

In December 2010, the Certified Legal Project Manager® program was launched to meet the unique needs of busy lawyers and legal staff. While several other LPM certification programs have been introduced since then, this is the most demanding and the only one designed for lawyers and staff who want to take a leadership role on important LPM issues to help change LPM policies inside their firms and define new internal processes.

Certified Legal Project Managers® now work at firms ranging in size from eight lawyers to over 1,000 lawyers, in the US and overseas. This program has been widely described in the legal press, including articles in *Law 360*, *Lexpert Magazine*, and the *National Law Review*.¹

Graduates of this program have compared it to a master's level course. It is a self-paced distance learning program which requires a minimum commitment of 40 hours over approximately six months. To be admitted to this program, applicants must have a minimum of three years of experience as a practicing lawyer, or as a staff person at a law firm who has significant experience helping to manage legal matters.

The program is divided into two modules. In Module 1, participants complete required readings listed in the *Legal Project Management Quick Reference Guide* and submit written answers to 18 essay questions. They then discuss their answers in three 50-minute telecons with a legal project management expert. To pass Module 1, participants must successfully answer and discuss 18 questions. Participants may be required to revise and re-submit answers that are rated incomplete or unsatisfactory.

In Module 2, each participant has three more 50-minute telecons with the same expert about how to apply these concepts to a real-world challenge from their firm, such as:

- How to improve results for an active matter or a particular client
- A theoretical analysis of a past matter that has been completed. (Assume that the exact same situation arises again, but the client insists on a fixed price at a 10% lower total cost with better communication throughout. What should you do differently?)
- How to improve project management procedures in your practice group or your entire firm
- Any other topic that will enable you and your clients to benefit from the concepts described in Module 1 including communication management, risk management, change management, knowledge management and/or quality control

¹ Leigh Kamping-Carter, "Program Aims to Turn Attorneys into Project Managers," www.law360.com (Nov 2010); Sandra Rubin, "Project Paralysis," www.lexpertdigital.ca (May 2011); Stacy D. Ballin and Mitchell S. Thompson, "Why We Decided to Become Certified Legal Project Managers®," www.natlawreview.com (Feb 2011).

Graduates' past projects include:

- Templates to improve efficiency and standardize practice group-wide approaches for secured financings at a 220-lawyer firm, including budget estimates, client letters, and a closing agenda
- Forms and templates to standardize client intake and matter management at an eight-lawyer firm
- A research study of recent litigation write-downs at a 1,200-lawyer firm, and procedures for reducing write-downs in the future

At the conclusion of Module 2, the coach and the participant discuss how progress will be sustained over the next three to twelve months, and how success will be defined.

After successful completion of Module 2, each participant is granted the Certified Legal Project Manager[®] credential.

Deliverables include:

- Seven telecons over up to six months with a legal project management expert:
 - A brief introductory call to discuss the participant's background and needs, and the program requirements
 - Three 50-minute telecons in Module 1 to discuss written answers to 18 questions based on reading assignments
 - Three 50-minute calls in Module 2 to discuss how project management concepts apply to an actual matter from the participant's firm
- Copies of four LPM-related books provided by NextGenLPM:
 - *Legal Project Management Quick Reference Guide, 4th Edition*;
 - *Legal Project Management, Pricing, and Alternative Fee Arrangements*;
 - *Client Value and Law Firm Profitability*; and
 - *Time Management Handbook for Lawyers*.

(Participants are also required to purchase seven additional books on their own)

- An 18-item open-book essay exam to certify mastery of basic concepts
- A project management analysis of a real world matter from the firm
- A final open-book essay exam summarizing the results of the project management analysis, and its possible implications for future matters
- Up to six months of unlimited email support to help each participant complete the program on time
- A Certified Legal Project Manager[®] certificate awarded upon successful completion of the program

“The Certified Legal Project Manager® program produced immediate and genuine benefits for our firm. The readings helped me to clarify which concepts from the project management literature would be most helpful to us. And the detailed discussions of exactly how to apply those concepts helped me to develop checklists and templates to plan and manage fixed price arrangements. These tools are now helping us to better define scope, to manage the work to deliver high quality while staying within budget, and to get new business.”

– Elizabeth Harris, Founder, Harris Cost Lawyers

“In the Certified Legal Project Manager® program, I studied selections from several textbooks on project management, then analyzed how these concepts could help our firm provide more value to clients and protect profitability. In the case study portion, I worked with a legal project management expert to develop templates to increase efficiency for certain types of secured financings, including working agendas, forms for communicating with clients, and budget estimate spreadsheets. These tools will help us give clients better price guidance and increase the consistency of the services we provide.”

– D. Fraser MacFadyen, Partner, Stewart McKelvey

Contact us today (info@NextGenLPM.com or 800-49-TRAIN) to register for the program or to determine whether this program is the best option for you among our offerings.