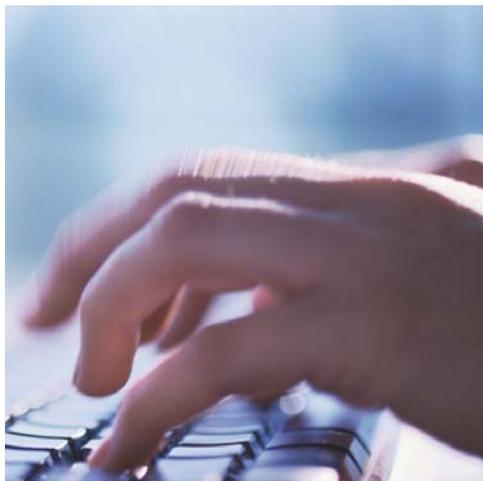
For years I've been curious about the PRINCE2 Project Management Certification. What was it about? Is it only for people who live in the United Kingdom? Would it apply to me, as a PMI Certified Professional? Would becoming certified be a noticeable achievement? Most importantly; would it help me manage my projects better? Recently I took the PRINCE2 Certification exam and received certification. The benefits were immediately apparent.

The PRINCE2 Certification was originally established under the title of "PRINCE" – "Projects In Controlled Environments". Over the years it evolved, and in 1996 it was officially revamped, re-standardized, and re-named to "PRINCE2".

What is PRINCE2? PRINCE2 is a process based method for effective Project Management. Please notice the difference from PMI Certification. The difference becomes apparent when you understand the difference between "process", and "Body of Knowledge". While PMI does an excellent job of providing an accumulated set of knowledge in a standardized format, it steers fairly clear of recommending actual "processes" to follow when managing projects. That's where PRINCE2 comes in.

PRINCE2 walks you through the entire Project Management lifecycle, beginning at "Project Startup" (the activities that take place before a project actually begins, and ends at "Project Close". PRINCE2 provides an effective framework for following repeatable processes that will assist any Project Manager in the governance of his or her Project Management activities.

The PRINCE2 Method differs from the PMI method, by providing a set of repeatable process steps to follow. This is different from the PMI BOK – which is more directed at explaining process items, inputs, outputs, tools, environments, etc. While both sets of knowledge complement each other, the benefits of combination become apparent by the synergy the combination generates. By combining the two methodologies, a Project Manager is able to apply the PMI concepts of processes, into the process framework that PRINCE2 provides. PRINCE2 can be tailored to any project size, much like PMI methodology. However, in PRINCE2 you may never remove a process. A process activity must always be completed, but the process can be tailored to suit the appropriate environment. Additionally, PRINCE2 is an "embedded" methodology; meaning when an organization adapts PRINCE2, the expectation is that it will be applied to all facets of Project Management activities.

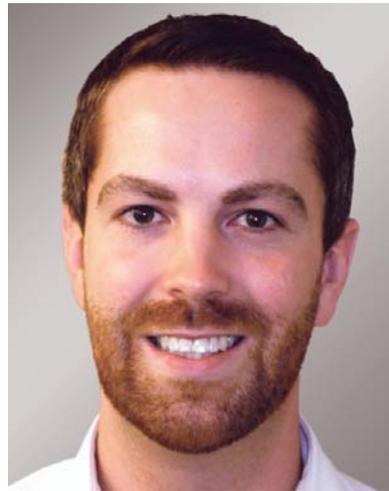




Can the two disciplines co-exist? Absolutely. I argue that not only can the two disciplines co-exist; but rather; both double their stated set of benefits when combined in use. Using an analogy of a puzzle, one might call PMI the “pieces”, while one might call PRINCE2 the “method” for completing the puzzle. When you have put both together – you create an entire new entity – a beautiful, completed masterpiece!

The next question you may be wondering is, “isn’t PRINCE2” only a UK standard? That’s equivalent to asking the question “Isn’t English only used in the UK”? No! While there are certainly different flavors of the “language” (linguistic or professional), the Project Management processes that PRINCE2 teaches are absolutely universal. The PRINCE2 methodology is a process based set of principles that can be applied to any organization of any size.

Conclusion: After earning my PRINCE2 certification, I observed a world of opportunities open. Suddenly I understood a new language, new terminology, and new processes. I was exposed to a process based system that allowed me new ways of looking at problems. I was refreshed on some Project Management philosophies that sometimes as a PM, I take for granted. And finally, I obtained a new set of tools that I could apply to any project of any size. As a Project Manager, one of the many things I’ve learned is the more tools we have at our disposal, the easier our lives become.



Jeff Steinman has been a Certified Associate in Project Management since 2006 and is currently managing medium and large scale projects for McKesson Corp. in Springfield Missouri. Originally from Canada, Jeff holds international work experiences in a number of vertical sectors including software development, healthcare, and education. Jeff has experience working on projects ranging from \$50,000 to \$1 million and has a passion for the profession of project management. Jeff holds a degree in Computer Sciences and Certificate of Mastery in Process Reengineering. Jeff also holds certifications in Comptia Project + and Microsoft Certified Technology Specialist: Managing Project using Project 2007 certification

About APMG

APMG-US accredits Training Organizations, Trainers and Consultants across the Americas and administers exams for professional certification. We are a wholly owned subsidiary of The APMG Group, Ltd, the official accreditor for PRINCE2®, an internationally recognized standard for Project Management. PRINCE2 (Projects IN Controlled Environments), is a scalable and flexible project management method that navigates you through all the essentials for successfully running any type of project.

PRINCE2 underwent a full refresh in June, 2009 to more fully address today’s project environment. More than 170

organizations contributed their experiences and ideas to the refresh process. PRINCE2 reflects the Best Practices of leading project management practitioners worldwide and can enhance the credentials and careers of project management professionals.

For more information on PRINCE2, or how to become an accredited PRINCE2 training organization, please contact APMG at 781.275.8604 or info-US@apmg-US.com

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