

CASE STUDY

Building Project Management and Leadership Capability Through Simulation

How a U.S. Government agency combined project management education, leadership development, and simulation to build practical, mission-ready capability.

FOUNDATION

Project management
fundamentals

EXPERIENTIAL PRACTICE

Decisions, tradeoffs
& consequences

MISSION-READY CAPABILITY

Leadership judgment
& action

CASE STUDY

From Project Management Knowledge to Mission-Ready Capability

A U.S. Government agency needed an intensive project management and leadership program for a select group of international leaders participating in a broader technical training initiative.

The objective went beyond certification preparation. Participants needed practical project management capability and stronger leadership judgment in real-world situations.

THE CHALLENGE

The agency wanted participants to develop a practical understanding of project management fundamentals while strengthening their ability to lead projects, manage stakeholders, identify and respond to risk, and apply structured decision-making in real-world situations.

The program also needed to satisfy the 35 hours of project management education required for participants pursuing the Project Management Professional (PMP) credential.

THE MANAGEMENT WORLDS APPROACH

Management Worlds delivered a five-day experiential program combining project management fundamentals, project leadership, practical exercises, facilitated discussion, coaching, and a Management Worlds project management simulation.

Participants worked through the full project lifecycle, including initiation, planning, execution, monitoring and control, risk management, and closeout. Rather than relying primarily on lecture-based instruction, the program required participants to apply new concepts and tools through hands-on exercises and realistic project situations.

INITIATE	PLAN	EXECUTE	MONITOR	MANAGE RISK	CLOSE
1	2	3	4	5	6

A central component of the experience was simulation. Participants created project plans, made decisions during execution, responded to changing conditions, managed competing priorities, and experienced the consequences of their decisions.

Leadership development was integrated throughout the program, including facilitator coaching and assessment designed to help participants better understand how their individual leadership decisions influenced project and team performance.

AREAS OF FOCUS

Capability Built Across the Project Lifecycle

PLAN & CONTROL	RISK & STAKEHOLDERS	LEAD & DECIDE
Project planning and execution Work breakdown structures Cost and schedule estimation Project controls	Stakeholder alignment Risk and opportunity management Problem solving Project closeout	Team leadership Decision-making under uncertainty Facilitator coaching Realistic project conditions

Case studies, exercises, discussion, and simulation reinforced the concepts and provided participants with repeated opportunities to learn by doing.

THE IMPACT

Beyond Understanding to Applied Capability

By combining formal project management education with experiential learning, participants were able to move beyond understanding project management concepts to practicing how those concepts are applied.

35+ HOURS	PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE	LEADERSHIP CAPABILITY
Project management education supporting PMP eligibility	Applying tools and navigating realistic project challenges	Leading through uncertainty and structured decision-making

For the sponsoring organization, the program supported a broader objective: developing professionals who could apply structured project management and leadership practices when implementing complex technical initiatives in their home organizations.

WHY IT MATTERS

Project management capability cannot be developed through knowledge transfer alone. Professionals need opportunities to make decisions, manage tradeoffs, experience consequences, and adjust their approach. By combining project management fundamentals with simulation and leadership development, Management Worlds creates an environment where participants can practice those skills before applying them to mission-critical projects.

Build project leaders ready to perform when the mission demands it.

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