



WHITE PAPER

SEASON 1

KEY TAKEAWAYS



PMI India presents the summary and key takeaways of each session of the Common Ground Webinar Series - Season 1 held from May to July 2020. Browse through the white paper to refresh your memory and use the handy tips recommended by the experts to become a better project manager.

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Common Ground Webinar Series

Theme: Agile project management

SEASON 1 | EPISODE 1

FEATURED SPEAKERS

Session 1



Pankaj Rai

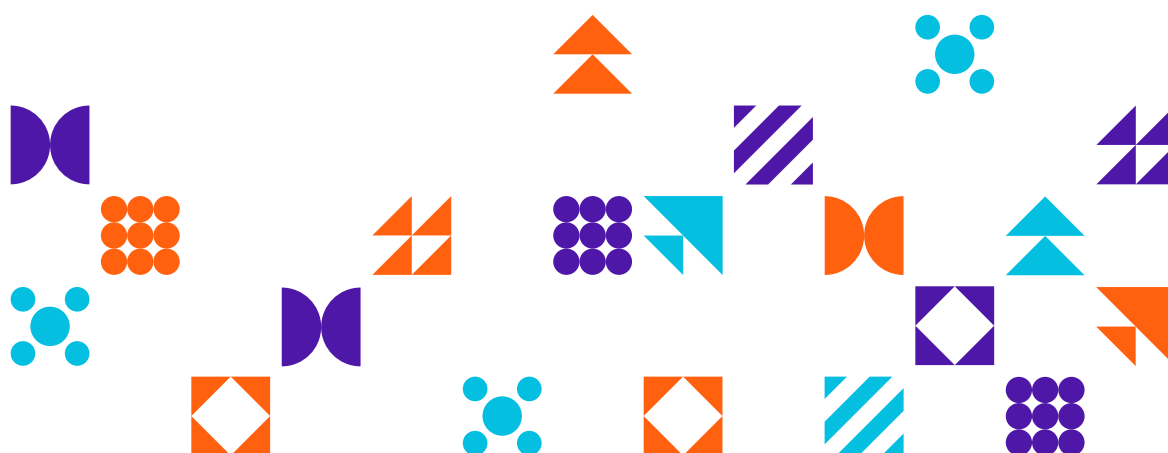
Senior Vice President
Strategic Thinking,
Wells Fargo

Session 2



Scott Ambler

Vice President and
Chief Scientist for
Disciplined Agile (DA), PMI



Session 1: Agile Methodologies



Pankaj Rai, senior vice president - strategic thinking at Wells Fargo, is responsible for creating a culture of 3Es (effectiveness, efficiency, and experience) in the company's shared services operations in India and the Philippines. In his total experience of over 25 years, he has led large teams, and set up and managed shared services operations in various organizations such as Dell, EMC, GE Capital, and Standard Chartered Bank.

Summary

Pankaj Rai applied insights from his vast experience in organizational transformation to look at how individuals and enterprises must change themselves for the post-COVID world. To understand how different the future of work will be, professionals must first look at the belief systems of the past that have led to their actions in the present. Unless they change those thoughts and beliefs, they will not be able to pivot to the new normal.

Unlike in the past, the future will be non-linear and unpredictable. For instance, an auto company in the linear world might have survived with incremental, continuous improvements. But now companies are competing with not just traditional auto manufacturers but also new entrants from technology sectors like Tesla and Apple, and they must reinvent themselves to stay ahead. Similarly, a professional cannot be content with a degree alone; they must be open to acquiring new skills. They must also be open to pursuing different careers along the way, and not just different jobs. A project manager will need to supplement traditional project skills with industry domain specialization and digital skills.

Mr. Rai believes professionals must also acquire some of the softer skills that will be in short supply in the future. He spoke about his 5C framework of skills and attitudes that will be critical in an increasingly de-globalized world – compassion, conviction, creativity, curiosity, and communication.



Key takeaways:

- Be prepared for a non-linear, unpredictable future.
- Be versatile – if earlier a job needed a knife, now it needs a Swiss knife.
- Develop skills and attitudes from the 5Cs that will be in short supply in the future – compassion, conviction, creativity, curiosity, and communication.
- Re-educate and reinvest yourself to find a fit in the new normal.
- Re-craft your identity to go beyond job descriptions; discover your purpose in the long-term.
- A generation is a metaphor for change; now since change is happening faster, one generation lasts shorter.
- There will be two types of roles in the future – a thinker who defines a function and a deliverer who gets things done. Choose what suits you.
- Today is about work-life integration, not work-life balance. Define your own normal.

Develop skills and attitudes from the 5Cs that will be in short supply in the future – compassion, conviction, creativity, curiosity, and communication.



Session 2: Introducing Basics of Disciplined Agile



Scott Ambler, vice president and chief scientist for Disciplined Agile (DA) at PMI, is a Disciplined Agile Fellow and the author and co-author of over 20 books. He co-developed DA with Mark Lines. He is also the creator of the Agile Modelling and Agile Data methodologies.

Summary

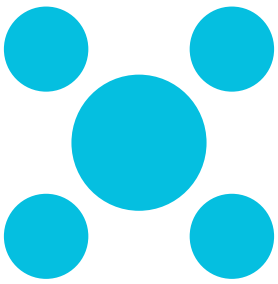
What works in one situation does not work in another; what brings success to one team could spell disaster for another. This is a premise on which the Disciplined Agile (DA) framework and toolkit were developed. And then came COVID-19. The chaos that ensued proved to be the perfect ground to validate this hypothesis. It is now clear that teams of the future will need choice to apply a method that works for their own unique situation.

DA is a non-prescriptive approach that embraces the uniqueness of people and organizations. Scott Ambler explained what it means to have a DA mindset, how to use the DA toolkit, and how teams and enterprises can choose their own way of working (WOW). These will be important in the post-COVID world when organizations will need to be more flexible, and change their strategy often and quickly.

He defined the DA mindset as having a set of principles such as be pragmatic, context counts, and organize around products/services; promises such as accelerate value realization, collaborate proactively, and improve continuously; and guidelines such as validate learnings, apply design thinking, and adopt measures to improve outcomes. The DA toolkit provides technique options and the trade-offs so that teams can make smarter choices.

Mr. Ambler also spoke about the guided continuous improvement technique that aims at faster improvements and early success, and the lean governance approach that organizations can use as a guide to adopt the DA framework.





Key takeaways:

- Kick off DA in the current stage of your agile journey; learn and evolve as you go.
- There is no best practice; every single practice has advantages and disadvantages.
- DA is a hybrid approach, put your context into it.
- Don't be a 'framework prisoner'; retain your option to choose.
- Evolve your WOW – identify problem, identify solution, try it out, assess effectiveness, adopt/abandon, and share learnings.
- Know the trade-offs before you make a choice.
- Make better choices, fail less often, and improve faster.
- A one-size-fits-all governance approach is bureaucracy; a consistent, lean approach is empowering.

Make better choices, fail less often, and improve faster.



Common Ground Webinar Series

Theme: Life skills/Professional development

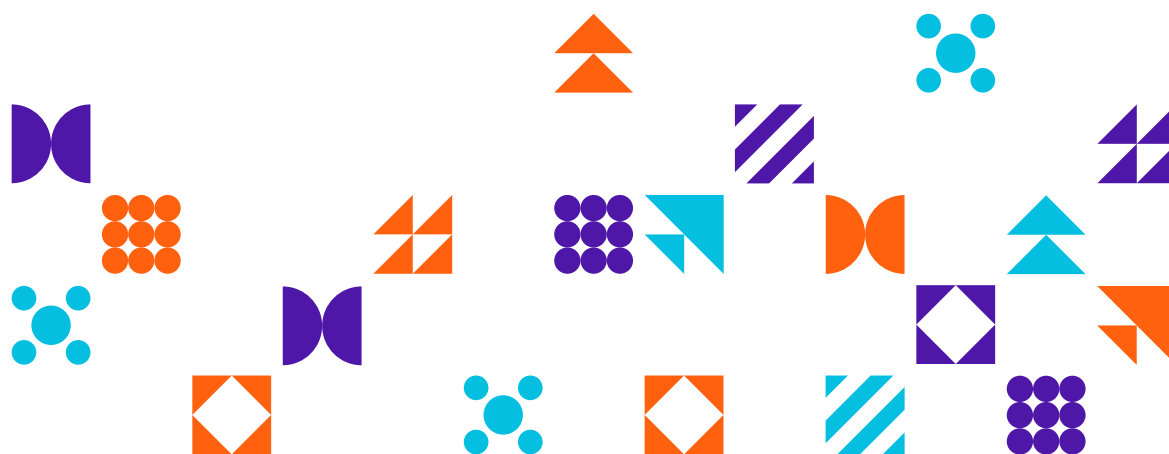
SEASON 1 | EPISODE 2

FEATURED SPEAKER



Sujan Roy

Head of International Business
Passenger Vehicles, Tata Motors



Session: A primer to career success and fulfilment in difficult times



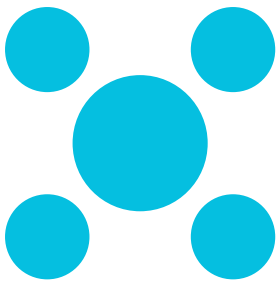
Sujan Roy, head of international business – passenger vehicles, Tata Motors, is a seasoned products, sales, and marketing professional from the automotive industry. He has nearly three decades of experience in India and abroad, having served some of the biggest names in the industry besides Tata Motors, such as Volkswagen, Honda, Mahindra, Mercedes, and Lexus. Mr. Roy is a two-time national finalist in humorous speeches and an award winning writer.

Summary

In the popular Hindi movie of 2019, *Gully Boy*, the title of a rap song, *Apna Time Ayega* (my time will come), became the movie's signature line. It aptly conveyed the protagonist's resilience in the midst of struggles. Sujan Roy used this line to capture the theme of his talk, which was about experiences that shaped his professional life.

Mr. Roy drew out “13 nuggets of wisdom” from his life that could help project managers overcome challenges and find satisfaction in their careers. He looked for inspiration in real-life examples, personal experiences, and fictional accounts, and presented them in the form of relatable stories. Each story held a value to help professionals understand how to give more to their organizations, attain career growth, and remain a vital asset during the current crisis.





Key takeaways:

- Focus on your self-worth; shape and present yourself in such a way that enhances your value.
- Stay hungry and determined to succeed despite all odds.
- Prioritize tasks and align your work to your manager's expectations.
- Stay focused on your goals regardless of the challenges around you.
- Develop a sense of ownership in your company and job; a strong connection with your organization will lead to fulfilment at work.
- Become a Gurkha; you are bigger than any challenges.
- Step out of your comfort zone; that is where growth occurs.
- Bring out the inner child in you; know that there is no limit to your potential.
- Be courteous and write 'thank you' notes.
- Read more to expand your knowledge.
- Spend time to look after your appearance; dress professionally.
- Learn to speak well.
- Embrace the art of saying 'no.'
- Luck is not all chance; how you respond when luck appears makes all the difference.

Write down each of your dreams, visualize them, and go back to them every now and then.



Common Ground Webinar Series

Theme: Overcoming the pandemic/Crisis management

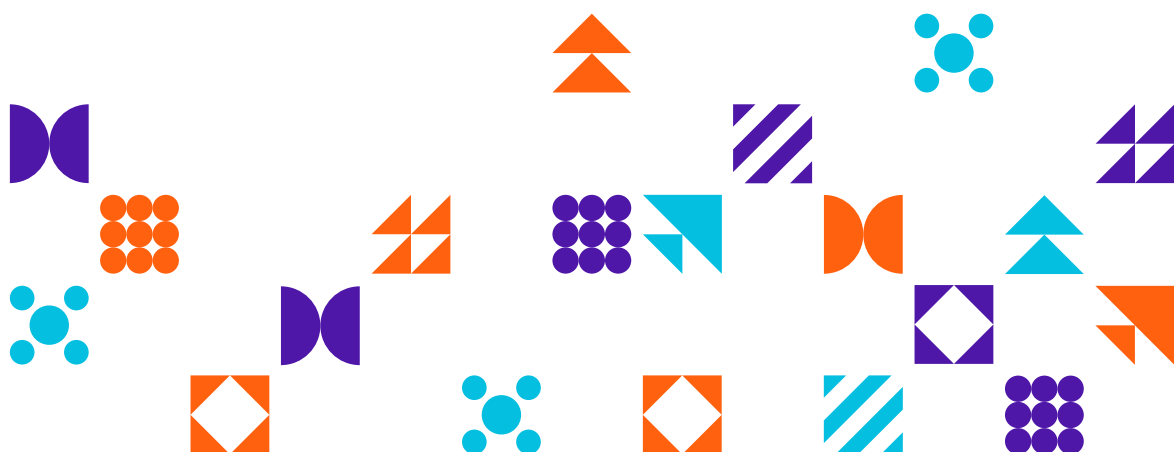
SEASON 1 | EPISODE 3

FEATURED SPEAKER



Dr. Deepa Bhide, PMP

Vice President,
Clinical Content Management, Cotiviti



Session: Application of project management principles in crisis management



Dr. Deepa Bhide, PMP, vice president - clinical content management, Cotiviti, is a medical professional and a project practitioner. In over 20 years of experience in consulting, training and operations, she has successfully married healthcare domain expertise with knowledge of project management and healthcare information technology. Her paper, *Patient care - A project management perspective*, has received wide global acclaim.

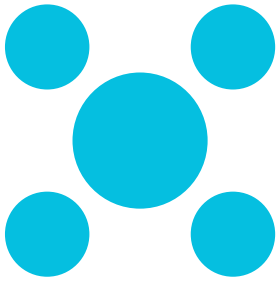
Summary

Dr. Deepa Bhide offered a unique perspective in the management of the pandemic through the lenses of a clinician and a project practitioner. She combined the experiences of being a COVID-19 warrior with her knowledge of project management to join the dots and present a 'new normal' for not just those in the healthcare industry but also others.

Reflecting on the magnitude of the pandemic, she said the healthcare crisis swiftly turned into a human crisis that attacked society at its core and impacted diverse industries. With no manual or treatment protocol to refer to, healthcare professionals are managing the outbreak in a manner akin to "building a plane as it is flying." It means dealing with risks, uncertainties, experimentations, and innovations on the go – and all these while making life and death decisions.

Dr. Bhide believes the crisis will shape the future in different ways – smarter resource management, quick-paced and on-the-go learning, greater agility in decision-making, and ethical considerations to make when faced with resource constraints. The crisis is opening up the healthcare system for a transformation that will have an impact on both the healthcare and related sectors. With its Code of Ethics and project management framework, PMI has a big role to play in the way the industry transforms and professionals recraft their skills and reinvent their identities.





Key takeaways:

- Digital delivery of healthcare services such as telemedicine gaining fast acceptance.
- Rise in virtual care will change the very soul of clinician-patient encounters.
- Healthcare systems will undergo transformation, which will impact several other industries.
- Learning cycle for health workers shrinking; focus is on agility and flexibility.
- PMI's Code of Ethics can be a guiding force as new dilemmas and ethical considerations come to the fore.
- Be prepared for the unknown, revisit lessons learned in previous situations.
- Focus on continuous nano innovations and business foresight.
- Adopt a project management framework in healthcare as a safety net.

With its Code of Ethics and project management framework, PMI has a big role to play in the way the industry transforms and professionals recraft their skills and reinvent their identities.



Common Ground Webinar Series

Theme: Life skills/Professional development

SEASON 1 | EPISODE 4

FEATURED SPEAKERS

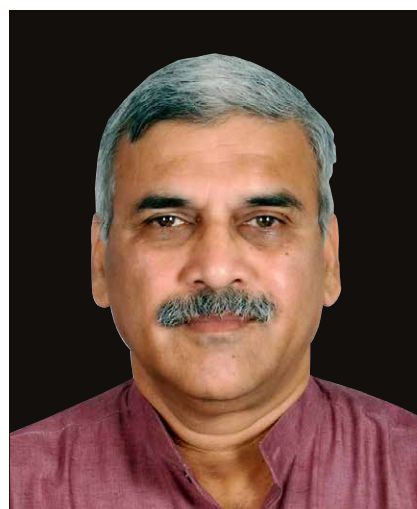
Session 1



Suman Ghose

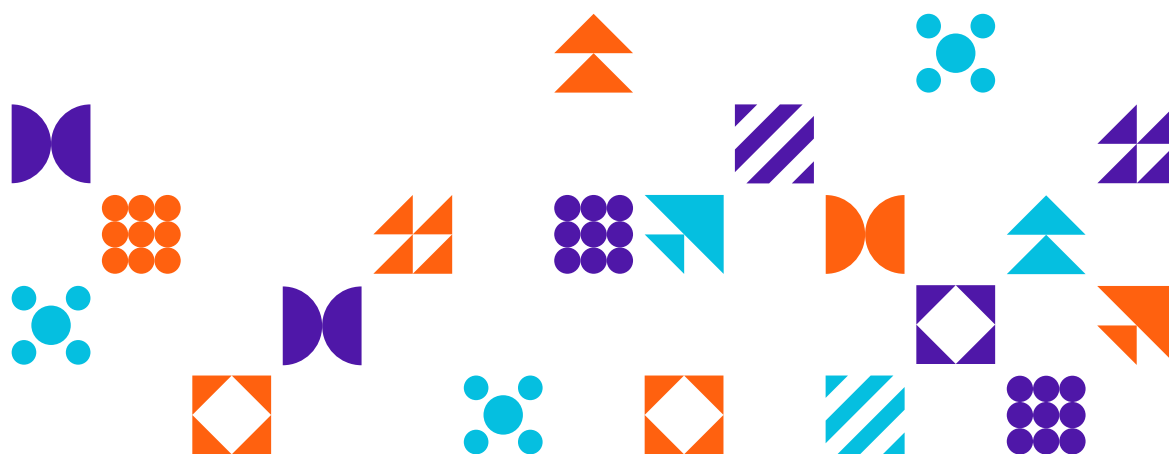
Co-founder
Inroads Leadership Development

Session 2



Lt. Col. L. Shri Harsha

(Retd.) PgMP, PMP
Techno Legal Consultant &
Technical Arbitrator



Session 1: How to Remain Calm and Positive in a Lockdown



Suman Ghose, co-founder, Inroads Leadership Development, is the author of the best-selling book, *From Command to Empathy*. He has over two decades of experience in diverse areas including practice management, program and site management, and ERP consulting. Mr. Ghose collaborates with individuals and organizations to help them achieve maximum performance and meaningful growth on critical leadership skills.

Summary

At a time when stress levels are rising, there is a need to understand why we behave in a certain manner in a given situation so that we can improve our response mechanism. Suman Ghose explored the neurological factors that contribute to anxiety and stress in people, and how different parts of the body react when stress hormones are released. Over time, increased stress could affect a person's health by increasing one's heartbeat and causing the liver to produce extra glucose.

However, individuals have the power to choose their response in the event of a crisis. Many of the techniques to overcome stress are classic examples of mind over matter. Mr. Ghose recommended a number of books that explore this subject such as *Man's Search for Meaning* and *The Power of Positive Thinking*.

He demonstrated a few simple exercises and breathing techniques to come out of stressful situations. Healing methods like yoga and meditation can reverse the effects of chronic stress. He strongly advocates mindfulness as a means to better manage one's emotions and guide teams during difficult times.



Key takeaways:

- Acknowledge the knowing-doing gap: why we do the things we know we shouldn't do.
- Ask yourself “why” before making a choice; you will then be more committed to your choice.
- Fight vs flight response: control the speed at which your brain thinks and reacts, so you can respond better.
- Don't let yourself be emotionally hijacked; remove yourself from that situation.
- 60,000 thoughts invade our minds daily; stay mindful to reduce the number and get mental clarity.
- Between stimulus and response lies our power to make a choice.
- Retrain the brain to focus and relax through yoga and exercise.
- Remember to reflect on what you are grateful for today.

Fight vs flight response: control the speed at which your brain thinks and reacts, so you can respond better.



Session 2: Stakeholder engagement – a juggler’s act



Lt. Col. L. Shri Harsha, (Retd.) PgMP, PMP, is a techno-legal consultant and technical arbitrator, with three decades of diverse experience across continents. His expertise spans different aspects of management ranging from program, project, contract, to stakeholder management. He is the second Indian to receive the prestigious PMI Eric Jenett Project Management Excellence Award in 2019. During his days in the Indian Army, he served in the frontline in Sri Lanka, Jammu & Kashmir, and Rajasthan.

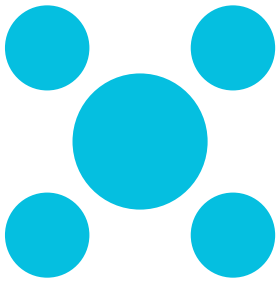
Summary

As the session title suggests, managing stakeholders in today’s business environment involves multi-tasking and quick responses as the situation evolves. Mr. Shri Harsha covered stakeholder management in theory, reality, and practice. He shared insights on how project managers can understand the different types of challenges that arise with stakeholders and learn to manage them better.

He urged project managers to spot the signs of negativity in stakeholders, as he named different ‘negative stakeholder’ categories. “Instigators” is a category of internal stakeholders who may try to fish for information on project development and use it for personal gains. “Surprise-springer” is a category of external stakeholders who extract confidential information from someone in your team to put you down. While negativity is detrimental to the project and the rest of the team, deal with them with professionalism.

Team leaders cannot afford to ignore difficult stakeholders as they may scuttle their project. Broaden your knowledge so you can understand the technical aspects of the project when dealing with stakeholders who have different skills. Be aware of the highs and lows of stakeholder management, and arm yourself with the relevant knowledge and techniques to take all the stakeholders along.





Key takeaways:

- Observe your stakeholders and get to know them better.
- Keep time aside for stakeholder planning.
- Behavioral analysis, professional excellence, and communication are key to tackling difficult stakeholders.
- Leave your comfort zone; communicate openly to get control over a situation.
- Be there for your team; create a good impression on your stakeholders.
- Take a stand when you must.
- Listen more and talk less.
- Don't burn your bridges; you never know who you will run into around the corner.

Behavioral analysis, professional excellence, and communication are key to tackling difficult stakeholders.



Common Ground Webinar Series

Theme: Life skills/Professional development

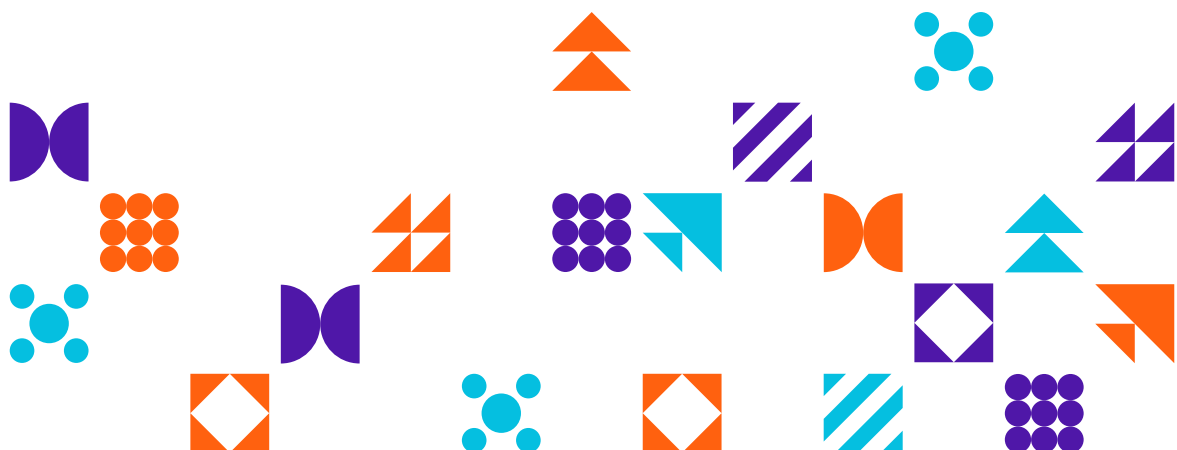
SEASON 1 | EPISODE 5

FEATURED SPEAKER



Radhika Vachani

Founder
Advaita Wellness Pvt. Ltd.



Session: Challenge to Opportunity - The Mental Wellbeing Journey



Radhika Vachani, founder of The Institute of Inner Wellbeing & Excellence, is an authority on positive wellbeing. Her mantra is to “transform the world, one breath at a time.” She is a researcher and author, with 23 years of experience in practicing yoga, meditation, and self-awareness.

Summary

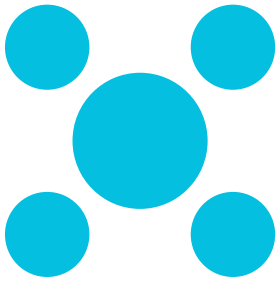
The world around us is impermanent; this too will pass. When caught in a maelstrom such as the pandemic, it is easy to get swept away by negativity and forget to look beyond the current state. Radhika Vachani reminded project managers of the transient nature of our physical reality and to get comfortable with volatility and change.

There is a need to retrain our perspective toward the ever-changing physical environment. It begins with accepting that nothing is permanent in life, and making peace with this fact.

Ms. Vachani believes in the power of wellbeing to overcome and convert challenges into opportunities. The starting point to enhance mental wellness is by understanding one's current mental state. She defined our mind and body as the house in which we spend 24 hours a day. We spend hours taking care of our external self; it is equally important to dedicate time to take care of our internal self.

She demonstrated a few breathing techniques for effective meditation and urged practitioners to dedicate time to regularly meditate to gain mental clarity and master challenges.





Key takeaways:

- Three issues affecting mental wellbeing: mental clarity, emotional barriers, physical wellness.
- Your thoughts have a profound impact on your actions and experiences in life.
- Don't give in to emotional hijacking; get control over your behavior and stay in touch with reality.
- Reflect on ancient Indian wisdom and apply it to modern life.
- Respond, and not react, to change.
- Hone your inner-self the way you develop your external self.
- Put your best effort today, and not tomorrow.

Live in the present; the past is over; the future is not here yet.



Common Ground Webinar Series

Theme: Technical project management

SEASON 1 | EPISODE 6

FEATURED SPEAKERS

Session 1



Lee R. Lambert, PMP

CEO

Lambert Consulting Group

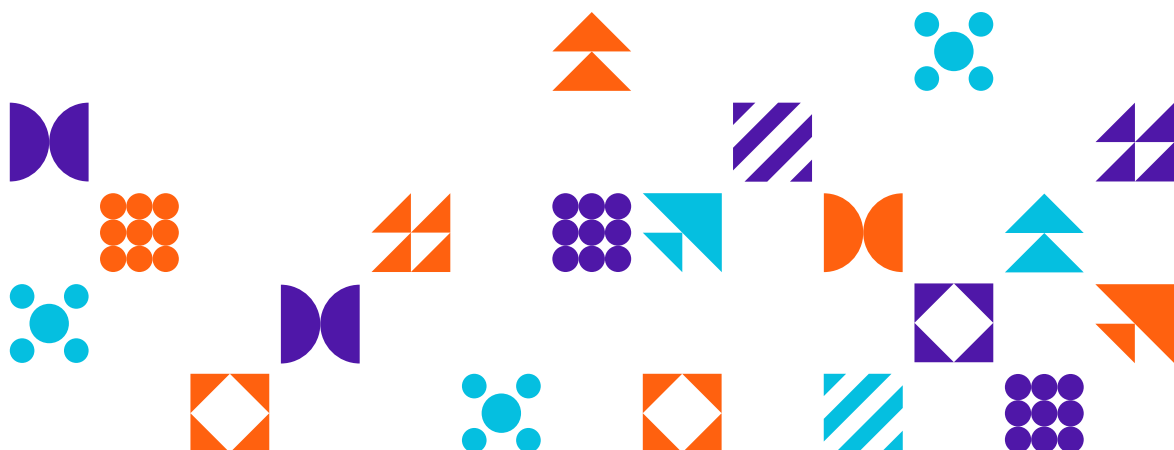
Session 2



Tejas Sura, PMP, PfMP

Board of Directors, PMI

Founder & MD, Cubic Turnkey Pvt. Ltd.



Session 1: Importance of a PPM



Lee R. Lambert, PMP, is CEO of Lambert Consulting Group, and PMI Fellow. He is the founder of PMI's Project Management Practitioner (PMP)[®] credential. He has over 40 years of project management experience and is a project management thought leader. His book, *Project Management: The Common Sense Approach*, is a global best-seller.

Summary

Among the changes that the pandemic has brought in, many are around digital capabilities that allow organizations to continue business as usual in the midst of large scale disruption of work. Lee Lambert spoke about one such capability – the project portfolio management (PPM) system that makes remote working smooth and productive.

PPM integrates all the information across the organization and generates decision-support information for the company. Without access to such insights, remote decision-making would be disastrous for project managers and senior executives. In a poll conducted during Mr. Lambert's session, over 50 percent of the attendees agreed that they would be able to execute their professional responsibilities without leaving home if their organization had a mature PPM system.

However, project managers who want to invest in a PPM system for the organization often face this question from senior executives: 'Do I really need it?' Mr. Lambert urges project managers to bring executives on board by demonstrating the value that PPM offers. Recounting an incident when he was convinced to buy a vacuum cleaner, he advised project managers to first create the illusion of a need and then live up to the expectations by delivering what was promised.



Key takeaways:

- Project management is the thread that holds an organization together.
- PPM integrates information across an organization vertically, horizontally, and diagonally.
- PPM converts data into decision support information and insights.
- Bring executives on board to win their confidence.
- Don't just generate data; learn how to analyze it.
- Avoid off the shelf PPM applications; tailor-make it to your needs.
- Sales is about creating the illusion of a need.

Everybody is a stakeholder; use insights from PPM to know how to communicate with different stakeholders.



Session 2: Rethink, Rebuild, Revive: The Way Ahead for the Construction Industry



Tejas Sura, PMP, PfMP, is the founder and managing director of Cubic Turnkey, and chair of the strategic oversight committee of PMI Board of Directors. He has over 25 years of experience in the construction industry. He led the Indian delegation for the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) technical committee for project, program, and portfolio management

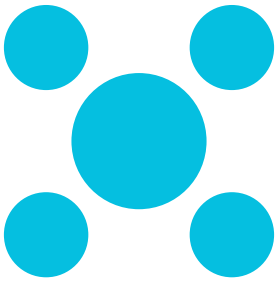
Summary

As India went into a prolonged lockdown due to COVID-19, the construction industry was one of the hardest hit. Tejas Sura spoke about the pain that the second largest contributor to India's gross domestic product (GDP) is experiencing. As construction came to a grinding halt across the country, it impacted the livelihood of around 50 million people and put the industry in severe financial distress. Even after some construction activity restarted, liquidity in the market remains low and contractors and suppliers are struggling with poor cash flow.

Mr. Sura made a strong case for the use of digital technologies to restart and revive the industry. This is the time to disrupt the way the industry has traditionally operated. He believes a key objective of the disruption should be to establish the credibility of developers and contractors as companies that are reliable, and have high ethical and quality standards.

Among the digital technologies that have high potential to disrupt the industry are building information modelling (BIM), augmented reality (AR), artificial intelligence (AI), project management tools, automation, and robotics. Blockchain-enabled smart contracts, modular manufacturing, Lean construction methods, and digital marketing tools are some other technologies from which the industry will benefit.





Key takeaways:

- 99 percent of construction companies are small and medium enterprises.
- Construction industry undergoing major distress.
- Disruption in the construction industry is long overdue.
- Developers and contractors must work toward building credibility.
- BIM, AR, AI, and automation technologies will be the biggest disruptions.

To stay competitive and master operational efficiency, construction companies must use project management tools.



Common Ground Webinar Series

Theme: Future of Work

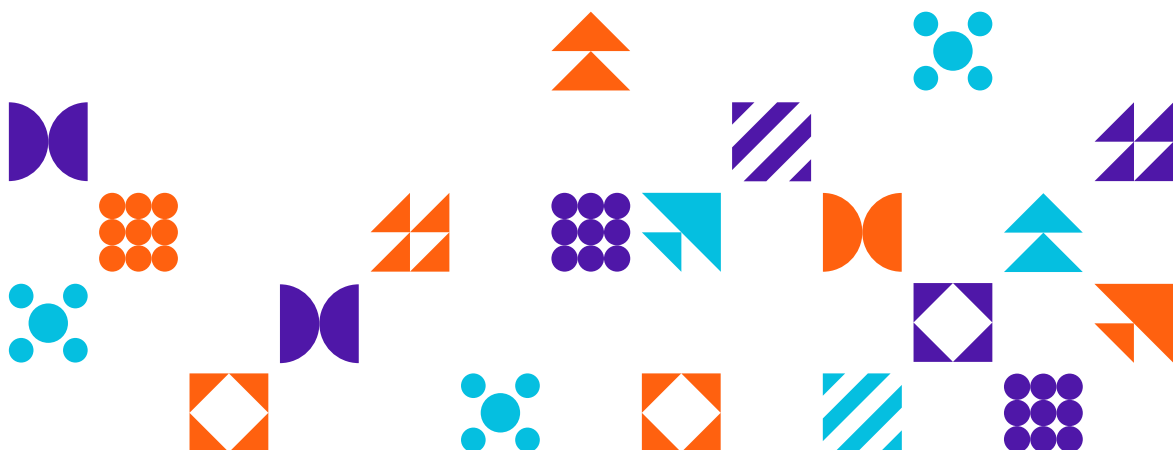
SEASON 1 | EPISODE 7

FEATURED SPEAKER



Sunil Prashara

President & CEO
PMI



Session: The Future of Work and the Project Economy in the Post-COVID-19 Era



Sunil Prashara is the president and CEO of PMI and the lead advocate for PMI's global organization that serves more than three million professionals in nearly every country in the world. Prior to taking over this role, Mr. Prashara served in leadership positions in program management, sales, operations, and digital transformation in telecom, ICT, and not-for-profit sectors.

Summary

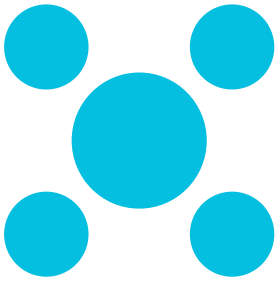
When businesses get back on the recovery path, they will build back better by investing in people, projects, and the planet, instead of putting their energies purely on growing profit. Pointing to the silver lining beyond the dark clouds hovering over the world now, Sunil Prashara said project management will be more relevant as the world works its way out of the current crisis.

Mr. Prashara called COVID-19 a wake-up call for organizations to adapt to change quickly. The Project Economy will get a boost from organizations as they reorient their business to the new normal and pivot to digital. He believes as work gets projectified, companies will need project managers who can deliver. Quoting a McKinsey report, he said project management will remain a top future skillset.

He urged project managers to develop 'power skills' that will be in demand such as cultural awareness, lifetime learning mindset, creativity, humility and authenticity, collaboration, social responsibility, and financial savvy.

The scope of influence for PMI is slated to grow in a world that needs more change makers. Though only 13 million professionals in the world have 'project manager' in their job title, in reality 42 million require project management skills to do their job, and 714 million professionals are responsible for bringing change. PMI is also working toward creating project management capabilities in people across age groups – through Educational Foundation for young children, life skills in the youth, core project skills and power 'skills' in professionals through certifications, and Brightline for strategic, enterprise-wide capability building for leaders and mentors.





Key takeaways:

- US\$ 2 trillion is wasted every year on project failure or poor project execution.
- Businesses in the new world will build back better and invest in people, projects, and the planet.
- Core project skills and power skills will grow in demand.
- As people work remotely, building a company culture becomes more important.
- Be a gymnast in your thought and spirit, be nimble and elegant.
- Focus on what you are as a person in your CV, not what you have achieved.
- Days of failing and failing fast are gone; organizations need people who can deliver.

We will see the rise of the Ironman not the Terminator; think of growing skills that will complement the work of machines.

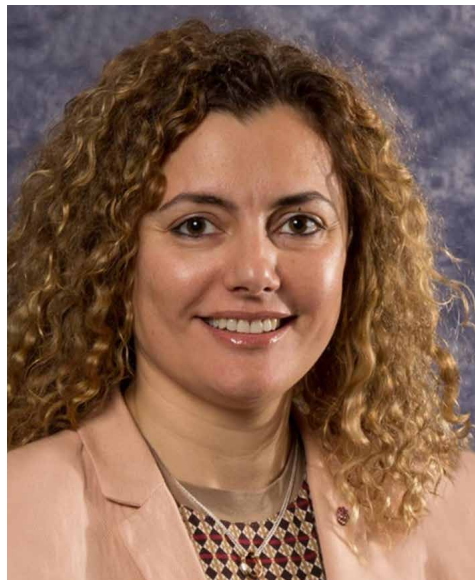


Common Ground Webinar Series

Theme: Future of Work

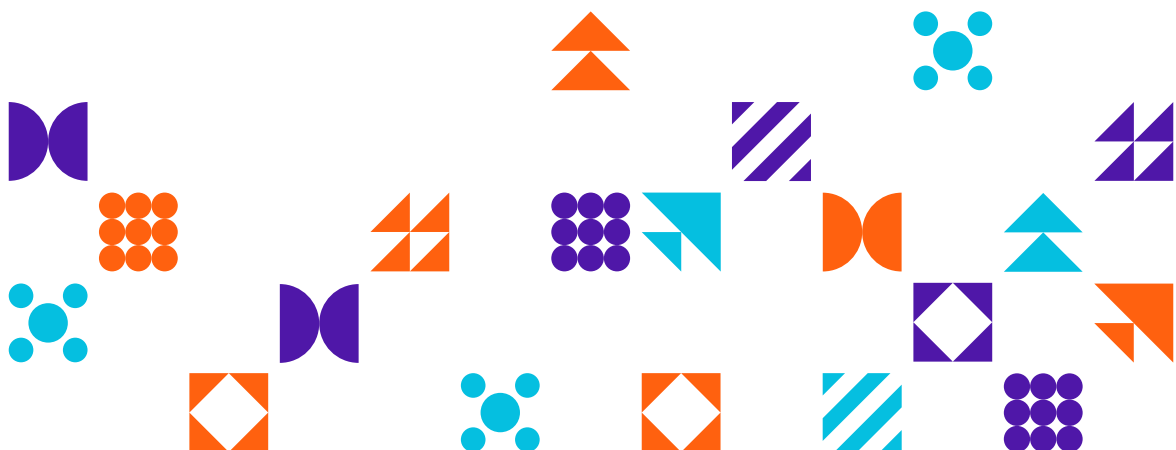
SEASON 1 | EPISODE 8

FEATURED SPEAKER



Grace Najjar

Managing Director,
Middle East and North Africa, PMI



Session: Digital Transformation and Project Management: Opportunities and Challenges



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

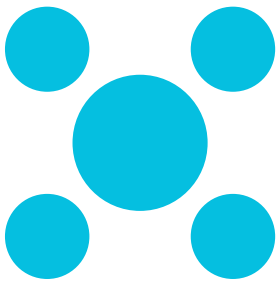
Summary

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

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

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





Key takeaways:

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

Project managers will lead teams of humans and robots.



Common Ground Webinar Series

Theme: Crisis management

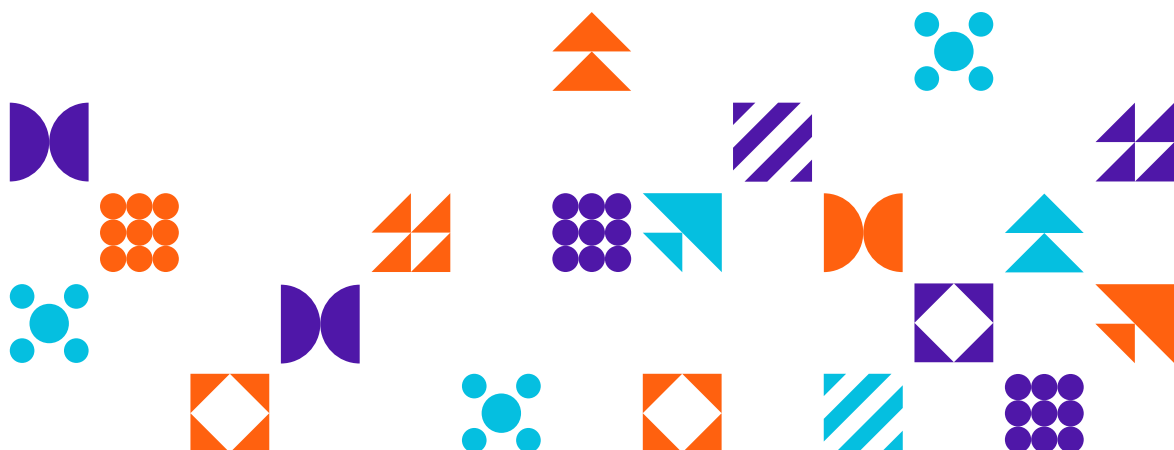
SEASON 1 | EPISODE 9

FEATURED SPEAKER



Kishore Jayaraman

President
Rolls-Royce India & South Asia



Session: The Strength of Outcome-Focused Businesses in a VUCA-World



Kishore Jayaraman, president, Rolls-Royce India & South Asia, has led teams in different parts of the globe across a career spanning 30 years. At Rolls-Royce, he is focused on building capabilities through empowered teams, thereby enabling the company to grow sustainably. Prior to his current assignment, he spent a large part of his career with General Electric. He is an avid reader of world affairs, emerging economics, human history, and geo-politics.

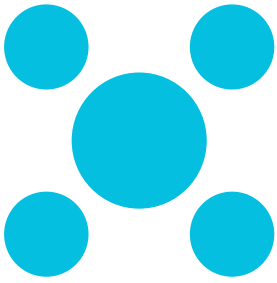
Summary

The year 2020 has taught us that the world can change overnight when we least expect it, especially in the corporate setting. It can come in the form of changes in project goals or working arrangements. Mr. Jayaraman spoke about the need to be prepared for the new normal and be outcome-focused.

He believes in the power of planning; while it is difficult to predict a crisis, staying prepared for changes helps in managing it better. He advised project managers to set clear goals and outcomes for transformation projects. This will ensure that projects do not get side-tracked due to any obstacles in the external environment.

He recommends constantly measuring new outcomes to see whether the team's actions are taking the project toward its goal. It is this outcome-focused culture that will help companies in their drive to increase productivity and enhance team spirit.





Key takeaways:

- Don't fret over changes; put a detailed plan to manage change.
- Every transformation needs to result in an outcome.
- Concentrate on the bigger picture; reflect on how your decisions will impact the company and its stakeholders.
- Establish an outcome-based culture.
- Don't get lost in everyday things; set big goals to boost the team's focus and productivity.

Focussing on outcomes marks the difference between a good and a great team.



Common Ground Webinar Series

Theme: Future of Work

SEASON 1 | EPISODE 10

FEATURED SPEAKERS

Session 1



Mark Broome

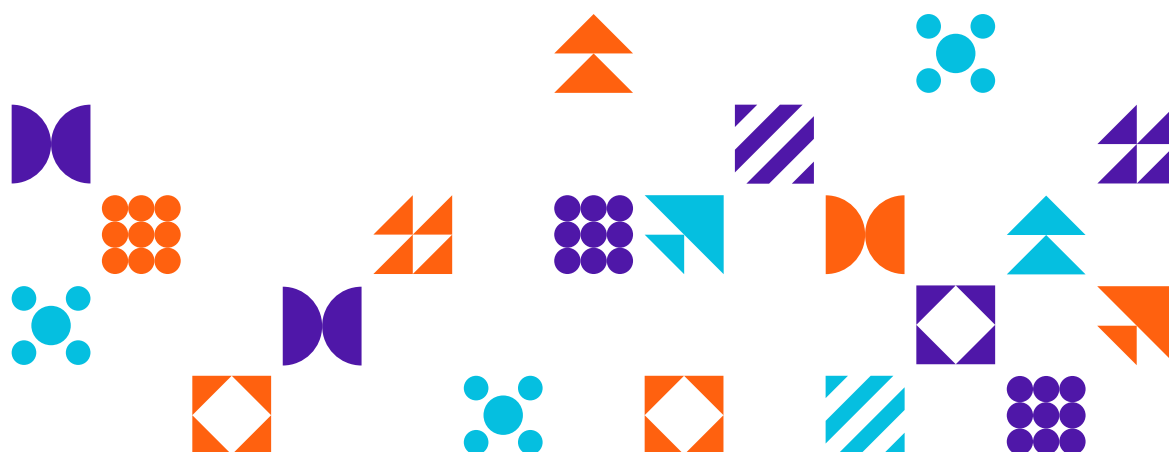
Chief Data Officer,
Project Management Institute

Session 2



Snehanshu Mitra

Head of CoE - Data Science and AI,
NASSCOM



Session 1: Artificial Intelligence in Project Management – An Impending Risk or an Opportunity?



Mark Broome, chief data officer, PMI, has held numerous leadership roles that have given him insights into driving change through innovation and integration. Mr. Broome provides expert advisory and coaching support to startups in the digital and analytics technology space. Through such volunteering work, he is guiding the future generation of business leaders.

Summary

Technology advancements powered by artificial intelligence (AI) has improved the quality of our lives in every aspect. But a common worry weighing on people's minds is the impact the growth of AI could have on jobs in the future. Mr. Broome spoke about the growth of AI becoming more prevalent in society, and what this means for project managers.

He said that only 50 percent of AI's potential has been uncovered so far, with rapid growth expected in the next 20-30 years. As AI disrupts the job market, professionals need to upgrade their skills to remain relevant. Mr. Broome urged project managers to grow their digital skills and learn about the ins and outs of AI, so they will be equipped with the right skills to manage AI-related projects in the future.

Project managers need to continuously update their knowledge on how to combine human intelligence and AI to achieve project goals. Mr. Broome recommended *Creativity, Inc.* as a must-read for professionals. The book provides useful tips that could contribute to project success such as observing your team's competence and involvement at work.



Key takeaways:

- AI can compensate in areas where human resources are limited.
- Learn to adapt and adopt.
- Machines can be death traps; how we leverage its power will make the difference.
- Learn the terminologies used by AI developers; get a good grasp of project delivery.
- Learn to interpret data; communicate better with AI developers.
- Leverage AI to improve the development and delivery of your projects.
- Boost your skills and experiences to stay relevant in an AI-powered industry.

Knowing to manage AI projects will be critical for project managers.



Session 2: Artificial Intelligence in Project Management - An Impending Risk or an Opportunity?



Snehanshu Mitra, heads the center of excellence for data science and artificial intelligence (AI) at the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM). He is responsible for creating, nurturing, and scaling up a vibrant AI ecosystem at NASSCOM. He also works with enterprises to co-innovate and promote academic research and AI skills. Mr. Mitra has served leadership roles in companies like Dell, Vodafone, and DenuoSource.

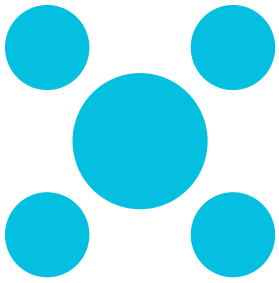
Summary

From healthcare and agriculture, to education and supply chain, artificial intelligence (AI) has created positive change. Snehanshu Mitra calls AI the most significant development that we have seen in our lifetime. In the healthcare industry, for example, AI has improved the access of quality healthcare for patients from varying backgrounds and those in remote areas.

Similar effects can be seen in enterprises, with productivity gains surging up to 40 percent. Mr. Mitra said AI powered algorithms have forged greater connectivity between enterprises and customers. He quoted the example of Netflix to illustrate how AI has improved the viewing experience of its customers, by making suggestions on the basis of viewing patterns. He emphasised that project managers need to leverage AI in their projects.

He noted that as AI rises, some jobs will be lost and new jobs will be created. It is not entirely foreseeable what new skills or jobs the future holds, but project managers need to be optimistic about the future. Moreover, there is no better way for project managers to prepare for the future than by learning new digital skills that are aligned with technology and industry advancements.





Key takeaways:

- AI can improve the productivity gains of an enterprise by up to 40%.
- Remain positive about the future as AI will create new jobs.
- Have an honest conversation with yourself about your role and thoughts on AI.
- Learn new digital skills that are aligned with technology and industry advancements.
- Improve your knowledge of how the data-driven world works.
- Stay updated on technological advancements and map your skills accordingly.
- Get a grasp on hot button topics such as data privacy and compliance.

Learn new digital skills that are aligned with technology and industry advancements.



Common Ground Webinar Series

Theme: Employee engagement/Crisis management

SEASON 1 | EPISODE 11

FEATURED SPEAKERS

Session 1



Karthik Ramamurthy,
MCA, MBA, PMP

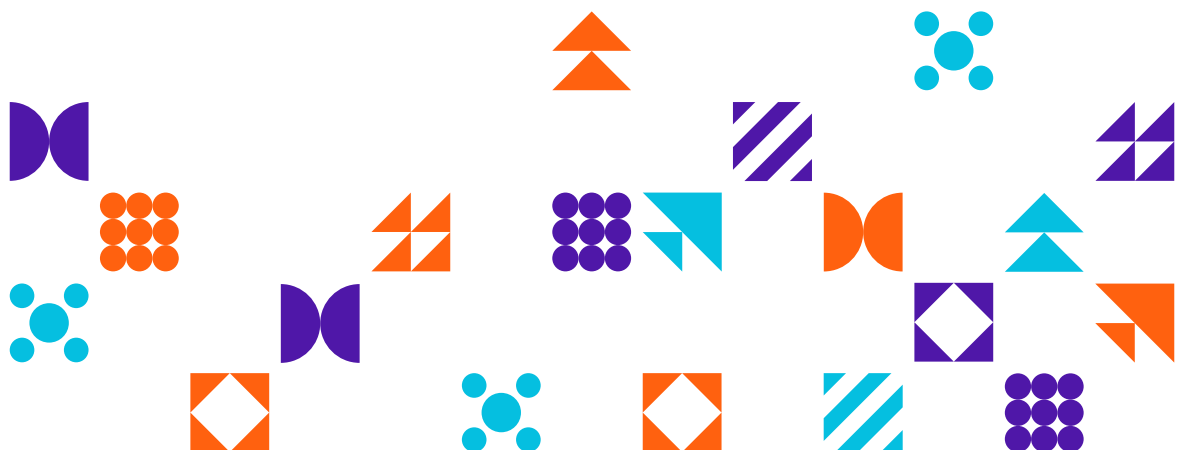
Founder & Chief Consultant, KeyResultz
Author: Say YES to Project Success -
Winning the Project Management Game

Session 2



Vivek Sonar, PMP, PMI-RMP

General Manager
(Product Development)
Mahindra Trucks & Bus Division



Session 1: IPL 2020 & Beyond: Inspirational People-Centered Leadership for the New Normal



Karthik Ramamurthy, PMP, founder and chief consultant, KeyResultz, is the author of the best-selling book, *Say Yes To Project Success*. He has three decades of expertise in delivering results to global clients. He has been a keynote speaker, presenter, panelist, and moderator at events in a dozen countries. He is a PMI volunteer leader, who has served the community in global, national, and local roles.

Summary

COVID-19 has altered the working dynamics with work-from-home being the new norm now. This new work arrangement has evoked feelings of worries, frustration, and boredom in employees. In this session, Karthik Ramamurthy explored what he called, Inspirational People-Centered Leadership (IPL). He identified a few common pitfalls associated with remote working. Managing a drop in the team's productivity and morale, as well as balancing the expectations of clients are constraints that project managers face today.

Mr. Ramamurthy shared insights that professionals can use to inspire their team members and themselves. Focussing on the bigger picture and reminding the team about it will align everyone's attention to one common goal. He also encouraged project managers to connect with their team members on social media. Observing their interests such as the type of books and music they like will allow managers to understand team members from different backgrounds.

Team morale is another area of concern. He advised managers to dedicate time to conduct fun quizzes and games with the team. This will boost the team's bond and morale, and reduce their feelings of worries and boredom. This is a time for managers to be there for the team and become a true leader.



Key takeaways:

- Find strategies to deal with risks during a crisis.
- Stress causes team conflict and demotivation, which affects the delivery of goals.
- Think, act, and communicate like a CEO.
- Focus on the positive side of working from home, such as less commuting and distractions at work.
- Learn new skills. This will be handy in the event of retrenchment.
- Put yourself in others' shoes and communicate with empathy.
- Focus on the good things that your team is doing instead of just scrutinizing mistakes.
- Observe changes in team members and communicate with them transparently.

Make appreciating people a habit, boost your team's mood and productivity.



Session 2: Resolves for Crisis Situations



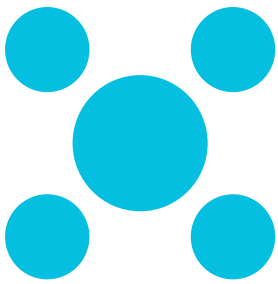
Vivek Sonar, PMP, PMI-RMP, general manager, product development, Mahindra Truck and Bus Division, is a project and program management professional with over 30 years of experience in the automotive industry. He is well-versed with automotive new product development stage-gate processes and risk identification. He mentors young professionals and volunteers in his free time.

Summary

When you are standing face-to-face with a crisis, take a deep breath and listen to your inner voice. Vivek Sonar explains that during stressful times, taking a moment to reflect on one's experiences will remind us that we have crossed and overcome similar struggles in the past. He urged project managers to tap into those experiences and realize that we have overcome wars, financial crises, and natural disasters in the past. And hence, humanity can overcome COVID-19.

Reflecting on the conversations he has had with his inner voice, Mr. Sonar said that a crisis can be both a curse or an opportunity, depending on how we perceive it. Our mind has been conditioned from our childhood to react with fear when faced with a crisis. But now is the time to retrain our mind to view the crisis as an opportunity instead. This is also a time to unlearn and relearn so that we are in touch with the current times and succeed in any situation.





Key takeaways:

- Whether you perish or progress during a crisis is in your hands.
- Convert a crisis into an opportunity by turning despair into optimism.
- Look for solutions to problems inwardly.
- Survival is an instinct. Make your goal bigger than your needs.
- Redefine your purpose and analyze what new values you can bring to your team.
- Curiosity is a virtue we need to cultivate; see the world through the eyes of a child.
- Let go of preconceived notions and worries of what other people will say about you.
- Don't let success make you complacent; remain humble at all stages.
- Anticipate, organize, and adapt: three strategies to build resilience.
- Stay calm during a crisis and help others.

Saying “I don’t know” is good; make that your starting point to learn, unlearn, and relearn.



Common Ground Webinar Series

Theme: Life skills/Professional development

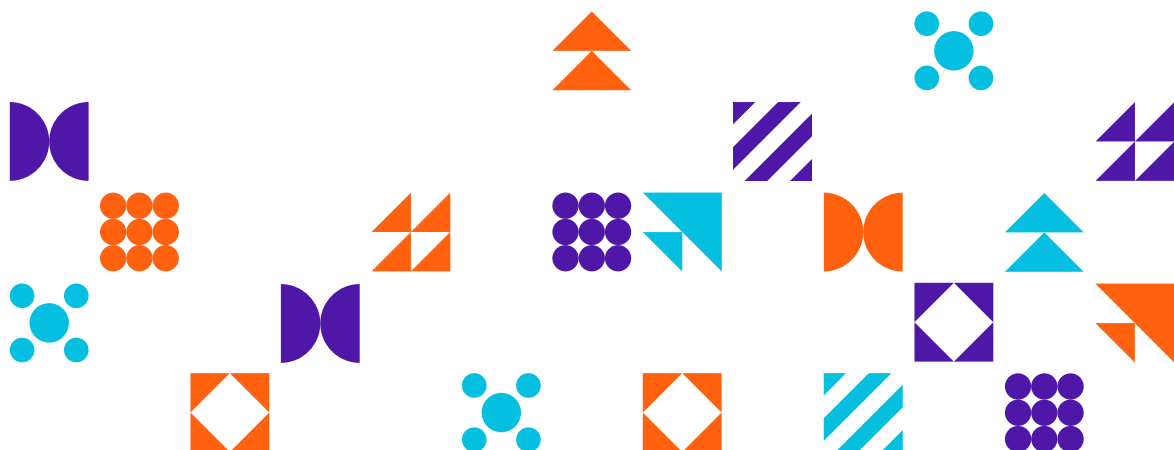
SEASON 1 | EPISODE 12

FEATURED SPEAKER



Anja Blacha

Vice President -Youth,
Project Management Institute
and record holding mountaineer



Session: How to Realize Big Goals in the Outdoors



Anja Blacha, vice president - youth at PMI, is a mountaineer and explorer. She is the first German woman to climb K2, the world's second-highest mountain. In 2020, she set the record for completing the longest solo and unsupported polar expedition by any woman. Ms. Blacha is also the youngest German to have climbed all the seven summits in the world. She has over a decade of professional experience in the telecom industry.

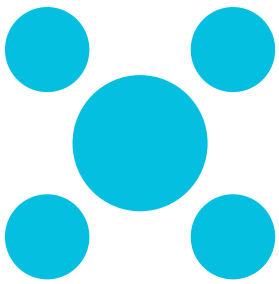
Summary

Undertaking a mountaineering expedition is no different from embarking on a project. It involves goal setting, planning, preparation, and risk management. Anja Blacha walked professionals through her inspiring journey of pursuing her passion for climbing mountains. She recounted how people told her that she did not look like she had the physical capacity to scale mountains. However, she turned her weakness, which is her small physical stature, into her superpower by focussing on the food she eats and the gears she carries on an expedition.

She attributed curiosity as the main fuel behind her mountaineering dreams. Being curious about new knowledge and experiences can also help to forge success in one's professional life. Ms. Blacha defined three layers of risk management as: recognizing risks, preparing for risks, and focusing on one's ability to overcome them. While risks can be a barrier to achieving your goals, it builds resilience, which is instrumental in finding success. Accept risks and overcome them to build a strong character.

Whether it's your work or your passion, set goals and work toward it. She urged project managers to not be deterred by a lack of experience from trying new experiences.





Key takeaways:

- Redefine your comfort zone; dare to pursue bigger goals.
- Cultivate the drive to keep learning and pushing yourself.
- Let your past not shadow your present or the future.
- Find mentors you can look up to for inspiration.
- Don't take yourself too seriously; be open to making a fool of yourself sometimes.
- Ask others for advice but trust your gut instinct the most.
- Determination will give you solutions to problems, not excuses.
- You can't have it all; be ready for sacrifices to turn your dreams to reality.
- Know your limits; stop when you need to.
- Every single step gets you closer to your goals.
- Be appreciative of what you have.

Focus your energy on the things you can control.





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