



**Project
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The Critical Path

March 2023



Contents

March 2023

2-3	Editor's Note	Himadri Chowdhury
4-5	A New Normal for Women in the Workforce	Yasmina Khelifi
6-8	The Curious Case of the Hybrid PMO	Greg Collocott
9-10	Jobs Guide	Steve Tompkins
11-13	Beyond Project Management	Ibrahim Dani
14-16	Projects and Transformation	Jess Tayel
17-19	Coco's Corner	Leo Coco
20-21	ProjectizeMe	Louis Taborda
22-24	Chapter News	PMI Sydney
25	Membership Updates	Sydney Mudau
26	Photo of the Month	PMI Sydney

Editor's Note

Himadri Chowdhury

It's Elections time. Anywhere you go nowadays, you are accosted by smiling volunteers passing on pamphlets describing the merits of their party's candidate, and, if you're in luck, the candidate in person, very interested in your current and future well-being. The colour of the city is now red, blue, teal, yellow and myriad others as politicians jostle through canvassing, promises, snipes, barbs, and missteps to get into 6 Macquarie Street. By the time the April issue of The Critical Path comes out, we will have a newly elected Legislative Assembly with some familiar and some new faces. Whoever wins the mandate, there would be several immediate expectations from the electorate, key among them being the reduction of the cost of living.



With March coming to a close, another round of school holidays is creeping up on us. Easter is around the corner, and supermarket shelves are getting overloaded with chocolate eggs and bunnies. In homes around Australia egg-hunts are being planned surreptitiously, budgets and innovations are being thought through, and battlelines are being drawn between the hunters and the hunted, er, the egg-concealers! This has been a pretty good summer and early Autumn so far, and, if the weather holds, we are going to have a glorious Easter.

Fresh from our strategic planning session in February, the PMI Sydney Chapter Board have made some significant strides into operational planning for the year. There are some exciting events getting lined up, starting with a mid-year event in June, coinciding with our AGM. March has been a busy month so far. We just completed our new partnership agreement with Talent International – details in the chapter news section. We also celebrated International Women's Day on the 8th of March with Women in Project Management partnered event in the city. Look at our photo of the month section for a glimpse of the event. We have a great coverage of our event on 23 March and a preview of the next event on 4 April in the chapter news section.

In this month's Critical Path, we have reprinted an article on the new normal for women in the workforce by Yasmina Khelifi from projectmanagement.com. In her column, Jess Tayel talks about the value that project managers bring to today's complex and fast-paced project environments. Leo Coco discusses micro habits that effect macro changes in our lives and Louis Taborda debates the levels of abstraction needed for repeated information in projects. We also have Greg Collocott from PM Partners investigating the curious case of the hybrid PMO, while Ibrahim Dani discusses a new way to motivate the team – the Enneagram way.

We have started a new column this month by Talent's Steve Tompkins on the job market in NSW, current and future trends, and what project managers can look out for. I hope this will help our membership in their search for new opportunities. We are curating additional content from the next edition onwards, including voice of members. If you want to be featured, reach out to me at the email IDs below.

We would love for you to contribute to the future issues of our newsletter. Please connect with us at newsletter@pmisydney.org or marketing@pmisydney.org.

Best,

Himadri Sekhar Chowdhury

Editor, The Critical Path

A New Normal for Women in the Workforce

Yasmina Khelifi

Every year, International Women's Day celebrates equality. It encourages us to think about what we have achieved as societies—and if we have moved forward. The bad news is that we often realize progress is slow.

How is career advancement for women right now? And what changes can we initiate with our everyday actions if we truly want to improve the situation? Here are some ways project managers and organizations can foster women's equality:

1. Mentor and sponsor colleagues.

I've begun to mentor a young colleague. When she asked me, I didn't think twice—remembering that in my early career, I had no guidance.

For me, being a reliable mentor means:

- I don't ever move meetings; I respect the time we schedule.
- I connect the mentee with my network.
- I share the training I've had, and other resources I've found interesting.
- I explain various career paths (and encourage my mentee to enquire about them).
- I connect the dots—for instance, when I see a valuable resource in a field mentioned by a mentor, I share this information.

2. Be ready to help.

Have you received a request to connect on LinkedIn? Accept it. Or a question? Answer it. Try to respond to every request, even if just through email or social media. Spend time sharing your challenges and experiences, as this helps to illuminate paths. You may think, "Did I really help much just by answering some questions? Did I bring value?" Yes: It means a lot when you take time to reply to someone who has asked for help.

3. Uncover the unspoken rules.

I read a very interesting book, [The Unspoken Rules: Secrets to Starting Your Career Off Right](#) by Gorick Ng. It relates to equality, but not only for women. The author deciphers the workplace's rules in a very actionable way, step by step. When you have more years of experience, you've learned a lot about organizational workplaces. There's tacit knowledge you can share with other women. Why not create a short guide?



Yasmina Khelifi is a French project manager with three PMI certifications. She has been working in an international environment for 20 years. She is a passionate volunteer at PMI and Professional Women's Network. She is also a regular volunteer blogger on [ProjectManagement.com](#). She is the host and founder of the podcast "Global Leaders Talk with Yasmina Khelifi."

4. Remember that words matter.

I've even seen some women change their clothing style or behaviour. Do women need to adapt—or even lose their authenticity—to succeed in the workplace, especially if it is male-dominated?

How do you instill confidence in such an environment? How do you avoid labelling? These are all common leadership questions we must investigate. What if we try a small experiment for a week: Let's track what words we use in a team when we talk about our female colleagues. Do you notice any differences? Why?

5. Address workplace policies.

Some initiatives for better equality are spreading in some organizations, but there is still much work to do when it comes to:

- Pay Equality
- Access to informal networks
- Career paths
- Flexible time

What future do you envision in the workplace? If each of us—whatever our gender identity—takes a small action every day, we can have a better impact in the long run, for ourselves and our colleagues. Individual energies will create a spill-over effect. We don't need to be organizational psychologists; we just need to think about how we want to behave as leaders, and that will ultimately impact project outcomes.

International Women's Day is important to celebrate, but it doesn't hide that there are many issues around equality in the workplace, and not only for women—just like the Black Lives Matter movement has illuminated. What struggles and victories have you experienced? How have you helped support women in the workforce?

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Original article is available at: <https://www.projectmanagement.com/articles/766349/a-new-normal-for-women-in-the-workforce--how-can-you-make-an-impact->

The Curious Case of the Hybrid PMO

Greg Collocott

*Struggling to marry your project reporting, governance, and progress measurement with the realities of agile? It's time to transform your PMO. **Greg Collocott**, PM-Partners Associate Principal Consultant, explains how and where to start.*

As agile delivery methods gain popularity across organisations of all shapes and sizes, today's PMO must be able to support a range of delivery approaches. The realities of a hybrid delivery environment – coupled with a host of dynamic factors – mean that PMOs that remain wedded to old operating models are undoubtedly feeling the pressure (or embroiled in chaos).

So how can you achieve balance in your PMO between having a clear governance structure and oversight and allowing agile teams the flexibility to innovate, with a consistency of language? While there is no silver bullet, there are steps you can take to reshape your PMO into one that proactively facilitates the delivery of value across teams.



Greg Collocott

PM-Partners
Associate Principal
Consultant



Evolving your current PMO

Whatever the size or shape of your current PMO, the most fundamental considerations are as follows:

- 1. Fit for purpose** – what PMO principles and modes of governance best suit your organisation and the environment you're operating in? Ultimately, it's about optimising your PMO model.
- 2. Process before tools** – buying a new tool isn't going to fix your problems – the same goes for just hiring a bunch of people. You need to review and improve the process.
- 3. Understanding** – the people in your organisation need to know and understand how this process works. Most importantly, they need to own that process.
- 4. Simplicity** – us humans love to complicate things. There is no better example of this than in the business case and PMO governance processes of a large organisation. Think about what you need to get the job done. Even in the most complex organisations we can find a simpler way to run faster.

Bringing your hybrid PMO to life

With these fundamentals in mind, achieving progress comes down to getting a few key changes across the line. Regardless of how we work, we need:

- **Good, consistent governance** – this means following the same governance at a high level.
- **Prioritisation** – whether Agile or traditional, all work should be prioritised in the same way.
- **Measurement** – everything needs to be measured (if you're not measuring, there must be no value).
- **Support** – our leaders/executive decision makers need to fully support this way of working.

So, how do you achieve these goals in practice? As a good starting point, we need to establish the following:

- **Simplified roles with clear responsibilities** (within your PMO, governance and project structures) and empowered people in these roles – NOT delegates. This will help to ensure that the right level of accountability and governance is applied across projects.
- **A few, clear processes** to support these roles, hinged on best practice and with prioritisation management at the core. This is critical to streamlining delivery and enabling the organisation to effectively prioritise and manage its Agile/ hybrid portfolio.
- **Clear documentation** – the more succinct the better, i.e., one or two pages outlining the processes and practices that everyone can understand. And focus on visuals over lots of words – lengthy documents won't gel with Agilists and they're unlikely to read them.
- **Key metrics** for visualising progress and value at each level of the organisation. This means a focus on scope – this is what we need to measure, inspect, adapt, refine, monitor, prioritise and possibly vigorously discuss, as this is how we think about the value being delivered.
- **Appropriate and clear communication** – for success to happen your executives need to be on board and 100 per cent a part of this journey. To this end, you need to bring them with you every step of the way. This includes establishing appropriate measures for every project and providing a consistent reporting framework and

documentation that enables them to make informed, data-driven decisions.

This last point is critical as the actions of executives will have to demonstrate the need to create an enhanced PMO. Once they get a taste of what they like and they're comfortable that the reporting reflects what they're hearing on the ground, they'll start demanding more of the same, and the teams will follow that lead.

Shifting your thinking

All the above will help to establish and drive your enhanced, hybrid PMO. But there's one essential ingredient missing: you need to be courageous and open to change both in your thinking style and how you perceive your role.

A lot of PMOs spend vast sums on new processes and tools but ignore new ways of thinking. You need to start by acknowledging and then driving a shift in culture. Your role is to assist in the delivery of value, not to police how that value is achieved – today's PMO needs to be a partner, a consultant, and a proactive servant leader.

By taking the right steps and shifting your mindset, you can start to transform your PMO into one that provides the best service whichever delivery method or approach is being used. As you embrace what it means to be a hybrid PMO, you'll be on a path to a new world, working proactively *with* teams and stakeholders to achieve great things for the better outcome of the organisational strategy and needs.

To find out more about evolving your PMO, don't miss the [full version of this article](#) or consider boosting your team's capabilities in this area with PM-Partners' [Running an effective hybrid PMO](#) course. For more information, [contact the team at PM-Partners](#) or call 1300 70 13 14.

Note: PMI members qualify for a 20% discount on PM-Partners courses – simply quote code PMI20 when booking.

Jobs Guide

Steve Tompkins

NSW has shown some of the lowest unemployment rates across the states for the last 6 months with February 2023 sitting at 3.1% against a national 3.7%. The NSW budget remains on track to return to surplus in 2025 despite high inflation, doom and gloom in the media, and the challenging global landscape. NSW infrastructure program budget has increased to a record \$116.6 billion over the 4 years driven by investments in new and existing transport infrastructure and health facilities. This supports LinkedIn data that shows Transport for NSW has been the largest employer in the state of Project Managers, CBA and Westpac followed by Telstra.

The project management industry continues to have more opportunities for contract engagement than permanent. If NSW Labor is elected later this month, they have stated they will cut government spending on contractors by 25%. However, contingent contract labour has grown on average nearly 20% every year since 2016 and while there remains a shortage of critical workers across NSW I think this proposed cut back on contract labour is ambitious.

One thing implied by both parties is that they seem to agree on the value that project practitioners bring to organisations. With the Liberal party positioned to continue to hire contractors across the board, Labor will favour “reduced spend on consultants”, and funds “directed where it’s needed to those who deliver the services”, a comforting thought for the NSW project professional. The demand has a strong impact on contractor rates and while rates have dropped off slightly from the highs of last year, they seem to have stabilised.

Project Manager jobseekers who can demonstrate in-demand skills are those commanding the highest rates. Apart from Stakeholder Management, Change Management is currently a skill that hiring managers hold in high regard. Effective change management requires an ability to measure and analyse projects and collect the data needed to make quick and considered decisions. Above all, the ability to clearly communicate changes while continuing to motivate teams to execute new plans is highly valued. Now I am not suggesting we all become Change Managers but the Project and Program Managers who have these subset skills will command the premium rates in the market for the immediate future and are a very attractive proposition for hiring managers. Those that have worked on projects that engage



Steve Tompkins has over 20 years' experience in the Recruitment Industry in Sydney and the UK, nearly a decade of which was spent in leadership positions. He is the NSW Government Client Relationship Manager for Talent International in Sydney and has enjoyed working closely with the PMI for the last decade. His main area of specialisation in recruitment is in sourcing, delivery and support of Project Managers, delivery teams and Project resources.

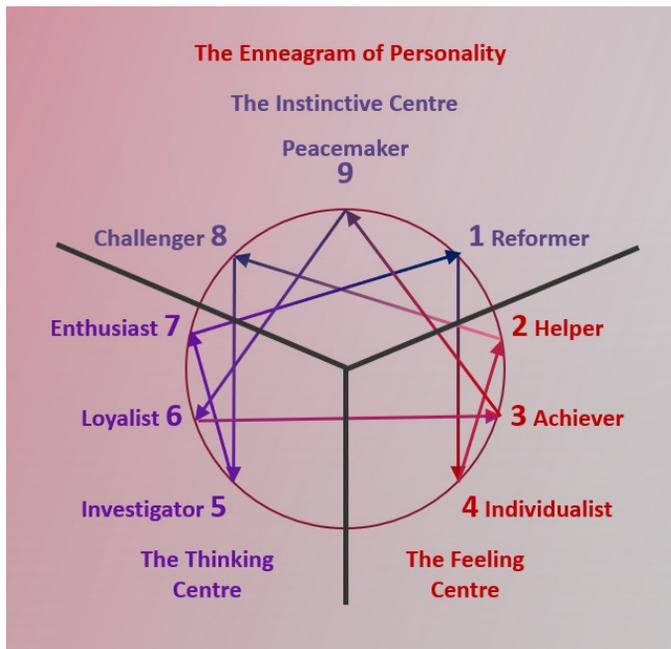
change agents early in the project lifecycle are held in high regard in the eyes of most of the hiring managers I have talked to.

With the pending election, economic uncertainty, and wider global unrest, these are certainly changing times. One of the many positive aspects of a career in project management is that PM skills are transferable, so Project Managers can move their career to industries where there is growth. Be your own change agent, pivot and adapt!

Beyond Project Management

Ibrahim Dani

Motivate Your Team – The Enneagram Way



[Ibrahim Dani](#) is an accomplished business leader with extensive experience in managing programs and leading people. Ibrahim had a colourful career journey including speaking at PMI EMEA Congress and training aspiring Project Managers. He is an advocate for excellence, a trusted adviser, and a thought leader in project delivery and related human capital management.

Projects are delivered by people, and this will continue at least until AI takes over project management. While the Project Manager should master the tools and processes they are using to manage their project, project delivery will undoubtedly suffer if the Project Manager ignores the human factor of the project team, and the stakeholders influencing the project. What “makes or breaks” project success is knowing what makes people “tick” and acting accordingly. In this month’s Beyond Project Management I will introduce one of the many ways to understand and motivate your team: The Enneagram of Personality.

Taken at face value, the Enneagram is made up of nine numbers representing different personalities interconnected and woven together through human psychology, and traditional knowledge of human nature. While the Enneagram is basically a useful tool to help individuals manage their emotions and interpret the world around them, many businesses are using it in team building and conflict resolution. By the same token, when you know more about yourself and the people around you, you will know the ‘hot buttons’ of every personality. Exploiting this knowledge you will increase the collaboration among the project team and the influential stakeholder, and consequently, this will increase the chances of delivering successful projects.

Caveat: I am not promoting this classification as the only way to understand yourself and the team. This is one of many other ways that can help you manoeuvre the complex landscape of human behaviours and interactions and give you some ideas that could help you in building effective relationships. I acknowledge that not everyone agrees that this classification works. The purpose of this article is to enrich your toolbox and give you more options and ideas to consider. It's up to a Project Manager to identify and use the right tool for the right situation.

Enneagram Personalities

Type 1: The Reformer. Also known as the Improver and the Perfectionist. They strive to make things right or better. They often struggle with their condemning inner voice to do better. They need to be accurate and orderly, and they fear being incorrect or blamed. The Reformers are motivated by being right and fair, and their focus on excellence. Imagine their feeling about Agile principles of 'fail fast, fail often', or 'MVP - just enough'.

Type 2: The Helper. Also known as the Giver and the Befriender. They need to be loved and truly cared for. They also need to be wanted, needed, and appreciated. They fear they will be rejected for being their authentic self. The Helper is motivated by verbal affirmation and acknowledgement. Tell them "thank you" more often and see how they get excited and spread their positive impact across the whole project.

Type 3: The Achiever. Also known as the Performer and the Motivator. They need to be valued and accepted. They adapt to the scenario to achieve success because they fear to be considered unworthy due to failure. The Achiever is motivated when they are affirmed in their actions and the impressions they make on others. If you don't have an Achiever in your project, strive to get one.

Type 4: The Individualist. Also known as the Romantic and the Artist. Their life strategy is "I must be understood as uniquely as I am". They like to create different and "beautiful" things – ideas or tangibles. They are motivated when you recognise their uniqueness and authenticity. With the right guidance, they can help you create better project objectives or resolve your project issues in a creative way.

Type 5: The Investigator. Also known as the Observer and the Theorist. They like to be always knowledgeable and equipped with evidence and data. They are motivated by being independent and undisturbed. They hate change and get irritated by the break in routine. With Agile's embrace of uncertainty and continuous change, the Investigators suffer. Nevertheless, you can rely on them in your project for validation and evidence-based arguments if and when you need it.

Type 6: The Loyalist. Also known as the Sceptic and the Guardian. They focus on being safe and secure all the time, and they rely on a strong support system to keep them safe. You will lose them if they feel any mistrust or security threat. They are motivated by reassurances of safety and job security. Their focus on safety and security makes them good at developing contingency plans and workarounds for risks and issues. Therefore, if you can assure them of their role on the project, they will help you in resolving the problems of the project.

Type 7: The Enthusiast. Also known as the Optimist and the Epicurean. They like to have fun and new experiences while working. They find silver lining in every challenge and keep

options open. They are motivated with consistent excitement and continuous engagement and stimulation. The combined wisdom of the Loyalist and the Enthusiast (types 6 and 7) is a blessing for any project. If you have these types of personalities, ensure they collaborate and your project will reap the results.

Type 8: The Challenger. Also known as the Protector and Advocate. They never like to be controlled by anyone. If you micromanage them, you lose them. They are motivated by letting them dominate their own environment, and giving them the responsibility to ensure that everyone in their environment is protected. For Challengers on your project, clarify what and when you want things, and leave it to them to deliver – they will.

Type 9: The Peacemaker. Also known as the Mediator and the Reconciler. They strive to maintain peace and calm and create harmony in their environment. They focus on peace-making so that they might miss their main role. They are motivated by solving people's problems and managing conflict. They bring harmony and serenity to your challenging project.

These are the general characteristics of the Enneagram Personalities. People usually have a dominant type and few characteristics from other types. Also, people change over time from one type to the other. It would be useful to observe your project team and the influential stakeholders to understand the dominant type of each person. With the right understanding of the needs, fears, and motivations of everyone in your project, you can decide when and how to press their “hot buttons” to align everyone towards the project purpose and objectives.

References:

- Taking care of Business with the Enneagram by R. Karl Hebenstreit ([Link](#))
- The Complete Guide to the ENNEAGRAM by Sierra Mackenzie ([Link](#))
- What's your Enneatype? By Liz Carver and Josh Green ([Link](#))

Projects and Transformations

Jess Tayel

The project manager's incontestable value in today's complex and fast-moving landscape of Transformation and Change programs

Introduction

Projects are the building block for changing how we do things. Be it a new system, implementing new ways of working, an improved business capability or executing a new organizational design initiative and much more.

The landscape we operate in has become much more complex, with many moving parts and loud voices that make it hard to see the forest for the trees. As a result, projects must be integrated and are an accurate and aligned representation of the business outcomes to be delivered.

In the coming sections, I will highlight the main aspects of this topic (at a high level) and would love your feedback and would welcome requests to expand on any area with more depth.

Do we have a problem?

- *Operating in a vacuum*

Many projects operate in a vacuum and are unaware of the organizational context. Those projects are more about delivering and creating tangible outputs to meet the deadline. While we still need to consider tangible outputs and meeting deadlines; the relentless focus on just that and not on what matters, which is the business outcome, does not serve anyone.

- *If I deliver within time, budget, and scope, then I am all good*

There is a lot to be said here! However, I would like to pose a few questions:

- What if the time estimate is unrealistic or doesn't cover some critical aspects of the work (the stuff that matters)?
- What if the budget does not consider the complexity of the landscape?
- What if the scope is not a reflection of the intended business outcome?

Hitting those targets doesn't matter because they are not the right targets.



[Jess Tayel](#) is a global thought leader in Business transformation, an executive coach and mentor. Her mission is to elevate the transformation practice and enable leaders to be the best version of themselves. Jess is also the founder of the People of Change Community, a global community for leaders and professionals in change, transformation, program management and experience design.

- Do we know enough?

One of the biggest challenges in designing and delivering projects is the lack of understanding of what the real problem is and what are the root causes.

- Solution-focused

Being solution-focused doesn't sound like a problem, right? Well, if that is all we are focused on with eagerness to define a solution without having the proper context or enough information and making a ton of assumptions along the way. In this case, we have a problem.

Why does this shift matter?

- The program's chance of success is tied to its weakest link

Any large-scale program relies on the success of its projects. However, the program's chances of success are tied to the weakest link in its chain of projects. If one project performs poorly and the other 5 do great, the result is still mediocre, and ultimately the business sponsors and their teams will suffer.

- You are not "just" problem-solving.

Project managers consider themselves problem solvers, and that is true. However, this is not enough.

To be a problem solver, we need to consider the first part, which is working on the problem: You need to understand the problem first, then understand the context, understand what causes the problem, and then move to create options and hypothesis that can solve the problem once and for all (or as much as possible given the organization's maturity). The second half is the solving part: which means you need a 360 view of what a balanced and adopted solution might look like and then deliver it well.

- The measurement system is flawed.

What does it mean to deliver a successful project? What does success mean? What does good look like? The lack of a unified success measure that the entire project team is aligned on from day one means we won't really know if we have hit the mark. And to clarify, I am talking about what success looks like using the business sponsors, the customers and the business teams' perspective.

What needs to change?

- You are not a manager; you are a leader.

I always felt uneasy about the word management in project management. Nowadays, we are not managing; we are leading, designing, delivering and embedding. And as a result, the project management capability and its practitioners must evolve to include all those areas to have deep value in today's complex landscape.

- Slow down to speed up!

Yes, I know, it sounds cliché, right? But, moreover, do you have the leaders' buy-in to do so? This comes back to your conviction of what it means to slow down to speed up. And slowing down certainly doesn't mean doing less work or suspending work. However, it is about doing a different kind of work. It is about stepping away from attempting to

"solutionize" and moving into the problem space and the opportunity space your project will help make possible. This is all about sharpening the saw before cutting the tree. So when you cut the tree, it is done once; it is clean and well-considered.

- *Enablement & change adoption is your true objective*

Whatever the change your project aims to deliver, the whole project is an added cost if the change is not adopted. It is as simple as that! Projects that contribute to creating unnecessary complexity, more noise, and making people's & customers' lives harder are not worth doing. Going back to "old ways" is the escape route that most business teams will take when the solution doesn't work for them. Enablement & change adoption is your true objective and outcome. You need to work backwards from there and see how you can integrate your project and product work with the enablement & change adoption lens at the early stages so your project achieves the outcome and creates the change needed.

In summary, for project leaders and directors to attain an incontestable value in today's complicated landscape while still delivering impact and scaling their influence, it is imperative to level up and elevate the project manager's capabilities to focus project leadership, architecture, design, delivery, enablement and change adoption.

This is also crucial for project managers, program managers and program directors to continue to thrive and progress their careers to higher levels of impact.

Would love to hear from readers on case studies, feedback and perspectives!

Coco's Corner

Leo Coco

Micro Habits – Tiny changes that get you huge results

Firstly, you would think that building an effective team should not be so hard right... or is it?

So, you want to change your life. You're fed up with where you're at and you can't even see clearly where you want to get to. You've failed too many times before, so hesitate in making any next moves.

You are at a crossroads: so, do you try one last time, or give up before you have even started?

To be honest, giving up doesn't have to be an option. You can be a better, stronger, more confident version of yourself, and you're almost guaranteed to move onwards and upwards.

That's because this time you're going to build what's called Micro Habits. These tiny changes I encourage you to adopt, are about to give you some pretty HUGE results.

Micro Habits are exactly what they sound like – they're small actions that you take on a regular basis until you form a new habit. Incremental change has been proven to work, over and over again, in a variety of ways. So, what makes Micro Habits so exciting is that they are TINY.

The value of incremental change is profound, and you can start implementing them in your life from today!

Micro Habits can be used to shift elements of your Health, Financial Wellness, your Family Life, Career, and even Social Skills.

So, Why Incremental Change?

The phrase "incremental change" might not be familiar to you, but I guarantee that the effects of it are.

Simply put - incremental changes are small shifts made over a long period of time.

A common thing we are all familiar with in our own health is that unless you have several medical issues, you didn't wake up 20 kilograms overweight one day, nor did your grandfather acquire



Project Management Authority, Trainer, Entrepreneur and Speaker, there are many facets to [Leo Coco](#), our PMISC Director. He has seen it all – from fast-paced corporate environments, to public enterprises touching millions. Decades of experience have given him an almost uncanny ability to home in on the latest trends in the market and predict changes that are coming. In this column, Leo gives our readers a ringside view of how the world of Project Management is changing around us.

those heavy lines etched into his forehead in the course of an afternoon.

These changes all happened over time.

While the changes themselves are slow and go almost entirely unseen, the results are large enough to be visible to those around us. No one can dispute Grandpa's wrinkles any more than they can dispute the fact that you have put on weight over the years. This is what makes incremental change so absolutely astonishing in its power.

By you focusing on Micro Habits, you're going to harness the power of this Incremental Change. By focusing on these tiny actions acted out consistently over time, that are so small that they seem almost unnoticeable to the casual observer, your life has the potential to change in very big and exciting ways.

Let me share why using incremental change is so much more effective, than just trying to revamp your entire life all at once, as this has been one the methods I have used personally over the course of my life (and I still do to this day) that has made a dramatic impact on what I have been able to achieve.

They are easier to start

More often than not, the reason we have such a hard time making changes in our lives is that we just don't know where to begin. The entire process can seem so overwhelming and complicated. With Micro Habits, the complexity is removed. When you only change one very small thing at a time, it barely feels like a change at all. In fact, it can be kind of fun trying out an incremental change just to see what kind of result you might get.

2. They are easier to sustain

While BIG changes tend to get old tiresome real fast (like changing from a diet full of processed foods over to something like Keto or Paleo), micro-changes (like adding a vegetable to every meal) never feels that hard at all. The simplicity of incremental change carries momentum all on its own when done right.

In the world of incremental change allows you to keep going with the old ways and then maintaining these Micro Habits is what leads you to consistently building healthier habits over time.

3. They are fairly painless

Big changes are often so encompassing that they can actually hurt. Imagine throwing out every piece of unhealthy food in your kitchen. Then imagine standing there trying to figure out what to eat. If you ended up in tears, it wouldn't be entirely unexpected. After all, you've just lost everything that you liked to eat.

The great thing about Micro Habits is that the change is in increments. So, if you're working to change your diet, you're only changing out one food perhaps – like giving up soft drinks – while still continue enjoying the things you usually enjoy. That makes this kind of change easier to transition to in the long run.

By making these little changes, chances are you're going to discover things about you that you never knew before, like in the process you find that you really love to eat fresh fruit too.

4. They use less energy

Trying to make big changes will only wear you out. It's like going for a full-fledged body workout when you typically rarely get up from the couch. Your body certainly wouldn't be ready for that kind of workout, and the whole process (finding workout clothes and equipment, going to the gym, knowing what machine to use and how long to train, and for how many reps) can be quite daunting.

Micro Habits allow you to take things more slowly, so instead of worrying about all that extra time at the gym, maybe you're just deciding to take the stairs at work or park 10 minutes away from the office, so you get that extra walking in to start with. This still gives you some exercise you wouldn't normally get.

That's not to say that going to the gym is a bad thing right! Even your gym routine might be able to use some additional Micro Habits, especially if you have already been going regularly.

So, if your usual 30 minutes on the treadmill, could be easily adjusted by spending an extra ten minutes lifting weights before calling it a day. You could also commit to trying a different exercise machine that isn't usually part of your normal workout each week.

5. They keep you motivated

Big goals can feel a million miles away and might easily leave you discouraged as unattainable.

Micro Habits set smaller goals that are achieved in tiny increments. This means you can get to your destination a lot faster than you might expect, leaving you with a feeling of accomplishment. That feeling helps keep you stay motivated as you continue to work towards the change you want to see in your world.

Creating Micro Habits is a self-sustaining cycle of change and continued momentum.

While on the surface they might not seem like big achievements, the feeling of having done something which is moving you forward is still valid and will make you feel good about yourself, and what the direction your heading.

Now at this point, it's up to YOU to take that motivation and RUN with it. Use it to feed your next micro-habit, so that no matter what, you keep moving forward, growing, and changing and becoming who you're meant to be and want to be.

When you look at all the benefits found in leveraging Micro Habits, you can't help but see that they might be tiny – but they have some HUGE Positive Value when it comes to making changes in your life. In fact, Positive Change that you can SUSTAIN!

Knowing the value of **incremental change**, now it's time for YOU to run with it and see how you could shift your world!

To Your Success!

Leo Coco

Levels of Project Abstraction

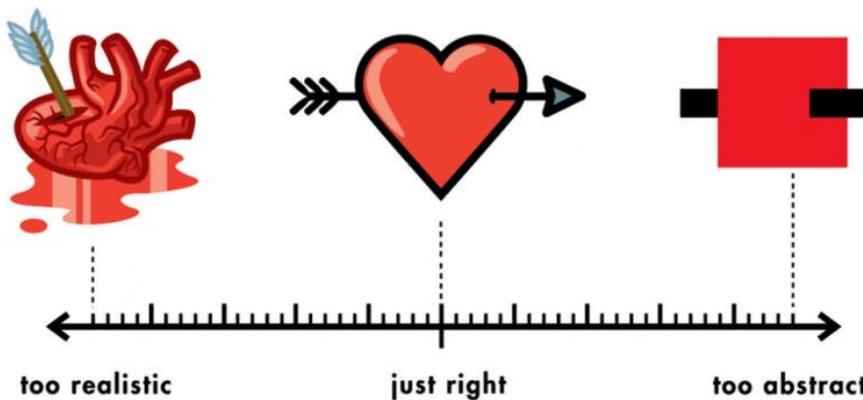
Louis Taborda

Spare a thought for those learning project management (PM) for the first time. When you learn by experience you have the luxury of taking in concepts gradually over time, giving you the added benefit of context. However, those learning in a classroom situation (or even from PMBOK for their PMP certification) must absorb a whole lot of facts in a short time. The result can be a whole jumble of concepts that lack context and nuance.



[Dr Louis Taborda](#) is a project professional and passionate educator at the School of Project Management, University of Sydney. He is also founder of [Projectize.Me](#) a start-up Social Enterprise. All the views expressed here are his own.

THE ABSTRACT-O-METER



I encountered that challenge when teaching students about the project lifecycle and the PM artefacts that (traditionally) need to be developed at different stages. Think about how strange it can be to a novice that we have similar sounding sections (take the “project assumptions” section as an example) that appear in the Business Case, the Project Charter, and often again in the Project Plan. Why do we keep repeating the same stuff?

Actually, I remember thinking something similar as a practitioner – why do we have project templates that have us repeat things? Maybe you have had a similar experience when you (were tempted to?) cut & paste a section from one document to another. Experience might help us understand why these things need to be in different documents (is it because it is targeting a different audience that might not have access to earlier project documents?) but when we simply focus on doing the job at hand, we can be conveniently blind and not give adequate thought to a question that a novice might ask?

Why is it that project documentation across the lifecycle appears to repeat the same information?

Unlike a practitioner who might dismiss the question and just be irritated at having to paraphrase an apparently redundant section of a document, I have to have an answer for my curious students. So, what's with all the repetition? I'm asking here – let me know if you have any thoughts.

Besides the above point about each document having a different readership (which is real), I point out few more fundamental reasons why project documents might repeat themselves. First is that there is potential for sequential documents in the lifecycle to be spread over significant time periods – how long does it take before a Business Case is signed-off and a project is actually initiated? Second, the authorship and perspective is different with the Business Case potentially being optimistic while the Project Charter and Plan may be more reserved and risk-averse. Finally, the level of detail required in the different PM artefacts might vary because each has a different purpose.

I have found the Abstract-O-Meter created by the artist Christoph Niemann to be a fun way of representing the level of detail that different PM documents might need to address – what an executive might expect would not satisfy the architect, let alone the builder. Then, once they feel comfortable with the idea, we turn to the greater challenge: learning to communicate at the appropriate level of abstraction for each stakeholder in our project.

While that seems to help my students feel comfortable with the different documents across the project lifecycle, [I'd appreciate your thoughts on this topic](#) to help me understand it better.

The answer is definitely complicated!

Chapter News – March 2022

Mentoring Returns in 2023!

Dear valued PMISC members,

We are thrilled to announce that our mentoring program for 2023 is recommencing, and we can't wait to see what exciting opportunities this year will bring.

To kick off the program, we are hosting a special event on April 28th. This event will feature speeches from the directors of the Sydney chapter, who will share their experiences and insights on the importance of mentoring and the benefits it can bring to both mentors and mentees.

In addition, we are also excited to offer a networking event, which will provide a valuable opportunity for our members to connect, share ideas, and build relationships with one another.

We believe that mentoring is a powerful tool for personal and professional growth, and we are committed to supporting our members in every way possible. Whether you are a seasoned mentor or just starting your mentoring journey, we encourage you to join us for this exciting event.

So mark your calendars and save the date - April 28th is going to be an incredible day of learning, networking, and growth.

We look forward to seeing you there!

PMI Sydney Chapter's Partnership with Talent International

PMI Sydney Chapter is happy to announce our partnership with Talent International. Talent will be the Chapter's Platinum Sponsor for 2023.

Talent

Here's what the Talent team said about the partnership: Talent is a global technology recruitment leader with a deep specialisation in project management. Working with more than 11,000 project managers around the world and placing over 1,000 PMs in new roles in 2022, we're fluent in project management - from agile to scrum. Solidifying our commitment to the field, we are excited to be Platinum partner to the PMI Sydney Chapter. We share the PMI's mission to advance the project management profession and support its members in achieving excellence in their careers. We are dedicated to staying up-to-date with the latest industry trends and best practices, and our team of experts regularly participates in PMI events and training programs. We look forward to supporting the PMI and its members in the years to come.

If you are looking for your next PM role, help in staffing your next project or insights on the hiring market, reach out to Steve at steve.tompkins@talentinternational.com

Chapter News – March 2022

Mike Roberts – Putting purpose back into innovation

On the 23rd March, Michael Roberts delivered an engaging and compelling session taking our attendees through what it means to be an effective, authentic leader. Thanks to Mike for the time and effort put into your insightful presentation!



Chapter News – March 2022

PMISC Event April 4

PMI Sydney Chapter is pleased to host Join Act Knowledge founder and director Jürgen Oschadleus as he illustrates how the fundamental principles of project management – the skills, the capabilities, and the tools – can be applied to our own lives, as well as our projects and organisations, to help bring clarity, structure and focus.

Jürgen Oschadleus is an international speaker, educator, consultant and coach on project leadership, influence and effective communication. He combines his background in history, teaching and technology projects with a fascination for sport and psychology, and uses this to challenge people's thinking and help them create new mental connections, apply knowledge and achieve the outcomes they seek.

Register: <https://pmisydney.org/events/evening-events/pmisc-4th-april-2023-this-project-called-life>

Date: Tuesday 4th April 2023

Arrive: 6 PM

Meeting: 6:30 PM to 8 PM

Depart: 9 PM

Venue : Castlereagh Boutique Hotel

Women in Projects Event April 18

Join Women in Projects Australia for some good old fashioned networking!

Discuss your current project, your pain points, your celebrations and meet some other people that work in the Project Space – you never know who you will work with on your next project, who will be your next client, or where your next role might come from.

We are here to develop the confidence and skills of our group to ensure they can go after their goals and dreams.

Register: <https://pmisydney.org/events/event-listing/women-in-project-management/women-in-projects-australia-social-networking>

Date: Tuesday 18th April 2023

Arrive: 6 PM

Meeting: 6:30 PM to 8 PM

Venue : Escient

Chapter News – March 2022

Announcement: EMBA Program with Universal Business School Sydney

PMI Sydney Chapter is currently in the process of finalising a partnership agreement with Universal Business School Sydney (UBSS). Central to the association agreement is an invitation to all PMI Sydney Chapter members to enrol in the Executive MBA program run by UBSS with a substantial financial discount.



The Executive Master of Business Administration - Executive Delivery Mode is a specifically designed program for those seeking to broaden their knowledge and extend their business network with like senior executives. The program which focuses on entrepreneurship, consists of 16 subjects is run as a hybrid on-line and a two-day face to face session held over a weekend, held in at prominent hotel venues at major cities.

Look for more details to come in our next newsletter!

Speaking at PMI Sydney

Are you ready to inspire others? Tell us what you're passionate about. PMI Sydney Chapter is looking for volunteers to be speakers in 2023 events and participate in panel discussion. Please submit your interest at the following link:

<https://forms.gle/Ai6eLJE6U4gxMcPh8>

Contributions Wanted for the Newsletter

The PMI Sydney Chapter Newsletter Editorial Team is requesting your contributions for our monthly newsletter, The Critical Path. News, Views, Opinion Pieces, or Articles, all are welcome. We would also be happy to hear about the content you'd like to see in the newsletter.

Please reach out to marketing@pmisidney.org with your contributions or suggestions.

Membership Updates

Sydney Mudau

Message from the Membership Director

We are gearing up for a year of development and accomplishment as the Director of Membership for the PMI Sydney Chapter in 2023. Some of our priorities will be connecting with academic institutions, growing PMI membership and giving back to the communities.

We intend to continue inviting new members to our Chapter and providing chances for greater engagement and participation in our events and activities planned in the coming months. In order to improve project management education, we also hope to forge mutually beneficial relationships with academic institutions.

Following is the list of members who celebrated either 3, 5, 7, 10, 15 or 20 years of association with the PMI Sydney Chapter in March 2023. We thank you for your association, support and advice.



Sydney is a self-driven and motivated individual with a passion for learning and growth. Sydney enjoys steering the membership portfolio to serve PMI Sydney Chapter members.

He is a firm advocate for continuous improvement and passionate about sharing project management best practices with the wider Project Management network.

PMI Sydney Member	Years of Membership
March 2023	
Lynne Colley	3
Elizabeth Clark	5
Vivek Khatri	5
Michael Chilcott	15
Hazel Boaler	20

Photo of the Month

PMI Sydney



About the image

A couple of photos of the attendees at the PMI and Escient-sponsored Women in Projects Australia International Women's Day event. We had an amazing event with the panelists My Tran Le, Sandy Abrahams and Fiona MacTavish. The audience had some great questions and conversations with our panelists.