



## MICROSOFT EPM EDUCATION

# Be a hero. Manage projects more effectively than you ever thought possible.

### The “Your Job, Tool’s Job™” Curriculum from Milestone Consulting Group

#### Complexity is Big Business

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There’s a constant refrain in the business world, but no one’s doing any singing. That’s because the refrain is a complaint, heard in companies from the Fortune 500 to the newest small businesses. The specifics may change from company to company, but the basic tune is the same: How do we deal with the increasing complexity that threatens to drown us? Complexity exists in every aspect of business, with employees and managers having to manage more information, more people, more resources, and more vendors and partners outside of the company.

In response to this need, Microsoft has evolved its Microsoft Project software into Microsoft Office Project Professional and Microsoft Office Project Standard versions that can help

manage projects for a single manager, a business unit, or an entire company. By helping managers to coordinate the thousands of tasks that can go into hundreds of projects, these products can help tame complexity and bring unprecedented benefits to businesses: more productive and profitable use of resources, more accurate scheduling and projection of completion dates, faster and more cost-effective implementation of projects.

#### Project Managers Need Training

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But Microsoft Office Project, with its millions of lines of software code, can also add to complexity. Learning how the software works is only the first major challenge that people must take. Another is learning how to work with the software—that’s a very different and more subtle challenge, one that requires understanding the software’s role in a company and in the project management



“We’re excited about YJTJ training because it’s an excellent, refreshing curriculum that integrates the proper approach to project management with training on how the software works. YJTJ showed us how to use the tool to its maximum. As a result, we’ve gone from hitting a third of our milestones on time to hitting more than half—and we’re on the way to hitting 65 percent.”

Chuck A. Stakston  
*Business Process Manager  
Medical Division Laboratory  
3M Corporation*

process. Which parts of the project management process should be handled by the software? Which by the person using the software? How should a person and a company think about projects to get the biggest benefit from the software? Don't look for the software's packaging to answer these questions.

Project managers need training to use Microsoft Office Project software effectively. But most of the options available to them are less than ideal. Some training offerings focus on the most basic mechanics of the software, ignoring the higher-level issues of change management and mindset that are crucial to using Microsoft Office Project effectively. Some training offerings are created by people who've never used the software to manage projects; their curriculum is limited to theory and can't include the practical insights that immediately boost a manager's effectiveness.

Microsoft Office Project training that overcomes these challenges would be a crucial service to organizations, enabling them to operate more productively, more cost-effectively, and with greater agility.

### Introducing Milestone Consulting Group Microsoft Office Project Training

Now, you can provide this type of training to your organization. The Milestone Consulting Group Microsoft Office Project Training curriculum is now available for your adoption and use with your project managers.

The Milestone Consulting Group curriculum is based on the company's unique "**Your Job, Tool's Job™**" (YJTJ™) paradigm. As its name suggests, the YJTJ approach goes beyond explaining software features and demystifying the product (although it certainly includes that) to explain the mindset that managers should have to make optimal use of the software.

That mindset: that they are in partnership with the software—that both they and the software have distinctive roles and responsibilities. When project managers understand what they should contribute to the project management process and what they should leave to the software, they are able, for the first time, to allow the software to deliver its maximum benefit to their companies. The YJTJ approach is also uniquely suited to dispelling common misconceptions about project management, for example, that Microsoft Office Project "solves" project management by

"The YJTJ curriculum was extremely helpful. It brought clarity to the use of Microsoft Project that we didn't have before. Now, we can see where resources are being used. We can justify headcount increases. We can show where our efforts are being focused."

Elizabeth Johnson  
*Technical IT Manager  
 AEGON USA Investment  
 Management, LLC*



handling all project management responsibilities, or that project managers should override the calculations provided by the software in response to their inputs.

The YJTJ-based curriculum is flexible enough to be used both in standard formats that describe project management and Microsoft Office Project in ways that apply to all companies, and in customized formats that allow the training provider to deliver a class tailored to the needs of a single company. Trainers can teach the curriculum using generic templates or templates based on the actual work processes of a sponsoring company.

The YJTJ curriculum includes all the training materials that participants need, including a fully configured training laptop for hands-on instruction (courses may also be delivered in seminar format).



## Why Milestone Consulting Group

The YJTJ-based curriculum comes from Milestone Consulting Group, a company that specializes in best-of-breed Microsoft Office Project-based solutions and services. Every day, Milestone Consulting Group assists customers in defining and building project management solutions through custom configuration, education, coaching and mentoring, and integration services. The Milestone Consulting Group approach works: its clients reduce project lifecycle time and cost, and boost the accuracy of their scheduling and resource projections.

The result: there's nothing abstract or theoretical about Milestone Consulting Group's understanding of Microsoft Office Project software. All of the practical, real-world understanding, all of the tips and techniques developed in the field, all of the wisdom that comes from tens of thousands of hours of experience—all of this is the unmatched foundation for Milestone Consulting Group's Microsoft Office Project curriculum. ♦



“YJTJ is a great way to explain Microsoft Project; it really gives us a framework for understanding that we didn't have before. We learned how to let the software determine the schedule, rather than entering start and finish dates on our own. Now, when we don't like the schedule that Project produces, we can go into the software, understand the constraints that produced that schedule, and address them to get a schedule we like.”

*Alan Raymond  
Senior Vice President  
Twin Cities Habitat  
for Humanity*

## **Milestone Consulting EPM Training: Enabling More Effective Project Management Today**

### **Better Risk Management at Data Recognition Corp.**

Maple Grove, Minnesota-based Data Recognition Corp. provides high-quality differentiated services to state Departments of Education, medium and large businesses, and the U.S. government. As the company grew, it knew it needed to upgrade its desktop-based Microsoft Project software to an enterprise-wide, server-based Microsoft EPM solution. That meant more than technological change. It meant changing the way project managers used and thought about project management software.

To implement those changes, DRC turned to Milestone Consulting Group. The company first provided DRC with two training classes and then, in response to increased demand, came back to deliver three more classes.

“The strongest part of Milestone’s EPM class was explaining the collaborative aspects of using the server-based Microsoft Project software,” says Neil Trembley, Senior Project Manager at DRC. “The curriculum was clear, the goals clearly stated and met. The training allows our project managers to take full advantage

of our task owner’s time and work successfully with them. Milestone taught us how we could make optimal use of Project’s scheduling capabilities.”

DRC manages 20 to 25 projects at any one time, each with about 2,500 tasks. As a result of the training from Milestone Consulting Group, communications between project managers and task owners is up and risks are managed more effectively. “We see more quickly where risks can occur — and that means we can find solutions and overcome them,” says Trembley.

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Neil Trembley  
*Senior Project Manager*  
DRC



## Pacific Life Gains Clear View of Future

The program management office for the life insurance division of insurance giant Pacific Life includes 33 people, mostly project managers and business analysts. At any time, about 35 large projects and numerous small projects are active, each involving up to 50 people, with resources drawn from both inside and outside of the company.

Until a few years ago, each area within IT and the project management office had developed its own approach to resource planning—making it difficult to aggregate resource plans to get a total view of how resources were to be deployed. The company knew it needed to change its business processes and deploy a resource planning tool for consistent use across the enterprise. It turned to training from Milestone Consulting Group.

“What impressed us was that the Milestone Consulting Group curriculum is very practical in its approach,” says Bill Hezzelwood, Vice President, Program Management Office. “When they trained us on Microsoft Project, we got the very clear sense that this is actually something we could get done. With others, there’s a lot of theory.”

“The YJTJ approach is such an obvious way to look at Microsoft

Project, you wonder why other vendors aren’t teaching this way—but they aren’t,” Hezzelwood continues. “The Microsoft Project software we had on our desktops for years always had the ability to help us with dynamic scheduling—but until we received the Milestone training, we didn’t fully understand or appreciate this concept.”

“Thanks to Milestone Consulting Group, we not only know how to use Microsoft Project more effectively—we have a standard way to use the tool across our business division,” says Hezzelwood. “The curriculum explained where we needed to standardize and where we could be flexible. We learned why we should use the tool as designed—and how we could benefit from doing so.”

Those benefits, says Hezzelwood, are very tangible for Pacific Life. After three rounds of Milestone Consulting training for ever-larger groups of employees, the life insurance division now has in place a resource plan for all IT/program management office resources that goes out on a six-month calendar. “For the first time, we have a clear picture of what people are working on six months out,” he says. “Managers can look at that and ask if we have the right resources on the right projects. We couldn’t have done that without the Milestone YJTJ training.”



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**Bill Hezzelwood**  
*Vice President,  
 Program Management Office  
 Pacific Life*

## Paddock Laboratories Gains Insights for Management Decisions

Project managers at pharmaceutical manufacturer Paddock Laboratories were using Microsoft Office Project—but in different ways. That led team members throughout the organization to receive inconsistent reports and project data of uneven accuracy. Decisions were delayed, team meetings could be stressful. “We needed to get our entire organization on the same page regarding how to use Microsoft Office Project,” says Bruce Falcon, Program Manager, Paddock Laboratories. “We couldn’t get that from some canned training materials.”

But they could get that from the YJTJ curriculum from Milestone Consulting Group.

“The YJTJ curriculum freed us from the misconceptions we had about Project and enabled us to use it in a consistent, powerful way throughout the company,” says Falcon. “Now, we have tangible data we can present to our executives about our resource use and our projected needs. As a result, they can make better decisions. We’re not relying on feelings or guesses any more.” ♦

## Is the YJTJ Curriculum for Microsoft Project Right for Your Organization?

**Milestone Consulting Group** is an active member of the Project Management Institute (PMI) and its training offerings provide PMI Project Management Professionals with Professional Development Units.



To learn more about the **YJTJ curriculum for Microsoft Office Project** and how you might use it with your project managers, **contact Milestone Consulting Group at [sales@milestone-consultinggroup.com](mailto:sales@milestone-consultinggroup.com) or call 952.400.7858.** ♦

**Microsoft**  
**CERTIFIED**  
*Partner*



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*Bruce Falcon  
Program Manager  
Paddock Laboratories*

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