



**COMMON GROUND  
WEBINAR SERIES**

# **COMMON GROUND**

## **KEY TAKEAWAYS DOCUMENT**



**Project  
Management  
Institute.**

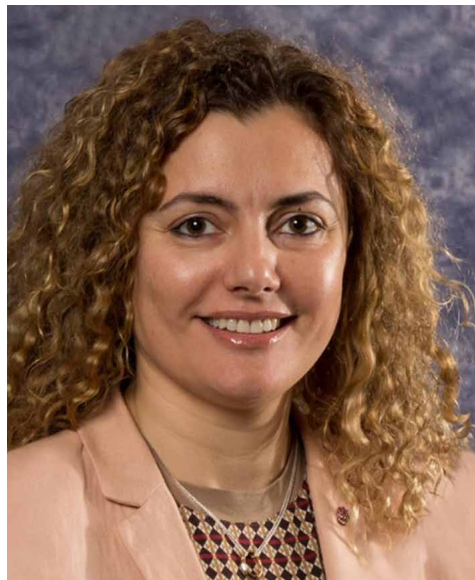
# Common Ground Webinar Series

Theme: Future of Work

SEASON 1 | EPISODE 8

## FEATURED SPEAKER

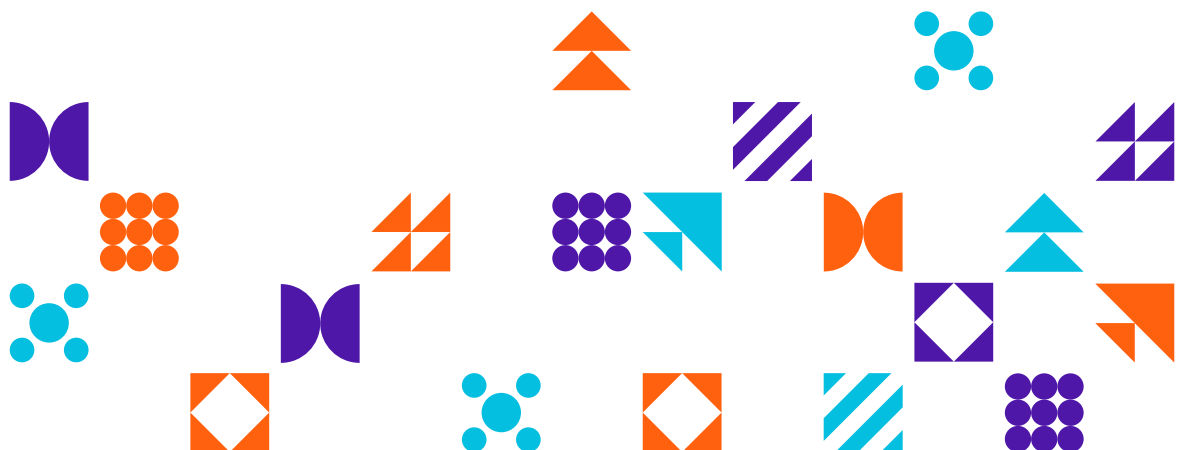
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**Grace Najjar**

Managing Director,  
Middle East and North Africa, PMI

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## Session: Digital Transformation and Project Management: Opportunities and Challenges



**Grace Najjar**, managing director, PMI Middle East and North Africa (MENA), has 25 years of national and international advisory and managerial roles in corporations and governments in strategy execution, results delivery, modernization, and digital transformation. She has been appointed an expert for the MENA region for programs funded by global organizations such as the World Bank and United States Agency for International Development. She has won several recognitions including The Leading Arab Women Influencers in Arab Economy and Banking Industry in 2015.

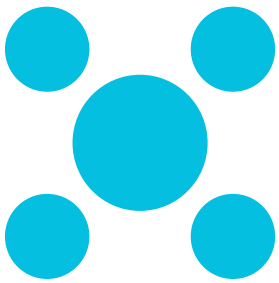
### Summary

When COVID-19 struck the United Arab Emirates (UAE), around 1.2 million children in the country moved to online learning within a day. This was possible because of the government's investments in a smart learning program early on. Grace Najjar used examples of such ambitious yet successful digital transformation initiatives in the UAE to set the context for her talk – what must organizations do to achieve a desirable outcome from their digital transformation programs.

The most critical piece is a clearly defined and communicated transformation strategy. Success also depends on a mindset change in executives and employees toward adopting digital and the level of skills in an organization's human capital. Leaders must evaluate the existing capabilities and identify the enabling capabilities, set key performance indicators and milestones, and track and adjust as they proceed.

Project managers will need to evolve and leverage digital tools and agile methods to manage the high level of complexity in transformation projects. As many of the daily tasks get automated, project managers must add value to their roles through creative thinking. The future will not be about humans or robots, but an integration of the two. Hence project managers must focus on digital skills besides technical project management, business, and leadership skills.





## Key takeaways:

- The future project manager is a change agent, thinker, and strategic advisor.
- The new skills in demand will be: data science, innovation, security, legal/compliance, decision-making, and cross-functional collaboration.
- Organizations must be clear about the reason for transformation.
- Project management will remain a top skill for the future.
- Develop emotional intelligence to win customers.
- Use standards to know your fundamentals but look beyond that.
- To decide whether you need a digital tool, think of the outcome, benchmarks, and what the customer needs.

Project managers will lead teams of humans and robots.

