

## **BW Papersystems launches 14-module global training program to elevate project leadership**

*By: Chris Anderson, Project Management Leader, and Arul Karthikeyan, Director of Global R&D Program Management*

BW Papersystems global project leadership training emerged from a strategic review meeting focused on advancing our global aftermarket initiative, CTA 60. Neal McConnellogue, BW Papersystems President of Corrugating & Chief Commercial Officer, and Matt Nichols, Field Service Director, identified Chris Anderson, Project Management Leader in Southern Wisconsin, and Arul Karthikeyan, Director of Global R&D Program Management, to develop a program that could be presented virtually to our global team. Chris and Arul collaborated to create, complete and conduct a global a 14-module training program to share a “best in class” project management playbook.

Neal extended the opportunity to key leaders across the company, and the training sessions were held throughout November and December of 2024. The program attracted 55 participants including Program Managers and Project Leaders from BW Papersystems’ Wisconsin, Maryland, Latin America and EMEA locations.

Chris led the training, guiding the participants through the Southern Wisconsin Team’s Project Leadership playbook. The modules delved into several key areas, such as the distinctions between Program Managers and Project Managers, the business landscape, the importance of standard work, communication plan development, risk identification tools and prioritized strategies. The training also highlighted the significance of Lessons Learned events, professionalism, promoting lifelong learning and building customer trust.

While Program Managers and Project Managers share similar goals and standard work processes, there are critical differences in their roles. Program Managers focus on new product R&D development (NPD) projects, while Project Managers execute standard projects which have been handed over from NPD to the Value Streams. In both cases, clear scope definition and effective communication are essential to meeting project targets and key performance indicators (KPIs). In both cases a Project Leader and Program Manager drives excitement with dynamic kick-off meetings to ensure the scope and responsibilities of contributing areas are clearly understood. Throughout the project they review risks and keep projects on task through corrective action. Communication in all directions is vital to align stakeholders, clarify scope, mitigate risk, and ensure clarity in next steps.

At the conclusion of each project phase, a "Lessons Learned" event is held to celebrate successes, recognize team contributions, identify opportunities for improvement and assign corrective actions.

Designed to engage and educate, the training offered top-tier content and provided participants with time to share questions, experiences, reflections, practice exercises and role-playing sessions to deepen understanding and enhance the application of the concepts learned. The feedback on the training was overwhelmingly positive!

Alexander Jegl, Value Stream Leader from Stuttgart remarked, "We now have a clear process and set of tools, so we don't have to reinvent the wheel."

Cindy Brand, Field Service Project Leader, also expressed the appreciation "Standard work, communicating effectively and utilizing the PM tools are critical for our success."

Bill Huff, Program Manager, added, "I particularly appreciated the focus on the differences between program management & project management and how to navigate those differences."

Annie Fahrenkrug, Director Training & Development, shared "I learned a tremendous amount from this training. The creation of standard work is crucial, and many of the concepts like professionalism, align closely with what we teach in our own training. I got a lot of value from this, and I really appreciate the effort everyone put into it."

This investment in training highlights BW Papersystems' commitment to building people by sharing the best processes, tools and standard work practices. By doing so, the company aims to drive successful projects, enhance engagement, minimize risk, leverage global collaboration, build customer trust and foster stronger communication across all levels, both internally and externally.

Neal McConnellogue praised the initiative sharing "This training is a great example of collaboration and teamwork in action. It addresses a critical need and delivers a first-class experience for our team members, strengthening our ability to execute projects effectively across the globe."