How to Master PMPal (Demo) Quickly

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PMPal is a large software tool – it has many features and functions. The User Interface is made as intuitively decipherable as is humanly possible – once you have spent a little time on the tool, you may not need to refer its user manual.

First, please read the document "PMPal's Approach to SPM" (Software Project Management) – this document puts PMPal in its proper perspective.

Often people confuse project management to be synonymous with PERT/CPM and software tools based on those techniques – examples of such tools are MS-Project, and Primavera and there can be more. Sure, PERT/CPM are great techniques that help us define the project plan and schedule. The fact is, that project management is more than PERT/CPM and goes beyond planning and scheduling.

I am sure that you know that the three phases of project management are
1. Project Planning
2. Project Execution
3. Project Close out

A project management tool must cater to all the three phases. Needless to say, the devil of project management is more in execution than planning. Abe Lincoln said that if he were asked to fell a tree he would spend half the time sharpening the axe – still the other half of time he spent in felling the tree!! Whatever be the sharpness of the axe (Planning), it would be of no use if we don't cut (Execution) the tree properly.

PMPal attempts to assist you in sharpening the axe (Planning) as well as properly cutting (Execution) the tree. We would be glad to receive your feedback and love to improve PMPal.

The assumed workflow of SPM is as follows –

1. A new project starts with defining a project by the Administrator
2. A Project Manager (PM) / Project Leader (PL) is allocated to it
3. Then software estimation, including scheduling, is carried out by PM/PL
4. When the project is started after approval by the client or the concerned stakeholder, further persons are allocated to the project (by the Administrator)
5. PM/PL start work on the project by defining work elements using the WBS Summary
6. PM/PL allocate work elements to persons and get them completed using the WBS Allocation
7. Defects are reported using the Defect Manager Summary
8. Defects are resolved using the Defect Manager Resolution
9. Change Requests are reported using the Change Manager Summary
10. Change Requests are resolved using the Change Manager Resolution

Other related activities are

1. Senior Management can view metrics using the top View menu any time to know the status and process improvement
2. Senior Management can view reports provided by the software
3. Administrator sets the prerequisites for the software –
   a. Company name to reflect in the reports
   b. Define defect types, change types, project types, project phases, tasks, holidays etc
   c. Administrator defines projects, adds personnel and allocates persons to projects

4. All the employees enter the effort spent using the Timesheet – this provides inputs of the actual effort spent, so that the tool can compute various metrics

Suggested method of going thru evaluating PMPal

First run thru the software using the existing projects –
1. Look at all existing estimates
   a. Size & Effort Estimates
   b. Cost Estimates
   c. Scheduling
2. Look at WBS
   a. Summary first and then
   b. Allocation
3. Look at Defect Manager
   a. Summary first and then
   b. Resolution
4. Look at Change Manager
   a. Summary first and then
   b. Resolution
5. Look at Timesheet
6. Look at all the artifacts available in the Top View menu
7. Look at all the artifacts available in the Top Reports menu
8. Look at all the artifacts available in the Top Tools menu
9. Look at all the artifacts available in the Top File-Administration menu

Note on Security – or Oops! – I cannot see the project I just created!!

For the purpose of demo, we have disabled security features of login. However, to make the software work, just as it would in the full version, we hard coded a login into the demo. PMPal-Demo assumes that user by name "**murali**" (yeah – you are right – that's me!) has logged in. In some of the screens, only those projects for which the logged in user has been allocated would be shown.

When you create a new project, you may not find it in some of the screens – the reason is that the employee - **murali** - is not allocated to that project. So, whenever you create new project, make sure that **murali** is allocated to that project.

Finally …

Now you are ready to use the PMPal. Any confusion, please read the Help file provided in PMPal. User Manual is provided for download on the web site.

Any time, please feel free to contact me either on phone or email or chat to discuss usage of PMPal or to provide your valuable feedback or for any other purpose – I will be glad to respond as fast as possible.

Here are my contact details

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Thank you, very much for sparing your time to read this document. Have a pleasant day

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