MANAGE South Asia

PMI Project Management Institute®

#PMSAC22 Conference Special

Looking Beyond Traditional Methods: Reshaping the Future of Work

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PMI SOUTH ASIA PRESENTS ONCE UPON A TIME IN MUMBAI STARRING PROJECT MANAGERS RELEASING ON 9-10 DEC 2022

Dear Practitioner,

In today's fast-pivoting world of project management, it is no longer acceptable or satisfactory to just deliver projects on time and within budget. Project managers need to inculcate attributes, such as collaboration, resilience, business agility skills, and mission-critical knowledge, to see and achieve beyond the obvious.

To help steer an organization in an uncertain future, leaders need a perpetual transformation mindset. The pressing need of the moment is to focus on new ways of business thinking, cultural change and cross-functionality.

We explored the theme, "Project Management—Hybrid and Beyond," at the 14th Project Management South Asia Conference 2022 on 9 and 10 December in Mumbai. This year, we were delighted to be able to return to the physical setting—the warmth and camaraderie of face-to-face meetings were palpable. I'm sure delegates made use of the opportunity to build business relationships and connections at a deeper level.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to the industry leaders and project practitioners who shared their knowledge and insights with our delegates. Special thanks to the all-women crew of Project Navika Sagar Parikrama, who have defied all gender stereotypes and are an inspiration to the nation.

I deeply appreciate PMI Mumbai Chapter's relentless effort and dedication to make the conference a huge success. Congratulations!

In this special edition of *Manage South Asia*, besides conference coverage, you will find a report on our recently released *Pulse of the Profession®* 2023 report. Learn about the power skills that help professionals redefine success.

Also look out for a feature on the "Top 10 Most Influential Projects" in South Asia. I hope you gain valuable insights from these breakthrough projects that are shaping the world for the better.

My sincere thanks to all the speakers, sponsors, delegates, chapter leaders, volunteers and practitioners for your support. I look forward to seeing you at the Project Management South Asia Conference 2023 in Chennai.

I wish you and your family a very Happy New Year!

Kind regards,

Dr. Srini Srinivasan

Managing Director,
PMI South Asia

Dear Members,

It was a great feeling to return to an in-person event after a gap of three years. The absence of face-to-face connections made virtual events quite impersonal. This year, we were able to shake hands, look into a colleague's eyes, meet new people and socialize in person, which is a part of the PMI culture.

The conference planning process commenced in January 2022, with an expectation to get a target of 600 delegates to attend it. We experienced some challenges in putting all the pieces together. However, our prior experience of hosting conferences guided us through the process. Eventually, everything worked out well. More than 560 delegates registered for the conference. None of the listed speakers dropped out at the last minute. The conference ran as per schedule without any delays or hiccups.

This year's conference was centered on "Project Management—Hybrid and Beyond." It provided scope to explore new ideas and glean insights into current trends and critical issues facing the new ways of working. I'm certain the delegates have gone back with a deeper understanding of how to manage issues related to remote work, moonlighting or a hybrid project environment.

The fresh perspectives and possibilities shared by the experts answered the most puzzling question facing practitioners today: "How do we handle the next decade?" That I think was the biggest takeaway of the conference.

Warm regards,

Jacob Zachariah

Conference Chair and President, PMI Mumbai Chapter

LOOKING BEYOND TRADITIONAL METHODS: RESHAPING THE FUTURE OF WORK

Project managers need to break away from the shackles of scope, cost and time, and adopt new approaches that work best amid unexpected challenges.

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A one-size-fits-all approach is losing its relevance in a swiftly changing project environment. Professionals at all levels need to acquire new skills, tools and mindsets to navigate future uncertainties. Leaders must think and dig beyond the obvious to deliver quality-driven outcomes.

These were some overriding thoughts that emerged from the discussions at the 14th Project Management South Asia Conference (PMSAC) 2022 on 9 and 10 December in Mumbai. Based on the theme, "Project Management—Hybrid and Beyond," the conference was hosted by the PMI Mumbai Chapter.

The event, which reconvened in person after a gap of three years, saw project practitioners, business leaders, defense personnel and PMI chapter members coming together to exchange industry-shaping insights to navigate the challenges ahead. More than 560 delegates from India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka attended the conference.

Jacob Zachariah, conference chair and president of the PMI Mumbai Chapter, extended a warm welcome to the delegates and set the context for the conference. It was followed by a video message from Pierre LeManh, president and CEO of PMI. He said, "As projects grow increasingly complex, project professionals must develop a robust set of skills, disciplines and new ways of working. That is true across the world. PMI stands ready to help you along your journey."

In his inaugural address, Dr. Srini Srinivasan, regional managing director of PMI South Asia, emphasized that the role of a project manager is to steer the team from confusion and chaos to order and security. Talking about the effort that went into organizing the organization, he said, "I would like to acknowledge the tremendous work done by the PMI Mumbai Chapter to put the event together. It is a living, breathing example of what project management is all about."

In the opening keynote, Sudhish Panicker, managing director and head of BNY Mellon International Operations (India), said industries need to consider an "amoebic structure" of work culture to bring agility and flexibility.

Shailesh Gandhi, activist for Right to Information and former central information commissioner, brought into focus the inadequacies of the Indian judicial system. He also urged project managers to go beyond their tasks to find solutions for timely dispensation of justice.

Sandeep Kumar, founder and CEO of ProductDossier, highlighted why project managers need to understand key systemic issues to improve project margins.

The final keynote was delivered by Achin Gupta, CEO of One India Business at Cipla, who spoke on reimagining the future of work and why consumers are looking for more participation in decision-making processes.

Day two continued with the same level of excitement and energy, with a

welcome note from Biren Parekh, the director of the conference.

Brigadier Sushil Bhasin, coach on military-inspired leadership and author, pointed out that one must be flexible and adaptable rather than being the strongest or fastest to tackle tough times.

Vishal Verma, construction program implementation manager at Burns & McDonnell, spoke on the direct correlation between client success and organization culture.

A panel discussion moderated by Commodore Abhishek Kankan was a high point of the second day. It featured six women officers of Project Navika Sagar Parikrama who shared inspiring stories on overcoming challenges while circumnavigating the globe on an Indian-built boat, INSV Tarini. They assertively put across a message that gender does not define one's capabilities.

Renu Menon, senior practice manager, AWS ProServe, spoke about the role of IT not just as an enabler but also as a driver of business outcomes.

Other speakers who delivered insightful sessions from the parallel track sessions were: Deepak Mulay, program management, Burns & McDonnell; Ajay Aggarwal, managing partner, Humane Design and Innovation; Monika Muddamshetty, director, International Gaming Technology; and Satyajit Hange, founding farmer, Two Brothers Organic Farms.

The event culminated with an engaging fireside chat between Dr. Srinivasan and K. R. S. Jamwal, executive director of Tata Industries. They discussed why leaders need to "unlearn and relearn" to resonate with changing times and also the importance of power skills.

PMSAC presented the PMI South Asia Project of the Year awards during the conference. IBM, Bosch, Tata Advanced Systems and Larsen & Toubro Hydro won in the micro, small, medium and large categories, respectively. UST and BumbleB Trust were the winners in the categories of contribution to the community and special recognition, respectively.

The host for the conference, the PMI Mumbai Chapter, passed on the baton for PMSAC 2023 to the PMI Chennai Chapter.

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Our multidisciplinary professionals provide actionable solutions to simplify complex projects. Explore the many career opportunities at our office in Mumbai.

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Simplifying
PROGRAM MANAGEMENT
for Large-Scale Capital Projects

There are many challenges involved in managing a large number of projects. From successfully planning and executing the projects to maintaining efficiencies among diverse stakeholders systems, there is enormous pressure on the program manager.

The use of a program management information system (PMIS) — which includes comprehensive data, dashboards and software integration to help organize and execute projects — can help ease the pain project owners are experiencing with their large capital programs.

With a lot of the challenges project owners are facing, including labor shortages and a slow supply chain, a PMIS can help keep large capital utility projects on schedule and on budget. Some of the benefits include:

Maximizing Resource Efficiency by Minimizing Data Manipulation

During a time when staffing shortages are abundant, it is essential to maximize the efficiencies of existing and new staff. Using a PMIS can simplify the steps needed to track, analyze and ultimately respond to the data outputs.

Instead of using multiple systems to track a bunch of separate data sources, program management dashboards backed by a robust PMIS streamline all pertinent information into one simplified location. This means that the program data is entered only once in any system and fewer pairs of eyes are needed in sorting through information and completing tasks.

Staying in the Know

The PMIS makes it possible to know at a moment's notice where each project is in terms of both its life cycle and its status, and the information is available to utility project owners 24/7.

Because the PMIS dashboards marry items like task statuses, submittal information and change orders with the current schedule, owners can quickly and easily gain an understanding of how the project is progressing. The PMIS also provides actionable, trustworthy data in almost real time.

Managing by Exception

The PMIS dashboards can be customized based on the goals of the utility project's owner. Such customization includes the ability to apply "business rules" — allowing the system to look for specific errors or items to flag the moment they happen, before they become a part of the project record.

The main benefit of applying these rules is that instead of finding out later down the line that a certain item wasn't requested for procurement or that a goal wasn't met by a target date, the utility owner can be notified immediately. This way, the project avoids delays that could occur if the information were not discovered until later.

Putting Concepts Into Practice

Early in 2020, an electrical transmission utility reached out to Burns & McDonnell for help with program management on its large-scale capital project. The utility had a plan and funding in place and needed assistance executing the project from beginning to end, to see that the project would be executed at a certain pace to meet the utility's particular financial goals.

Despite initiating the project at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the help of our program management services, including a customized PMIS systems solution and dashboards, the utility was able to keep its original timeline, and the utility's goals are being met year after year.
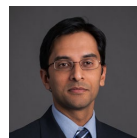
by
Vishal Verma, PMP

Leading in a Hybrid World

Sudish Panicker, managing director and head, BNY Mellon International Operations, India

Sudish Panicker is a chartered accountant and cost accountant with experience in accounting, financial services management, commercial banking and retail. He is on the national council of the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) Global Capability Centers (GCC). He is the co-chair of the Pune chapter of NASSCOM GCC.

Business organizations follow a variety of structures—a physical one that is usually static, and an organizational structure that is dynamic in nature. Moreover, businesses are either vertically or horizontally aligned to manage their projects.

But today organizations need to think of yet another format—an "amoebic structure" with no definite shape but with sufficient agility, flexibility and assurance that the structure will determine the right course of action to manage projects and obtain the desired results. For instance, during the pandemic-related lockdown, businesses adopted alternative working patterns and consumers realized that they could get a variety of goods delivered at their doorstep. That, in turn, led businesses to reinvent their operating models and get closer to the consumers. With an "amoebic structure," organizations can easily accommodate such change.

Today, words like "hybrid", "remote" and "new normal" have become common. But at the start of the pandemic, while some businesses struggled to work remotely, others did not take time to move to a virtual mode of work.

Project managers need new competencies to address multiple challenges arising out of the new ways of working. They need to establish a sense of ownership, collaboration and inclusivity, and ensure that there is the right emotional connection within the team even if they are not at the same location. "No matter what we do in life, at the heart of it, we are all program managers. And, hence, instead of trying to turn the clock back to 2019, embrace the present and march ahead," he said.

Key Takeaways

- Be prepared to address multiple challenges.
- Develop a sense of collaboration to ensure project success.
- Redesign organizational structure for agility and flexibility.
- Develop an emotional connection with your team.
- Work toward establishing a sense of ownership and leadership in team members.

Solutions for Timely Justice Systems

Shailesh Gandhi, RTI activist and former central information commissioner

Shailesh Gandhi is a first-generation entrepreneur and a distinguished alumnus awardee of the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay. The only Right to Information (RTI) activist to have been chosen as a central information commissioner, he disposed of a record 20,000+ cases, ensuring that most cases were decided in less than 90 days.

Though India's judicial system is the key pillar of Indian democracy, it is a far cry when it comes to resolving certain intrinsic issues, thus exposing its flaws and inefficiencies. Shailesh Gandhi said that though there have been improvements in areas like roads, telecommunication and railways, the judicial system has lagged behind. This calls for innovative inputs and solutions.

These statistics say it all: 70% of legal cases are disposed of in less than four months in many countries, whereas in India only 35% are disposed of in a year. The average time taken to settle a simple legal case in India is between 25 and 30 months, whereas in European countries it is around six months.

Mr. Gandhi discussed judicial delays due to an increasing backlog of cases. There are more than 122,850 convicts and 427,160 undertrials as of 2021. Most of them are poor, have no means to influence the proceedings in their favor and languish in jail awaiting trial.

He recommended major judicial reforms to enable timely delivery of justice. With an average of 21% of judicial positions being vacant, filling vacancies must be a priority. Moreover, courts must switch to the virtual mode for hearing cases. It will enable courts to tackle 90% of the cases in a year and lessen the burden of backlog cases.

Key Takeaways

- Remember that delayed justice is synonymous with injustice.
- Understand that the accountability of chief justices is to ensure speedy justice.
- Implement e-filing of petitions, affidavits and fee payments.
- Enable algorithm-based computerized case listing, case allocation and adjournments with only a 5% override given to judges.
- Enlist project managers to help in the timely delivery of justice.

Building Project Management Culture for Better Project Margins—A Common Sense Approach

Sandeep Kumar, founder and CEO, ProductDossier Solutions

Sandeep Kumar has 25 years of professional experience in the software industry. His expertise lies in process automation, project and portfolio management and product life cycle management solutions. He founded ProductDossier in January 2006 with a focus on building enterprise solutions for global corporations.

Using an analogy of doctors who refuse to dispense medication instantly without understanding a patient's medical history, Mr. Kumar explained that project managers must also first identify the key barriers to improve project margins before recommending a course of action.

He said that it is critical for project managers to figure out and analyze key systemic issues before acting upon them. These include cost estimations, project setup, and resource forecasting and utilization. Project managers need to be aware of the actual versus planned project performance for timely corrective actions, such as closely monitoring billing and days sales outstanding (DSO), to control revenue leakage.

Mr Kumar pointed out that it is not the responsibility of only the finance team to produce the desired financial outcomes. When people across different functions work in tandem, improving project margins becomes easier.

To realize project profitability, Mr. Kumar recommended developing a strong project management culture—awareness of the challenges, a sense of purpose and ownership of the project. He said achieving the targets is not about tools; the right culture will help in reaping exponential value.

Key Takeaways

- Understand that project margins are not necessarily about money but about customer satisfaction.
- Ensure accurate cost estimates to meet the target number in the execution process.
- Manage change requests efficiently and avoid a dent in project profitability.
- Build a robust project management culture to create sustainable and exponential results.
- Focus on empowerment and empathy to achieve a project management culture.

Reimagining the Future of Work

Achin Gupta, CEO, One India Business, Cipla

Achin Gupta is an entrepreneurial leader who has established new businesses across markets in India, Europe and the emerging markets. He is driven by the purpose of making high-quality, affordable healthcare accessible for patients.

"Challenge is actually the best time to force you into doing something that will eventually become an opportunity," said Achin Gupta. The pandemic forced sectors across the globe to think beyond the obvious. As panic and anxiety reigned in the world, the pharmaceutical sector used grit and innovation to overcome the challenges.

"During the pandemic, we evaluated what our manufacturing should be like in the future. We realized that it had to be more automated, paperless and touchless. Hence, we put the Internet of Things and robotics in place. Similarly, project managers must determine what are the optimal conditions, and accordingly allocate resources and engage the workforce adequately to successfully undertake their tasks," Mr. Gupta recommended.

He rated problem-solving as a fundamental skill for a project manager, as a lot of the strategic change management agenda is driven by them. Clarity of thoughts is equally important. The objective must be to have shared outcomes and not just shared activities. If it does not happen, everyone will be working to reach their own targeted goal but miss the organization's goal. They must also focus on the speed of getting work executed; this speed must be accompanied with agility, else there will be a fear that you might go too fast and too far but in the wrong direction.

Key Takeaways

- Identify what will be a significant transformation and communicate it down the line.
- Have clarity of thoughts and clarity on roles and responsibilities within the organization.
- Focus on investments, resource allocation, prioritization and risk management.
- Employ a multimodal way of communication.
- Remember that the future is not a fixed destination; be prepared to change and be agile.

Shifting Gears: Are You Future-Ready?

Brigadier Sushil Bhasin (Retired), leadership coach

Brigadier Sushil Bhasin (Retired) is a coach for military-inspired leadership and time consciousness, and a global keynote and TEDx speaker. He spent 34 years in the Indian Army and has been applying the principles of military-inspired leadership in the corporate and educational world. He has authored a self-help book titled "Design Your Life."

Mr. Bhasin nudged the audience to look into the future with this question in their mind: "How can we plan for a future we do not know of?" He suggested looking beyond challenges and being hopeful because only then will opportunities become apparent.

When it is well known that change is the only constant, why does change cause concern? He believes that the reason for concern is not change by itself, but instead the speed of change. Therefore, contingency planning is crucial to prepare for unexpected scenarios and be future-ready.

Reminding the audience of the VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity) world, he urged them to add three Ds to it to make it more relevant today—diverse, disruptive and digital.

He placed changing one's mindset as the most important skill to learn how to swim in the unknown waters and survive. One needs to do away with a fixed mindset and embrace a growth mindset that helps in building a positive attitude. This will ultimately translate into good performance and successful outcomes.

He also compared the critical skills needed in the armed forces and in project management. Military leaders lead projects, while project managers manage projects. But there is a shared objective of executing projects and accomplishing missions efficiently.

"Leaders must have a clear vision for the future, seize opportunities to unleash the best, upskill and reskill one's core competency and be agile to adapt to change," he said.

Key Takeaways

- Have a clear vision, know your mission and what you want to accomplish.
- Know that it is not the strongest who survive tough times, but the ones more adaptable to change.
- Think and operate ahead of the predictability curve.
- Lead by example and empower people toward a common goal.
- Look past managing a crisis each day; plan better to secure continuous success.

Direct Correlation Between Client Success and Organization Culture

Vishal Verma, PMP, construction program implementation manager, Burns & McDonnell

Vishal Verma is a program implementation manager with experience in program, project and construction management. He develops specialized program management solutions on complex projects around the world and works closely with major utilities in the United States and globally, delivering best practices for their design and construction projects and programs.

No matter which industry you are in or what project you are working on, how you connect with people makes all the difference to project outcomes. Vishal Verma spoke about the importance of stakeholder management to achieve desired outcomes.

While talking about Burns & McDonnell's culture that is centered on the motto "We are All Employee-Owners," he said, "Employee ownership is our common thread that connects and drives us to deliver remarkable work for our clients. We believe that ownership is the key to personal and collective success."

Growth of each team member is important too. The company assigns newly hired fresh college graduates three projects in a row in the first year, followed by five in the next year. By the time they reach 35 to 40 years of age, they will have the experience of working on different projects.

Touching upon project failure, he said that hundreds of factors are behind it, but identifying the cause that led to the failure is important.

"It is necessary to embrace artificial intelligence and also frequently impart training to the staff so that they are updated on the new technologies," he added.

Key Takeaways

- Invest in young people and help them gain confidence.
- Make them own projects and be accountable for the outcomes.
- Focus on service to clients to drive success.
- Make sure to learn from the experience of retiring workers.
- Embrace artificial intelligence.

Leveraging Technology, Driving Outcomes

Renu Menon has 28 years of experience in driving strategic technology initiatives for clients across banking, financial services, media, and consumer industries. She has been leading teams for migrating and modernizing IT workloads on AWS Cloud.

Digital transformation is the need of the hour. Businesses are engaging in digital transformation in some form, thanks to the rapidly evolving consumer expectations and changing demographics. Renu Menon laid emphasis on the role of IT not just as an enabler but also as a driver of business outcomes.

However, achieving the business objectives of digital transformation often eludes organizations. While about 90% of businesses are engaging in some form of digitalization, only 15% – 16% believe that they are realizing the benefits in terms of keeping pace with changing demands.

Renu Menon, senior practice manager, AWS ProServe

She emphasized that to drive business value through innovation and agility, businesses must change their mindset and approach. They should redefine traditional boundaries between departments and teams; make sure that the internal teams and partners are aligned and work toward achieving a common set of outcomes. Today, the single most important goal is to be able to respond quickly to change, and organizations are being judged in the market on this front. She also urged project managers to not focus on the output but channelize efforts to achieve the desired outcomes instead. It may not always be possible to validate the outputs against the expected outcomes.

She said, "Peter Weill of MIT Sloan School of Management in The Agility Paradox has stated that organizational agility is the ability to respond, decide, embrace, chang and execute quickly." And hence the time to execute continues to shrink as digitally enabled startups reinvent the market. Agility is no longer a choice to compete successfully in today's landscape.

Key Takeaways

- Focus on achieving the desired business outcomes, not merely the outputs.
- Prioritize team management.
- Change the mindset of the team and redefine your approach for agility.
- Communicate your vision to the team effectively.

The Crafting of an All-Round Leader

K.R.S. Jamwal, executive director, Tata Industries

K.R.S. Jamwal is responsible for the incubation of new ventures, such as Tata Health and Tata UniStore, and investments made by Tata Industries in new businesses and startups. He is also a member on the board of the overseas subsidiary of Tata Industries—Qubit Investments PTE (Singapore).

In a conversation with Dr. Srini Srinivasan, regional managing director of PMI South Asia, K.R.S. Jamwal shared the secret sauce of Tata Group's success. As per the company's philosophy, Tata encourages employees to take ownership of their work and does not enforce any standard operating procedure. If someone wants to take ownership of something and accept the associated responsibility, Tata does not hesitate to give an opportunity to the employee. Jamwal acknowledged that he has been a fortunate beneficiary of this philosophy.

On being asked about his journey from being a project manager to being the head of incubation of new ventures, he revealed that he began his career as a project executive. In the past, designations were strictly controlled in the Tata Group. One was expected to do a full cycle of a project before earning the title of a project manager.

He spoke about how to effectively leverage new technologies that can give a competitive edge to your business. As a leader, you need to scan, select, and adopt those technologies that help fuel the efficiency and productivity of your team. He also cautioned that the pace of technological change is relatively much faster now. Leaders need to unlearn and relearn to stay relevant with the changing times.

Discussing the evolving nature of the PMI Talent Triangle®, he said, "It resonates with me, and I can relate to it. Given the fluidity of the way of the world and how the world is changing at an accelerated rate, it is a sensible thing."

Power skills are drastically needed in today's workplace, which is in a constant flux of change. He pointed out that organizations must prioritize people, who are their biggest asset. Power skills pertain to how you relate and collaborate with your people and help define the type of leader you are.

One must invest time and effort to develop the right expertise, capabilities and confidence to venture into an unfamiliar field. This will help you mold yourself into an all-around leader.

Key Takeaways

- Reinvent continuously to thrive in a volatile environment.
- Everything in life is a project, and you can be a good project too.
- The shared energy of the team fosters a project's success.
- Embrace the right attitude to evolve with time.
- Stay hungry to improve your steep learning curve.

Social Impact at PMI

Ramam Atmakuri is a strategic and innovative thinker with deep insight and experience in building and managing businesses, forging long-term client relationships, and leading multicultural and multidisciplinary teams.

Dinu Raheja is an experienced school manager with a demonstrated history of working in the education management industry. She specializes in coaching, curriculum development, program development and event planning.
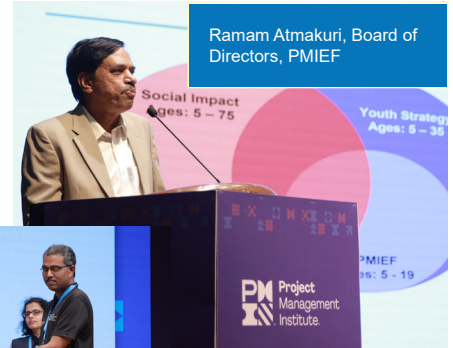
Inculcating leadership qualities alone in the youth is not sufficient. They also need to imbibe work-readiness. "To make our youth career, work and industry ready, we must bridge the gap between education and industry. We must strive to make our youth solution drivers," asserted Ms. Raheja.

By repeating a problem, the problem does not resolve itself. Leaders need to step in and come up with solutions. And, therefore, although project management is a managerial process, it must be taught to the youth like a life skill.

PMI focuses on empowering people, especially changemakers, to make ideas a reality. "We promote project management as a profession and a life skill for the youth who are our changemakers and nation builders. And we focus on educating them at a young age so that they inculcate project management as a life skill," said Mr. Atmakuri.

Ramam Atmakuri, Board of Directors, PMIEF

Dinu Raheja, executive director, The Global Education & Leadership Foundation

Key Takeaways

- Inculcate leadership qualities and career readiness in young people.
- Encourage them to become solution drivers.
- Make them understand sustainable development goals at a young age.

A Journey From Our Farms to Your Families

Satyajit Hange, founding farmer, Two Brothers Organic Farms

Satyajit Hange quit his banking job to take up organic farming. He founded Two Brothers Organic Farms in 2014 with his brother Ajinkya Hange. The sustainably produced crops from the farms are sold in 680 cities around the globe.

Satyajit Hange outlined his journey from being a banker to pursuing his "true calling" of becoming an organic farmer and entrepreneur. "It is a dream come true. As somebody has rightly said—when you do something with love, everything else follows. Taking that first leap is important," said Mr. Hange. In a span of eight years, his pro-environment work was mentioned on the World Environment Day by the Government of India.

The brothers did not have any plan or project in mind nor did they have any targets when they embarked on this journey. They started from a remote village called Bhodani in the Pune district of Maharashtra. And today, the company has grown into a US$6 million business with customers in 52 countries.

"Our parents had kept us away from the village as they thought there was no future in farming. But today we are self-sufficient in the truest sense—we generate our own electricity; we harvest the water we use; we have our own seed bank; we make our own fertilizers; and the products we make from the farm produce—that is, ghee, jaggery, peanut butter, pickles, etc.—are made without any additives or preservatives," he elaborated.

Mr. Hange stressed that risk is essential and not an option. He advised budding entrepreneurs to take the leap of faith sooner so they can learn to fly faster.

Key Takeaways

- Pursue your business organically.
- Trust your instinct.
- Treat people working alongside you with dignity.
- Use a problem as an asset.

Drones and Drone Startup Challenges

Cdr. Milind Kulshreshtha (Retired), founder, AiKairos Pvt. Ltd.
Lt. Cdr. John Livingstone (Retired), founder, Johnnette Technologies

Milind Kulshreshtha is the founder of AiKairos that works in the area of niche technologies focused on defense solutions, with drones being the primary technology platform. He has been associated with drone building for five years and has designed India's first Kamikaze drone solution for the National Security Guard.

After serving in the Indian Navy for a decade as a certified drone pilot, John Livingstone started Johnnette Technologies and the Indian Institute of Drones in 2014. He holds records for being the fastest trained military drone pilot and the only naval officer to be awarded at UAV Tetra School at Indian Air Force in 2007.

"Passion is the driving force that will take you forward. Whether you are working in an organization or planning your startup, if you are not passionate, you will not be able to achieve the desired results," said Cdr. Milind Kulshreshtha (retired), while suggesting that those who are passionate about flying drones must venture into the drone business.

Seconding his opinion, Lt. Cdr. John Livingstone (retired) said that India no longer purchases drones from Israel. "From 2007 to 2014, we used to procure drones from international companies and that is when this startup concept pinched me and a few other like-minded people. In 2009, we decided to go indigenous. And from that time, atma nirbharta (self-sufficiency) in this sector began in the true sense," he said.

They spoke about the importance of being self-reliant when it comes to the country's defense capabilities. However, creating indigenous solutions is difficult, especially at a time when ready-to-use solutions can be procured from outside the country. "Hence, leaders must challenge their teams to learn, innovate and create solutions in-house. which will then result in the overall development of the individual and also make the organization self-reliant," he added.

Key Takeaways

- Be passionate about your goals.
- Make every challenge a learning opportunity.
- Push your team to make self-reliance a motto.

Design Thinking — Humanizing Project Management

Ajay Aggarwal, managing partner, Humane Design & Innovation Consulting LLP

Before starting Humane Design & Innovation Consulting LLP, Ajay Aggarwal founded the design thinking and innovation practice at KPMG India. His career spans across roles in advisory, product and service design, process automation, sales and business development and training.

Businesses must shift their perspective from designing products to designing human experiences. The role of empathy is significant, therefore, organizations need to encourage and build empathy to enable the transition.

Ajay Aggarwal explained that design thinking is a human-centered approach to finding problems and solving them with continuous experimentation. Some of the secret ingredients of design thinking include exploring, ideating, creating and evolving.

He stressed that design thinking is not a process where designers solve the problems of customers. Design thinkers are problem finders, a set of professionals who are in big demand today.

He stated that project managers or people in leadership positions are not real disruptors. The disruptors are the consumers, whose lives have been impacted by change and who are demanding new experiences.

Key Takeaways

- Design thinkers are storytellers who craft stories around design.
- Fail fast and succeed sooner.
- Think of the customer as the real disruptor.

Project/Program Management and Data Visualization

Deepak Mulay, Program Management, Burns & McDonnell

Deepak Mulay is a mechanical engineer with over a decade of experience in project controls and program management across fertilizer process plants, nuclear power plants, downstream oil and gas facilities and the energy sector.

Data is everywhere. People are dealing with large volumes of data every day. But for data to provide value, it needs to be handled smartly so that one can derive meaningful insights from it. Without such capability, you cannot predict the future of your projects or company.

British mathematician Clive Humbly said in 2006, "Data is the new oil." Deepak Mulay said that the analogy has proven to be correct, as data now drives businesses, much like oil, and is extremely valuable, but if left unrefined, it is useless.

How is visual project management helping in navigation of complex data? Mr. Mulay explains that visualization combines a large amount of project data from different sources and weaves together appealing and meaningful visuals. Visual project management helps in quickly facilitating the right decisions at the right time.

Comparing traditional project tools to visual project management, he said that the former provides static reports with limited connections to external data. Visual project management uses interactive and visually appealing dashboards and makes the information easily available to everyone involved in a project.

Key Takeaways
- Adopt visual project management for dynamic reporting of data from multiple sources.
- Allow cross-filtering and drill-through filters for sharper insights.
- Access different types of information on a single platform and avoid email exchanges.

Hybrid Project Management–The Key to Better Outcomes?

Monika Muddamshetty, director, International Game Technology

Monika Muddamshetty is a seasoned leader in the delivery and agile space, dealing with people and processes to deliver improved outcomes across projects, programs and portfolios. In her current role, she heads an agile center of excellence that drives the journey to agile ways of working.

Traditionally, projects were executed in line with agreements with customers in terms of scope, time, cost and quality. But that is no longer the case. Even when projects are delivered as per predefined agreements, it might not be of enough value. "Given the changing market needs, requirements and customer expectations, customers always look for change because they have to align with the market," Monika Muddamshetty said. Project management must therefore accommodate change.

Ms. Muddamshetty said that the predictive (waterfall) approach is best suited for projects that are straightforward and have clarity on what needs to be done. But that approach does not offer flexibility or the ability to respond to change quickly. The agile approach is more effective for such projects. Also known as the adaptive approach, it focuses on flexibility, trust, collaboration and customer centricity.

Elucidating the hybrid concept, Ms. Muddamshetty said, "Hybrid project management is usually best suited for projects that fall between some level of agreement on what needs to be done and some level of certainty on how it needs to be done with different movable variable paths."

Key Takeaways
- Use the predictive approach only when there is clarity on what is needed.
- Customize processes to align a project with the context to maximize the probability of success.
- Adopt hybrid project management as middle ground between fixed scope and flexibility.

Building Digital Project Culture for Better Project Margins -
Learning & Insights for IT Services Company

ProductDossier

To improve project margins, your IT services company needs to have digital project culture.
Do you have it?

Checkpoints

Can your salespeople achieve quick turnaround times for project proposals while keeping delivery teams and management on the same page? Can your talent acquisition team preempt resource shortages before they affect deliverables? Are your accounts people able to flag threats to project margins before they dip? Are your salespeople on top of the 'scope creep'?

Having digital things doesn't necessarily build digital project culture

Let's say you are already using CRM, ERP, HRMS, and project management tools. But if you can't answer 'yes' to the above questions, you don't have digital project culture. Your information flow has a lot of breaks that hide vital signals. While revenue leaks, critical resources are overworked, project scopes creep, and your profits suffer, your managers struggle to reconcile data from different applications and spreadsheets. They can't act in time. It is difficult to improve project margins without the digitization of end-to-end business workflows.

Learnings & insights for building digital project culture

Gleaned from experiences of several successful transformations

It is a leader's job

Any cultural transformation happens only if the top leadership team of your organization remains steadfast to the goal.

You need a partner, not a vendor

Your partner should have experience in implementing professional services automation software for the digitization of Opportunity-to-CASH cycles.

Appoint a sponsor

The sponsor should be a senior person. The sponsor should command the trust and respect of the top leadership as well as the rank and file.

Only the best will do

Remember, your organization's growth, profitability, credibility, and continued viability will be involved. Hand-pick your best people to be in the implementation team.

Even the best need hand-holding

Give enough room to your implementation team to get going and get results. Be empathetic. Support them fully. Celebrate the achievements. Consolidate the learnings.

Think big, act small.

It's a long haul that needs several small steps. Paint the big picture. Outline those small steps and the gains to be realized after every step. Take the first step. Let the results motivate your team. Repeat until you complete the journey.

Navika Sagar Parikrama—Circumventing Barriers

The Navika Sagar Parikrama mission of the Indian Navy is a fitting example of leadership, bravery and a sense of adventure prominent in the armed forces. In this voyage, six women naval officers circumnavigated the globe in the first-ever such mission on an Indian-built sailboat, INSV Tarini. The expedition lasted 254 days, which began in Goa in September 2017 and completed in May 2018.

At the panel discussion moderated by Cdr. Abhishek Kankan (Retired), the discussion delves into the crew's selection process, the preparations, challenges and lessons learned. Below are the panelists who were part of the crew.

• **Lt. Cdr. Vartika Joshi (Retired.), Nao Sena Medal (NM), Indian Navy**—An Indian Navy veteran who is the first skipper from Asia to have led an all-women crew around the globe.

• **Lt. Cdr. Pratibha Jamwal, NM, Indian Navy**—Joined the Indian Navy as an air traffic controller. She ventured into open ocean sailing in 2014 and undertook the first cross-peninsular voyage by an Indian woman from Goa to Port Blair.

• **Lt. Cdr. Aishwarya Boddapati, NM, Indian Navy**—Was one of the six officers selected for the Navika Sagar Parikrama mission in 2016.

• **Lt. Cdr. Patarlapalli Swathi, NM, Indian Navy**—Was commissioned in the

Indian Navy in 2011 and appointed as an air traffic controller at Vishakhapatnam Airport.

• **Lt. Cdr. Shougrakpam Vijaya Devi, NM, Indian Navy**—Serves in the Indian Navy and posted at the National Defence Academy as an instructor.

• **Lt. Cdr. Payal Gupta NM, Indian Navy**—An experienced expeditionary sailor who has clocked more than 47,500 nautical miles on sailboats. She participated in the Cape2Rio race across the South Atlantic in 2017.

The idea of Navika Sagar Parikrama was conceptualized by late Vice Admiral Manohar Prahlad Awati, who was known as the father of the Indian Navy's circumnavigation adventures.

When the Indian Navy decided to organize an all-women mission to circumnavigate the world, there were 500 women naval officers in service. Many came forward for the mission, namely Navika Sagar Parikrama, but only 50 women made it to the shortlist. Finally, six of them were selected.

Lt. Cdr. Aishwarya Boddapati said, "The inspiration for an all-women crew came after Commander Abhilash Tomy of the Indian Navy finished his solo nonstop circumnavigation of the globe. Many women officers came forward for this mission, but the selection process was rigorous."

Some of the officers backed out after opposition from their families. Lt. Cdr. Payal Gupta said,

"Once you join the armed forces, your family in a way gives up on you. I saw the ocean for the first time when I joined the Indian Navy. Until then, my parents had not known anything about sailing. Even I had refrained from telling them much."

A critical factor for the success of the mission was the type of boat being used. Lt. Cdr. Vartika Joshi, the team leader, said, "The boat needed to be stable and safe enough with a robust design to steer an uncertain marine environment. Initially, the boat was designed for a solo sailor. It then underwent some modifications to fit the six members of the expedition."

For someone who had not seen the sea before, venturing into the unknown was not child's play. Lt. Cdr. Shourgrakpam Vijaya Devi, who grew up in Manipur, which is miles away from the sea, the fear of the unknown was unnerving. She said, "But it was this fear that motivated me through the expedition. I knew I could not go wrong anywhere and must strive for the best at all times."

The voyage started from Goa and completed its first leg in Fremantle, Australia. After that, the crew headed to New Zealand. Lt. Cdr. Pratibha Jamwal said, "The next leg meant crossing the South Pacific, which was the longest and most difficult experience. The sea was rough, which necessitated meticulous preparation of our boat."

Added Lt. Cdr. P. Swathi, "Projects never go as planned. In the armed forces, we can only plan for the next hour. In this mission, we had planned to take the east to west route so that winds gushing from behind would make the sailing easier, faster and less fuel consuming. But we had to take detours because of the sea conditions."

Narrating their hardships, the crew said that human psychology changes when exposed to unknown dangers. The crew hardly got 3 to 4 hours of sleep on a good day. Contact with their families was minimal, which took an emotional toll on the crew.

As the weather and sea conditions grew worse, the crew changed the route or diverted the boat to the shore. The voyage showed the importance of keeping plans flexible. A key lesson for the delegates was the need to make a broad plan to tie in with the project goals but complement that with micro planning to manage a wide range of what-if scenarios and unforeseen circumstances.

PMI South Asia Awards 2022

PMI South Asia confers awards on organizations in recognition of excellence and distinction in project execution. Here are the winners of 2022 in several categories who made significant contributions to project management.

Contribution to the Community

Project: Transforming Lives Through Education

Organization: UST India

Project of the Year—Small

Project: Engine Management System Development

Organization: Bosch Global Software Technologies

Project of the Year—Micro

Project: D365 Supply Chain Management (SCM) Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Roll-Out in Europe

Organization: IBM

Project of the Year—Medium

Project: Medical Oxygen Plant

Organization: Tata Advanced Systems

Special Recognition

Project: EdTech Kalvi 40: Enabling Holistic Education in Rural Schools
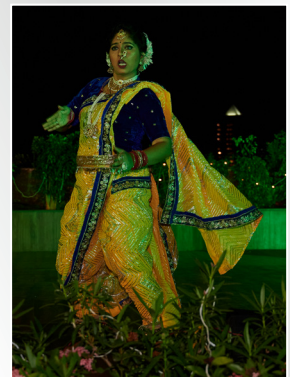
Organization: BumbleB Trust

Project of the Year—Large

Project: New Water Injection South-R

Organization: Larsen & Toubro Hydro

A Colorful Cultural Extravaganza

A new addition to the Project Management South Asia Conference 2022 was a cultural showcase. Delegates got a taste of the rich and vibrant culture of Maharashtra, where the conference was held.

Manage South Asia spoke with delegates at the venue to hear their views on the conference.

Aman Sabzwari, project manager, BlueDart Express Limited

The speakers enlightened the audience on how to be agile and hybrid, and develop the practice of looking beyond the obvious especially during uncertain times. I am from the logistics sector but I got an opportunity to network and connect with people from many other sectors.

Deepak Metkar, manager—projects, Larsen and Toubro (L&T)

I obtained the Project Management Professional (PMP)® certification this year, and I am glad I had the opportunity to attend such an insightful conference. It was well-organized and eminent speakers made the sessions interesting, informative and relevant.

Shilpa Bane, senior project manager delivery lead, Accenture Technology & Solutions

It was an energetic and informative conference. The speakers have left a mark and provided us guidance that will stay with us forever. I am sure it will help us in our projects in the future.

Snehal Awate, freelance project management consultant

It was a well-organized conference. It was a learning experience for a freelance consultant like me.

Amruta Pore, manager—digital, Eaton

I appreciate that PMI held such an exciting conference to enable practitioners to network with peers from different industries and organizations. The sessions were well-planned and gave us new perspectives from different points of view. Kudos to PMI for bringing project managers together and helping them build their career and achieve professional growth.

Amit Agarwal, general manager, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) Ltd.

I found the conference interesting but I felt that most of the speakers focused on the theoretical aspects of project management. I would have appreciated more had they cited first-hand experiences for a better understanding of new project managers.

Ruchi Natekar, senior deputy general manager, planning and contracts, L&T Realty

The overall experience of the conference was exhilarating. It gave members a sense of belonging to a community, and it feels good to be a part of such a culture. The conference was enriching and the insights were quite valuable; it will benefit us in our day-to-day working.

Sheetal Joshi, healthcare consultant, CitiusTech

I attended the conference to meet like-minded project managers from different sectors and understand the practices used by them. I now have new perspectives on how we can work with people from across the globe, how we can empower people across ranks to take the right decisions and how to improve projects operationally.

Shelendra Chandil, general manager, ONGC

I thoroughly enjoyed both days; the sessions were interesting, productive and informative. The discussion on 'Navika Sagar Parikrama' with six women naval officers was captivating. Thank you for organizing such a wonderful conference.

Arline Singha, technical project manager, V2Soft Pvt. Ltd.

The conference touched upon topics that are relevant to project management professionals. The learnings will definitely help us improve processes in our respective companies. Kudos to PMI for hosting such a wonderful conference, and I look forward to attending many more in the future.

Princey Achankunju, general manager, Lupin

I attend PMI conferences every year. This conference gave me a wider perspective on project management. It helped me to unlearn many things and take new ideas to my company.

Vishwadeep Daware, MTech in Project Management

I am looking for certifications in project management. It was a great conference, and I gathered insights from various industry leaders and experts. The conference has helped me to update my knowledge base.

Sumeet Chawla, technical project manager, IDBS

This is the first time I have attended the conference. It was a good exposure for me. I got to know different perspectives from nontechnical project managers. It will definitely help me in my day-to-day office work.

Bhuvana Sundar S, senior program manager, Bosch Global Software Technologies

It is not just an immense learning experience that we got but also family-like bonding. There are various conferences, but this conference is the grandest of all. It gave us an opportunity to reconnect with people we had lost touch with over the years.

Guru Shanda Murthy, project manager, IBM

The sessions explored at the conference were good. The conference gave us a lot of insights into the current trends in project management. As a project manager, we need to know where our focus areas should be and how we can give back to society.

A Big Thank You to Our Conference Volunteers and Sponsors!

We would like to extend our gratitude to the team of volunteers who made this conference a big success. We salute your hard work, commitment, collaboration and seamless execution.

JACOB ZACHARIAH,
Conference Chair

BIREN PAREKH,
Conference Director

OSCAR D'SOUZA

RAPHAEL DAVID

PRIYA PATRA

MANISH DEDHIYA

RAHUL TELANG

ANITA KANOJIA

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PMI Pulse of the Profession® 2023: Embrace Power Skills for Project Success

Pulse of the Profession® 2023:
Power Skills, Redefining Project Success | 14th Edition
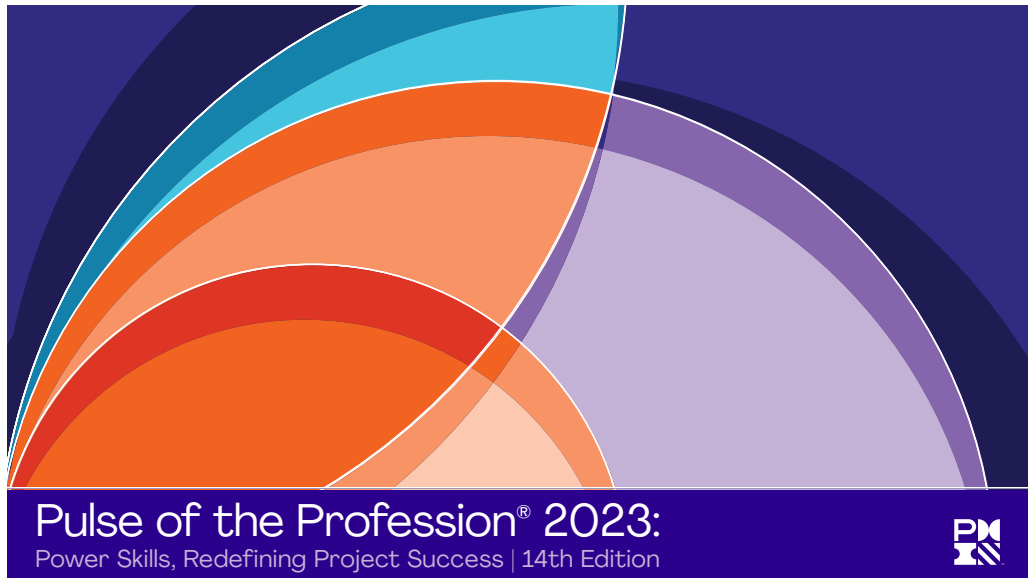
Project Management Institute (PMI) published the 14th edition of its "Pulse of the Profession® 2023" report. The Annual PMI Global Survey on Project Management examines how putting a priority on power skills helps project professionals and organizations redefine project success in our fast-pivoting world.

PMI defines power skills as abilities and behaviors that facilitate working with others and help project professionals to succeed in the workplace. Some individuals and other organizations also refer to them as "soft skills" or "interpersonal skills."

Project professionals rated communication, problem-solving, collaborative leadership and strategic thinking as the most critical power skills that help them fulfill organizational objectives. In the South Asia region, 74% respondents place importance on communication, 76% on problem-solving, 71% on collaborative leadership and 70% on strategic thinking.

The research studied the relationship between power skills and project success. Benefits realization management (BRM) maturity organizational agility, and project management maturity emerged as top factors of project success. It stressed that these factors are significantly more prevalent in organizations that prioritize power skills.

Organizations fostering power skills are likely to achieve 57% BRM maturity, 64% project management maturity, and 51% organizational agility. On the other hand, organizations that fail to focus on power skills are likely to witness 18% BRM maturity, 11% project management maturity, and 19% organizational agility.

Also, organizations that place high priority on power skills tend to perform better and meet business goals. While 72% of their projects successfully met business goals, only 28% of their projects experienced scope creep, and 17% experienced budget loss to project failure.

However, in spite of growing recognition of the need for these skills for success, organizations struggle to nurture them in their employees. According to talent decisionmakers, the main barriers to prioritizing power skills training and development are the cost issue and a lack of perceived value. The lack of perceived value is highest in industries like energy (58%) and manufacturing (57%) and lowest in construction (34%) and financial services (45%).

The report revealed several approaches that organizations can adopt to prioritize power skills:

• Step outside the iron triangle of scope, cost and time, and reinforce power skills that contribute to the everyday dynamics of project management.

• Focus on the power skills most tied to fulfilling organizational objectives.

• Build power skills in individual career development plans, and track their mastery during performance evaluations.

• Evaluate professional development and training programming to ensure it reflects the organization's commitment to building power skills in employees.

• Allocate the right funding to power skills offerings.

• Introduce team-based assessments of power skills and strengthen their importance in the organization.

A total of 3,492 project professionals representing a range of industries and regions, including North America, Latin America, the Caribbean, China, Europe, South Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, Asia Pacific, and Sub-Saharan Africa were surveyed for the report.

Read the full **report** for more details.

Breakthrough Innovations: Creating the Opportunities of Tomorrow

PMI honored the 50 most influential projects as well as the 10 best projects across regions and industries. **Manage South Asia** *features 10 innovative projects from the South Asia region that speak volumes of their creative approaches toward solving a new wave of global challenges.*

Blurring the Lines Between Real and Virtual

Project name: Metaverse Studio, India

Noor Architects Consultants

Noor Architects Consultants applied its real-world creative process to the metaverse, creating a digital extension of its Chandigarh-based studio. Team members and clients can experiment with emerging technologies and create designs that might someday become a reality.

What started as a creative whim is quickly having a tangible impact—showing the power of the metaverse to change architecture. It gives greater flexibility and endless opportunities to design and imagine in this futuristic space.

"The metaverse sets a tone for boundless possibilities," says Noor Dasmesh Singh, founder of Noor Architects Consultants. "It is a realm for the creative amalgamation of the real, unreal, surreal and the mirror reflections of the real."

Check out **Metaverse Studio.**

Breaking the Barriers

Project name: Koo Multi Language Tool, India

Bombinate Technologies

Social media was created for nurturing connections in the digital space, but language barriers can limit how far a connection stretches. The Indian microblogging app, Koo, helps bust those barriers with a feature that makes translations automatic, seamless and easy. In India, which recognizes 22 languages in the Constitution, the social media platform is earning raves for its ability to retain the writer's intended meaning and tone. With a robust slate of new features being planned, Koo aims to become the premier microblogging platform of India and beyond.

Visit **Koo Multi Language Tool** for more details.

Embracing an Inclusive Approach

Project name: Open-for-All Digital Ecosystem, India

ICICI Bank

Looking to make financial services more inclusive, India's ICICI Bank created a digital ecosystem specifically for owners of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Launched in April 2022, it aims to make business banking more accessible by allowing users to open accounts digitally and access financial services on one streamlined platform. It does not limit the new offering to its own clients, ICICI Bank welcomes guest accounts too—leveling the playing field for small businesses across India.

"The MSME segment forms the backbone of the Indian economy," says Anup Bagchi, executive director, ICICI Bank. "They are keen to adopt digital solutions to simplify their way of doing business so that they can focus more on growth."

Read more about **Open-for-All Digital Ecosystem.**

Reinforcing Conservation Practices to Save the Environment and Wildlife

Project name: Project Cheetah, India

The Government of India

Seven decades after the world's fastest land animal was declared extinct in India, the cheetah is making a comeback in the country. Project Cheetah, which is the world's first intercontinental, large wild carnivore translocation project, aims to revitalize and diversify India's wildlife and its habitat.

Under the project, three dozen African cheetahs will be relocated to various national parks in India over five years. The US$28 million project is led by an expansive team, including the Wildlife Institute of India, the National Tiger Conservation Authority and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

The team chose Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh and released eight African cheetahs brought from Namibia in September 2022.

"We have abated all of the cheetah's threats and we now have well-protected areas to help restore our lost heritage," says Yadvendradev Jhala, the project leader and dean of the Wildlife Institute of India.

Read more about **Project Cheetah**

A Purpose-Driven Design

Project name: Secure Sanand, India

Studio Saar

When designing a new factory for Indian electronics manufacturer Secure Meter, Studio Saar was given a simple challenge: "Create an environment to make complex, cutting-edge technologies, and uplift the spirits of those in the workplace." The key is to strike a balance between

manufacturing's emphasis on efficiency and security, and an uplifting work environment that promotes staff well-being.

The project requires segregating one large factory into four purpose-driven buildings—a manufacturing facility, reception building, utility bay and a canteen and recreation center.

During the pandemic, project leaders realized the benefits of the design's separate structures, enabling the canteen to be converted into temporary accommodations for workers.

Building a Stronger Bond

Project name: Greater Male Connectivity Project, Maldives

Afcons, India

The project is billed as the largest infrastructure initiative in the Maldives. Funded by a US$100 million grant and US$400 million line of credit by the Indian government, the project involves construction of a 6.74-kilometer (4.2-mile) bridge and causeway link connecting the capital city Male with three adjoining islands.

The project is expected to significantly benefit the country's economy and act as a lasting symbol of the friendship between the neighboring countries.

On a Mission to Achieve Carbon Neutrality

Project name: Battery-Sharing Service, India

Honda Motor

India has more than 8 million rickshaws (tuk-tuks) on its streets, which means shifting even a small portion of those lightweight three-wheelers to electric power would bring significant savings in carbon emissions. But the electric battery's relatively short range and long charging time have made it a tough sell to rickshaw drivers.

In October 2021, Honda unveiled a novel solution—a battery-sharing service in India. It will allow drivers to avail of services from the nearest battery-swapping station to exchange discharged batteries for the fully charged ones.

A pilot of the service in early 2021 saw 30 rickshaw drivers cover more than 200,000 kilometers (124,000 miles)—verifying the project's business viability. Honda isn't alone in the race to power India's EV transition, but its focus on the underlying infrastructure could dramatically speed up the adoption.

Smart Glass: Redefining Work Culture

Project name: Nimo Beta, India

Nimo Planet

Ever since Google Glass was rolled out nine years ago, tech innovators have tried, and often failed, to develop eyewear that could function as

a computer. But Indian startup Nimo Planet saw the pandemic-driven changes in how people work and set its sight on a new user base—people looking to work at home, in coffee shops or even outside without a laptop or even a smartphone.

Rolling out its beta version earlier this year, the company says the Wi-Fi-enabled smart glasses are capable of displaying up to six virtual screens at once—like a moving computer array only the user can see. Designed to handle average workday tasks, the face-based computer is changing the way we work and enabling people to work from anywhere without compromising their productivity.

Firming up Connectivity Network

Project name: Trans-Himalayan Multi-Dimensional Connectivity Network, Nepal

Nepal/China Government

During a landmark visit by China's President Xi Jinping to Nepal in 2019, the two countries elevated their relationship to "strategic partner." The two countries announced the Trans-Himalayan Multi-Dimensional Connectivity Network—a series of infrastructure initiatives along the economic corridors that link Nepal to China.

Launched in August 2022, the project is part of China's Belt and Road Initiative. Highlights include a cross-border railway (creating another trade route for landlocked Nepal) and an upgrade to the Araniko Highway, which was closed following the 2015 Gorkha earthquake.

Empowering Women in STEM Careers

Project name: STEM for Girls, India

IBM

Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) for Girls was launched by IBM in 2019 to improve education and career pathways for girls in government schools. The company pledged to provide tech training to 30 million people by 2030, and kicked off a number of new partnerships and programs to strengthen the initiative.

In one of the standout initiatives, in May 2022 IBM forged a partnership with the Department of School Education in Arunachal Pradesh to introduce the IBM STEM for Girls program.

Under the initiative, more than 13,500 students in grades 8 to 10 will receive digital fluency training, coding skills and life and career skills. IBM and state leaders are creating a resource group to roll out the tech-forward model across 130 schools—setting off what could be a sea change in how the country's young girls prepare for their future.

PMI WEST BENGAL CHAPTER
10TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

On 13 November 2022, more than 80 members of the PMI West Bengal Chapter got together for a "Family Rendezvous" to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the chapter. On the agenda was the screening of a video specially created for the occasion, followed by a panel discussion with its philanthropic and corporate partners—Save the Children, NGO partner from Sundarbans and West Bengal Power Development Corporation Limited. The panelists talked about the positive impact that project management practices have brought to the functioning of the partner organizations.

Next up was a TED Talk-style session in which members picked six different project management topics. The chapter also announced the inception of a Toastmasters Club for its members.

Somnath Mondal from Maa Saroda Women and Rural Welfare Society thanked the chapter for its support in driving various programs at Sadeshkhali in Sundarbans.

DONATING BOOKS; EMPOWERING LIVES

On the occasion of "Family Rendezvous," the chapter announced the setting up of a library at Sandeshkhali in Sundarbans, as a part of its outreach program. Members donated over 50 books, ranging from fiction to grammar books and dictionaries. Members from the partner NGO, Maa Saroda Women and Rural Welfare Society, were there to collect the books.

The chapter's efforts in setting up the library have been applauded by the block development officer of the West Bengal government.

Interested in donating books or helping the chapter in procuring new books for the library? Contact pmiwbc.outreach@pmiwbc.org

STUDENT CONNECT

Prof. Indraneel Mukhopadhyay, head of department, Computer Science & Engineering, Institute of Engineering and Management, Salt Lake, Kolkata, invited the PMI West Bengal Chapter to deliver an online session for the students. Held on 30 November, the session delved into the benefits of a PMI membership and the Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)® certification.

It was a great opportunity to connect with students and introduce them to project management. Over 250 students and faculty members joined the session.

Chapter President Saon Sen Nandi and Director of Membership, Ramyajit Dasgupta, spoke to the students. Mr. Nandi spoke about the relevance of project management for young learners in today's world, while Mr. Dasgupta explained ways in which students can benefit from a PMI membership such as connecting with mentors. Mr.
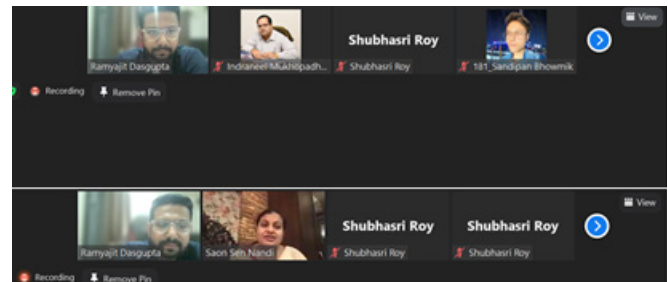
Mukhopadhyay encouraged the students to become a part of the PMI West Bengal Chapter student club.

PMI MUMBAI CHAPTER
VIRTUAL CROSS-COUNTRY PLATFORM

The PMI Mumbai Chapter successfully concluded Season 3 of PMI Chapter Xchange in November. Chapter Xchange is the PMI Mumbai Chapter's flagship initiative to foster

cross-chapter collaboration. It is a virtual platform for chapter leaders and members to connect, collaborate and cocreate.
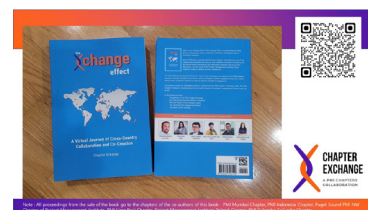
Currently, 23 PMI chapters across continents are on this platform. Members and nonmembers meet every month to discuss a chosen topic with thought leaders across the globe.

The unforgettable memories of interactions and learnings garnered after 28 such events involving 10,000+ participants across 70 countries have now been documented by chapter leaders in a book titled "The Xchange Effect!" The book is available on Amazon.

PMI TRIVANDRUM, KERALA CHAPTER
AWARD TO RECOGNIZE EXCELLENCE

The PMI Trivandrum, Kerala Chapter received the Global Best Chapter Award in category II at the PMI® Global Summit in Las Vegas on 1 December. The socially

responsible chapter is dedicated to giving back to society and the project management community through various innovative projects.

KERALA ACADEMIC FORUM

The fourth batch of the PMI Kerala Academic Forum of Saintgits College of Engineering was officially brought on board on 26 November 2022 at an event inaugurated by Jayakishore S.R., president, PMI Trivandrum, Kerala Chapter. This was followed by an address by Jacob Varghese, head of IT, Defense and Aerospace Markets, PMI South Asia. He spoke on the importance of bridging the gap between academia and industry.

The chapter started two new initiatives at this year's forum—Thrive, the Entrepreneurship Development Program, and Gits-eloquence, a public speaking club. Dr. Krishna Kumar TI, founder and CEO, TravelSpoc, and Joji John, vice president, marketing, of the PMI Trivandrum, Kerala Chapter inaugurated the initiatives. Hariprasad P.S., vice president, education, shared his thoughts on the importance of the academic forum.

The forum currently has 300 students as members. Of these, a record 85 signed up for a special offer for the Global PMI student membership. This was made possible by the

concerted efforts of volunteers Philip Jacob Perakathu, Greshma Susan, Reji Prejith and Prasanna Kumar.

INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS

In October, five students each from the mechanical, and electrical and electronics engineering courses of Saintgits College of Engineering received three weeks of internship

training at Taurus Investment Holdings. They worked on its Trivandrum Downtown Project.

Students who attended the Wings Academic Conclave and signed up with online delivery service provider, Qwqer, had an opportunity to pursue a two-week internship in the IT department of the company.

PMI GUJARAT, INDIA CHAPTER
AWARD TO CELEBRATE EXCELLENCE

It was a proud moment for the PMI Gujarat, India Chapter when it was named the "Chapter of the Year 2022," winning the prestigious award at the PMI® Global Summit. It is recognition of the spirit of volunteerism and the passion displayed by the chapter members and leaders to grow the community.

GET TOGETHER, LEARNING SESSION

The chapter organized its quarterly volunteer meeting on 3 July 2022. It was an occasion for volunteers and board members to celebrate the milestones crossed. The chapter currently has over 200 members and 22 volunteers.

PM Forum, a regular feature in the chapter's events calendar, returned to an in-person format for the first time since the pandemic. The session on "Project Cost Management, Cash Flow and Working Capital Management," held on 31 July 2022, featured Madhu Kumar Jain, head (project controls), joint general manager at Larsen and Toubro Hydrocarbon Engineering as the speaker. Aniket Chhaya, vice president, programs, was the moderator.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Students of L.D. College of Engineering took part in a full-day workshop on 16 September 2022. The workshop,

Academic Event at LDCE
Organized By
PMIGJC

Fun - Learn - Prizes

titled "Project Management Funshop," was organized by the chapter. It featured case study presentations, besides quizzes and awards to win. A student project management club was also started with 16 members.

The chapter hosted a webinar titled "Enhancing Your Visibility in Your Workplace." It was organized on 24 September 2022 by Region 11 WEC. Chapter volunteers took care of the marketing, registration and hosting of the event.

CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

The PMI Gujarat, India Chapter announced the launch of its newsletter in September.
The newsletter will be called "Prabandh," which means planning, management or provision for future needs.
The aim of the newsletter is to provide a platform for knowledge sharing, development of skills and project management community. As a part of the initiative, domain experts will be invited to share their views, latest trends and prevailing project practices.

PRABANDH

PMI Project Management Institute, Gujarat, India

PMI Gujarat India Chapter Newsletter   September 2022 Issue

PMI CHENNAI CHAPTER
11TH EDITION OF SANGAMAM 22

The PMI Chennai Chapter hosted its 11th annual conference, "Sangamam 22," on 10 September 2022. The theme of the conference was "Leadership Blend for Project Success: Dream, Dare, Deliver." The event attracted over 350 attendees, including top and mid-level managers. The chief guest was Thiru T. Mano Thangaraj, minister for information technology and digital services, Government

of Tamil Nadu, who spoke about the efforts being taken by the government to make Tamil Nadu the top state for internet connectivity for all by 2030. This was followed by the release of the first edition of the chapter newsletter — PMI Thamizhagam.

The welcome address was given by Parvez Alam, president, PMI Chennai Chapter. It was followed by a talk by Dr. Srini Srinivasan, managing director, PMI South Asia. The context was explained by Prasanna Sampathkumar, mentor, PMI Region 11.

The guest of honor for the event was Dr. J. Radhakrishnan, principal secretary—cooperation, food and consumer protection, Government of Tamil Nadu, who spoke about how visible administration and common-sense leadership bring desired results.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The chapter's annual general meeting took place on 10 September 2022. It started with Mr. Alam sharing the highlights. Some of the achievements mentioned were the new initiative of "Women in Leadership," the 20th anniversary celebrations, the newly formed chapter advisory group and the launch of the newsletter.

Mohamed Aslam Ashraff, vice president, volunteer development, presented the "Syed Memorial Volunteer of the Year 2021–2022" award to Lakshmana Nukula.

IMPARTING KNOWLEDGE

In two educational sessions in October, attendees sharpened their knowledge about the latest project management tools and practices.

The first was a project management workshop held for the staff of the IT Minister, Government of Tamil Nadu, in Kanyakumari on 12, 13, and 14 October 2022. They learned about the best practices and tools to resolve everyday work challenges. This was followed by group activities to imbibe project management concepts in

the workplace. G. Lakshmi Shekar, from Info Career and Sivaram Athmakuri, vice president, finance, PMI Chennai Chapter, conducted the workshop.

Aparna Grandhi, leader, Women Empowerment Committee, PMI Chennai Chapter, conducted a thought-provoking session, titled "Planning and Prioritization for Effective Learning—Tools for Success," for 70 first-year college students. These students are beneficiaries of Project Puthri, a community program that supports girls from underserved communities to grow into career-minded young women. The session was held at Shri Sundarbai Shasun Jain College for Women, Chennai, on 15 October.

DONATION DRIVE

On 29 October, the chapter collaborated with its NGO partner, Goonj, to hold a collection drive at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)—Madras Research Park. Goonj works with rural women to upcycle donated material to create a range of eco-friendly products.

Many chapter members donated clothes and other goods for the initiative.

CELEBRATING A MILESTONE

Over 50 members, volunteers and representatives from the industry and academia attended a gala on 19 November to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the

chapter. Bhuvana Sundar S, vice president, outreach, and Sivaram Athmakuri, vice president, finance, felicitated veteran volunteers and Project Puthri representatives.

This was followed by a knowledge-sharing session on "Contracts Management" by senior member and volunteer from Coimbatore, Ragothaman Gurunathan.

ENRICHING CONNECTIONS

The chapter participated in the PMI Leadership Institute Regional Meeting—South Asia on 15 October. It was a time for interactions among chapter leaders, alliance partners, board members and the executive leadership team.

The PMI Chennai Chapter received three honors: 500 Club Member/Chapter Guest Pass, pre-qualified chapter for PMI Chapter Award and an award for the successful completion of 20 years as a chapter.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT COMMITTEE

The PMI Chennai Chapter's Women Empowerment Committee (WEC) organized a get-together for women members on 19 November 2022. Forty women actively took part in the in-person event. One-to-one mentorship was provided to around 25 women participants and gave valuable insights into topics like leadership, entrepreneurship, project management, creating a work-life balance, returning to work after a career break and more.

Aparna Grandhi, leader, WEC; Radha Somasundaram,

program manager, Bosch; Janani Arumugam, senior project manager, Bosch; and a team of volunteers put this forum together with the support of Raghothaman Gurunathan, project management consultant, BGRS. Bhuvana Sundar S, vice president, outreach, and Sivaram Athmakuri, vice president, finance, felicitated the mentors and volunteers.

REACHING OUT TO STUDENTS

As part of its academic outreach initiatives, the chapter organized a knowledge-sharing session on "Project Management Basics for Academia" at Saveetha Engineering College on 14 October. The session was conducted by chapter volunteer Anash Sashee and attended by over 100 students and staff.

Aparna Grandhi addressed more than 60 MBA students of Jerusalem College of Engineering, Chennai, on 28

October. Grandhi spoke on "Project Management—An Essential Skill for a Career" and spoke about basic project management concepts.

Bhuvana Sundar visited Daffodil International University, Dhaka, Bangladesh, on 7 November, on the invitation of Dr. AKM Fazlul Haque, professor and director, internal quality assurance cell. He addressed 50 students and teaching staff on "Project Management Fundamentals for Academia."

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

These educational sessions took place in September and October:
1. A panel discussion on "Agile Leadership Characteristics"

was held on 24 September 2022 at IIT-Madras Research Park, Chennai.

2. Two knowledge-sharing sessions were organized on 29 October 2022. While Joe Nisha Arvind, psychologist and life coach, Joes Hope Center, spoke on "Emotional Well-Being," Vasudeva Sarma Sutram delved into the topic, "Digitalization in EPC Industry—Challenges and Opportunities."

PMI BANGLADESH CHAPTER
EFFECTIVE PROJECT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The PMI Bangladesh Chapter organized the Bangladesh Project Management Symposium on 5 November. Based on the theme, "Made by Bangladesh: Empowering and Accelerating Achievement," it aimed at promoting project management excellence and its export-oriented industries and services globally. During the conference, prominent business leaders and project managers from diverse industries exchanged knowledge and insights in project management best practices for project success.

Senior officials of the Bangladesh government, project consultants and corporate leaders attended the conference.

PMI BANGALORE INDIA CHAPTER
EMPOWERMENT WITH KNOWLEDGE

The PMI Bangalore India Chapter conducted its monthly knowledge-sharing and networking sessions, "PM Footprints."

On 10 September 2022, Venkatesh Manjaiah, founder and CEO of Pansophy Learning Systems, spoke on "Enneagram (Any-A-Gram) Secrets for Project Managers." He highlighted how 80% of today's world is governed by emotional quotient (EQ) and emotional intelligence (EI). Manjaiah pointed out that EQ and EI are critical toolkits

for project managers to achieve better stakeholder management, effective communication, and efficient project delivery.

On 8 October 2022, Ramanujan Mysore, PhD, who is the CEO of Bravo Consulting LLC, shared insights on "Project Management Professionals—Humans with a Magic Wand." The session delved into the realities of a project manager's work life across domains and industries. Dr. Mysore reminded the audience of the strength of project managers and the miracles they are capable of creating.

INNOVATIONS IN ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION

Two sessions on "Engineering and Construction PM Footprints" were held in September and October.

On 10 September 2022, Sundararaman K., an industry veteran and independent director, made a presentation on "Project Management—A Practical Approach in Manufacturing." He used case studies to explain business process reengineering and discussed the Japanese concept of the "Obeya Room" in project management.

On 8 October 2022, Subramanya Katti, executive director of Hongirana Energy Pvt. Ltd., presented a session on "Project Management Landscape in the Global Energy Transition." He spoke about using project management to move toward a net zero carbon footprint. He also urged the audience to focus on the customer and finances first; and said that the technology will automatically fall into place.

ARCHITECTING PROJECT MANAGEMENT

After a pandemic-induced hiatus of two years, The PMI Bangalore India Chapter conducted its annual conference on 12 November 2022 in an in-person format. The theme of the conference was "Architecting Project Management— Embracing Innovation and Sustainability." The keynote speakers included Dr. Srini Srinivasan, managing director, PMI South Asia; Harish Bijoor, business and brand strategy specialist; Prof. Rishikesh Krishnan, director, IIMB; Deepa Sathiaram, leading international systems design professional in Green Building, HVAC and building systems; and Srinivasan Arunachalam, group president, Steer Group, Bengaluru.
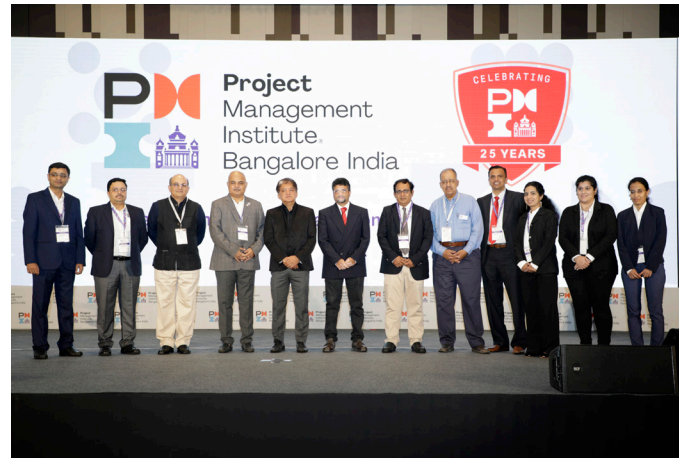
The other speakers were Nuthun Prasanna Kumar, director, Dvizira Private Limited; Debi Kar, founder and CEO, Personifwy; Pavan Soni, founder, Inflexion Point; Subashis Bandhopadhya, VP—BFSI Domain, Happiest Minds Technologies; and Ashhar Farhan, partner and co-founder, Danna Farmers Network.

A panel discussion on "Creating Sunrise Technologies from India" was also conducted by startup enterprises incubated by NASSCOM Deep Tech Club. The panel included Abhijit Choudhary, founder and CEO, Niral Networks; Rishab Verma, co-founder and CEO, UrbanMatrix Technologies; and Abhishek Gupta, sales leader, Imaginate. It was moderated by Palash Gupta, member, NASSCOM Product Council, DeepTech Club, and vice president and board member, PMI Bangalore India Chapter.

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STAR VOLUNTEERS

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

SAI SANTHOSH, PMP

Project Manager, SAP Labs India Pvt. Ltd.

Volunteer, PMI Pune-Deccan India Chapter

Been a PMI member since: 2016

The biggest hurdles I face as a project manager: As a project manager, you can create the most ideal environment. But if the team does not possess the necessary skills to tackle the problem at hand, your project is bound to fail. This is a huge project management problem that can only be solved with proper experience and foresight.

The top skills I have learned through PMI: Adapting my project manager methodology to constant updates (agile practice).

My new success mantra as a project manager: Being consistent, not neglecting any of the methodologies.

The big takeaway for me from volunteering: Constant and new learnings.

The future is ... Having an incremental learning curve.

SREEVANI LAKKARAJU

Senior Scrum Master, NationsBenefits

Volunteer, PMI Pearl City, Hyderabad Chapter

Been a PMI member since: March 2022

The biggest hurdles I face as a project manager: Managing communications seamlessly and transparently, whether internal or external.

The top skills I have learned through PMI: Scope management, stakeholder management and communication skills.

My new success mantra as a project manager: Be a role model and empower your team members.

The big takeaway for me from volunteering: I have gained a lot of confidence and knowledge.

The future is ... To continue my volunteer journey and help new members of the chapter.

COMMANDER ASHISH SAXENA (RETIRED), PMP

Additional general manager

(electrical), Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Ltd.

Chair-Ethics committee,

PMI Mumbai Chapter

Been a PMI member since: 23 September 2012

The biggest hurdles I face as a project manager: Managing internal and external stakeholders (with reference to government projects).

The top skills I have learned through PMI: Setting the framework for my project management experience to market my skills and experience in a manner more relevant to the target industries.

My new success mantra as a project manager: Agility for winability.

The big takeaway for me from volunteering: Volunteering for me is the elixir that rejuvenates the professional in me, introducing me to other talented professionals.

The future is ... automatedly, disruptably, VUCA'bly exciting!

SWETHA SURENDRAN, PMP

Associate General Manager, CNSI

Volunteer, PMI Chennai Chapter

PMI member since: 18 May 2013

The biggest hurdles I face as a project manager: At present, it is attrition.

The top skills I have learned through PMI: Scope and stakeholder management.

My new success mantra as a project manager: Empower team members and focus on the big picture.

The big takeaway for me from volunteering: It's a great opportunity to give back to the project management community. It has helped me expand my network beyond the IT industry.

The future is ... Bright and flexible for project managers with digital skills. It is also about the hybrid mode and adding more diversity to organizations.

NIMISHA PATEL, PMI-ACP, PMP

Project Manager
(Advantmed India LLP)

Volunteer (Training and Development), PMI Gujarat, India Chapter

Been a PMI member since: 2020

The biggest hurdles I face as a project manager: Poorly defined objectives.

The top skills I have learned through PMI: Applying PMI standards in project management activities by looking at the bigger picture and defining project strategy and planning.

My new success mantra as a project manager: Effective communication and collaborative leadership.

The big takeaway for me from volunteering: Getting real-time experience of connecting with project management professionals working in different sectors and building my social skills.

The future is ... Project management.

RAMYAJIT DASGUPTA, PMP

Global Analytics Manager, Concentrix Daksh India Pvt Ltd.

Director, Membership Portfolio, PMI West Bengal Chapter

Been a PMI member since: 2018

The biggest hurdles I face as a project manager: To handle cross functional stakeholders having diversified involvement in projects.

The top skills I have learned through PMI: Leading multiple projects in parallel and meeting the service-level agreements.

My new success mantra as a project manager: To be more agile in my approach at any phase of the project.

The big takeaway for me from volunteering: Get to know more in-depth about project management and the project economy.

The future is ... The project economy to turn ideas into reality.

Project Management Institute

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