

PMI Pulse of the profession_AI_2020

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Introduction

In today's rapidly changing business realm, the integration of AI technologies has become a crucial factor in organizational strategies and project management approaches. The recent findings from PwC show that 85 percent of global CEOs foresee significant changes in their business operations within the next five years due to AI transformations. This trend is further emphasized by the latest research from Pulse of the Profession®, revealing that 81 percent of organizations are already affected by AI technologies.

In the conservative sectors like construction and engineering, companies such as Bechtel are utilizing deep learning, a form of AI, to boost productivity. This showcases the widespread recognition of AI's power across various industries. However, when some organizations prioritize AI, a significant portion, 36 percent, are lagging. This inconsistency highlights the critical need for organizations to adopt AI technologies and stay competitive in today's dynamic market.

Six Game-Changing AI Technologies Impacting Organizations

Knowledge-Based Systems	
Currently Impacted Organizations - 37%	Organizations expected to be impacted in the Future - 71%
Machine Learning	
Currently Impacted Organizations - 31%	Organizations expected to be impacted in the Future - 69%
Design Management	
Currently Impacted Organizations - 29 %	Organizations expected to be impacted in the Future - 68%
Expert Systems	
Currently Impacted Organizations - 21%	Organizations expected to be impacted in the Future - 64%
Deep Learning	
Currently Impacted Organizations - 21%	Organizations expected to be impacted in the Future - 63%
Robotic Process Automation	
Currently Impacted Organizations - 21%	Organizations expected to be impacted in the Future - 62%

MELDS Principles

It's true that organizations can adopt AI, but they need collaboration between humans and machines to deliver the maximum potential of AI. The MELDS principles, researched by Accenture, states that:

- Encourage the right **Mindset**
- Promote **Experimentation**
- Support **Leadership**
- Incorporate **Data** into Strategy
- Cultivate new **Skills**

The MELDS principles are not just hypothesis. Organizations that adopt this “human and machine combo” have significant increase in their key performance.

Navigating Organizational Shifts

The higher authorities are no longer expecting change but actively reforming their organizations to integrate agility and innovation into their core DNA. When half of the organizations are prioritizing a culture to receive change, companies like **Nutrient in Canada** are adopting a startup mentality. However, many organizations address cultural transformations seriously, which can delay acceptance and foster reluctance among team members.

The rapid growth of technological advancements is a key driver of change, with senior executives expressing concerns about technological disruption. But still, leaders recognize the necessity of adopting these changes, and they are making significant investments in technology advancements and digitalization. Even though technology skills are crucial, interpersonal skills

remain more important, as emphasized by professionals like Priscila Duarte from Microsoft, who highlights the importance of leadership skills after the rise of artificial intelligence.

Pulse Data displays how organizations are prioritizing various aspects of talent development in a project:

- 65% of Leadership Skills
- 68% of Technical Skills
- 50% of Digital Skills
- 58% of Business Skills

Widening Skill Base

Organizations are prioritizing the development of future talent by emphasizing leadership acumen, business strategy, technical proficiencies, and digital skills. Project professionals are expected to excel in a wider range of competencies beyond conventional project management constraints, with significant importance placed on building strong relationships and nurturing collaboration. This transition emphasizes the importance of interpersonal skills and proficiency in project management.

Additionally, project managers are changing into leaders of cross-functional teams with increased autonomy and strategic impact. As the nature of work undergoes a fundamental shift, there is a growing need for individuals and organizations to enhance their Technology Quotient (TQ) alongside project management capabilities (PMTQ). This adjustment is essential to adapt to the continuous evaluation brought by technological advancements and the rise of The Project Economy.

Fresh Approaches

In the era of prioritizing customer satisfaction, leaders are placing significant importance on meeting user requirements. According to Pulse Data, 70 percent of organizations prioritize nurturing a culture focussing on delivering customer value. Matthew Klein Jr., PMP, senior director of the Enterprise Project Management Office (EPMO) at Farasis Energy, Half Moon Bay, California, USA, emphasizes the significance of finding ways to address organizational and customer pain points within project management.

To beat these challenges, project professionals are adopting a mixture of project practices. For example, Pulse Data reports that 59 percent of organizations use design thinking to research and resolve problems.

"We have integrated design thinking into our operational infrastructure to adopt a human-centred approach in solving client issues," states Mr. Giraudo. Earlier, Accenture may have relied on standard solutions when clients wanted revenue enhancement. However, they now address each challenge through a design-thinking perspective, understanding stakeholders' perspectives and developing solutions collaboratively.

Whether incorporating design thinking or agile methodologies, organizations must strategically integrate new methodologies. Viviane de Paula, PMP, project manager, PMI volunteer, São Paulo, Brazil, warns against fast paced implementation of agile approaches without considering organizational realities. She says that there is no universally applicable solution, and every problem needs a different solution.

Tomorrow Begins Today

In today's rapidly changing world, there's no room for standing still. Individual projects or innovative ideas alone are not sufficient to maintain an organization's competitive side indefinitely. Leaders who adopt a forward-thinking perspective are better prepared to face challenges by building strong teams. The 2020 Pulse of the Profession® report highlights three core principles embraced by leading organizations:

- **Agility Is Key:** No matter how brilliant a strategy idea is, the risks may appear in the form of supply chain disruptions or emerging technologies. Organizations capable of adapting quickly to new opportunities are best positioned for success in the future.
- **Technology is Crucial, but Human Influence Matters:** While leaders realise the impact of new technologies on organizations, the effectiveness of managing technologies like AI and machine learning ultimately depends on the capabilities and experience of the individuals. Executives and project managers must invest in training, implement effective methodologies, and cultivate talent to utilise technology accurately.
- **Project Leaders Drive Transformation:** In the middle of ongoing change, leaders increasingly rely on project managers to convert ideas into countable outcomes. This often necessitates a mixture of conventional and innovative skills.

Conclusion

The Pulse of the Profession®, conducted annually since 2006, is regarded as the leading global survey of project management practitioners. It serves as an important tool for tracking major trends in project management both in present and for future. Through original market research, Pulse provides essential feedback and insights from project, program, and portfolio managers, supplemented by a comprehensive analysis of third-party data.

In the 2020 edition of Pulse, feedback is derived from the perspectives of 3,060 project professionals, 358 senior executives, and 554 directors of project management offices across various industries such as IT, financial services, government, manufacturing, energy, construction, healthcare, and telecom. Across continents, respondents originate from North America, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), China, India, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

Reference

PMI (2020). Ahead of the Curve: Forging a Future-Focused Culture. *Pulse of the Profession*.

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