

# Achieving the Renowned PMP Certification: Insights from a leading PMP Educator and Industry Practitioner

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**The PMP certification remains one of the most challenging yet rewarding endeavors in the project management field. Sought after by tens of thousands globally each year, it's widely considered the gold standard in project management certifications, particularly within the United States where it's often a prerequisite for many formal project management roles.**

Earning the coveted PMP designation demands significant investment of time, effort, and resources. Success is not guaranteed, and many aspiring professionals require multiple attempts before achieving certification.

Our guest today is part of an organization dedicated to demystifying the PMP certification process and helping individuals succeed. Employing cutting-edge methodologies and innovative teaching practices, PMTraining boasts a remarkable success rate among its students.

Barbara McKinnon, PMP, an authorized training instructor with PMTraining, brings a wealth of experience to the role. Having worked in IT project management for over 25 years, her passion for the field is evident. She first encountered PMTraining while pursuing her own PMP certification and was immediately impressed by their student-centric approach, including a money-back guarantee.

"When I was preparing for the PMP exam," she recalls, "I wanted the best instruction on the market. It was important to me to really learn everything about project management so that I could practice it with confidence, and pass the PMP Exam." PMTraining won me over; it stood out among its peers because of its curated educational program, its exceptional customer service, unwavering support for students, and rich learning resources"

Today, PMTraining continues to utilize a "wrap-around" approach to its learning delivery, providing

students foundational content at the beginning and advanced content at the end of its courses.

“We believe it’s crucial to contextualize the PMP material,” explains Barbara, “helping students understand how to apply these concepts to real-world project delivery situations.”

Barbara typically mentors groups of 10-15 students, emphasizing that her role extends beyond simply teaching the syllabus. She strives to help students gain valuable insights and enrich their understanding of project management principles.

Is there an ideal student for the PMP certification?

“The most successful students are typically self-motivated and truly embrace the goal of becoming better project professionals,” she asserts. “The PMP is not just about passing an exam; it’s about becoming a more effective and impactful practitioner.”

What advice does she offer to those considering the PMP?

“Relate the material to your own projects,” she advises. “Integrating learning with your daily work will yield better long-term results. Discuss your learning journey with others. Aim for mastery – truly understand the key concepts and how they apply in real-time scenarios. This will lead to deeper comprehension than simply memorizing examples.”

The PMP certification demonstrates a strong commitment to professional development and serves as a valuable credential in the project management industry.

“Even entry-level PM roles now often require the PMP certification,” she notes, highlighting its increasing importance across the industry.

Beyond teaching, Barbara actively contributes to the project management community. She serves on the PMI’s Standards Committee, an independent body that hears appeals brought forward through an appeal process. She was also part of the 2019 PMI Global Conference delegation in her hometown of Philadelphia.

“It was an honor to be a facilitator and showcase the hospitality of the Philadelphia project management community,” she shares enthusiastically.


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As our conversation concludes, I ask Barbara about her future aspirations.

“I’m in this for the long haul,” she smiles. “I’m excited to continue on the PMTraining journey and to have the PMTraining family be a part of this exciting chapter of my own teaching and mentoring experience. I’m confident that the organization’s core values of excellent teaching and unwavering student support will continue to set it apart from the competition.”

The PMP is more than just a credential; it’s an investment in your professional growth. It empowers you to become a more effective and impactful project leader, elevating your career while enriching your understanding of best practices and cultivating a mindset of excellence in everything you do.

Barbara McKinnon, MSPM, PMP, PMI-ACP, CAPM, is an authorized PMP exam prep instructor, she holds a master’s degree in project management, a bachelor’s degree in management information systems. She is an Agile Certified Practitioner, Certified Associate in Project Management, and a Project Management Professional. Her passion has led her to give back to the profession through volunteer work with the Project Management Institute. As a full time IT Project Manager at Auburn University, she manages large scale projects across the enterprise. Barbara is a project leader and coach who specializes in helping students achieve their goals, whether it is to pass the PMP Examination or, to improve their project management skills. When she’s not teaching, volunteering, or practicing project management, Barbara spends time with family and friends.

To find out more about the PMP learning options with PMtraining and to access special PMG discounts [visit our resource page here](#).