CHAPTER AWARD WINNER

Project Management Institute Kerala India

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE 2022

THE JOURNEY BEGAN 20 YEARS AGO

The Project Management Institute, Kerala Chapter is one among the 11 chapters of PMI South Asia. The Chapter was established in the year 2003 by a group of like minded professionals with an aim to build a community of project managers in the state. The Chapter kick started Kochi branch operations in 2018. Ever since its inception, the Chapter has been providing significant value not restricted to the project management community, but also to the society, conducting conferences, knowledge sharing sessions, webinars, networking events etc.

This year, the chapter is recognized as the **BEST Global Chapter in category II** by the Project Management Institute. This is recognition for the unique initiatives of the chapter like academic outreach programs, social good projects like support to children in palliative care families, value added programs to members like PM tools training, platform for public speaking and many more. The directorboard would like to place its gratitude on records about the wholehearted efforts by the members and volunteers who made this possible for the first time in the history of the chapter.

Jayakishore S R
President, PMI Kerala Chapter

For a member driven organization like PMI and PMI Kerala Chapter in particular, with a lot of programs designed and executed by the volunteers, recognitions are a real motivators. Though the volunteers are highly self driven and capable of assuming responsibilities and ownership without any instruction, a recognition empowers them to move forward, attract more volunteers, contributing more and more to the PM community and the society.

Today, after two decades of inception, when the chapter receives the BEST global chapter award in category II for the first time, on behalf of the director board, I would like to thank the founding members of the chapter, leaders, volunteers and members who steered the chapter. Over these years, the chapter had significant growth in membership, number of programs conducted on a regular basis, which made PMI Kerala Chapter a significant professional body in the state.

Thanks to initiatives by the members and volunteers, PMI Kerala Chapter could launch very unique initiatives which are recognized by through this award. The Chapter have multiple programs to reach out to the society, identify the under privileged and designs programs to support them in many ways. The chapter's way of member engagement becomes very unique as it identifies the need of every member the day they join the chapter, making sure that it is addressed and support them in their professional journey. Thanks to the Pandemic, the chapter now has members for over 20 countries. To support and engage these members, PMI Global Community volunteers designs programs which empowers them volunteering remotely.

The Chapter is working in association with many professional bodies in the state such as Institute of Engineers, Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Computer Society of India and Aeronautical Society of India. The Chapter is also associating with other PMI Chapters in the region and across the boarders. Association with PMI Tunisia, Singapore, Lakeshore - Ontario, chapters resulted in significant member engagement and growth for all the chapter's involved.

With more and more volunteers coming forward to contribute and lead, the chapter is all set to launch more programs which will definitely contribute much more to the society and community.

Hariprasad P S
VP Education, PMI Kerala Chapter

"Rome Wasn't Built in a Day, But They Were Laying Bricks Every Hour".

Way back, many visionary leaders thought about how we can take a professional, non-profit organisation to new heights. With this thought in mind, we, at PMI Kerala, decided to become advocates of project management and ensure right practices are put into use to deliver things which add value to people and society

We extended project management practice to areas like school, colleges, NGOs & other likeminded organisations to help package whatever they were doing into a proper structure, and deliver it in a better way through training, consultancy, and mentoring.
We have started building communities in college and schools as academic forums where students feel the immense value of being part of professional organisations. Volunteering & mentoring has helped us[1] in bridging the gap between academia and industry. Today PMI Kerala stands with a student member base of around 600, from which 200 are PMI global members. PMI Kerala's annual Student Conference **"WINGS"** is conducted exclusively for students.

We spread our reach by associating with various skill training organisations. Today we have tie-ups with more than 10 professional & nonprofessional organisations. We collaborate with them to conduct trainings and webinars and have created various platforms for members to grow professionally. Our collaboration with these organisations has helped in conceptualising ideas like **"Whiz Talk"** and **"PMIK Toastmaster"**, to name a few.

The NGOs we associate with, helped us grow from a professional non-profit organisation to a socially responsible non-profit professional organisation. Today we stand as the chapter with the greatest number of volunteer hours under **"UN Sustainable Goals**" across the globe during 2021. An astounding **16,000** Volunteer hours! Our Socially responsible arm delivered multiple social good activities like **"Audio books for blind"**, **"UDAAN**- Educational support for Students", **"DISHA**- educate and empower girl kids" in addition to many others.

Hariprasad P S (Cntd...)

VP Education, PMI Kerala Chapter

While we are espousing Project Management ideologies within various aspects of functional society, we are always focused on our members to help them build their network & grow professionally. PMI Kerala's annual conference **"WAVES"**, **"HATCH"** – startup conclave, **"CanDAla"** – DA conference are all unique events aimed at enabling our members to build their professional network. PMI Kerala also piloted a job portal for the members. We introduced **"PMI Kerala – Empower"** an event aimed at engaging new and erstwhile members of the chapter.

We published a white paper: **"Agile for Non-IT"** that focussed on agile methods in industries other than IT. We also created enough volunteer opportunities for members to engage them as per their interest.

For everyone beyond the PMI Kerala family, this might be perceived as something akin to a cake walk. But to re-emphasize whatever we have achieved today is because of the hard work and efforts of visionary leaders and selfless volunteers.

In 2020 we were the finalist for **Global best chapter award**
In 2021 we were the **Fearless change award winners**
In 2022 we won the **Global best chapter award for category II**

PMI Kerala was laying the bricks all these years for this moment. Like they say, "Rome wasn't built in a day!"

We are very sure that with all your support and encouragement we can keep this momentum going and ensure that PMI KERALA attains new heights and glory.

A big **Thank you** for standing by our side and supporting us in achieving this great milestone…

Anoob Fasaludeen

Associate Director at Nielsen
https://www.linkedin.com/in/anoobfasaludeen17111982/

DSDM is an Agile method that focuses on the full project lifecycle, DSDM (formally known as Dynamic System Development Method) was created in 1994, after project managers using Rapid Application Development (RAD) wanted more governance and discipline to this new iterative way of working.

DSDM's success is due to the philosophy "that any project must be aligned to clearly defined strategic goals and focus upon early delivery of real benefits to the business." Supporting this philosophy with the eight principles allows teams to maintain focus and achieve project goals. This is very well articulated in the fig below:

Fig: The 8 DSDM principles (Source: Knowledge Train)

Anoob Fasaludeen (Cntd...)

Just like any Project Management technique, DSDM has its fair share of advantages & disadvantages.

The major advantages are :-
- Measure the progress of a project in initial stages easily.
- Interaction between the stakeholders will be formed.
- The continuous feedback mechanism helps to develop the system according to user needs.

While the disadvantages are :-
- It can be costly to implement
- It minimizes creativity, as work has to be delivered in a clear time boxed manner
- DSDM works best when teams have a reliable structure & full support from management

Do you think DSDM would work in your environment?

Jaydeep Chakraborty PMP

Senior Consultant at Tata Consultancy Services
https://www.linkedin.com/in/jaydeep-chakraborty-pmp-prince2

It is a Volatile, Uncertain, Complex & Ambiguous (VUCA) world and we live in a sea of accelerating change. Some evangelists also call it out as Brittle, Anxious, Non-linear & Incomprehensible (BANI). Therefore, with an uncertain and rapidly changing world, the risk of one's current knowledge becoming quickly obsolete is very high. The best way to cope with such an unknown future is by learning, unlearning and relearning – a commitment to be a lifelong learner.

Projects have become a basic unit of work and life in the 21st century and projects are the ways we do things which are undertaken to fulfill objectives by producing deliverables that create value and benefits. As per PMI' PMBOK - Project is a **Temporary** Endeavour Undertaken to Create a Unique Product, Services or Result. Project management is the discipline of execution and bridges the gap between organizational strategy and successful projects. Worldwide, organizations embrace, value, utilize project management and attribute their success to it.

The 21st century work and life skills are :-
- quickly analyzing complex problems
- conceiving & creating innovative solutions
- effectively communicating & collaborating with other team members

Young learners, who are graduating from colleges, must prepare for careers and work demands of the future. They have to develop the above skills and work towards a clear goal, aligned with the project vision. They would gain significant advantage by building "work readiness" through knowledge of project management practices. Strengthening the resume with strong project management capabilities, even before stepping out from the academic institutes, give them a competitive edge.

Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM) certification from PMI imparts knowledge about project management to such learners with little or no project management experience. New CAPM exam content outline (ECO) w.e.f. Jan 2023 is available in the PMI website as below:
https://www.pmi.org/certifications/certified-associate-capm

A. Kabir Pary
Management Consultant, Trainer and Coach
at Zinetico Solutions
https://www.linkedin.com/in/kabir-pary/

By challenging established employment arrangements, gig work is disrupting labor markets all over the world. This rise was further hastened by altered workplace demographics brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic, including great resignation, quiet quitting, and moonlighting. Platform mediated work is making an impact across geographies. On the demand side, software development and IT work occupy nearly 40% of platform-based knowledge work and on the supply side, around 40% of IT gig workers on platforms are from India.

Online IT outsourcing resources (IT gig workers) are being used by businesses more frequently for their projects. Online outsourcing offers businesses access to skilled people from around the world as well as lower costs for projects, administration, and compliance. It stands out because it makes special use of resources that are often acquired for brief periods of time and are not constrained by organizational frameworks.

Platform economy necessitates diverse skills due to its unique nature. A recent study that used a qualitative content analysis of client viewpoints compiled the skills needed for this transformation. The most important skills identified include learning that promotes open communication, technical competence, shared ownership, and shared understanding.

In a nutshell, the skills are :-
- ability to understand requirements and meet expectations, attention to detail, and quality consciousness (shared understanding)
- technical skills, knowledge and professionalism (technical competence)
- responsiveness, cost management and promptness (shared ownership) and
- communication and feedback (open communication).

A T-shaped skill combination with deep technical competence along with the other three would be the expectation for the future.

'It's not about you'

Meera Sankar
Freelance Content Writer and Educator
https://www.linkedin.com/in/meera-sankar

Every time I watch the movie Dr. Strange, I am mesmerised by it in general, but the Ancient One's dialogue with Dr. Strange, in specific, never ceases to amaze me. 'Arrogance and fear still keep you from learning the simplest and most significant lesson of all…. It's not about you.' Seemingly simple, yet powerful; of immense significance, both philosophically and in management.

It is true, that in a TEAM, there is no I, and for good reason too. A healthy team is one where all feel included, are confident of expressing their opinions and encouraged to reach their maximum potential. And who better to facilitate this than an empowered leader, who mentors the team into being productive, proficient and positive, making them capable of taking independent, staunch decisions.

I mean, who wouldn't want to be appreciated and heeded to, and what better place to enjoy it than at one's own work place, in the solace of one's own team.

Fig: The 8 DSDM principles (Source: Knowledge Train)

Meera Sankar (Cntd...)

Member, PMI Kerala Chapter

As already established, there is no 'I' in the team, which means it is not just about one person. A leader is one who is voluntarily followed, earning respect of others; unlike one who commands loyalty and respect by force.

'You cannot beat a river into submission; you have to surrender to its current, and use its power as your own.' Understanding or showing empathy towards the team members, lending an ear in times of need, openly appreciating a great idea, being proactive about the professional needs of the team, genuinely taking an interest in the development of the other members in the team, without thinking about personal goals, go a long way in gaining the much needed trust and respect of the team. When the team is thus nurtured into a strong and efficient entity, along with the team members and the leader, the whole organisation as such develops and benefits, thereby creating a plethora of opportunities and positive experiences for every stakeholder involved.

'With great power comes great responsibility.' While authority and power come only to a chosen few, everyone can be a winner and feel fulfilled, starting with the simple act of the leader realising that, 'It's not about you.'

Murali Krishnan M.C
Member, PMI Kerala Chapter

We are living in an era of transformation programs. Digital transformation continues to be one of the most important growth drivers for the C-suite executives. While the strategy may be formulated in board rooms, project managers drive the execution of these transformation programs on the ground which can potentially change long-standing business models and initiate a culture change in the organisation. These disruptive programs are redefining the project management landscape; it is imperative that practitioners recognise and adapt to the evolving scope of PM.

- **Build a strategic mindset**

Project managers are required to develop a deep understanding of business priorities, transformation strategy and ensure projects are aligned to the strategy. They need to be outcome focussed; not just the methodology or the processes followed for project execution.

- **Change management is not 'out of scope'**

To lead and manage the unprecedented amount and speed of change in the industry, building change management skills are becoming essential for project managers. Enhance your ability to plan, implement and successfully manage the impact of change. Project managers are often expected to ensure impacted people are aligned to the needs and benefits of the project.

- **Adaptability, flexibility and agility**

We are operating in a fast changing, volatile business environment and to drive projects to completion and achieve stated goals require project managers to be extremely flexible. It is critical to adopt an agile mindset while executing programs.

Murali Krishnan M.C (Cntd...)

Member, PMI Kerala Chapter

- **Innovation is key**

Innovation has become a core competency for project managers and a critical skill to be successful in leading large transformation programs. Project managers need to actively look for opportunities and seek ideas throughout the lifecycle to streamline/automate processes and for innovations which will help the program achieve its strategic goals.

- **Act as a leader and not a manager**

The nature of transformation programs demands project managers to be relentless in the pursuit of outcomes which matters for the stakeholders. Get out of your comfort zone and challenge the status quo; do not be afraid to get into unchartered territory. And remember, it is OK to fail but make sure you fail fast and learn fast!

Industry is evolving and nature of jobs are changing, project management practice is not immune to this change. Growth of the project management practice will depend heavily on how current practitioners stay ahead of the curve and redefine a project manager's role in the industry. As the saying goes the illiterate in today's world are those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn!

Nishad Ziaudeen

Electrical Manager, TRAGS
https://www.linkedin.com/in/nishad-ziaudeen/

Reading.... a habit that everyone needs to develop in life.

Ever heard of a book called "The Epic of Gilgamesh"!! This is the first ever book written. This book was about a mythical retelling of the tales of a hero and king from history.

Of course, you may argue that this fact is incorrect. Though there have been many inscriptions in clay tablets (Mesopotamian Era- 3rd BC), papyrus reeds (Ancient Egypt- 2400 BC), silk, wood, shells, flowers, leaves, etc., this is one of the oldest books ever recorded.

Earlier days, reading was restricted only to the rich due to lesser books available at that time. But this hobby started spreading when Cai Lun of the Han Dynasty invented paper, somewhere around 100 BC. This invention played a pivotal role, and a strong reading culture developed despite strong political restrictions. The paper technology then spread to the Arab world, who started using paper to make money. The rest, as you know, is what is in your hands now!

In the 11th century, a Japanese woman known as Murasaki Shikibu wrote the first ever recorded novel, "The Tale of Genji", which had 54 chapters.

Nearly 2000 years later, people are still engrossed in novels, whether it is a book or on a handheld screen.

Books can be relied on when you are bored, upset, depressed, lonely, or annoyed.

Good books keep your mind active and enhance creative ability. It improves communication skills and language creativity. Other than increasing knowledge, books help reduce stress, boosts imagination, and helps develop analytical skills.

Books have always been a part and parcel of human development, from childhood, through teenage and until death. Good books are always cherished for a lifetime.

Nishad Ziaudeen (Cntd...)

Member, PMI Kerala Chapter

There are numerous studies conducted by famed institutions and researchers, who have proven that a 30 minute reading reduces blood pressure, heart rate and psychological distress just as effectively as yoga and other exercises. Reading with your children as early as infancy and continuing through elementary school years has proven beneficial in their performances, viz., increases communication skills, self-esteem, and better brain functionality in children. Also, reading is always the best solution to sleep well.

To conclude, books are a global phenomenon and, like everything else in life, this hobby should be inculcated in your blood. It is equally important for children also to read as much as possible because the effects of reading are cumulative and never ending.

Remember the quote from the famous English Journalist, philosopher and novelist, William Godwin, **"He that loves reading has everything within his reach."**

Courtesy: Wikipedia, booktrust, Bradbury books, ancient.eu, healthline, cram, toppr.

Nithin Kumar

Manager(Digital Transformation, Cognizant
https://www.linkedin.com/in/nithinkumarperatla/

Strategic workforce planning is an important aspect of project management that focuses on aligning the organization's workforce with its business goals and objectives. This involves identifying the skills and competencies required to meet the organization's objectives, and then developing strategies to acquire, develop, and retain the necessary talent.

One key aspect of strategic workforce planning is the focus on revenue and cost drivers. Revenue drivers refer to the factors that drive an organization's revenue, such as sales, marketing, and customer service. Cost drivers, on the other hand, are the factors that drive an organization's costs, such as labor, materials, and overhead expenses. By identifying and analyzing these revenue and cost drivers, project managers can develop strategies to optimize their workforce and maximize the organization's profitability. For example, if an organization is looking to increase its revenue, it may need to invest in training and development programs to improve the skills and competencies of its sales team. Similarly, if the organization is looking to reduce its costs, it may need to implement cost-saving measures, such as reducing labor hours or outsourcing certain tasks.

In addition to improving the organization's bottom line, strategic workforce planning can also help project managers to identify potential gaps in their workforce and develop strategies to fill those gaps. This can be achieved through various methods, such as recruiting and hiring new employees, or retraining and developing existing employees.

Effective strategic workforce planning can also help to improve employee morale and retention. By providing employees with the necessary training and development opportunities, organizations can create a positive work environment that is conducive to employee growth and development. This can help to reduce turnover rates and improve overall productivity.

In conclusion, strategic workforce planning is an essential aspect of project management that focuses on aligning the organization's workforce with its business goals and objectives. By analyzing revenue and cost drivers, project managers can develop strategies to optimize their workforce and maximize the organization's profitability.

Enneagram as a tool for Project Managers

Priyesh Gopalakrishnan

Delivery Director, Cognizant

https://www.linkedin.com/in/priyeshgopalakrishnan/

In the current VUCA world, project management is a critical role in ensuring successful completion of a project. A key trait of a project manager is how well he/she understands the team and the leadership skills he/she demonstrates to get the team to perform.

A project team comprises of people with different personalities and understanding these personalities will help identify how individuals respond to a particular situation, how they interact with people, how uncertainties are handled and provide insights into individual's strengths, weaknesses, their core fear and motivation

In this article I am going to introduce you to an age old method of understanding personality types of people know as Enneagram. Enneagram is a very powerful scientifically validated personality typing framework that breaks down the patterns of human behaviour into nine distinct types. There are nine interconnected ways of perceiving and experiencing the world that enables us to understand answers to some of the pertinent questions we have like – Who am I? Why do I do what I do? How do I think, act and feel.

Image Source: WWW.Enneagraminstitute.com

Priyesh Gopalakrishnan (Cntd...)

Member, PMI Kerala Chapter

Every individual come into this world with certain predispositions (nature) and will have certain innate needs. However good their upbringing is some of these innate needs are left unfulfilled and the individual will adopt certain behaviours to satisfy those needs. Over a period of time such behaviours form a pattern (nurture) and neural pathways are created in our brains which later become part of our personality. Human personality is comprised of this nature and nurture. Enneagram will help not only to identify your basic personality type but beyond that it will show you, your core fear, motivations behind doing every action, your perspective of the world, your idealised self image, defence mechanisms you deploy to protect your self image and how all these is showing up as your behaviour which is visible to the external world. By being self aware and accepting who you are, you can choose your path towards transformation by keeping the Enneagram circle shown above as a reference.

Enneagram type of each individuals in a team will define the team dynamics and understanding these dynamics will help in creating a high performing team. Enneagram can thus be an excellent tool for project manager in effectively managing the teams and the project.

Ramanathan Yegyanarayanan

Agile Coach, Standard Chartered GBS

https://www.linkedin.com/in/ramanathan-yegyanarayanan/

Being an Enactor of Scrum as a teacher - Scrum Master is responsible for ensuring Scrum is understood and enacted well within a scrum team and the one who protects the Team from external hindrances. Their service to the organization in Scrum adoption, by empirical process control they help the scrum team in the software product development, works with other Scrum Masters across the organization to increase the effectiveness of the application of Scrum framework in the complex domain. By a profound understanding and practicing agility the Scrum Master ensures that the team is clear on its focus, finds various techniques for the product owner to effectively manage product backlog, ensures that Product Owner knows how to arrange the Product Backlog in order to maximize value for the organization.

Being a Powerful Facilitator – Scrum Masters usually juggle issues as they emerge for individuals, for the group, and for the organization. Through their responsive action, they help a group build capacity for resilience. They are strong in effective facilitation by taking people through a group process with clearly defined outcomes which encourages participation and a group commitment to meaningful results. Facilitate Scrum events effectively through gamification such as innovation games and techniques like liberating structures.

Being a Coach – Scrum Master coaches the team on self-Organization and cross-functionality, helps them reflect on creating high-value products. Make the Scrum Team reflect on the need for clear and concise Product Backlog items. They take a coaching stance for the organization in its Scrum adoption. Coach always makes the leaders understand how to lead by example, living by the Agile values and principles. From the excerpts of the book "7 Habits of the highly effective people" by Stephen Covey they always begin with the end in mind and works backward from the goal to figure out the most effective and efficient way moving from X to Y. Helps the team to set a sustainable pace as others around lose their heads they stay calm being mindful. Think with the head and feel with the heart and well balance their thinking and feeling by applying logical thinking as well as empathize while solving problems for the team. Waits and is always readily available for help. Creates and offers learning opportunities instead of pushing their ideas, advice, and views onto others. Postpones judgment on whatever they hear and let others talk while they actively

Ramanathan Yegyanarayanan (Cntd...)
Member, PMI Kerala Chapter

listen with care, Following Talk less, listen to more approach. Often flow like steam, being patient, pragmatic, and present by coaching the individuals, teams, and organization.

Being a servant leader – Servant leadership is an art, which is the most important stances of a ScrumMaster. A practical example, Southwest Airlines, where due to its founder Herb Kelleher's guidance, often cited as the model servant leadership corporation. putting employees first which has resulted in a highly engaged, low-turnover workforce, and an evident outcome which is 35-plus consecutive years of profitability, an unheard-of record in the turbulent airline industry. Servant leaders always start with a desire to serve the team members, where the outcome in turn serves and benefits the whole organization at a larger scale. Many leaders equate leadership with the control and they feel they are responsible for everything. But Servant leaders do more by listening to the team: they encourage them which becomes a hallmark expression of a servant leader, and it is a powerful tool. Engages in respectful conversation which demonstrates trust in the team members. Trust is a major prerequisite for servant leaders.

Being a Mentor – While being a teacher to impart the basic knowledge of Scrum framework, Scrum Master mentors the Team and the organization as to what Scrum Rules & Responsibilities of each role to enact it properly. Often mentors the team members to look for complementary practices that can improve the technical abilities of a team's value delivery through XP, Kanban, etc.

Being a Ninja – The destructor of Impediments – Mindfully allows the team to solve any impediments or conflicts by understanding the levels of conflict accounting for the self-organizing capabilities of the team. Then if the team still struggles to solve them, then the scrum master takes the impediment remover stance in our terms he becomes a ninja to break the barriers that impede the team's progress. For external impediments, work with the stakeholders in the organization to help resolve. Scrum Master understands how the Organization works and avoids any external hindrances to the team proactively.

Ramanathan Yegyanarayanan (Cntd...)

Member, PMI Kerala Chapter

Being an agent of change management - As a primary agent of change management, the Scrum Masters gets greater visibility in an organization. They are well aware of shifting the status quo and creating a more sustainable environment by knowing when to be disruptive and defensive. The organizational changes often take a long mile. Though these scrum masters are often a catalyst to accelerate. The strength of Scrum is well understood when we inspect and adapt to understanding the impediments and transparent issues, Scrum Masters often create a strong support system within the organization to resolve these dysfunctions at a faster pace. They have the ultimate goal of co-creating a culture where Scrum excels.

Being a Manager - As agile embraces horizontal management, this continues to be an important activity for organizations, which makes the role of the manager to be an essential and a valuable one. Scrum Master is responsible for managing the whole process and optimizing it, managing the healthy environment for the team, managing various boundaries of self-organization, managing the impediments as a whole, managing the diversified culture in a team that helps the team to flourish. Jurgen Appelo states that management is everyone's job.

To effectively validate how the scrum master is effective in taking these stances and helping the team and organization on their Agile Adoption Journey. The recommended scrum master assessment from agility health radar allows the teams to provide feedback to improve on key areas such as Servant Leadership, Facilitation, knowledge, leading teams, removing impediments and resolving conflicts Etc

Self-Serving Leaders to Servant Leaders

Reshma Prakash

Operations Project Manager, UST Global
https://www.linkedin.com/in/reshma-prakash-a55033157/

Servant Leaders as the name suggests the leaders are bound to serve. The Self-serving Leaders also have the word 'Serve' in its name. So, what makes the real difference?

The distinction comes in the place where the word serve is used. The former is used as the prefix and latter it comes as the suffix. The first and the last make the difference. Service is the main motto of the Servant Leaders. Before Serving there is a self in the second word. So that makes the difference. You are serving yourselves and not others – Self-Serving Leaders.

The shift from Self-Serving Leaders to Servant Leaders is not an easy task. The pre-requisite for the shift is the change in the mindset. You need to prepare yourself for that **"BIG"** change and practice it.

Theoretically, we should practice the following qualities and make it a part of your daily life.

1. Behaving Ethically and Putting others First – These qualities are inbuilt in the leaders. But sometimes pride and fear surface these qualities. To be servant leaders, you need to resurface these qualities and put it into practice.
2. Conceptual Skills and Empowerment – Dream Big and Being inclusive helps the shift from Self-Serving leaders to Servant Leaders. Being Inclusive motivates and empowers the teams to Dream Big and achieve the goals.
3. Bringing Value to the Community - Building and bringing value to the community fast track the shift from Self-Serving Leaders to Servant Leaders
4. Healing – Servant Leaders create wholeness at multiple levels- within themselves, through relationships and in service to the society.

Having said all these, the most important factor is **"YOU"** – Your Readiness to Serve others and Not You.

Shanmugaraj Balasubramanian

Head- Project Manager Practice, Aspire Systems

https://www.linkedin.com/in/shanmugarajb/

I had been hired as Agile Coach to lead agile transformation in one of the leading IT services companies in Chennai in the beginning of 2021. Agile transformation has been taken as one of the critical strategic initiatives as part of the digitalization journey. It was sponsored by the senior leadership to drive agile transformation for the internal IT team.

To give the idea on the demographics of the unit that handles internal IT, it is of team size of 200+ people servicing, maintaining 100+ applications. The technology ranges from .Net, PeopleSoft, SQL, PowerBI, SharePoint, SAP, Java, OCS, and a few other third party off the shelf products. The teams were operating 100% in the waterfall. Agile is a new vocabulary for them.
Given the situation, being hired as head of agile transformation was a formidable job to lead them to success. Leadership and I have decided to start with training the entire team and leaders with Agile. I had 4 phases in the transformation journey. I had decided to go with Hybrid agile for the adoption. ScrumXp and ScrumBan for development and operations respectively. Planned to use SAFe if we wanted to scale.

First phase, Q1, I had started with training. Conducted 3 days workshop covering Agile Manifesto, values, principles, Scrum in detail, XP, Kanban, and business agility. I had designed training and workshop in its entirety. It ran into 6 to 7 batches to cover the wholesome of the unit. I had a couple of options in front of me to proceed with the implementation either in the big bang approach and piloting approach. I chose the latter to make them believe it is possible as I could observe only few enthusiastic people and the rest of the team members were in the mode of wait and watch.

Second phase, Q2, I had started with piloting. Picked up a few medium priority projects in a couple of streams where we deployed newly hired scrum masters as well as moved a few enthusiastic team members to those pilots. We had 6 sprints as part of the pilot. Meanwhile, I had built a metric system and governance mechanism. Metrics built around 3 categories that include Product agility, Team agility and technical agility. I strongly believe that if a team goes green in these 3 areas, they will be on a journey of business agility. Governance instituted at 3 levels at

Shanmugaraj Balasubramanian (Cntd...)
Member, PMI Kerala Chapter

Sprint level, Release level and Product level. Biggest learnings on the pilots are two. One of them was to improve on product agility and the other one is to improve on relative sizing.

Third phase, Q3, I had started with Scaling. With the success of the pilots on one hand and moving with implementing and propagating to other teams in the unit. It was a little easier as I had testimonies from piloted teams and success speaks for itself. Teams had started experiencing the fruits of a new way of working. While scaling, I had brought product agility workshops to PO teams. Gone through the journey of implementing relative sizing and helped the teams to build estimation models for all the prevailing technologies. I had also ensured that each team had started measuring Agile maturity based on the available maturity model in the QMS system.

Fourth phase, Q4, Measure and Grow. It is so gratifying that the entire unit platformed into a new way of working in Agile. It is not over yet. I had made sure that I reached out leaders on every Quarter with the Top 3 improvement ideas based on the Quarterly Maturity assessments, customized Spotify team health monitoring, and Monthly publication of metrics along with learning from retrospectives.

It was indeed a fulfilling journey. Our roll out on Azure DevOps as an agile planning tool and GOCD as CICD pipeline also helped us in the transformation journey. Journey goes on.

Snehalkumar Pravinchandra Patel

Associate Vice President - OnAcutate

https://www.linkedin.com/in/snehalkumar-patel/

Background: The structure of organizational excellence stands on top of foundation of high performing teams. Though a high performing team is only one of the foundations of organizational excellence, it is the most critical one to attain overall excellence. There is a difference between a good organization and great organization, and the key difference between them is the people who drive the organizational growth.

An organization consists of a variety of people, some people are motivated and aligned with organizational goals, whereas others are not well-aligned with those goals. It is the latter set of people who are inadvertently called **problem people**. In this article, we will discuss reasons why problem people are there, and how to motivate them. It is essential for managers to consider
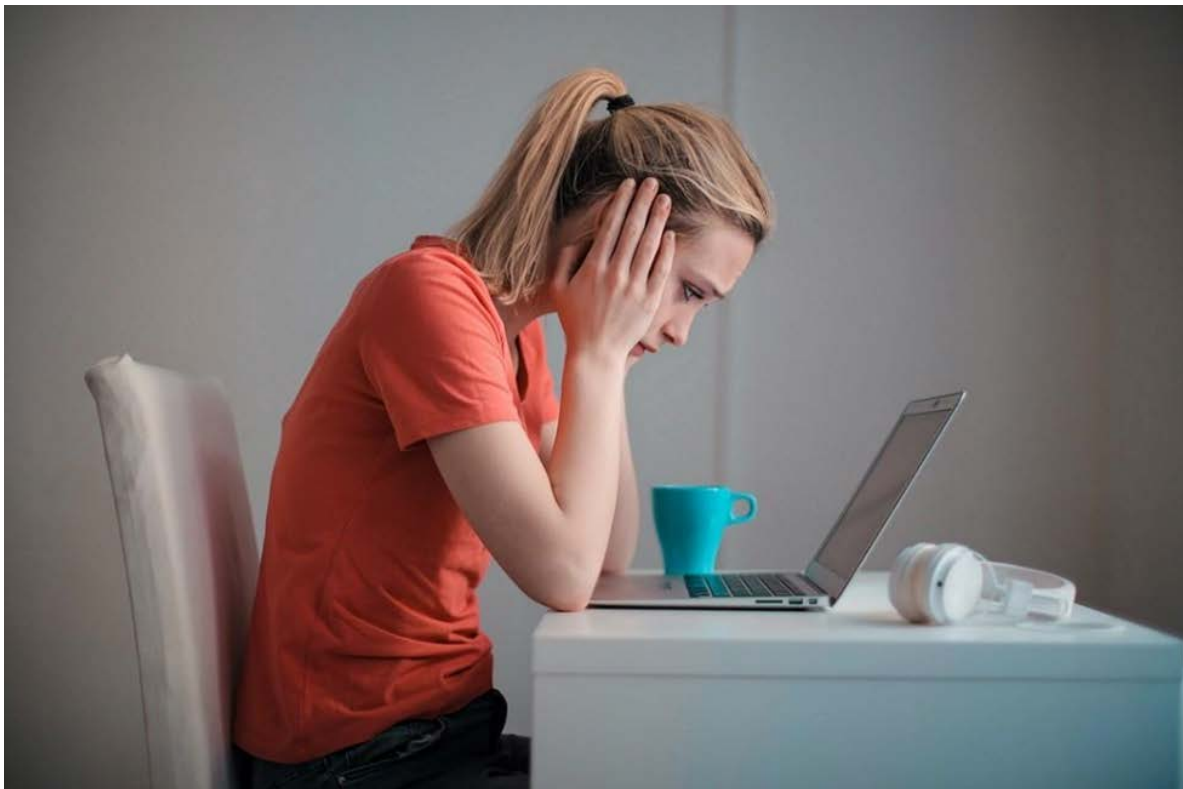

Photo Credit: Andrea Piacquadio [https://www.pexels.com/@olly/]
https://www.pexels.com/photo/woman-in-red-t-shirt-looking-at-her-laptop-3755761/

Snehalkumar Pravinchandra Patel (Cntd...)

Member, PMI Kerala Chapter

problem people as an indispensable part of an organization that needs support to align them with organizational objectives. For a manager, it is imperative to take the whole team together to create a high performing team, which eventually translates into organizational excellence by strengthening the performance.

Reasons and ways to motivate Problem People:

We will investigate a few of the key reasons why some people lack motivation and are not aligned with organizational objectives. Moreover, we will explore few ways in which managers can help them in transitioning from problem people to **motivated people:**

(1) **Lack of sense of contribution:** Some people are not aware of how their contribution is ultimately helping their team and organization grow. This situation normally arises out of a lack of appreciation of one's contribution by an individual's manager or an organization itself. These individuals are unable to see the big picture of their contribution towards organizational growth and excellence, resulting in unmotivated individuals.

How managers can help: It is important for manager to find out from where this lack of sense of contribution idea is stemming in the subordinate's mind. There may be many reasons why the subordinate is having this feeling. Manager can ask the right questions to subordinates to find out the root cause of his/her belief. Once it is identified, managers should make the individual aware of how critical the work being done by that person is and how it contributes to organizational growth by connecting the dots for that individual. At the right time, an individual should be recognized and rewarded for his/her efforts by the manager and/or organization to keep him/her motivated to work with other team members. This way the individual will be aligned with the rest of the team and contribute towards high performing team.

(2) **Fear of failure:** Some people have closed themselves from taking on assignments that requires innovation, additional efforts or critical thinking. Historically, these types of people are there in an organization with a culture which punishes failures. It is a well-established fact that we live in an age where failing fast is beneficial to individuals, teams, and organizations as a whole. Individuals who are given liberty to experiment their creative ideas and fail fast, will be those people who will help organizations find the right business ideas that help organizations diversify and grow in a short period of time.

Snehalkumar Pravinchandra Patel (Cntd...)
Member, PMI Kerala Chapter

How managers can help: Manager should foster an environment that allows people to experiment and learn from their mistakes. This type of culture will help in building high performing teams that embrace challenges head on and bring innovative ideas to solve business problems. This will help problem people in experimenting with their creative ideas and eventually help in aligning themselves with organizational objectives.

(3) **Misalignment of personal goals with organizational goals:** At a time, there is a misalignment of problem people's personal goals with organizational goals. This results in a blocker in motivating problem people.

How managers can help: Manager can discuss with problem people about their personal aspirations and help them in bridging gaps between their personal goals and organizational goals. They can assign tasks that may help problem people fulfill their personal goals at the same time those tasks also align with organizational goals. Gradually, the manager can increase the share of organizational objectives while assigning the tasks and eventually create motivated individuals out of problem people.

(4) **Problematic Context/Situation**: Sometimes the context is the culprit that make problem people unmotivated individuals. Those situations may bring out the worst of the problem people instead of their best.

How managers can help: Manager should put himself in the shoes of problem people and understand the situation from their perspective. If there are situations that are blocking problem people from being motivated, the manager should try to alter such situations to the benefit of problem people in such a way that encourages problem people to perform better. In some cases, the manager himself/herself can be a hurdle in making problem people motivated. In this scenario, the manager should introspect and try to identify which environmental factors can be altered that can help in motivating problem people and implement them to the benefit of individual, team and organization.

It is easy for managers to not deal with problem people and eventually let go of them. However, these same people can become an asset and contribute to organizational excellence, if provided with an opportunity. In summary, it is the manager who needs to explore ways to bring out the best of the problem people and align them with other team members to create a high performing team. When there are multiple high performing teams in an organization, the goal of achieving organizational excellence becomes a comparatively smooth journey!

ChatGPT in Project Management

Venkat Annapragada

Managing Director, Azurite
https://www.linkedin.com/in/venkataramiahannapragada/

GPT (Generative Pre-trained Transformer) is a type of artificial intelligence (AI) model developed by OpenAI that is capable of generating human-like text when given a prompt. GPT can be used in a variety of applications, including chatbots, language translation systems, and content generation platforms.

In the field of project management, GPT can be used to automate certain tasks and improve efficiency. For example, GPT could be used to generate project reports, emails, or other communication materials, saving time and effort for project managers.

Photo by Andrea De Santis on Unsplash

Venkat Annapragada(Cntd...)
Member, PMI Kerala Chapter

GPT could also be used to assist with project planning and scheduling. For example, a project manager could use GPT to generate a project schedule based on input such as project tasks, dependencies, and resource availability. GPT could also be used to generate project estimates and budget proposals, helping project managers to more accurately forecast the resources and time required for a project.

Additionally, GPT could be used to support project communication and collaboration. For example, a chatbot powered by GPT could be used to facilitate communication between team members and stakeholders, or to provide real-time updates on project progress.

Overall, GPT has the potential to revolutionize the way project managers work, by automating certain tasks and freeing up time and resources for more important tasks. By leveraging the power of AI, project managers can improve efficiency and drive better results for their organizations

#plantthefuture2022

Academic Conference #WINGS2022

Member family meet @ Kochi , October 2022

Academic Forum 2022, Saintgits College of Engineering

PMI KERALA CHAPTER TOASTMASTERS

Club Number: 07998505 | District 121 | Area G1

JOIN TODAY

PMI KERALA CHAPTER TOASTMASTERS

Club Number: 07998505 | District 121 | Area G1

REGISTRATIONS OPEN

ANNOUNCING

KID'S GAVEL CLUB

Public Speaking Club for
Children under 18

PMI Kerala Chapter - Social Outreach

PRESIDENT
Jayakishore S R

VP OPERATIONS
Akhila Gowri Shankar

VP FINANCE
Harikuttan K

VP EDUCATION
Hari Prasad P S

VP PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Dileep Viswanathan

VP MEMBERSHIP
Sindhya Sudheendran

VP VOLUNTEER
Rashmi Mohandas

VP GOVERNANCE
Sreejesh Varier

VP BRANCHES
Rasmi V Nair

VP MARKETING
Joji John

Team PMIK at PMI South Asia Conference Dec 2022

20 YEARS