Project Management Trends Report 2019

Bruce Gay, PMP

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Introduction

The *Project Management Trends Report* is a set of collected trends, insights, and observations gathered over Winter and Spring 2019. It is **not** an all-encompassing report, nor does it provide results from a structured survey of project management practitioners and industry trends. The information is based off my observations, my reading of online articles and social media, and face-to-face conversations that I have had with colleagues and friends at recent professional conferences over the recent months. Thus, this report is flawed in that it represents my views and biases.

My goal in publishing this report is to highlight trends, elevate the conversation, educate others, and spur action on areas of opportunity for the project management profession. All these may add up to a lofty goal, but one has to start somewhere.

If you enjoy reading the *Project Management Trends Report*, or gain benefit from the insights, please let me know your feedback at brucegay@verizon.net

> "We don't see things as they are, we see them as we are.**"**
> - Anaïs Nin

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Sections Overview

1) Impressions of the Profession
2) Trends: New Skills for the Profession
3) Trends: New Ways of Organizing Work
4) Trends: Future of Project Management
5) Working with Humans
6) Opportunities for the Profession

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Impressions of the Profession

What people may observe about the PM Profession.

– There is a strong international community spirit.
– People who like the challenges and problem solving are attracted to the profession.
– There is a PM mindset or personality style.

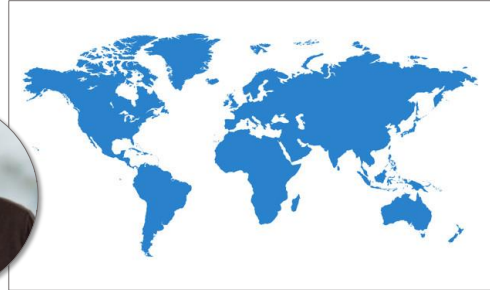www.brucegay.com   2019 Project Management Trends Report   4

It is a Global Profession

- Project Management is global profession with a strong international community spirit
- As an organization, Project Management Institute (PMI) has 570,000+ members working in 208 countries around the world:
  - Over 910,000 holders of PMP® Certification
  - Over 302 local chapters run by volunteers

As the new Pres. & CEO of PMI, Sunil has been traveling around visiting chapters. In his first 70 days in office, his biggest first impression is **"the people and the community spirit of the PM profession."**

- Sunil Prashara, Pres. & CEO of PMI
PMI EMEA Congress 2019

Source: Project Management Institute, "PMI Fact File." PMI Today, June 2019, 4.

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Who is attracted to the work?

Project Managers are individuals who:
- Like the challenges and problem solving of the work
- Feel the urgency to "get stuff done"
- Are driven by accomplishment
- Do well "riding the wave" of change

#GetShitDone

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There is a Project Manager mindset

Observation: During my travels this year, I observed a common mindset among Project Managers. Surprisingly, I would go as far as to call it a personality style. The words below encapsulate the top 10 positive attributes of a PM mindset.

Results driven   Entrepreneurial   Personal drive

Relationship builder   Effective communicator   Learner   Creative

Leadership   Willingness to improve   Deep curiosity

There is still the open question: Does a specific mindset drive passion for our profession?

Impressions of the Profession

Threats to Project Management.

- Not all projects are successful, nor are they delivering value for our customers/business.
- The profession needs to change/adapt to the rapidly-changing business environment; We cannot manage projects in the manner we always have.
- Project Management is not a science, but more of an art. Thus, it relies heavily on the individual practitioner.
- Many industries and organizations lack mature project management practices, or do not understand the profession.

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Opportunities for Project Management.

Impressions of the Profession

- Research confirms that projects create business value and project management creates higher value for more complex projects versus lower complexity projects.[1]
- The Project Management Institute (PMI) proactively works to stay ahead of trends and rapid changes across the global business environment.
- Not all business environments are VUCA.
- "Women in Project Management" is becoming a real movement with an increasing relevance.
- Where industries and organizations do not have mature PM tools/methods/best practices, there is room to grow the profession into adjacent environments.
- The importance of customer-centricity is growing.

1 - Prof. Dr. Hans Georg Gemünden (Berlin University of Technology)

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Trends:
New Skills for the Profession

- Change Management
- Storytelling
- "Circle of influence" (Stephen Covey)
- Coping with complexity
- Growing the PM toolbox to include new delivery methods (Agile, Design Thinking, etc.)
- Managing Remote Teams
- Gaming techniques to engage team and customers
- Managing intergenerational teams
- New modes of communication including Social Media
- "Soft Skills"
- Agility - releasing capabilities sooner, understanding when "good enough" is enough
- Moving from risk management to organizational resilience

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Trends:
New Ways of Organizing Work

– Projects are still the "currency" of our work.
– Decentralized task management
– Delegation of authority and accountability
– Empowering teams to manage their work
– Delivery approaches that enable flexibility without administrative burden
– "Asynchronous Time Management" – staying laser-focused on tasks and stakeholders most likely to be a challenge
– Focus on mission, people, and the balance between human versus technical aspects of Project Management
– Allow coexistence of multiple Project Management methodologies
– Leverage automation, bots, and AI for heavy lifting, and focus on the softer aspects of Project Management

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Trends:
Future of Project Management

– Command and control is dead
– Servant leadership means to see leaders in others
– Manage people, not the detailed tasks
– Shift toward:
  – "Project Leadership" not just Project Management
  – Closer alignment of business and projects
  – Hybrid projects and virtual teams
  – Leadership, strategic, and business management and less technical Project Management

Trends:
Future of Project Management
(cont.)

– Key emerging competencies for PMs :
  – Agility/adaptability
  – Customer-centric
  – Understanding of advanced analytics and Big Data
  – Respecting others/empathy
  – Anticipation/prediction (anticipate and address conflicts before they occur)
  – Diplomacy and influencing others
  – Storytelling
  – Maintaining broad organizational knowledge
– Work life balance?

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"Projects are all about people."

Working with Humans

– Learn to treat co-workers and staff as individuals. One-size-fits-all management style does not work.
– The bosses we remember: 1) Provided safe space to grow, 2) opened career doors, 3) defended us when we needed it, 4) recognized and rewarded us, 5) developed us as leaders, 6) inspired us to stretch higher, 7) led by example, 8) told us our worked mattered, and 9) forgave us when we made mistakes.
– Value diversity within your teams, but spend time to disseminate a common identity, culture, and behaviors across the group.
– The brain responds to change as if something violent is happening.
– Technical knowledge + empathy = optimal customer experience
– Unresolved conflict ultimately wastes money.
– Restoring self-esteem is key to resolving conflict.
– Solve hard problems over coffee and tea. (Make time to develop relationships and build up social capital.)
– The global financial crisis of 2008-2010 was a turning point in managing people. There has been a major shift to getting value from resources (staff) in a sustainable way and a movement toward more long-term vision and work/life balance.
– "Generativity" is a modern leadership style focused on human flourishing that project leaders need to adopt. [Generativity = making (leaving) your mark.]
– Embrace Social media to take the relationships with your teams to the next level, particularly important as we expect our teams to constitute of GEN Z in the coming years.

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Opportunities for the Profession

"Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again, this time more intelligently."

- Henry Ford

– Given today's marketplace, every business must be built to transform
– Businesses that invest time and effort to learn how to improve their customer's experience will thrive
– PMI should build bridges to other professional orgs (e.g. ACMP, IIBA, etc.)
– Research confirms that projects create business value and project management creates higher value for more complex projects versus lower complexity projects.
– There is evidence of successful project management everywhere, just need to look for it.
– The PMI organization is trying to stay ahead of the trends and rapid changes
  – PMI can take credit for one of the most important elements in supporting the profession: developing a worldwide acknowledged standardized vocabulary for project, program, and portfolio management.
  – The next big challenge will be to standardize terminology of agile beyond the small task group and define an integrated framework with the 3Ps: project, program, and portfolio management.
– Not all environments are VUCA. There are "normal" environments.
– Many industries and organizations do not have mature PM methods. There is room to grow the profession into adjacent environments.
– Helping "Women in Project Management" grow to strengthen the profession.
– Digital Transformation = Business Transformation. Leadership does not understand what is needed to implement "going digital"
– Digital Transformation is not about the technology; technology is just a means to an end

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Data Collection / Conferences

Speaking Engagements

January	ITMPI Webinar	Virtual	Design Thinking & Project Management
February	LearnFest Caribbean 2019	Kingston, Jamaica	Design Thinking – How Innovative Organizations Integrate Design Methods in Projects
March	PMI Pittsburgh Chapter	Pittsburgh, PA	Design Thinking & Project Management
March	Project Summit Business Analyst World	Orlando, FL	Design Thinking & Project Management; Cross-Team Collaboration is Hard! Tips & Tricks to Help Solve Divides
April	PM Congress 2019	Delft, Netherlands	Bridging Organizational Divides; Design Thinking & Project Management
April	Design Thinking 2019	Austin, TX	Translating Design Thinking into effective Project Management
April	SIIM Webinar	Virtual	Managing User Adoption on Informatics Projects
April	Project Summit Business Analyst World	Washington, DC	Design Thinking & Project Management; Cross-Team Collaboration is Hard! Tips & Tricks to Help Solve Divides
May	UMD PM Symposium	College Park, MD	Bridging Organizational Divides
May	PMI EMEA Congress 2019	Dublin, Ireland	Successfully Integrating Design Thinking Into Your Projects
May	Project World Business Analyst World	Toronto, ON	Integrating Design Thinking on Your Projects (Full day workshop); Cross-Team Collaboration is Hard! Tips & Tricks to Help Solve Divides
May	ITMPI Webinar	Virtual	Bridging Organizational Divides with Team Collaboration Models
June	PMI SW Ohio Summit19	Cincinnati, OH	Design Thinking & Project Management
June	UXPA International 2019	Scottsdale, AZ	Forging Alliances with Project Management: A PM's View of UX

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Thank you in advance for your feedback.

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