

Lou Marks

Are you nominating yourself or someone else?

My Self

Qualification held

Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAA40104 and TAE40110); Diploma of Training Design and Development (TAE50211); Post Graduate Diploma in Management; Advanced Diploma of Project Management; Diploma of Project Management

Qualification or course delivering

BSB41515 Certificate IV in Project Management Practice; BSB51415 Diploma of Project Management; BSB61215 Advanced Diploma of Program Management; and BSB80415 Graduate Diploma of Portfolio Management

Overview

Lou's career and direction has taken him on many different paths. He has over 28 years as a practitioner in the field of Project, Program and Portfolio Management, developing his knowledge and skills in senior management roles with Boeing, Rolls Royce, British Aerospace through managing various major projects and programs.

Over eight years ago, Lou changed career and moved into the Learning and Development field to share his breadth of knowledge and skills in practical project, program, and portfolio management capabilities. To support his professional facilitation and instructional design capability, Lou holds a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment and the Diploma of Training Design and Assessment.

Lou is the Head of School of Project Management for Institute of Management (IoM). He is responsible for designing new courseware for non/formal qualification training packages; Certificate IV in Project Management Practice through to Graduate Diploma of Portfolio Management – the main focus being on the provision of outstanding learning opportunities. He has delivered all of these courses across Australia for public and corporate companies and internationally. He is continuously undertaking research in the latest L&D sector and designing innovated, refreshing, engaging, stimulating and challenging course materials for student and trainer enjoyment and learning. Lou is an experienced training facilitator with eight years practical hands-on application in L&D. He has assessed over 2000 students for formal qualifications in project and program management; and prepared candidates for the PMI Project Management Professional (PMP) accreditation, as well as the PRINCE2 Foundation and Practitioner accreditations.

Lou's greatest achievement was recently being recognised at the Institute for Learning Professionals Australian Learning Impact Award winner 2017 Professional of the Year – a significant achievement considering he has only been in this field for just over eight years.

Lou continues to be a mentor to many students.

Criterion 1: Excellence and innovation

Since the day Lou joined the company, and being made Head of School, he has demonstrated a huge commitment in establishing the quality of the course ware for all the project management qualifications. Lou was on the reviewing panel of the BSB07 Training Package update in 2015. Lou is often called upon to provide consultancy support and competency development as a subject matter expert to PMI standards in a volunteer role.

Lou is also an active member with PMI as a volunteer; major reviewer of the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK®) Guide 5th and 6th Editions, and key contributor in the PMBOK® Guide 4th Edition. He was also a contributor in the Project Management Competency Development Framework PMI publication.

He has had speaking events at communities of practice, where he shared his knowledge and experiences to help others in best practices of project management delivery.

Lou has been engaged by two major state councils: BNE City Council and Toowoomba Regional Council (TRC) to contextualize and customize the Diploma of PM. He also delivered and assessed all students who completed the Diploma. Both councils have recognized a significant shift in the management and successful deliveries of their projects through the application of the techniques their staff had learned and taken away from the course.

It is in the classroom that Lou thrives and gets huge satisfaction in seeing students learn new techniques that they can apply on their projects. His knowledge and understanding of the course content is incredible; which is why he is recognized and respected in industry. With his background and ability to contextualize the theory and practical components using examples from his own experience helps students to understand how they can apply in their own environments.

As a practicing professional in project management, Lou often provides consultancy services to clients in the development of capability improvement, conduct maturity assessments identifying where there are weaknesses and suggest appropriate actions for improving to attain the expected target of maturity.

Lou is currently re-designing the delivery of all project management qualifications. He is pushing the boundaries of learning and delivery with a new innovated approach. When designing course ware, Lou is a firm believer of applying the Chinese proverb Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man how to fish and you feed him for a lifetime. It is more worthwhile to teach someone to do something (for themselves) than to do it for them (on an ongoing basis). Lou is designing a program whereby the student is learning is more self-directed activity with hands-on learning and collaborative play via role-play activities and gamification scenarios through the application of the contextualization of the following learning methodologies:

- 70-20-10 Framework
- Montessori's Method
- Kolb's Experimental Learning Model

Lou's innovated delivery approach will bring more life into the delivery of learning for both the learner and trainer, making the delivery more interactive, engaging, reflective learning, stimulating and challenging. This also demonstrates effective volume of learning (VoL), volume of training (VoT), and amount of training (AoT). Lou is currently working on a new fresh innovated qualification course ware delivery e-learning design that:

- Builds a compelling visual experience enhance retention with impact at first glance
- Adds meaningful interactions using response ware technology where the student in the class on multiple choice questions to establish instant knowledge understanding
- Allows students pull content via podcast and webinar with interactive activities
- Engages more senses with learning videos delivering short explanation and information
- Adds fun gaming elements - virtual learning simulation activities
- Student coaching on-line chat room

Criterion 2: Student focus/outcomes

The design and contextualization of the TRC Diploma program, Lou applied the Montessori's Method for the delivery whereby student engagement was achieved through hands-on learning and collaborative experience in class with the delivery broken down by:

- 10% theory delivery via short presentation of concept/techniques; Lou sharing his knowledge and gaining student confidence
- 20-70% is the application of learning from other students and from practical experience; class activities, role play scenarios where Lou provided support, guidance, advice to students in and outside of class

As all of the students from the TRC cohorts work in different areas within the organization, Lou engaged them through specific tailoring of a blended approach that included:

- Knowledge, existing knowledge brought to the training by the student and also the transfer and sharing of his own knowledge to the student
- Comprehension, application and analysis demonstrated through the students participation in the short exercises following the relevant theory delivery
- Synthesis, demonstrated by the student through their responses to verbal questioning in the workshop via their responses reflecting real life work experience applications

Lou continued to engage with each student on an individual coaching, validating what they already know and confirming how they have applied in their own work.

Lou was responsible for the contextualization of the Diploma of PM to include TRC specific framework, processes, and the delivery to two cohorts with total of 40 students. Lou delivered both cohorts, and was the assessor. Lou achieved a success of 90% of the students successfully completing and achieving their Diploma. Council CEO presented the students with their Diploma at a ceremony. Some student success stories that the coordinator passed on to Lou:

- Student JP (WIS) Learning from the Diploma and using the PMF uncovered a lot of hidden scope for the Mt Kynoch WTP control system upgrade these would have turned into expensive contract variations otherwise.
- Student BS (CSB) Using the PMF and spending the time in the planning phase for the new Smart Phone App project let us identify all the activities required up-front, so we could plan resource requirements much more accurately for delivery.
- Student TS (Finance) We have found that we can apply project management methodologies for preparation of Councils Annual Financial Statement, in particular, scope, stakeholder and schedule management.

Consultation of the contextualized Diploma course material between Lou and TRC subject matter experts (SME) who represented the range of students in each cohort was undertaken. The consultation was prearranged at different stages of the design of the Diploma delivery program. This allowed for continuous gathering of feedback on, and reviewing of the draft-learning program at regular stages during the design, pilot delivery, and final version. The consultation feedback was used to assist in design decisions based upon general project management knowledge and incorporating the needs of any specific learner group criteria.

To address all students identified to complete the Diploma, Lou used the results from the SME skills gap analysis consultation to establish the best sequencing of the course material during delivery. The questions that Lou asked as part of the learning assessment of sequencing were:

- What should the student learn first?
- What skills need to be developed and practiced before moving to the next stage of developing their competence/ability?
- What is the logical flow of learning to be followed in delivery?

The results following the sequence assessment, Lou structured delivery around the clients project delivery logic. This allowed for the learning material to flow in a logical manner that helped the student to better understand TRC specific processes and application.

Criterion 3: Professionalism and commitment to VET teaching and learning

Lou plays an active volunteer role in various industry and institute working groups. He is also active with current and past students seeking help and advice on their professional development.

As a recognized mentor, both within his own organization to external project managers, he takes great interest in helping and sharing theory journey of further development.

Lou is currently one of the mentors for PMIQ and AIPM mentoring programs.

Lou is an active member with the following:

- Project Management Institute (PMI)
- Australian Institute of Project Management (AIPM)
- Institute for Learning Professionals (ILP)

Lou sets a very high standard for himself from an ethical and integrity stand point. He is extremely passionate and dedicated to the profession. When Lou designs course ware and assessments, his approach is not just ensuring that the student demonstrates their competency to the relevant criteria, but stretches the student to learn new knowledge. Many times students, who have passed through his classes and assessments, say that they have actually earned their qualification. And have gained the confidence to apply the learning back into their working life.

Lou expects his other colleagues to also work and deliver training to the same ethical standards and integrity as professionals.

Lou is often volunteering to be actively involved and participating in the VET BSB07 Training Packages reviews and updates. He was engaged with IBSA on the 2015 BSB07 Training Packages revision and content updates.

Lou is currently engaged to participate in the Enterprise Skills and Technical Skills projects in the BSB Training Package.

Lou is one of the volunteers to:

- PMIQ a mentor in their Mentoring Program 2018
- AIPM a mentor in their Mentoring Program and also one of the Reg PM Certification Program Assessors

He is matched to other project managers who are seeking that support, guidance, coaching, and advice from someone who is willing to share their knowledge and experience to help others.

His students constantly request Lou if they can contact him for support, and coaching. He often meets up with these students either via face/face or Skype sessions.

Lou is constantly undertaking self-learning and development in the VET practitioner capability and professional technical competencies. Lou is completing a number of relevant courses, webinars and competency assessments to maintain compliance and professional accreditations/certifications.

As a practitioner of project management, his commitment to maintaining an active engagement with members of the industry is vital for his own personal development and continued growth of knowledge of emerging trends and issues. He likes to be involved with the working groups that are initiated in reviewing and updating BSB Training Packages.

Lou spends a lot of his time in volunteering in both the VET and his professional technical field to be current.

Lou was a key reviewer of the latest PMI standards: PMBOK Guide 6th Edition, Program Management Standard 4th Edition, and Portfolio Management Standard 4th Edition.

Lou was a key contributor and reviewer of the BSB07 Training Packages: CIV in PM Practice, Diploma of Project Management, Advanced Diploma of Program Management, and Graduate Diploma of Portfolio Management.

Lou is constantly undertaking certification assessments, as one of the AIPM Reg PM Certification Program assessors.

End of last year, Lou was nominated for the Institute for Learning Professionals Australian Learning Impact Award and for all of his hard work, awarded winner 2017 Professional of the Year.

Criterion 4: Links with industry and/or community

With Lou's background from industry, he often consults with his network of key stakeholders to seek out what is happening to increase the students awareness, knowledge, and ability to apply the new techniques they have learned.

Over the last eight years, Lou has developed a network of L&D professionals, with whom he often consults and learns about new ways of teaching, sharing and developing the students learning experiences.

When Lou is not designing and developing new course ware materials, delivering courses and other activities previously mentioned, he is conducting research, watching relevant webinars to increase his knowledge, and contributing to relevant industry forum discussion groups.

To demonstrate his personal and professional industry engagement, these are some examples of student emails following completion of their qualification where Lou was their trainer and assessor.

- Student JJ (DHS) Thanks Lou! And thank you for being a great presenter and teacher, you were very engaging and I liked the real life examples you used when presenting
- Student PO'S (Defence Advanced Technical Training Instructor) Thank you for the guidance on the assessments. The course was more work than I anticipated, but was worth the effort as I have learnt some valuable info and skills to take back the work place."
- Student MG (Defence) Thanks for the support and drive you have given me over the last 8 months. I know that the positivity you provided definitely help me maintain my motivation. My goal was to submit all the required evidence before the end of the year and I think my last submission was 21 Dec. I have enjoyed what has been an exhausting professional development year (first year of PM Masters completed also) and have found it to be very rewarding. Thank you once again, and best of luck for 2018.
- Student BC (Defence) Thanks Lou, Much appreciated – was a good journey as I created all the plans from scratch which gives me even more confidence in my abilities. This marks the beginning of a journey for me. Next step is the Diploma in Asset Management to address the sustainment side of the house and then the Masters in Project and/or Sustainment Management at ADFA. Once I get posted to a Project as the PM, I will seek CPPM. Thanks again for all your guidance and assistance.


Lou devotes his time and effort-ensuring students receive outstanding learning experiences that enrich their lives. He wants to make a change by sharing his wealth and depth of knowledge and experiences to help others to improve their skills and abilities to being more effective. He is very honored and privileged to be fulfilling the role as Head of School, as the position allows him to serve the needs of his students.


Lou always looks at every delivery as a new challenge, embracing the moment to learn from each student from their experiences, and adapts the instructional methods that encourages all student to participate and learn without comprising his own values or that of the students needs.

Lou is the sort of trainer who does not go looking for credit for what he does. But he will always go above and beyond to ensure that the learning experience of the students is enjoyable and fun, where the students can feel comfortable knowing that they can all upon his support.


Lou constantly encourages and motivates students to maintain focus on their journey to achieve their qualification. He gets immense joy and satisfaction in seeing students complete their final assessments and issuing the Congratulations! email confirming their achievement and issue of qualification.


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