

Project Management and Process Improvement / Work Process Redesign in Law Firms

An Invaluable Training Program

Background

As clients place more demands on law firms for efficiency, accountability, and pricing breaks, the pressure mounts for tools and processes to manage these demands more effectively. Increasing pressure for alternative fee arrangements makes efficient work design more important than ever. Well managed work will optimize the productivity of the lawyers involved in ways that are predictable and replicable across the firm. Business organizations have long embraced the methods of project management and process improvement to achieve these goals and now law firms are beginning to as well.

While some law firms have used these methods in their implementation of new technology systems, more recently the focus is shifting to legal work redesign and project management for core work. Now, clients and law firms are rapidly embracing these approaches and seeking to learn how to apply these to a law firm setting in a way that supports how lawyers think and work.

HILDEBRANDT BAKER ROBBINS has teamed up with Legal Sales and Service Organization (LSSO) and faculty from George Washington University to offer a program on these topics developed specifically for the legal industry. Under the same umbrella, training on the concepts of process improvement and project management in law firms is being offered by leading experts who have led process improvement and project management in law firms and who have industry experience from organizations who embraced these concepts long before law firms. The most valuable approaches for law firms have been chosen, language has been customized, and exercises and case studies have been developed based on real-life situations facing law firm leaders and managers, to make the program relevant for participants in law firms.

Courses and Training Programs

Three-Day Public Program -- Our first three-day, open-enrollment course will be offered in early May in either NY or DC (dates soon to be announced). This program will cover the foundations of project management and process improvement – tailored to law firms.

The course outline follows:

Day One:

- **The Business Case for Project Management (“PM”) and Work Process Redesign/Process Improvement (“PI”) in Law Firms**
 - Applying these to law firms

- Understanding the differences between uses of PM and PI in law firms and other kinds of organizations
- Learning the benefits of PI and PM for law firms
- Helping your lawyers understand the business case and how it affects them
- Putting best practices to work at your firm or law department
- **Introduction to Work Process Redesign/Process Improvement**
 - Law firm billing example
 - The connection between process improvement and project management
- **Key Process Improvement Methodologies**
 - Key methodologies: Business Process Redesign, Lean, Six Sigma, Theory of Constraints
 - Tools most useful in the legal industry
- **Executing a Process Improvement Project – the Key Phases**
 - DEFINE
 - MEASURE
 - ANALYZE
 - IMPROVE
 - CONTROL
- **Delivering Real Benefits from Process Improvement Projects**

Day Two:

- **Foundations in Project Management**
 - Understanding projects vs. operations
 - Project life (Initiating, Planning, Executing and Controlling)
 - Key tools -- project charter, scope statement, breakdown structures, etc.
 - Key factors for project success
 - Project management with knowledge workers
 - Leader or manager – which one are you?
- **Project Planning and Development**
 - Goal setting and alignment with firm, practice area or client strategy
 - Project needs, selection and planning
 - The Project Charter and Project Plan
 - Project objectives
 - Determining and managing project risks – internal and external
 - Defining the roles of practice group leaders, responsible partners, project managers and lawyers/staff on the team
 - Project Deliverable Work Breakdown Structures (“DWBS”)

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Day Three:

- **Project Execution/Implementation and Control**
 - Executing, monitoring and controlling the project
 - Determining earned value management
 - Managing scope creep
 - Optimizing your resources
- **Application of Your Learning to Your Firm**
 - Leading a change management process in your law firm
 - Prioritizing exercise
 - Sharing approaches to taking PI/PM back to your firm—table discussions
 - Developing your action plan

This training will use primarily examples from law and other professional service firms. Examples from the legal industry will be used to illustrate key ideas and methods, and a case study will be used to apply your learning throughout the three-day course. In addition, we will discuss and demonstrate the tools that project managers use to successfully track progress from start to finish. The links between project management and process improvement will be discussed and clarified throughout the training.

Other Programs -- In addition to this three-day workshop, we offer an executive briefing (two to four hours, depending on the desired level of depth and the audience) which provides an overview intended for Executive Committees, practice group leaders or all partners. It is designed to provide an understanding of basic project management and process improvement terminology and some of the “best practices” in law firms using these approaches today.

HILDEBRANDT BAKER ROBBINS also offers in-house training on project management, process improvement (in conjunction with LSSO), or both topics if you prefer to have a customized program for your law firm. We can tailor the course to a one- to three -day offering depending on the level of depth desired.

Training Objectives

The goals of the three-day training program are to provide the fundamentals of project management and process improvement to law firm professionals. Upon completing the course, participants will receive a certificate for the Introduction to Law Firm Project Management and Process Improvement. Participants will have learned specific skills and approaches they can begin to apply immediately to look for process improvement opportunities and to manage projects more efficiently and effectively. They will also have earned a “White Belt” certification in law firm process improvement from LSSO. Both disciplines – Project Management and Process Improvement – require additional coursework and experience to reach expert status. This introductory course will provide a strong foundation and will enable you to apply basic concepts in your firm immediately and to decide if you want to pursue more advanced training in either discipline. After the initial foundational program, attendees can proceed, if desired, to take additional coursework or complete other advanced degrees in project management.

Our Faculty

HILDEBRANDT BAKER ROBBINS offers its own proprietary courses tailored to law firms. It also offers joint educational programs with faculty from top academic institutions and co-presented with the Legal Sales and Service Organization. LSSO led the industry in developing a process improvement certification program specifically oriented to the legal industry, and concepts from its PI Overview, White Belt, Yellow Belt and Green Belt certification programs have been presented to more than 100 leading law firms, legal departments, and organizations in the legal profession.

Depending upon the firm’s interests, the faculty may vary. A selection of our faculty is listed below:

Denis F. Cioffi, Ph.D.,

Dr. Cioffi is an Associate Professor in the Decision Sciences Department in the Business School at The George Washington University, earned his doctorate in astrophysics from the University of Colorado in Boulder, Colorado. After astrophysics research at the University of California at Berkeley, the Goddard Space Flight Center, and North Carolina State University in Raleigh, his science background led directly to his project and program management experience at various federal agencies. The transition to management comprised positions at the National Science Foundation, NASA Headquarters, and the Office of Science and Technology Policy in the Executive Office of the President. Dr. Cioffi served as Director of GW’s Project Management Program for three years (2001–2004) and currently heads the Project Management Academic Committee.

Laura Colcord

Laura Colcord is an internationally-known Process Improvement expert who has pioneered the use of Lean and Six Sigma methodologies in non-traditional applications, including financial services, the chemical industry, higher education, health care, support functions, and new product development. Her consulting practice encompasses the process improvement spectrum, including developing internal PI resources, assessing improvement potential for an organization, leading process improvement projects, and helping leaders design systematic LeanSigma transformation programs for their organizations. Ms. Colcord has a B.S. in Chemical Engineering, an MBA from Stern, and was a Fulbright scholar. In the last three years, she has presented process improvement concepts and training to more than 100 law firms, legal departments, and organizations in the legal profession.

Dr. Homayoun Khamooshi

Homayoun Khamooshi is an assistant professor in the Business School at The George Washington University. He earned his Ph.D. in Management Science (Project Management: Planning, Scheduling and Control) from Lancaster University in 1994 in UK, his Master of Engineering in Industrial Engineering and Management from Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) in 1979 in Thailand and a B.Eng. in Mechanical Engineering from Abadan Institute of Technology, Abadan, Iran in 1975. Dr. Khamooshi has over 10 years of industry experience through his work as project engineer, project manager, and consultant as well as more than 10 years in teaching and training Project Management and applied Operations Research courses in multiple industries. Prior to joining GWU he worked for the University of Northampton (UK) for more than a decade.

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Susan Raridon Lambreth

Ms. Lambreth, a Vice President with **HILDEBRANDT BAKER ROBBINS**, is a recognized expert on practice group management and leadership development. She has trained over 3,500 partners in law firms on various leadership and management topics affecting improved performance of practices and groups, including process improvement and project management. She is a Yellow Belt in Law Firm Process Improvement. She has written and spoken extensively on leadership and management and has worked with hundreds of law firms to enhance their ability to manage practices, projects and teams. Ms. Lambreth is the author of dozens of articles and two books on practice management, including *Achieving Peak Performance Through Practice Management* and *The Practice Group Leader's Handbook for Success*. She has written various blogs and other materials on project management and is currently working on a white paper on project management in law firms. Ms. Lambreth has consulted to law firms for over 25 years. Prior to that, she practiced law as a litigator.

Dr. Mark Sirkin

Dr. Sirkin is a Director with **HILDEBRANDT BAKER ROBBINS**. For 20 years, Dr. Sirkin has worked with law firms, closely-held businesses, and public corporations to improve performance and results. Recently he has been working with law firm leadership to develop talent at every level in the organization. He is an authority on maximizing human capital and human capital development in organizations. His interest in Project Management stems from his efforts to increase the effectiveness and "leverageability" of senior law firm leaders through enhanced tools and processes. His expertise in selecting and developing talent and managing change in organizations enables him to develop project managers while keeping the long-term strategic goals of the firm in mind. Prior to becoming a consultant, Dr. Sirkin was a university professor, research psychologist, administrator and clinician at several New York universities and medical Schools. His book, *The Secret Life of Corporations*, which re-imagines organizational structure and management for success in the 21st Century, was published in 2004.

Ronald K. Thomas

A Director and certified Project Management Professional (PMP) at **HILDEBRANDT BAKER ROBBINS**, Mr. Thomas has over 20 years of experience with project management and 10 years working with law firms. Long before law firms were using project management in other areas of their firm, Mr. Thomas was managing project teams for large, complex technology projects including business process analysis. Mr. Thomas has experience in managing technology mergers between companies. He has taught project management classes for our clients and for InfoTech Solutions Group, Inc. Mr. Thomas lead and facilitated an ILTA Webinar on project management entitled, "Setting Up A Project Management Organization: What Is It; Is It Right For You?" Mr. Thomas also authored, "PMOs and Law Firms: Lessons from the Field" in ILTA's July 2007 project management issue of Peer to Peer magazine. Mr. Thomas also holds two certificates in Project Management from the HCCS in Houston, Texas. Mr. Thomas holds a B.S. in Math and Physics from Clark-Atlanta University.

Dr. Young Hoon Kwak

Young Hoon Kwak, Ph.D. is a project management faculty member of the School of Business at The George Washington University. He earned his M.S. and Ph.D. in Engineering and Project Management from the University of California at Berkeley. He also worked as a visiting engineer at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, visiting assistant professor at the Florida International University, and visiting scholar at IPA Institute. Dr. Kwak currently serves as specialty editor (associate editor) for *Journal of Construction Engineering and Management* (ASCE) and is on the editorial board for *International Journal of Project Management* (Elsevier), *Project Management Journal* (Wiley), *International Journal of Managing Projects in Business* (Emerald), and *Journal of Management in Engineering* (ASCE). He is a recipient of competitive research grants from the Project Management Institute (PMI), IBM Center for the Business of Government, US Navy, and others. His research titled "Impact on Project Management of Allied Disciplines" which was partially funded by PMI won the 2008 International Project Management Association (IPMA) Outstanding Research Contribution Award.

Wondering How These Programs Could Help Your Firm Lower Costs, Develop a Competitive Advantage or Enhance Its Client Service?

Contact **Susan Raridon Lambreth** of **HILDEBRANDT BAKER ROBBINS** at 800-223-0937, ext. 220 or email her at slambreth@hbrconsulting.com. She can help you determine which programs and faculty fit your firm's needs and situation.

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