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Project Management Institute

Disciplined Agile:

Championing Choice, Rejecting Rigidity

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PMI POLL BOOTH

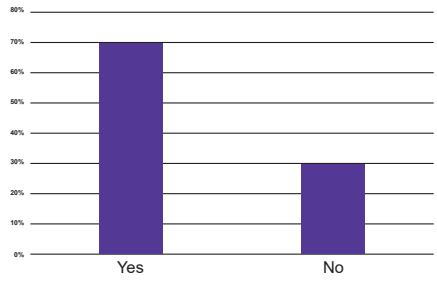
VOICE YOUR OPINION-JUNE POLL

Q. I have been able to manage stress well during the pandemic.

***Click here* to fill entry**

RESULT OF LAST POLL

Q. Working from home has improved my productivity.
Yes 70% No 30%



Voice your opinion • Last poll results

Cast your vote today. Learn if your fellow practitioners feel the same way as you when the results come out in the next issue of Manage India.

Dear Practitioners,

I hope you and your family are doing well and keeping your spirits up.

Earlier this month, many of us were able to resume some of our daily activities, while others in the containment zones continue to bear severe restrictions. Most of us have managed our physical and mental wellbeing quite well during these prolonged periods of isolation.

COVID-19 has shown us how we need to be aware of how situations can evolve fast, and, at the same time, know how to respond to it. Our ability as individuals and organizations to quickly adapt to change will be important way beyond COVID-19.

PMI's Disciplined Agile (DA) toolkit, which offers a hybrid agile approach to solution delivery, comes at an opportune time when we're trying to adapt to new ways of working. In this issue of *Manage India*, we illustrate the concept of customized Ways of Working (WoW) through an article by Scott Ambler, vice president and chief scientist, Disciplined Agile, as well as our cover story in which we talk to some of the early adopters of DA on paradigm shifts for project managers.

I'm proud to say that PMI, as an organization, has displayed remarkable business agility during this time. As cities shut down across the world, we addressed a big concern of those scheduled to take our Project Management Professional (PMP)® exam. In April, we moved the exam online, with a live proctor monitoring the candidate during the test. We believe this testing option will continue to be important in the post COVID-19 world. We have also delayed changes to the PMP exam format to 2 January 2021, so that exam candidates have sufficient time to prepare for it.

PMI-sponsored events, including the PMI India Regional Conference, have been shifted to a virtual format. We are helping our customers continue to build skills and prepare for the future with the *Common Ground* webinar series. PMI has delivered a variety of free resources, sneak peeks of new digital offerings, and virtual events during this time.

In the spirit of expanding engagement, we recently launched the Region 11 Women Engagement Committee to help promote a culture of inclusion and engagement in chapter boards, global volunteering, and membership. Our workspace and upskill contests have seen enthusiastic participation from members.

This is a great time for learning. We have launched an introductory online course, the *Basics of Disciplined Agile*, for those of you who want to understand the principles and applications of DA.

For our REP community, we're inviting applications for the newly launched Authorized Training Partner program. Learn more about the program and how to apply for it here.

May you continue to thrive in these interesting and challenging times, and stay safe.

Kind regards,

Srini Srinivasan
Managing Director, PMI India

Disciplined Agile: A Hybrid Approach to Suit Your WoW

SCOTT AMBLER
VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF SCIENTIST FOR DISCIPLINED AGILE, PMI

One of the great things about agile and lean are that there are thousands of great practices and strategies (techniques) out there for you to choose from. Then again, one of the frustrating things about agile and lean are that there are thousands of great techniques to choose from. How do you find out about these techniques? When should you adopt a specific technique? When shouldn't you? To what extent should you perform a technique? How do these techniques fit together? Answers to these questions are critical when a team is choosing its way of working (WoW).

PMI's Disciplined Agile (DA) toolkit has mined the various methods, frameworks, books of knowledge, and other sources to identify potential techniques that your teams may want to experiment with and adopt. We put these techniques into context, answering the questions mentioned above, and describe the trade-offs associated with each technique so that you can choose the right ones for your situation. Figure 1 indicates some of the methodologies and frameworks that we have mined for techniques.

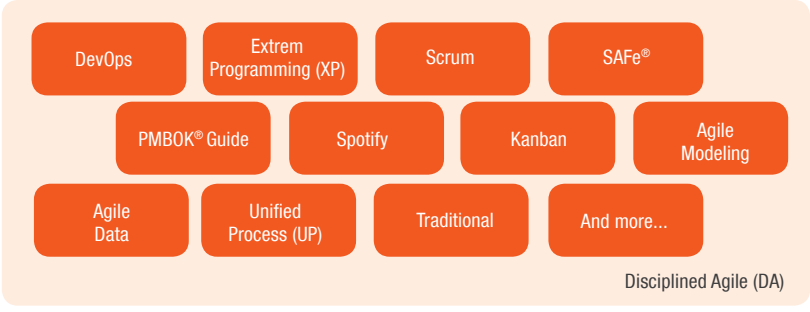


Figure 1. DA leverages ideas from many great sources

DA adopts strategies from the following sources:

- **DevOps:** The DevOps movement has identified a collection of strategies for streamlining software development and operations, thereby improving quality, customer service, and time to market.
- **Scrum:** The Scrum framework focuses on team leadership and requirements change management. Scrum captures some really great ideas that have become commonly adopted by agile teams.
- **Extreme Programming (XP):** XP is an agile method that focuses primarily on hard-core software development practices.
- **Scale Agile Framework (SAFe®):** SAFe captures agile and lean strategies for large-scale agile programs.
- **PMBOK® Guide:** PMI's *A Guide to Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide)* captures proven project management practices.
- **Spotify:** The Spotify framework describes several teaming and organizational strategies for organizations new to agile ways of working.
- **Kanban:** Kanban is a method for managing knowledge work with an emphasis on just-in-time delivery while not overloading the team members. In Kanban, the process, from definition of a task to its delivery to the customer, is visualized and team members pull work from a queue or work item pool.
- **Agile Modeling (AM):** AM is a practice-based methodology for effective modeling and documentation. AM was purposely architected to be a source of strategies which can be tailored into other base processes.
- **Agile Data (AD):** The AD method defines a collection of strategies that professionals can apply when working with and evolving sources of data.
- **Unified Process (UP):** The UP is an iterative and incremental process framework. The DA toolkit adopts and enhances several critical governance strategies from the UP.
- **Traditional:** There are many great ideas coming from traditional, sometimes called serial or even "predictive," sources that have been contextualized in the DA toolkit.
- **Other sources:** DA adopts techniques and practices from other sources such as Dynamic System Development Method, Feature Driven Development, Evo, and Crystal Clear. We have also adopted leaned-out strategies from the ITIL, COBiT, TOGAF, and DAMA frameworks (to name a few) to flesh out portions of DA.

Where these sources go into detail about these individual techniques, the focus of DA is to put them into context and to help you choose the right technique at the right time. There is no such thing as a best practice for all situations; instead you must choose the best fit for your context. In many ways, DA does the "heavy process lifting" for you in that it shows how all of these great ideas fit together, enabling you to get on with delighting your customers.

Disciplined Agile: Championing Choice, Rejecting Rigidity

Early adopters of PMI's Disciplined Agile (DA) write on how the DA toolkit promotes business agility and empowers teams in today's changed business environment

Project managers have always followed prescriptive methods to deliver a solution within an agile framework. Those methods have worked in the past. But today, as the world faces extraordinary change, the methods of the past fall short in meeting the demands of the current times.

Project managers are now working in unfamiliar conditions. If they were to choose a framework or method to suit their changed ways of working, there is nothing to guide them on what is right for their unique situation.

PMI's Disciplined Agile (DA) takes a hybrid approach by allowing practitioners to choose from an extensive library of leading agile and lean tools and methods. The DA toolkit allows them to make informed choices about what applies to their own way of working (WoW).

Embrace Change: Evolve WoW, Be Truly Agile

K. VENKATACHALIAH BABU
Assistant Vice President and Head, Project Management Center of Excellence, Infosys

Almost all of a sudden, we find ourselves in a completely new context (Covid-19). What seemed to be our mantra for success may need to be revisited for its effectiveness. The question is how can we stay relevant in the new context that makes our customers remunerate us at a time when they too are facing difficulties? How can we adapt, and adapt quickly? This question is valid for us as individuals, teams, and organizations – but the depth to which we have to dig within ourselves this time is much more than what we have done in the past.

Nature has taught us that agility brings resilience. If so, how can we be deeply agile and thus build strong resilience to survive and thrive in an ever changing context? To strengthen our agility, we can be guided by a tremendous body of knowledge available today that has been proven successful in organizations across the globe. However, we need to make choices that are relevant for us in our own current context and not limited by methods that we had adopted earlier. In the new normal, we are facing new constraints, for example social distancing, and existing constraints that are further amplified, for example data security. We have to make choices to evolve our ways of working (WoW) to work around such constraints that limit our ability to perform.

The DA toolkit helps us in exploring options to evolve our WoW. For example, with social distancing in place, how do we get teams that are distributed to collaborate to plan and make decisions effectively? Until a few weeks ago, teams were not used to this. Interestingly, 'coordinating within team' is a decision point of 'coordinate activities', one of the processes within the DA process toolkit. It provides a few options to address this challenge.

In the list of options for 'coordinating within team.' I would call out 'look ahead modelling/planning' and 'just-in-time planning'. Consider these options for any work item for which you understand what the work entails so you can plan accordingly. Couple this with the 'visualize work' technique wherein the team has a collective view of their plan and daily progress improves the team's ability to coordinate their efforts. When I implemented a solution that combines 'look ahead modelling/planning', 'just-in-time planning', and 'visualize work' techniques, it helped agile teams maintain or enhance the effectiveness of how they collaborated to deliver on iteration goals. It has gone one step further in improving transparency to stakeholders, which has taken additional importance in the new normal of work from home. We only had to provide agile teams choices and the environment to make decisions, guided by expertise.

Many individuals and teams have implemented new or changed techniques and innovative solutions, thus demonstrating resilience in delivering as effectively as before. Each one of us is unique as individuals and teams. We need to make choices that suit our context, look for ways to improve and innovate in a pragmatic manner, and delight our customers as an end result. In this process, we need to be cost-efficient, reduce lead time in value delivery, and become successful as an entity with awesome teams.

To help ingrain all elements of this agile behavior, I have found DA to be extremely relevant. DA is a powerful agnostic hybrid of approaches that leverages strategies from a variety of sources and provides a process decision toolkit that makes process decisions in a context sensitive manner. For some of the challenges you might be facing in your agile journey, DA may have the answer you need.

K. Venkatachaliah Babu coaches programs that engage stakeholders across senior leadership and scrum teams to embrace a lean agile mindset and accelerate time-to-market across multiple releases. He brings together deep knowledge of scaled agile delivery, theory of constraints, lean manufacturing, IT project and program management consulting, facilitation skills to influence cultural shifts and drive change.

No Single Rule: Go by Team Size, Purpose, Culture

SAIRAM C.
Agile Coach and Senior Vice President
DBS Asia Hub 2 Private Ltd.

Many organizations struggle with agile methods. An organization with a global footprint and with teams of varying sizes that work for different purposes could find it difficult to adopt agile.

Two of the principles of DA – Choice is Good and Context Counts – suit diverse and complex organizations that need a heterogenous approach.

Choice empowers teams and enables them to not take quick decisions. Using the goal diagrams in the DA toolkit, an organization can choose what it needs. It also helps them understand what to apply, when to apply, and the associated trade-offs.

Culture, skillsets, and size are some factors that decide how a team works. DA takes the uniqueness of each team into consideration and provides a comprehensive toolkit as a reference point while adopting an approach.

A few years back, an organization that I was coaching felt that the scrum agile method was working well for them at the team level. They wanted to scale it to the enterprise level. They were not keen on following prescriptive methods and wanted a flexible method that suited their ways of working.

They were looking at tactical agility at scale as they had teams that were geographically distributed, of different sizes, partly outsourced, and worked on leading edge technologies. They found the Disciplined Agile Delivery (DAD) to be useful as the delivery teams worked in different situations and could adapt it to their context.

Based on its agile maturity, the team had the flexibility to choose a suitable lifecycle. They picked the continuous delivery— agile lifecycle and made two important changes.

One change was to have the team leads play the role of the scrum master since DA offered that flexibility. They were also coached regularly for a couple of months on their new responsibilities. This led to a chain of positive developments.

The team leads felt they were part of the project and the management felt that the team leads were now more actively involved. The project also overcame the common problem of the lack of collaboration between scrum masters and team leads. The team leads were also happy that as scrum masters their responsibilities went beyond people management. Having a team lead who is technically strong, helped the team solve many technical challenges easily. This led to continuous delivery with high quality and at regular intervals to the customer.

The other major change in the process was starting with the inception phase. It is normally believed that agile does not require any upfront work as the team is expected to 'adaptively plan and evolve' during sprints. However, the management realized the value and the need to start with an inception phase to carve out the critical elements of the product being built. These included the architecture, product backlog items, and the minimum viable product (MVP), and aligning them with the key stakeholders before commencing the sprint.

This change resulted in several positive outcomes. The team members now understood the key deliverables, milestones, and dependencies. The customer was confident that the team was clear on the MVP deliverables, and so was the team. There was absolute transparency and visibility of what the team would work on in the release to deliver the MVP.

The management, the teams, and supporting groups realized that the ability to choose based on the context made it easy to adopt and adapt. As DA recognizes that and provides a toolkit accordingly, they were able to choose what is good based on their unique situations.

Sairam C has over 20 years of industry experience, including over 10 years in agile coaching across India, Europe, USA, and Vietnam. He is a DA champion for PMI Pearl City Chapter.

Enterprise Agility: Opt from Process Blades

SUMIT KUMAR SINHA
President, PMI West Bengal Chapter

DA has several benefits for organizations with various teams and business units. The seven principles of DA are the pillars of success for an organization. In every organization, there are teams of various sizes, who pursue different purposes. Moreover, each team faces unique situations and is made up of people from varied cultural backgrounds. The DA principle – Context Counts – refers to this aspect of teams.

The factors that should be considered to understand the context are:

- Selecting factors that drive the initial choice based on the team's Ways of Working (WoW) and
- Scaling factors that drive detailed decisions around the team's WoW.

These considerations lead to team organization, team process, and tooling. So ultimately, an organization should realize that "context counts" for every business unit. And this leads to its relevance in selecting a team's WoW from the DA *WoW Book* (the DA body of knowledge).

In the current pandemic, a team's ways of working have changed drastically. For example, in the telecom sector engineers assigned to provide network service are currently working from home and are required to adopt additional security measures and follow a cumbersome approval process. Special measures are being taken to ensure that network services are seamless and do not face any downtime. Operations management has become more challenging and critical.

Earlier, network engineers were allowed to monitor and maintain the servers remotely. But now they have been bestowed with the additional responsibility of ensuring zero downtime. So in the current situation, the entire landscape of WoW for these engineers has changed. This is the right time for teams to look for options of WoW as per guidelines stated in the *WoW Book.*

In the current situation, organizations are focusing on enterprise agility. Enterprise agility ensures that a system is capable of responding rapidly to certain modifications. Enterprise agility enables an organization to facilitate dynamic decision-making through which it can learn to adapt to any emerging competitive advantage.

The Disciplined Agile Enterprise (DAE) is a category within the scope of the DA toolkit. DAE is able to sense and respond swiftly to changes in the marketplace through organizational culture and structure. DAE is a storehouse of process blades, or options of processes to choose from and apply in a context sensitive manner.

Organizations with a strategic goal of improving enterprise agility can adapt DAE with a mindset to utilize the appropriate process blades. In the current situation, many organizations have taken an innovative approach to engage engineers remotely for customer delivery. On one hand, this has led to a significant mindset change in organizations, and on the other hand, organizations are taking an additional risk to deliver a product on time, within budget, and according to quality. The major change that organizations have adapted to is to integrate and orchestrate work at an enterprise level and deliver value to the customer.

Organizations must look at DAE as a toolkit and explore the options of process blades for better business agility.

Sumit Sinha is a DA champion from India and is a PMI Leadership Master Class Graduate of 2019. He has played the role of a delivery leader with 25 years of total experience in all phases of the software development lifecycle, including 18 years in leadership roles in software delivery and consulting projects.

Process Blades: Being Adaptive to Change

SAURABH PARIKH
Co-Founder and Director-Consulting
ProThoughts

Businesses today are becoming more dynamic and adaptive to change. Let's say you call a customer service center of an airline and a chatbot welcomes you. The chatbot addresses you by your name and gives you details of your next flight, rather than asking you about it, and provides other insights based on intelligence gathered from your past purchases and preferences. It earlier took you 15-20 minutes to get your work done, whereas now it takes just 2-3 minutes. The outcome: you are delighted by the service you just received.

Enterprise agility is all about sensing changes in the business environment, quickly responding to it, and learning and adapting to changes. It encompasses all business functions and departments in an organization.

Our organizations are complex and adaptive systems, whereby teams interact with one another across business units, departments, and locations. Work done by one team might significantly impact another team. Each team learns from one another's way of working and strives hard toward continuous improvement.

DA has a concept called process blades that refers to a collection of process options, such as practices and strategies, that should be chosen and then applied in a context sensitive manner. There are 21 blades in the DA toolkit.

Let's take an example of two of DA process blades – finance and procurement. DA defines the responsibility of finance as a function that ensures cash flow, that your money is well spent, taxes are minimized, spending is properly tracked and recorded, and legal reporting is performed properly. Procurement blade is to procure products and services from outside your organization to meet your needs.

As a scrum master in a global software company, I have used prescriptive Scrum and Kanban methodologies for software development and support, irrespective of the size and complexity of the project, team size, or its geographic spread. The finance and procurement teams followed the Waterfall budget method, which meant they budgeted for the whole year and brought various departments under its purview. The main challenge in this approach was that requirements often changed in our projects, and hence funding and procurement could not keep pace with that change.

Our global team had 90 members spread across the globe. The team needed dual monitors and an electronic dashboarding tool for their coding and testing work in May. The yearly budgets were approved and announced based on an annual forecast plan. Though there was a provision for a half-yearly budget review, it often meant a long wait. The exception approval process as a part of the governance process was also a long and tedious process.

The agile coach and I spent time with the procurement and finance heads to explain the way our agile teams worked and the rationale behind the changed requirement. We were successful in getting additional funds from the contingency budget. However, this incident showed the need for procurement and finance to be more creative and adaptive to the changes

happening around them. Over time, both the teams changed their approach to "adaptive budgeting and procurement processes." In this system, they laid out a minimum budget to meet the short-term needs, a monthly review process, and a venture capital style budgeting in which the minimally viable product is launched and future funding depended on product performance.

Process blades in DA works across four layers – enterprise, IT, DevOps, and delivery. A truly agile organization allows the interdependence of teams across various layers, enabling cross-learning among teams, and hence continuously adjusting and adapting to the changes as they occur. Organizations of the future must be prepared for such agility to succeed.

Saurabh Parikh is an industry veteran, trainer, coach, servant leader, and consultant with 26 years in the profession. He has trained over 6,000 project, program, and delivery leaders, and delivered multimillion-dollar programs and projects in senior capacity across various global organizations.

Business Agility: Freedom Matters, Not Frameworks

ASHISH SADEKAR
Founder and Director, ProThoughts

Many of today's businesses need to be agile. Business agility is the ability to respond to changes in a cost-effective way without losing quality.

The next question then for businesses is how to become more agile and survive in this ever changing world. I interact with almost 100 project managers on a monthly basis. And I have observed that some follow traditional ways of managing projects and have standardized project management practices. Some manage projects as per their manager's instructions. In some cases, it varies as the team changes. There are project managers who do not see any need to change the way they are working. Each one comes with their own interpretation.

When you do not know what to do, the easiest way is to follow a prescribed method. However, this method of accepting without questioning brings a lot of problems, for example, an overburdened workforce, unevenness in the workload, and team demotivation. It also diminishes an organization's ability to respond to change.

Following a method or practice may not be feasible in some situations. For example, you are continuously delivering incremental features into production and if you follow the prescribed practice of extensive documentation, it will just reduce the pace of work.

Let me take an example from my experience. We are constantly updating information on our company website. The marketing and technical team coordinate this effort and regularly release features such as a new webpage with our webinar calendar. These features are released on a daily or weekly basis. We had tried to prescribe some practices and methods to these teams but that was not generating the required outcome.

For example, we tried ScrumBan to prioritize tasks and take work as per our capacity. That reduced the pace of work, and the teams felt that the thrust put on them was unnecessary. Last year, we told the team you decide how you want to work together – they had no experience in project management patterns or practices. Surprisingly, the team came out with their own way of working and started improving the outcomes. They chose a simple Lean method. The team was accountable for the outcome since they had chosen their working methods. The job of the management was primarily to provide guidance in sorting out issues.

This is what the DA toolkit suggests. Give choice to your teams to choose their Way of Working (WoW), continuously improve their way for a better outcome, and thereby, develop business agility. Had I known about DA and applied the toolkit in the above scenario, we could have succeeded much earlier. Given the context, the toolkit would have applied the Lean option to the project. We could have saved one year trying to figure out the right option for our team. We could also have released the value (output) in the market much earlier, increased team motivation, and delighted our customers.

Freedom to choose your own WoW makes the team accountable and provides outstanding results. Each situation is different, and so is each team. So there cannot be a single prescription as a panacea for all. When a team chooses its own WoW, they become self-organizing and accountable, thus improving their motivation levels. The freedom to choose thus enables teams to work in a more effective manner.

Ashish Sadekar is passionate about project management and loves to write and talk on the subject. He comes with more than 20 years of experience in the profession, and has coached over 10,000 practitioners on agile practices and PMI certification training.

To promote DA

Remote Working – Win with Inclusivity and Sensitivity

Priya Patra

"When everyone is included, everyone wins," said Jesse Jackson, American civil rights activist.

On 22 March, India entered the first phase of the lockdown. Since then, we have witnessed unprecedented changes, which we never imagined before — be it be our approach to business, our way of working, or our approach towards life. As a manager, I had to keep the lights on under stress of team instability and ensuring self-care, all escalated with concerns over health and safety.

Now, as we near the end of the fourth phase of the lockdown, I look back to see how I have fared as a manager on being an inclusive leader:

1. ***Virtual workforce:*** On 23 March, we flipped the switch overnight from being physically present in office to working from home. I realized that my team, which was consistent in meeting deadlines, became less predictable. Some of the members suddenly went silent, while others were very anxious and stressed.

   According to a research by Gartner, only 10 percent of people like to work from home, while the rest prefer working in office or in co-working spaces. An overnight switch is an unprecedented change in behavior and way of working. This may make the team uncomfortable, with the members feeling they are unheard and isolated in these times of insecurity and confinement.

2. ***Marginalization:*** As we navigated through the first week under lockdown, still trying to meet our basic psychological and safety needs, I noticed some comments being passed on our onshore coordinator, who was of Southeast Asian origin.

   Since COVID-19 originated in Wuhan, China, there have been incidents of xenophobia and discrimination across the world. Such incidents can influence the team to marginalize members from Southeast Asian origin.

3. ***Self-isolation:*** A week later, I realized that my database administrator — a veteran in the project — was no longer engaged. He would miss team meetings frequently and when he attended them, he would not participate actively as he had done in the pre-lockdown phase.

Older generations, who are used to face-to-face meetings, may find it tough to adjust to the new normal of virtual connections and collaborations. They could be stressed because they are most impacted by the disease or they may have trouble adjusting to at-home virtual collaboration tools.

What could I have done better to be a more inclusive leader? What techniques can a project manager leverage to improve diversity and inclusion? Here is what I have learned from the eight weeks of lockdown:

1. ***Identify your quarantine persona:***
   Working remotely is strikingly different from working remotely under quarantine. There is stress, anxiety, and some amount of panic. It is also about managing kids and household chores, while trying to remain productive. This can influence one's persona.

   You should identify your quarantine persona and introspect to see how it affects you, your team, peers, and managers.

2. ***Look for blind spots:*** Uncover self-conscious and unconscious bias. It could be due to a combination of factors such as ethnicity, race, creed, societal upbringing, generation, religion, sexual orientation, education, marital status, or physical ability. Post self-awareness, we can bring about sustainable behavior changes via "peer coaching circles".

3. ***Interrupt and address:*** Take time out to address any racist remarks you encounter. Find out the intention behind such remarks and provide facts about COVID-19. Coach the person to rethink their actions and the impact that these comments can have on the team.

   Diversity and inclusion are necessary for resilience and recovery of business and life. Lack of inclusivity means we miss out on stellar ideas of new ways of working. This would also mean loss of goodwill and the ability to recover from crisis. Diversity and inclusion are not optional, but are a must to stay ahead of the curve.

Priya Patra is program manager at Capgemini. She is an advocate of agile project management and leads the Agile Community of Practice at Capgemini.

Project Showcase: An Engineering Success

Automotive manufacturers are constantly looking to add new features that offer vehicle owners a richer experience, a safer drive, and a higher degree of environmental compliance. As electronics in vehicles are becoming more and more complex, manufacturers are also looking for smarter solutions and integration of multiple control units in order to optimize space in the vehicle and energy management. Electronic component suppliers like Bosch are innovating solutions to cater to these trends.

Bengaluru-based Robert Bosch Engineering and Business Solutions Ltd, the second largest R&D center of Bosch worldwide, has been serving automotive companies for decades and is at the center of this shift toward highly complex electronics for vehicles of the future. The company won PMI India's Project of the Year (Micro) award in 2019 for a project that involved the upgrade and integration of two critical systems that together form the heart of a vehicle.

Bosch was approached by a customer, a US-based manufacturer of off-road vehicles such as snow mobiles, extreme sports bike etc. to design and develop a chipset that combines the functions of the Engine Control Unit (ECU) and Body Control Unit (BCU) into one unit. The integrated component will offer compatibility with the latest vehicle emission standards, enhanced engine management functions through the use of more sensors in the engine, and control new value-added luxury features in the vehicle. Moreover, the combined unit must be optimized to suit cost and space for the printed circuit board. In addition to it, the software development for both the ECU and BCU had to be adapted to meet the requirements of the integrated unit.

Complexities in the design process

Among the key challenges the team faced were coming up with an innovative design that accommodated all the functions in the limited available space. The team had never designed a chipset that integrated both the ECU and the BCU. It was a novel project even for the customer.

Off-road vehicles are different from other product categories as they are high powered and can operate in different terrains - rocky surfaces and mountains. It was difficult for the team to find relevant use cases for vehicles of this nature in order to understand all the functional and non-functional requirements at the beginning of the project.

The project called for inclusion of multiple product domains into a single product design such as the powertrain domain and the body control domain. Given the space constraint, there were restrictions on the options available for the design rules of electronic circuits.

The client had imposed a target cost of the product and it was a challenge to meet that target, especially with the inclusion of additional functionalities and price increases of electronic components across the market.

Lastly, there were cultural and time zone factors to consider. The project spanned three continents – the development center in India, the Bosch headquarters in Germany, the customer in the US and the manufacturing facility in Mexico.

Adaptive project management, mature processes

The project was going to be a test of the engineering and project management capabilities of the Bosch team in Bengaluru. The timeline was stringent, the budget was tight, and the team was venturing into a new territory. The team decided to conduct simultaneous development of the hardware, software, and mechanical aspects of the project so as to meet the customer expectations.

"We went with adaptive project management where we followed the Waterfall model with some flavors of agile. We adopted rapid prototyping that helped in incorporating customer feedback into the product design as we progressed so that we don't lose valuable time at the later stages. The adaptive approach helped us to also save costs since we didn't have to repeat tests later for the verification and validation process," said Pramod Motiram Phate, technical project manager, Robert Bosch.

The team from Robert Bosch receiving the Project of the Year (Micro category) award at PMI India National Conference in Hyderabad in October 2019.

The project required innovative thinking to achieve a desirable outcome. To accommodate all the functions in the limited space, the team used system in package (SIP) technology. SIP is a way of bundling two or more integrated circuits inside a single package. They also used front-loading and simulation tools to integrate the body control functions into the ECU. Scalable architecture was applied so as to reuse the design for multiple project variants with minimal cost and effort.

The team followed the company's internal project management processes for integration management. The Bosch engine management development process library has evolved over decades and takes care of various automotive standards, data integrity, and data transfer within various verticals; for example, the plant receives bill of materials via SAP.

The company's advanced project management tools also helped in the smooth delivery of the project. The team had access to the integrated global project management tool to plan and track schedule, budget, and cost; the hardware information system to record and track electronic components, parts, and bill of materials; a stakeholder register; a responsibility assignment matrix, and a standardized process of quality gates.

Stakeholder management was another key aspect since project success depended on how well the various teams built trust among themselves. The team in India took care of the development, product verification and validation, while the vehicle testing, industrialization, and system integration was done in Mexico and USA.

Bosch initiated a face-to-face workshop so as to understand and communicate one another's requirements better. Through regular simultaneous engineering team meetings and project review meetings, project status was regularly shared across all the teams. In these meetings, teams could give a heads-up about potential bottlenecks and ask for support on time.

"We overcame a number of complex challenges and successfully delivered the product to the customer. We owe this success to our internal processes that have been developed over the past 130 years, strong technical capabilities, adaptive project management, and strong communication that helped us to build trust among the various teams," added Mr. Phate.

Common Ground Webinar Series

PMI India launched the Common Ground webinar series, which is a curation of knowledge-based virtual events to give professionals an opportunity to learn from subject matter experts from different fields.

The series that kickstarted on 3 May takes place every Saturday at 4:30 pm IST. Each of the webinars has had around 800-1,000 attendees. PMI certified professionals can earn PDUs for attending these sessions.

You can watch these recordings on our YouTube channel. For future Common Ground webinars, enroll here.

PMI India volunteers Koushik Srinivasan and Monika Muddamshetty were moderators for the webinars.

PANKAJ RAI

Senior Vice President, Strategic Planning, Wells Fargo

Pankaj Rai spoke about the need to reinvent oneself to survive and thrive in the post-Covid-19 world. He elaborated on what he called the '5C Framework' or the five skills that will be in short supply in future – compassion, conviction, creativity, curiosity, and communication.

SCOTT AMBLER

Vice President and Chief Scientist for Disciplined Agile, PMI

Scott Ambler provided an introduction to PMI's Disciplined Agile and how it applies to a post-COVID-19 world where project managers will need to respond quickly to changes around them.

SUJAN ROY

Head of international business - passenger vehicles, Tata Motors

Sujan Roy laid down 13 steps to stay relevant and deliver what is expected of an individual. Explained through personal anecdotes and stories, he highlighted the importance of keeping the fire in the belly burning, knowing what to prioritize each day, choosing what to care about, going beyond the comfort zone, being well-read, and writing down one's dreams.

DR. DEEPA BHIDE

Vice president, clinical content management, Coviti

Dr. Deepa Bhide spoke about being on the frontline of the fight against Covid-19, which she termed a "healthcare hurricane that has hit all the cities at the same time." She highlighted the importance of resource planning and management, motivation, and ethical considerations and dilemmas in the healthcare sector.

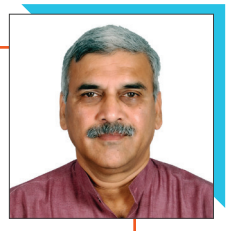
SUMAN GHOSE

Co-founder, Inroads Leadership Development

Suman Ghose threw light on how the human body and mind react to change, and the need to find one's own coping mechanisms. He took the help of theories and books by experts of this subject to provide answers as to why human beings behave in a certain manner and what they can do to respond better to external stimuli.

LT. COL. (RETD.) L. SHRI HARSHA

Techno-legal consultant



Lt. Col. (retd.) L. Shri Harsha spoke about ways to manage stakeholders better. He identified different personas in a team who affect the way a team functions, such as a surprise springer who hides information or a blocker who places hurdles on the way, and what strategies must one possess to manage such behaviors better.

RADHIKA VACHANI

Founder, The Institute of Inner Wellbeing & Excellence

Radhika Vachani reminded participants that though the current situation is unsettling because of the uncertainties, nothing in the physical environment is permanent. She urged participants to take a step back and not let the negativity surrounding us affect them. Instead they must understand the connections between our mind and physical state, and know how to stay positive and mindful.

EXCITING CONTESTS HELD DURING THE LOCKDOWN

We are thrilled to share the two contests held during the lockdown received an overwhelming response. Here's a quick peek at the contests and the winners

PMI Workspace Contest

This was call out to all those working from home, to share photographs of their unique WFH space.

Nazmul Hasan

Winner of Workspace Contest

His cozy nook with its quirky furniture made working from home seem like great fun!

#PMIworkspacecontest #PMIIndia #projectmanagement

PMI Upskill contest

This was shout out to all those who used the lockdown phase to learn new skills that could be applied in day to day work/life.

PASSIONATE LEARNERS DISCOVERED!

Meet the duo who used the lockdown period to upskill, so that when they get back to work, they would be more than ready to take on challenges that come their way!

Raghunath Panneerselvam
Project Manager, Ayonik, Chennai

Sreejith Venugopal
Project Lead,
L&T Technology Services Ltd., Bengaluru

#PMIupskillcontest #learnsomethingnew #PMIIndia #projectmanagement

PMI KERALA CHAPTER

VIRTUAL ANNUAL MEETING

PMI Kerala Chapter conducted its first virtual annual general on 18 April. Around 70 chapter members attended the two-hour-long session.

Chapter vice president, operations, Harikuttan K. welcomed the attendees and chapter president Dr. Krishnakumar T.I. shared the year's highlights. This was followed by a presentation of reports by the chapter's vice presidents.

The new board members for the current financial year were also formally introduced to the members in the virtual meeting. The chapter had completed the election process in March and the open positions filled unopposed.

PMIK-KAVACH: COVID-19 RESPONSE

On 30 March, PMI Kerala Chapter, with the support of Dr. Sreejith R., consultant pediatrician and honorary secretary, Indian Medical Association, Thiruvananthapuram, released an educational video of his talk on COVID-19 on YouTube.

The chapter, in association with Pallium India, also came forward to support patients with chronic illnesses such as diabetes, thyroid disorders, and dialysis care post kidney operation who were suffering due to the lockdown. The program, PMIK- Kavach, was launched with around 75 volunteers from the chapter, Pallium India, Red Cross Society, and Signature of Nishagandhi.

Pallium India founder and chairman, and Padma Shri awardee, Dr. M R Rajagopal, briefed the volunteers about the objective of this initiative and provided them guidelines. Separate volunteer teams were set up to the manage the call center, assess and direct requests from the call center to the administrative team, coordinate and undertake site visits, including buying medicine and helping with laboratory tests. The chapter organized government approvals for volunteers to move around during the lockdown. Clinical and medical support to the needy was offered free of cost.

The chapter's technology partner, TravelSPoC, supported in the development of an application to track the progress on the requests that volunteers were receiving from patients. The team followed an agile process for project execution with daily morning briefings. The patients, volunteers, and their activities were tracked using a Kanban board in the system, which made it easy to manage and monitor volunteer activities. The tool was able to track the requests raised by the patients, assign a volunteer according to a patient's location, and ensure the right support was given. The admin team, comprising Pallium and PMI Kerala Chapter senior leaders, had access to reports on the status of patient requests and volunteer tasks.

As many as 28 requests for medical supplies and 12 clinical supports were completed in the first week. By mid-May, over 270 patients received help with medical supplies and laboratory tests. The supporting organizations have expressed their willingness to now expand the program to other parts of Kerala.

Chapter volunteers reaching out to Pallium India beneficiaries during the lockdown.

WEBINAR SERIES

The chapter has been engaging with members with a series of webinars, thus providing opportunities to members to acquire Professional Development Units (PDUs). The chapter's Wednesday talks are now being held in association with other professional bodies.
The following webinars, conducted in April and May, were exclusively for chapter members:

- "Leading from the middle" by Ramam Atmakuri, executive vice chair, LV Prasad Eye Institute
- "Rebuilding the post-pandemic Indian economy" by Dr. Jayaram Nayar, director, TKM Institute of Management
- "The new normal – project management after COVID-19" by Dr. Srini Srinivasan, managing director, PMI India
- "Sales with grace in challenging times" by Dr. Shaju P Unni, corporate trainer and sales evangelist
- "Finance for non-finance managers" by M. Gowri Shankar, former CFO, Vizhinjam Seaport
- "Adapting and driving change in a disrupted world" by Dileepan Moorkanat, HP Enterprise
- "Think free, break free - A guide to out-of-the-box thinking" by Anil Kumar Pandala, former vice president, IL&FS
- "Life is beautiful : Believe or not" by Rajat Karunakaran, CEO, ProBiz
- "Strategic design and project delivery - bridging the gap" by Lee R Lambert, PMI Fellow

Besides these, the chapter hosted and supported a number of webinars with other organizations such as the Institution of Engineers (India) Kerala State Centre; the Computer Society of India, Trivandrum Chapter; the Internet Society, Trivandrum Chapter; the Vakkom Moulavi Foundation Trust, Trivandrum; and the IEEE Engineering in Medicine and Biology, Kerala Chapter.

ONLINE CERTIFICATION TRAINING

After PMI made it possible for aspirants to take certification exams from home, Kerala Chapter decided to resume certification training that had been on hold since March. The chapter is now conducting online training for PMI Project Management Professional (PMP)® certification exam. The training will span four weekends for four-and-a-half hours each instead of two weekends of 36 hours in the face-to-face version. For PMP refresher courses, members need to spend four-and-a-half hours each over two days of the weekend. For PMI Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP)® certification training, online sessions have been planned across two weekends for five-and-a-half hours each.

PMI CHENNAI CHAPTER

WEBINAR SERIES

PMI Chennai Chapter continued to engage with chapter members through knowledge-sharing webinars during the COVID-19 lockdown period of April and May. A number of webinars of one hour each were conducted. Two of them were hosted as part of the PMI Chennai Chapter's Global Communities of Practice initiative and were attended by members of the PMI North Carolina Chapter in the US.
The following webinars were conducted:

- Peter May, author of "The Lazy Project Manager" on how to introduce fun in projects
- Prakash Seshadri Sharma, a celebrity coach, on how to create a compelling future through balanced decision-making
- Sudhir Rao, leadership coach, KoeN MetaConsulting, on how to lead and manage stakeholders during difficult times
- Sathya Kumar, founder of Tycoon+, on the "New World Order" post COVID-19
- Sivaram Athmakuri, chapter vice president - certification and outreach, on the essentials of project management in three different webinars, including besides a session on an agile mindset for delivering customer delight and the project mindset for startups
- Syed Nazir Razik, president, PMI Chennai Chapter provided an introduction to agile

PMI MUMBAI CHAPTER

PM FORUM GOES ONLINE

PMI Mumbai Chapter has taken its PM Forum series online in the form of webinars every week. These webinars of two hours each have helped members acquire two PDUs.

Every weekend members have had the opportunity to learn from a rich pool of speakers.

The following are the webinars the chapter organized in April and May:

- "Project managers – brace the x-factor of digital transformation for success" and "Agility in COVID-19 era and beyond" by Priya Patra, program manager, Capgemini
- "Agile mindset for leadership" by Preeti Kate, agile coach and consultant, Tata Consultancy Services
- "The power of emotional intelligence – how it impacts agile teams" by Nagini Chandramouli, vice president and senior agile coach, BA Continuum
- "Design thinking – from ideas to innovation" by Ashutosh Bhatawadekar, enterprise agile coach
- "Servant leadership" by Kalpesh Vyas, consulting bid manager and technical solution lead, IBM
- "Emotional intelligence for project leaders in the new normal" by Fahad Ahmed, former president, PMI Karachi Chapter and head of project management office (Pakistan), Avanza Solutions
- "Robotic process automation for project and program managers" by Madan Upadhyay, founder and CEO, Emergen Teck

The chapter conducted a virtual workshop on visual thinking by corporate trainers, Agalya G S and Nitasha Nambiar, on 23 May. The paid workshop had 11 attendees.

The chapter has extended support to COVID-19 warriors through donations from members. The donations will go toward the following causes:

- Providing water bottles to police personnel managing check posts and those on duty on the streets.
- Helping migrant workers who want to travel back to their home towns with train fare, food packets and water.
- Providing face masks to frontline workers.

So far the chapter has received donations of more than Rs 1.15 lakh.

PMI WEST BENGAL CHAPTER

DISCIPLINED AGILE AWARENESS SESSION

Leading telecom company, Reliance Jio, had expressed interest in an introductory session on Disciplined Agile (DA). Sumit Kumar Sinha, president, PMI West Bengal Chapter, delivered two sessions for the company's finance team to establish the relevance of DA in the current market scenario. One session focused on the basics of agile project management, and the second session was on DA awareness building. Almost 180 senior managers of the company joined in the session from the company's headquarters in Mumbai.

After the end of the session, the team realized the need for similar sessions for their employees located in different regions. Next on the agenda are sessions for the Jio HR team in four other regions. Mr. Sinha will be conducting these sessions.

PMI PEARL CITY CHAPTER

VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS

The PMI Pearl City Chapter Academy conducted a series of virtual workshops for its members during the lockdown period. The work facilitators were Ganesh Puthucode, PMP, and Mohit Mathur, PMP.

These were workshops on project management basics for the Amara Raja Group, and two workshops for those aspiring for the PMP® certification – one was for Deloitte while the second was open to the public.

CERTIFICATION AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

The chapter also conducted two free certification awareness sessions -- "Kickstart your PMP® journey" and "What it takes to succeed in PMI-ACP®."
These sessions were formatted like webinars and were designed to provide awareness to professionals on PMI certifications and the professional benefits of certification. These sessions are scheduled to run once per month.
With the lockdown exerting different pressures on professionals, the chapter decided to cover topics of not just professional interest but also on physical and mental wellbeing of members through a series of virtual sessions. The following were the topics of these sessions:

- Building immunity – A scientific way
- Optimizing LinkedIn for professionals
- Managing physical and mental well-being of self and loved ones
- Law of attraction
- Hope over fear - The human side of project economy

VIRTUAL CHAPTER MEETING

The chapter conducted its first virtual members' networking meeting on 23 May. Around 120 members from across the state attended it.

The three-hour long meeting featured chapter updates and announcements, new initiatives undertaken, an engaging panel discussion, and a quiz. The panel discussion included four speakers who talked about agile delivery management in the new normal.

PMI REGION 11

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

PMI Region 11 recently launched a new initiative – the PMI Region 11 Women Engagement Committee. Region 11 includes all the nine PMI chapters in India, along with one chapter each in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

The initiative brings together women project managers from this region to better understand the challenges that women professionals face, create a safe and reliable network of support, and strategize and design initiatives that promote a culture of inclusion and engagement in chapter boards, volunteers, and membership.

The committee organized a webinar on 28 May to discuss inclusive leadership and women empowerment. Speaking on the need to invest in inclusive leadership, Dr. Srini Srinivasan, managing director, PMI India, said, "Inclusive leadership makes good sense; it provides tangible benefits in terms of both better financial performance and innovation in organizations."

Jennifer Tharp, PMI Board Member, said COVID-19 was a reminder that people depended on one another and when everybody worked together it benefited society. She spoke about the under representation of women in leadership and the importance of celebrating the successes of women leaders – from Indra Nooyi, the former CEO of PepsiCo to Anuradha TK, project director at Indian Space Research Organisation.

The webinar was moderated by Komal Mathur, chair, Region 11 Women Engagement Committee.

(Chapter news contributors are Jayakishore S R, PMP, Akhila Gowri Shankar, PMP, Nandakumar S., Komal Mathur, and Manoj Sarasappan, PMP)

STAR VOLUNTEERS

In this column, we shine the spotlight on our star volunteers from PMI India chapters who have made immense contributions through their dedication and passion. This is your opportunity to know a little bit about these remarkable men and women from our practitioner community.

YOGESH JOSHI

Senior General Manager – Business Development and Engineering, Bestkoki Automotive

Manager – Webinar Learning Bytes, PMI North India Chapter

Been a PMI member since: August 2016

What attracted me to PMI: The opportunity to learn best practices from PMI guidelines to enhance development of self, organization, and society.

My dream project as a project manager: Being a non-IT professional, I dreamed to become certified as a Project Management Professional (PMP)® in a stipulated time and I did it well.

My proudest PMI volunteer moment: Contributing to PMI NIC Learning-Bytes team to deliver a series of webinars successfully.

A life lesson I learned as a volunteer: The more you sweat in training and volunteering, the less you bleed on ground.

I am looking forward to: Engaging more in volunteer activities to solve societal challenges and to work on future technologies.

JONATHAN JUSTUS

Thomson Reuters

Editorial Board, PMI Pearl City Chapter

Been a PMI member since: 2019

What attracted me to PMI: In 2010, I saw PMI transforming lives and careers. I wanted to be acquainted with this institute from the day I was introduced to it.

My dream project as a project manager: I want to be a good team player, communicator, administrator, and leader.

My proudest PMI volunteer moment: The release of *Spandana* newsletter. Working with the editorial board members is an unforgettable experience.

A life lesson I learned as a volunteer: You need to bear the hitting by the chisel to become a beautiful sculpture.

I am looking forward to: Contributing, helping contributors give their best, and removing hurdles for members to come out of their cocoon.

ALAKANANDA RAO

CEO & Director, Alvari Systems

Volunteer, PMI West Bengal Chapter

Been a PMI member since: 2011

What attracted me to PMI: The way they capsuled all that we have learned on projects.

My dream project as a project manager: Using technology to overcome the Covid-19 pandemic.

My proudest PMI volunteer moment: When my contribution to PMI's A *Guide to Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide*, Sixth Edition was acknowledged.

A life lesson I learned as a volunteer: Life and work is not solely about earning money.

I am looking forward to: Continued engagement with PMI chapters, and national and global teams.

KAPIL GUNJE

Flextronics Technologies India Pvt Ltd

Volunteer, PMI Pune Deccan Chapter

Been a PMI member since: Sept 2015

What attracted me to PMI: The PMI Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct and the project management methodology that uses different knowledge areas throughout the project lifecycle.

My dream project as a project manager: Managing an engineering procurement and construction project allotted by the Government of India by using a project management methodology defined in the *PMBOK® Guide*.

My proudest PMI volunteer moment: River cleaning activity at Rajgurunagar in Pune.

A life lesson I learned as a volunteer: Leading a team effectively with devotion and dedication fetches good results. Every project requires micro-planning.

I am looking forward to: Participating in social activities planned by PMI Pune Deccan Chapter. Being an active member of the chapter Board and representing PMI India on an international platform.

KAUSHIK MUKUNDAN

Project Manager, IBM India

Assistant Vice President, Technical, PMI Bangalore Chapter

Been a PMI member since: August 2017

What attracted me to PMI: Global standards and best practices in project management, and opportunities to learn, network, and grow.

My dream project as a project manager: To manage a project that involves nation building.

My proudest PMI volunteer moment: Being part of the organizing team of the Project Management Practitioners Conference of Bangalore chapter. Also, graduating as a PMI India Champion.

A life lesson I learned as a volunteer: Active volunteerism fulfils your heart.

I am looking forward to: Taking up more volunteering opportunities and serving the project management community.

RAJU DHOLE

Project Manager, IBM India

Assistant Vice President, PMI Bangalore Chapter

Been a PMI member since: 2015

What attracted me to PMI: Networking, learning new things, meeting people.

My dream project as a project manager: First web-services project in my organization. Developed seamless web interface with a third-party vendor. Earned respect within the organization.

My proudest PMI volunteer moment: Listening to the presentation on the Statue of Liberty during Project Management Practitioners' Conference 2019.

A life lesson I learned as a volunteer: Expect nothing. You will learn new things, meet new people, and make new friends.

I am looking forward to: Life with the new normal with new energy.

VENKATA SUBRAMANIAN

Project Manager, Datamatics Digital Limited (Techjini)

Vice President, Branches, PMI Kerala Chapter

Been a PMI member since: 2013

What attracted me to PMI: The opportunity to network with leaders from the project management community and a chance to volunteer.

My dream project as a project manager: To be part of Indian government's project implementation, which helps the society.

My proudest PMI volunteer moment: The volunteering opportunity I had with PMI Kerala Chapter.

A life lesson I learned as a volunteer: Managing time.

I am looking forward to: Learning, contributing, growing professionally, and supporting society through volunteering.

RAJESHWARI GUDDETI

Project Manager, Parexel

Member, PMI Pearl City Chapter

Been a PMI member since: Sept 2019

What attracted me to PMI: I wanted to join PMI only to become certified as a Project Management Professional (PMP)®. But once I joined, I was astonished to see the scale of programs PMI is engaged in. The NIRD program and *PMBOK® Guide* in Braille are amazing.

My dream project as a project manager: To be part of a full-length project in alliance with the government for supporting organic farming and farmers.

My proudest PMI volunteer moment: Getting in touch with farmers and village women, understanding their problems, suggesting solutions, and working toward them.

A life lesson I learned as a volunteer: Every person can make a difference.

I am looking forward to: Contributing to the chapter and society development through continuous and consistent efforts.

MANISH DEDHIYA

Senior Manager,
Sony Pictures Networks

Secretary, PMI Mumbai Chapter

Been a PMI member since: August 2013

What attracted me to PMI: Sharing the best practices across the project management domain, giving back to the community, and developing networking and leadership skills.

My dream project as a project manager: Create a better place to live and work.

My proudest PMI volunteer moment: Getting the Volunteer of the Year recognition and a chance to be on the board of PMI Mumbai Chapter.

A life lesson I learned as a volunteer: Giving back to the community.

I am looking forward to: More things to do regarding the Covid-19 pandemic, help take chapter activities to the next level, and learning new skills.

SUNDARAM MUTHUKUMARASAMY

Manager – Connected Cars,
Renault Nissan Technology Business Centre India

Assistant Vice President – Professional Development,

PMI Chennai Chapter

Been a PMI member since: 2011

What attracted me to PMI: During the initial years of my career, I witnessed many projects getting aborted. I believe proper project management ensures it reaches its goal. Successfully certified for PMP® in 2013.

My proudest PMI volunteer moment: Being the master of ceremony in the PMI Chennai chapter conference, Sangamam 2019.

A life lesson I learned as a volunteer: You can inspire many by your positivity and dedication in what you're doing. Real life experience in PMI Chennai Chapter events.

A person who inspires me: Former president of India, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam who proved India's capability in space technology.

If I were to start a marketing campaign for PMI, my slogan would be… Always plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the ark.

Project Management Institute.

Inviting article submissions

Calling all PMI/Chapter Members and credential holders to submit their original writings on the topic of project management. Earn PDUs for your published article!

Submission deadline for the next issue - **July 15, 2020**

Email your article along with your recent photograph to editor.manageindia@pmi-india.org

HAVE YOU BEEN A WARRIOR OR WORRIER?

Project Management

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Faced a crisis at work due to the pandemic situation?

If you applied project management/agile practices to overcome the challenges, do let us know.

Top stories will be featured in the next issue of Manage India and also on our social media pages.

Click here to share your story on or before 30th June 2020.

Project Management Institute

Learning from On-ground Experiences

In this new column, *Manage India* talks to practitioners who have made a big impact on the PMI India Champion program

GOWRISHANKAR CHANDRASEKARAN
CHAMPION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER – PMI INDIA CHAMPION PROGRAM

HOW HAS THE CHAMPION PROGRAM HELPED YOU AS AN INDIVIDUAL? PLEASE ELABORATE ON HOW YOU HAVE BENEFITED AS A PROJECT MANAGER AND A LEADER.

For me, it has been a great learning experience all along. It allowed me to expand my network at the office as I started my journey as a Champion graduate in 2014 and worked with my colleagues to create visibility for the program. We started in a small way with intra-office communication and slowly graduated to managing standees/fliers and hosting events, including working as an emcee and sponsor at the same time. Many a times, as a volunteer, we just learn from on-ground experiences and that is the best teacher one can get. It also gave me an opportunity to lead the team to expand our work by hosting Champions several times at our office. I have made many friends along the way and learned a lot from my mentors and leaders. All this has helped me contribute in a more strategic manner to the program design. We have evolved in governance, structure, and advocacy over the years. Recently, a team of volunteers from Intel was part of our first-ever virtual Champion meeting due to the COVID-19 situation.

WHY WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THE CHAMPION PROGRAM TO A NEW VOLUNTEER? WHAT SHOULD SOMEONE EXPECT TO GAIN BY JOINING IT?

This is a great start for a new volunteer as it gives you an environment where you get easier access to connections and sponsorship, and a good platform to gain visibility while contributing to the program. You gain self-confidence, establish a good network with fellow champions from across various sectors, and learn from the seniors and leaders in the governance team on volunteering selflessly. This program allows you to explore your strengths and unlock your personal capability to the fullest.

HOW HAVE PMI MEMBERSHIP AND CERTIFICATIONS HELPED YOU AND YOUR ORGANIZATION OR TEAM?

Being associated with PMI has been very helpful to us. The work group has closely collaborated with PMI India to develop various programs. Our in-house team has successfully supported over 200 Project Management Professional (PMP)® certifications by enabling individuals to prepare for the exam. Many of our colleagues have been a part of the Champion Program and have grown along with it.

Passion Meets Limitless Opportunities

LINCY SIVADAS
SENIOR CHAMPION

HOW HAS THE CHAMPION PROGRAM HELPED YOU AS AN INDIVIDUAL? PLEASE ELABORATE ON HOW YOU HAVE BENEFITED AS A PROJECT MANAGER AND A LEADER.

Working hard is just doing your job — that's the baseline. But working hard and getting noticed requires more. It's about smart networking around you, and that is exactly where I truly belong now – the Champions family.

Though I have been associated with PMI for some time, it was three years back that I came across this program by sheer coincidence and applied for it. I was steered and supported by industry leaders whom I would not have been able to meet otherwise. The guidance and support I get from fellow champions and senior mentors in this group has molded me to become a strong part of the project management process within the organization.

Be it internal training or connecting with my peers within the company or elsewhere, the Champion Program has helped me tremendously. The Champion Program has given me exposure to the latest trends in tools and technique within the project management community. Frequent connections with fellow champions through regular meets and other modes of communication have helped me stay ahead of the latest trends in project management.

Being a champion has helped me gain a new outlook on executing projects and programs within my organization. I'm able to guide fellow managers, and propose and implement new concepts within our group and showcase improvements to the team.

WHY WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THE CHAMPION PROGRAM TO A NEW VOLUNTEER? WHAT SHOULD SOMEONE EXPECT TO GAIN BY JOINING IT?

Champions are a group of diverse professionals connected through a single thought – passion.

Every project manager who is passionate about their profession should take up this opportunity. This is a unique platform where passion meets limitless opportunity and professionalism.

However, to become a champion is not an easy task. It requires immense dedication and perseverance towards one's profession and hunger for knowledge. In return, the recognition and rewards you receive are just enormous. The opportunity you get to interact with fellow champions, and the guidance and mentoring offered by the senior members from different industries is something I cannot think of getting elsewhere.

HOW HAVE PMI MEMBERSHIP AND CERTIFICATIONS HELPED YOU AND YOUR ORGANIZATION OR TEAM?

Being associated with PMI for over eight years now, I can truly understand the doors it has opened for me. The vast amount of knowledge and the ability to access the latest trends in the project management community has helped me keep up with this fast-changing atmosphere.

From an organization's point of view, we are capable of building an enthusiastic project management community, which is an active part of most PMI and chapter activities. This, in turn, gives our organization an opportunity to showcase our capability to our clientele.

As an individual, I'm able to help my team members achieve their targets, by raising the bar and supporting them throughout the journey, be it through technical guidance or emotional support.

Project Management Institute

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