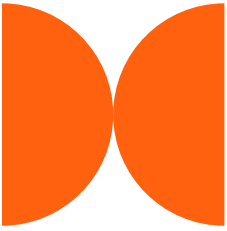




Tomorrow's Teams Today

The Future of Teaming: Creative, Collaborative and Agile



A New Take on Teams

Project leaders are eager to rally their teams around new ways of thinking.

This is not the time to stick with the status quo. Relentless technological evolution, shifting customer demands and global socioeconomic volatility are forcing a revolution in how problems are solved and how work gets done. One way that organizations are getting work done differently is through project teams. According to PMI research, more than half of all organizations are reorganizing their activities around projects and programs.

Companies can have the most brilliant strategy in the world, but it won't mean much unless they have multidisciplinary teams that can carry out that vision—and also gracefully pivot when scope or requirements are revised along the way. PMI research shows managing changing priorities is the biggest project delivery challenge.

Today's project leaders aren't just willing to reimagine their processes. They're eager to rally their teams around new ways of thinking. "I love changing all the time in search of better ways to work," says Rocio de la Cuadra Vigil, PMP, director, portfolio management, product development, Yanbal International, a cosmetics and jewelry company in Lima, Peru.

It's these agile, change-ready teams—led with an eye on collaboration, empathy and innovation—that will thrive in The Project Economy.

Teaming 2.0 in The Project Economy

Today's teams are formed around a fundamental understanding: Change happens through projects. Organizations are undergoing a paradigm shift in which projects are no longer adjacent to operations but instead the driving force behind how work is done. The project portfolio drives disruption, innovation and expansion. And those projects are led by teams comprised of people with a variety of titles, tapping into a variety of approaches to deliver financial and societal value.

This is The Project Economy—and it's the next generation of teams that will determine how well organizations perform.



A New Team DNA

“We work in small squads made up of integrated, multidisciplinary team members to provide solutions.”

—Susana Molina, PMP, Veolia Ecuador

As the nature of work changes, so too must the structure and dynamics of teams.

Our 2020 *Pulse of the Profession*[®] found that 42 percent of projects were characterized as having “high complexity,” a trend that has been growing over the past five years. Such complexity can rapidly boost team size: High-complexity projects average 24 core team members versus 8 for low-complexity projects, according to new research conducted for this report.

But not every organization can simply flood teams with more resources. Instead, it takes busting down boundaries across the enterprise and then stoking an ethos of shared responsibilities: Half of all project professionals are involved in cross-functional project-based work, PMI research reveals.

Case in point: Veolia, a French company that provides water, waste and energy management solutions to public and private clients around the world.

“Ten or 20 years ago, products had more time. Now, we need to deliver projects in months, not years, and

we have to deliver more quickly and more efficiently,” says Susana Molina, PMP, CIO, Veolia Ecuador. “We work in small squads made up of integrated, multidisciplinary team members to provide solutions.”

Project professionals report they had worked on an average of 6.1 teams in the prior 12 months, according to PMI research. And over the next year, 42 percent of respondents expect that number to increase.

Going all-in on agile is one way organizations can develop more risk-resilient, fail-fast teams and accelerate the pace of change. According to the 2020 *Pulse*, nearly 1 in 4 projects were completed in the prior year using agile. And over the next five years, half of project management offices (PMOs) expect to increase their use of agile. Leaders now know it’s simply a matter of when (and how) to adopt agile.

“When you’re dealing with big corporations with rigid structures, the challenge is how to scale small, dynamic agile teams up into the mainstream,” says David Marsh, PhD, director, UK Ministry of Defence, London, England.

Sizing Up Teams

High complexity teams have three times more core team members than low complexity teams.

6.1

Average number of teams project professionals have worked on in the prior 12 months

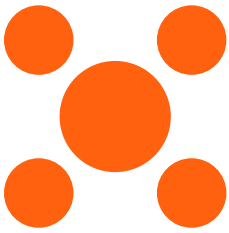
Mean Number of Core Team Members

High-Complexity

24

Low-Complexity

8



The Search Is On

“Our core project management skills don’t go away, but people skills are becoming front and center.”

—Jim Boland, IBM, Dublin, Ireland

When The Project Economy collides with a global skills shortage, organizations run the risk of losing talent or limping along with open headcounts. Having the right people with the right skills for priority projects is among the top three delivery challenges, according to PMI research. And 15 percent of 2020 *Pulse* respondents say lack of talent with the right skillsets was the single most important factor responsible for project failure at their organization.

The great talent shortage requires a shifting of roles and titles.

“Redefining descriptions for titles like project manager, assistant project manager and project leader may help some people move around the organization and help us manage talent by plugging resource gaps,” says Dr. Marsh.

Some project leaders are turning to technology to tame the talent beast.

With more than tens of thousands project managers and active projects running at any one time, IBM is using artificial intelligence (AI) to help build teams, says Jim Boland, leader of the company’s Project Management

Global Center of Excellence in Dublin, Ireland.

“We have very detailed and mature estimating models that take inputs from numerous data sources, such as previous projects and information we get from our customers,” he explains. “The models can help tell us the size, scale and types of projects we’re facing; what roles we need and how many of those roles are dedicated or would be shared roles across our teams.”

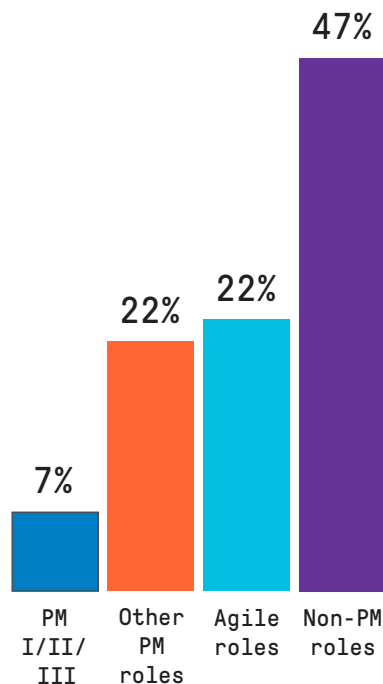
To truly get a handle on their talent needs, organizations must first consider the skills they need to execute their strategy and vision. Nearly a third of senior executives in the 2020 *Pulse* survey say securing relevant skills is one of the most important factors for achieving future success. Just what those relevant skills are appears to be changing, however.

“Our core project management skills don’t go away, but people skills are becoming front and center, and that’s something we’re putting significant emphasis on,” says Mr. Boland. “We’ve defined a whole range of people skills that we deem critical, including empathy, but also things like adaptability, critical thinking and problem solving.”

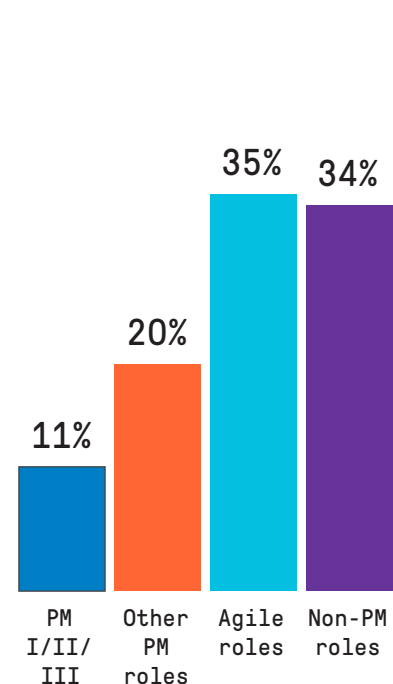
Role Playing

Less than a third of project team members have traditional project manager titles.

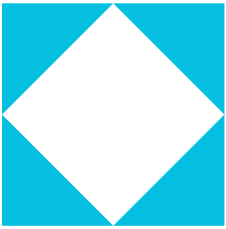
High-complexity Teams



Low-complexity Teams



1 in 3 team members are considered to be subject matter experts, regardless of the project complexity level



Collective Identity

“Collaboration is not only working together—it’s working *with* your team in a total participative organization.”

—Sandrine Wamy, PMP, Bolloré, Douala, Cameroon

Today’s project teams are moving far beyond a rote focus on time, budget and scope. In research conducted for this report, project professionals rank collaborative leadership as the most essential team skill.

“Every manager, every leader has to be a coach for their team,” says Sandrine Wamy, PMP, regional CIO, Bolloré, a transportation and logistics company, Douala, Cameroon. “Collaboration is not only working together—it’s working with your team in a total participative organization. Every team member should know they have a voice.”

Empathy, communication and emotional intelligence are also frequently mentioned by project professionals as essential team skills, according to PMI research.

The need for these new power skills might be even higher for virtual teams, when misunderstandings or miscommunication between team members working in different locales can fester into resentment or anger if left unaddressed. Ms. Wamy tries to mitigate such friction by arranging face-to-face meetings when tensions create risks. Periodically bringing together disparate team members in the same physical location resets the common ground and shifts the focus to shared project objectives.

The push to foster true understanding extends beyond the team: Project professionals rank “empathy

for the voice of the customer” as the second-most essential skill going forward. Teams that proactively engage end users can root out surprises and boost project benefits—whether it’s gathering patient feedback to optimize the design of a new healthcare facility or establishing test sites for people with disabilities to make sure a transportation system addresses accessibility needs.

Ms. Wamy recommends teams engage with customers early and often. “We have to make sure the customer benefits from the application that we deliver,” she says. “We have to show that we’re hearing them, and that we are trying to respond.”

AI can also lighten a team’s burden when it comes to mining customer insights. At IBM, for example, cognitive tools are helping teams anticipate and address customer pain points. The company’s project leaders also monitor dashboards that bring user feedback front and center.

“We try and get our project teams and our project leaders to think end to end,” says Mr. Boland. “We’re becoming more predictive by leveraging past experiences—either with that particular customer or on similar types of projects.”

More than Machines

Half of teams who already work with AI expect to work on even more AI teams in the next year. Among the other half who have never worked on this type of team, about one-fourth expect to start working on an AI team in the next year.

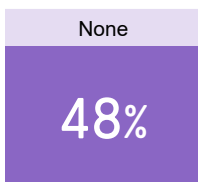
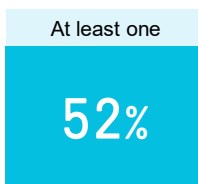
The Must-Haves

Clearly looking beyond the usual technical realm, project professionals say the most essential team skills are:

1. Collaborative leadership
2. Empathy for the voice of the customer
3. Risk management
4. Innovative mindset
5. Methodology or framework governance

Source: *Pulse of the Profession® In-Depth Report: Tomorrow’s Teams Today*, PMI, 2020

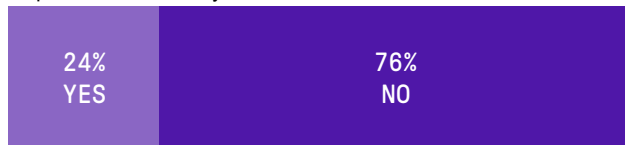
Number of AI teams worked on in the past year



Next Year: Expected change in AI team involvement



Next Year: Expect to work on any AI teams





Ready for Anything

Fast and flexible is the name of the game for teams in The Project Economy. As projects increase in complexity, organizations must rethink how teams get things done. Ready-for-anything teams will excel by prioritizing three core principles:

Agility ... Always:

No matter the size of a team, it must be built with flexibility in mind. As roles and responsibilities are redefined, teams that embrace an all-for-one mentality will be best prepared to adjust on the fly.

Collaborate and Listen:

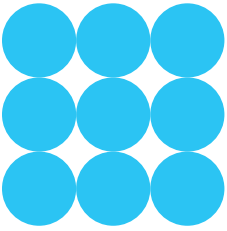
Hierarchies are dying—or at least the idea of an all-knowing, top-down leadership is fading fast. The onus is on project leaders to build team trust and forge a collaborative pact. Emotional intelligence and strong communication can make the difference between a project that delivers and one that's dead on arrival.

Put the Customer First:

Teams need to keep the user's needs in mind from the very start. Making consumer feedback the backbone of planning and execution will help teams stay on track to deliver meaningful value.

The paradigm shift is real: Projects are now primary to how organizations solve problems. And teams must be strategically structured to respond to that change.



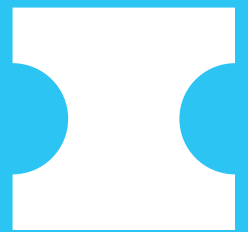
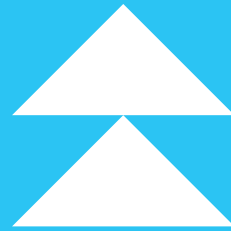
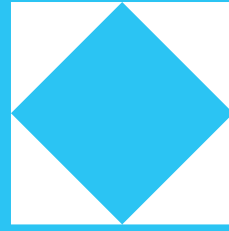
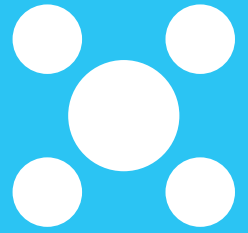
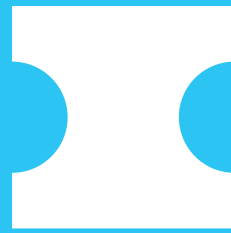
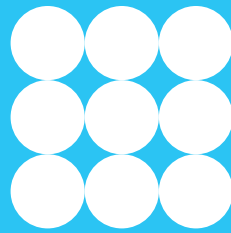
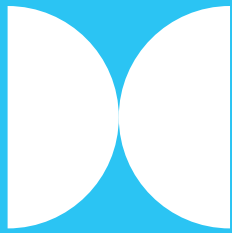


About This Report

This report highlights insights from PMI research, including:

- Research on project teams conducted online in January 2020 among a global sample of 358 project professionals from the PMI Thought Leadership Panel
- *Pulse of the Profession® 2020, Ahead of the Curve: Forging a Future Focused Culture*. Based on research conducted online in October/November 2019 among a global sample of 3,060 project professionals, 358 senior executives and 554 directors of project management offices from a wide range of industries
- Research on The Project Economy conducted online in September/October 2019 among a global sample of 642 project professionals from the PMI Thought Leadership Panel





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