



Academic prizes for Leeds project management students

Patrick Onions, The Knowledge Studio discussion forum, 8 November 2011

Let's face it: every student wants to write the perfect dissertation or paper. Academic research offers many rewards, whether it is for the marks, personal satisfaction, industry kudos or the opportunity to explore the world around us.

With that in mind, The Knowledge Studio is pleased to announce three annual prizes to students at the Centre for Project Management (C4PM). One prize is offered for the Best Dissertation, and two for Best Assignment. Full time and part-time Masters students are eligible, and each submission will be judged blind on its originality, presentation, structure, content, research, logic and relevance.

We are staunch advocates of the economic and cultural value of research, and regard knowledge as the best solution to becoming and remaining successful in academia and in business. We wholeheartedly want to encourage all C4PM students, and provide the incentive and inspiration to push further and achieve goals they may not have previously thought possible.

For further details, please email us directly or contact Mark Laurillard, Senior Lecturer at the Centre for Project Management, Leeds Metropolitan University.



Research Grant for KBPM

Patrick Onions, The Knowledge Studio discussion forum, 3 December 2011

The Knowledge Studio invites researchers and practitioners from all fields to apply for a grant to research a novel theory entitled “Knowledge Based Project Management” (KBPM).

Project management has been successfully applied to a wide range of industries where deliverables are tangible and planning and control are predictable, such as construction and aviation. These are environments where the outcomes and the tasks to achieve them are known or can be accurately described. Knowledge Economy projects on the other hand are characterised by knowledge intensive or novel activities, unique or unknown solutions, complex and dynamic environments, and skilled and creative staff.

A theoretical approach to managing Knowledge Economy projects was first postulated in 2007 and subsequently published at ECKM in 2008. This sought to define projects and project management in terms of knowledge, and set out a methodology for managing such projects using knowledge management principles. Theories are set out in the following papers:

- Projects in the Knowledge Economy – ECKM 2008
- A knowledge based theory of projects
- A knowledge based theory of project management
- A methodology for knowledge based project management

The grant will consist of a cash award of £1000, access to the author, technical support in applying the theory to real-world project/s, and potentially any agreed travel costs and conference fees. Preference will be given to research that proposes to rigorously, independently and empirically evaluate the theories throughout a project’s lifecycle, but proposals to investigate or develop the theory further will be considered.

Applicants should submit queries and proposals may be submitted to: research@knowledgestudio.co.uk . Proposals should be short and contain a brief biography, research strategy, an outline methodology, an indication of the data or case/s to be used, and a schedule. These should be in PDF or RTF format, and in English. Applications close on the 31st March 2012.



Academic Prizes

Industry efforts to encourage academic thinking

Patrick Onions, The Knowledge Studio discussion forum, 26 October 2012

The Knowledge Studio were pleased to announce the prize for Best Masters Dissertation in 2012 had been awarded to Jo Kilburn for a dissertation entitled “*Change Fatigue*“, in fulfilment of her MSc in Project Management at Leeds Metropolitan University’s Center for Project Management.

Academic prizes were offered in November 2011 in the post below, and five dissertations were submitted for assessment. All five were worthy candidates, and Jo’s dissertation stood out for several reasons. The research topic was novel and topical, research questions were insightful and effective, and the analysis was critical. The research was significant in that it explores one of the key the underlying challenges to broad-scale changes in many organisations today.

Jo’s abstract is reproduced below.

Abstract:

For several years now, local authorities in England have faced significant pressures to change the way they deliver services in order to respond to central government funding cuts and the Coalition’s desire to redefine the relationship between local authorities and national government. For many councils this has involved continuous upheaval over a number of years as they seek to not

only transform service delivery methods but to transform organisational culture and working practices.

The focus of this research is to explore the issue of change fatigue and the role that programme management maturity has in delivering change. By investigating these two issues, a more integrated approach to programme management has been developed that considers the welfare of employees during transformational change programmes. An alternative definition of change fatigue is also proposed.

The research methods consisted of a review of relevant literature on change fatigue, stress in the workplace, organisational change and programme management. Primary research was carried out using interviews and a questionnaire sent out to employees of a local authority in England.

The findings of this research show that change fatigue is a concept that is relevant to organisations undergoing numerous change initiatives and is positively related to emotional exhaustion. The healthiness of any change process is important to managing stress levels of employees and therefore it is in the best interest of an organisation to improve its capability to deliver programmes.

This dissertation recommends that further research is needed to validate the measure for change fatigue and that organisations should pay particular attention to the processes it uses to deliver change initiatives.