PROJECT SUMMIT
BUSINESS ANALYST WORLD

FUTURE FORWARD

CHICAGO, IL

OCTOBER 5-7, 2026
CHICAGO MARRIOTT NAPERVILLE

ON-LINE BROCHURE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Advisory Board/Why Attend 2

Greetings from the conference Vice Presdent 3

Keynote Speakers..... 4 - 5

Symposium Sessions At-A-Glance ..... 6 - 7

Session Descriptions ..... 8 - 15

Workshops ..... 16 - 17

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WHY ATTEND:

1 EARN UP TO **16 PDUs and CDUs over 3 days**

2 **TOP QUALITY EDUCATION** AT COMPETITIVE PRICES

3 REGIONAL ADVISORY BOARD THAT TARGETS **LOCAL ISSUES**

4 UNIQUE CONFERENCE MODEL **PMBA COMBINED**

5 **NETWORKING** UNLIMITED NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES WITH YOUR PEERS

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GREETINGS FROM THE CONFERENCE VICE PRESIDENT

Welcome to ProjectSummit*BAWorld Chicago!

On behalf of our entire team, welcome to ProjectSummit*BAWorld Chicago! We are so glad you are here.

Over the next few days, I encourage you to make this event your own. Explore sessions outside your usual area of expertise. Ask questions. Introduce yourself to someone new. Join a conversation at lunch. Connect with a speaker after their session. Some of the most valuable moments at this conference happen outside the meeting rooms, through the conversations and connections you make along the way.

This year, we have evolved our program to better reflect the way projects and organizations work today. Our content has been developed around four areas: **Delivery & Execution, Strategy & Transformation, Power Skills and Tools, Data & Innovation**. With three concurrent session rooms in Chicago, you will see Tools, Data & Innovation topics integrated throughout the other streams, giving you the opportunity to explore technology, AI, data and emerging tools alongside the broader challenges they are helping us solve.

And do not feel that you need to stay within one stream. Mix and match. Build the conference experience that is most valuable to you and the work you do.

One of the things I am most proud of about ProjectSummit*BAWorld is the community that has developed around it. Our speakers are part of that community too. They do not simply deliver a presentation and disappear. Many stay throughout the event, attend other sessions and spend time talking with attendees. Take advantage of that access. Ask them questions, continue the conversation and get to know them. They are here because they want to be part of your experience.

You will also notice something else new this year: **your Event Guide is entirely digital and available through our new event app**. Rather than carrying around a printed guide, you will have the program, speaker information and important event details right at your fingertips throughout the conference.

Most importantly, please remember that this truly is **your event**.

We build ProjectSummit*BAWorld for the project professionals who attend it, and your feedback helps determine where we go next. Tell us what worked. Tell us what you want more of. Tell us what we have not thought of yet. Your feedback is not simply appreciated — it is welcomed and genuinely important to us.

So make the most of these next few days. Learn something that changes the way you approach your work. Meet someone you would never have met otherwise. Have a conversation that continues long after Chicago.

Thank you for choosing to spend these days with us. I hope you leave ProjectSummit*BAWorld with new ideas, practical tools, valuable connections and a renewed enthusiasm for what comes next.

Enjoy the conference — and please come and say hello. I would love to meet you!

Amy Ruddell | Vice-President, Business Unit
ProjectSummit*BusinessAnalystWorld
aruddell@macgregorcom.com

2026 KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

KEYNOTE

Ted Lasso Leadership

JEFF HARRY

POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY PLAY SPEAKER,
REDISCOVER YOUR PLAY

OCTOBER 5 | **8:30AM - 9:45AM**

85% of employees are disengaged at work. Staff leave because they don't feel seen, heard, or appreciated. Who knew the answer to this lies in a show called Ted Lasso? Ted's leadership style is vital for companies because it demonstrates the effectiveness of a more holistic and inclusive approach to being a leader. It combines empathy, intuition, and collaboration, which creates a compassionate work culture. He balances it with cultivating assertiveness, decisiveness, and accountability, which leads to a more productive and results-oriented work culture. Ted Lasso also embraces play as crucial to building camaraderie and a solid foundation for AFC Richmond. In this session, we will explore how play and positive psychology are essential to building psychological safety in this surreal new reality of work. We will analyze through the lens of Ted Lasso what currently needs to be added to your workplace that would create the culture your staff is looking for to feel comfortable playing. Finally, we will determine the initial steps you need to take to create a "stay curious" environment where staff can do their most vibrant work.

Learning Objectives

- Learn to incorporate aspects of Ted Lasso's leadership currently missing within your management style.
- Determine immediate action steps that can be applied to ensure your staff feels seen, heard, and appreciated.
- Explore strategies to implement psychological safety techniques within the team that they can practice in real-time.

KEYNOTE

Career Enhancing Habits for BAs and PMs

KENT MCDONALD

WRITER AND PRODUCT MANAGER

OCTOBER 5 | **3:45pm - 4:45pm**

In today's challenging job market, you need strategic career moves to thrive in your current role and unlock your next big adventure. Based on my experience working with teams in a variety of industries, I've identified three essential career-enhancing strategies that set you apart. In this keynote I'll explain how to position yourself as an indispensable contributor by mastering: • Impact - understand how your organization makes and spends money • Context - adapt your approach based on lifecycle phases • Communication - influence without authority through stakeholder engagement I'll share practical tools you can use to advance in your current organization, or prepare for the future of work. You'll leave with a clear roadmap to advance your career and the confidence to navigate the evolving demands of business analysis and project management.

2026 KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

OCTOBER 6 | **8:30AM - 9:45AM**

Every major technology shift creates a new class of indispensable professionals — the ones who recognize the moment, position themselves early, and lead while others are still trying to understand what's happening. This is that moment. Short Summary: Business analysis professionals, project managers, and change agents have always been the bridge between business and technology. AI just made that bridge more valuable than ever. In 90 minutes, Jamie Champagne gives you the framework, the tool, and the peer conversation to stop watching the AI wave and start charging it. Full Description: Every major technology shift creates a new class of indispensable professionals — the ones who recognize the moment, position themselves early, and lead while others are still trying to understand what's happening. This is that moment. Business analysis and project management professionals — the people who ask the right questions, translate complexity, align stakeholders, and make technology actually work in the real world — are the most underestimated asset in any AI conversation. Jamie Champagne is here to change that, starting with you, starting now. In this electrifying 90-minute keynote, you'll gain a practical lens for navigating AI conversations in your organization, see live demonstrations of AI applied in real analysis and project scenarios, and walk away with a structured approach to positioning your value in an AI-driven environment. Most importantly, you'll complete a hands-on AI Work Audit alongside your peers — turning insight into immediate, actionable direction. Come in curious. Leave dangerous.

OCTOBER 6 | **2:30pm - 3:30pm**

CTRL+YOU Live! is a high-energy keynote that challenges Project Managers and Business Analysts to rethink how they work with AI. Put your analysis and judgment skills to the ultimate test by participating in various games that expose how to use AI properly, what most people get wrong about prompting, and a twist how you can choose the right AI tool for you! You'll walk away with understanding how to use AI as a thinking partner, a clearer picture of the AI landscape, and at least one thing you'll try before end of the week.

Learning Objectives

- Leave with practical templates, prompt structures, and use cases that can be applied immediately at work.
- Learn how to design effective AI prompts to improve communication, planning, and analysis.
- Practice applying AI tools to real-world PM and BA challenges through interactive team games.

Schedule at-a-glance

Monday, October 5

8:30 am - 9:45 am	**Ted Lasso Leadership** **Jeff Harry** Positive Psychology Play Speaker, Rediscover Your Play		
	Strategy & Transformation	**Power Skills**	**Delivery & Execution**
10:00 am - 11:00 am	Business Analyst - the Unofficial Leader **Michael Hanninen** Thomson Reuters	Stop Collecting Contacts and Start Creating Connections: Powerful Networking Secrets That Don't Feel Cringey **Leslie Hughes** PUNCH Media	The PM-OCM Partnership Model: A Framework for High-Performing Project Teams **Mike Boccolucci** Apex Systems **(Technology Tools and Innovation)**
11:15 am - 12:15 pm	Beyond Elicitation: Plan and Conduct Stakeholder Interviews Like a Pro **Pamela Paterson** Consultant	Well, THAT Escalated Quickly: Conflict Management for When Everyone Else Is Clearly Wrong **Phil Barth** Great Things Happen LLC	AI & Copilot in Project Management: What's Actually Working **Jacques Goupil** PPM Works **(Technology Tools and Innovation)**
12:15 pm - 1:15 pm	Lunch		
1:15 pm - 2:15 pm	Clarity Is the New Code: The BA's Opportunity in the Age of AI **Dave Saboe** Mastering Business Analysis	The Power of Your Voice: Skills for Crucial Conversations **Elias Mokole** ELM consultants	From Project Manager to Strategic Operator: The AI Advantage **Ahmad Noordin** RPM Living **(Technology Tools and Innovation)**
2:30 pm - 3:30 pm	AI Didn't Replace the Business Analyst - It Raised the Bar **Pulkit Singhal** Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago	The EQ Advantage: Emotionally Intelligent Workplaces **Connie Holmes** Confidence with Connie	Guide Path: Project Management in the world of Agile and Product Delivery **Hans Eckman** Info-Tech Research Group / Eckman Guides
2:30 pm - 3:30 pm	**Career Enhancing Moves for BAs and PMs** **Kent McDonald** Writer and Product Manager, KBPMedia		
3:30 pm - 5:00 pm	Networking Reception		

Schedule at-a-glance

Tuesday, October 6

8:30 am - 9:45 am	**The AI Era Was Built for People Like You. Prove It.** **Jamie Champagne** CBAP, PMP, Champagne Collaborations		
	Strategy & Transformation	**Power Skills**	**Delivery & Execution**
10:00 am - 11:00 am	Transformation Consulting 103: Human Intelligence (HI) in the Adaptive Hub Strategy **Lola Adesegha** SOC **Bukola Olotu** MSN, PMP	The Art of No: Saving Your Sanity One Boundary at a Time **Jennifer Battan** Spark Collaborative	Code More Naturally with Artificial Intelligence **Norman Eliaser, PhD** IIBA Chicagoland Chapter **(Technology Tools and Innovation)**
11:15 am - 12:15 pm	The Modern BA in an AI World **Michael Hanninen** Thomson Reuters	Beyond Efficiency: How Business Analysts and Project Managers Engineer Opportunity **Frank Kowalkowski** Knowledge Consultants, Inc.	Influencing Organizational Culture as Project Professionals: A Foundation to Successful Outcomes **Jeff Porter** Mutual of Omaha
12:15 pm - 1:15 pm	Lunch		
1:15 pm - 2:15 pm	The Essential Skill Sets Project Managers Need Today and Tomorrow **Jamie Champagne** Champagne Collaborations	Get Rid of the Waste! How to Boost Your Communication by Shrinking It **Pamela Paterson** Consultant	The Dark Side of AI: What Every PM and BA Should Know **Dave Saboe** Mastering Business Analysis **(Technology Tools and Innovation)**
2:30 pm - 3:30 pm	The BA Growth Loop: 10 Habits That Separate Average Analysts from Exceptional Ones **Obeid Raheel** NCSBN **(Power Skills)**	Guide Path: Career Paths - What will our roles look like in the future? **Hans Eckman** Info-Tech Research Group / Eckman Guides	Alignment Collapse: Why Enterprise Transformations Fail Between Strategy and Delivery **Candice Benson** Benson Consulting, Inc.
2:30 pm - 3:30 pm	**CTRL+YOU: The Game Show Keynote for PMs and BAs Who Want to Outsmart AI Before It Outsmarts Them** **Leslie Hughes,** LinkedIn Profile Writer, LinkedIn Trainer, Public Speaker, & CEO, PUNCH Media **Phil Barth,** PMP, CEO, Great Things Happen LLC		

Symposium Sessions

Monday, October 5
10:00am - 11:00am

Business Analyst - the Unofficial Leader

Michael Hanninen
CBAP, Director Business Analysis, Thomson Reuters

Michael Hanninen is a Lead Business Analyst at Thomson Reuters. With over 15 years of experience in the field, Michael is dedicated to helping individuals, teams, and organizations uncover hidden problems to achieve significant successes. As a certified CBAP through the IIBA, Michael leads teams of Business Analysts on large global projects, fostering positivity and encouraging success every step of the way. He guides his work and coaching with the mantra "Positive Thoughts, Positive Progress Forward."

Learning Objectives
- Learn communication techniques of a Business Analyst Leader
- Understand that the Business Analyst is a Leader
- Communication techniques will lead to leadership influence

Stop Collecting Contacts and Start Creating Connections: Powerful Networking Secrets That Don't Feel Cringey

Leslie Hughes
LinkedIn Profile Writer, LinkedIn Trainer, Public Speaker, & CEO, PUNCH Media

Networking isn't about collecting contacts and business cards, it's about building authentic visibility before you need it. This workshop gives PMs and BAs strategies, scripts, and LinkedIn tactics to create meaningful connections, strengthen influence, and make their network work for them.

Learning Objectives
- Use practical scripts and exercises to turn small interactions into lasting professional relationships
- Discover how to build and maintain a professional network before you need it
- Apply modern LinkedIn and digital visibility strategies to showcase expertise

The PM-OCM Partnership Model: A Framework for High-Performing Project Teams

Mike Boccolucci
Apex Systems

This session shows how strong collaboration between project management and organizational change management creates high-performing project teams. It introduces a practical framework for defining roles, aligning success metrics, and building joint routines that keep the technical and people sides of change working together. Participants will learn how this partnership improves decision-making, strengthens stakeholder engagement, and boosts benefits realization while reducing resistance and rework.

Learning Objectives
- Familiarization with partnership frameworks
- How to align technical and people tracks on a project
- The criticality of collaboration

Symposium Sessions

Monday, October 5
11:15am - 12:15pm

Beyond Elicitation: Plan and Conduct Stakeholder Interviews Like a Pro

Pamela Paterson
Consultant

Everything we do on tech projects begins with elicitation. Most of our elicitation is conducted through stakeholder interviews, whether with a single stakeholder or a group. Knowing how to conduct an effective interview will enable us to gather the information and data we need to do our work.

Learning Objectives

- PSelect appropriate question types and interview approaches for different stakeholders, group settings, and project scenarios
- Produce concise, usable documentation that transforms interview responses into meaningful requirements and project artifacts
- Apply structured stakeholder interviewing techniques to gather more accurate, complete, and trustworthy information during elicitation

Well, THAT Escalated Quickly: Conflict Management for When Everyone Else Is Clearly Wrong

Phil Barth
PMP, CEO, Great Things Happen LLC

Conflict is unavoidable. Bad conflict is not. Project managers and business analysts spend their days balancing priorities, requirements, deadlines, resources and people who occasionally seem determined to make all of those things harder than necessary. The challenge is not eliminating conflict. It is knowing how to respond when it shows up. In this practical, interactive session, Phil Barth explores five common ways people respond to conflict and how to choose the right approach based on the situation, the stakes and the people involved. Participants will explore when to push, when to give, when to pause, when to trade and when to work toward a better solution. But choosing an approach is only the beginning. Participants will also learn a practical process for having productive conflict conversations: understanding the other person's perspective, making sure their own perspective is understood, working toward a solution and leaving with clear commitments about what happens next. Along the way, they will learn practical ways to lower the temperature, disagree without making things worse, deal with difficult stakeholders and move conversations forward when everyone involved is absolutely certain the other person is wrong. Finally, participants will discover how AI can serve as a surprisingly effective conflict practice partner—helping them prepare for difficult conversations, role-play challenging stakeholders and get feedback before having the conversation for real. There will be practical tools, real-world examples and, because this is Phil Barth, a rubber chicken.

Learning Objectives

- Apply a practical conflict-management framework to decide when to push, give, pause, trade or solve.
- Learn how AI can actually help you resolve human conflicts
- Use specific communication techniques to lower tension, handle difficult stakeholders and move disagreements toward resolution.

AI & Copilot in Project Management: What's Actually Working

Jacques Goupil
PMP, MCTS, MCP, Managing Director, Sales, PPM Works

AI tools are everywhere, but the hype rarely matches reality in the project management world. This practitioner-focused session cuts through the noise to share what AI and Copilot capabilities are genuinely delivering value today - from status reporting to risk identification and where the gaps still are. Attendees leave with a grounded, honest perspective they can bring back to their teams immediately.

Learning Objectives

- Learn 3–5 specific use cases where AI adds real PM/BA value
- Understand prompt strategies that improve AI output quality
- Identify which Copilot capabilities are delivering genuine value in project management today

Symposium Sessions

Monday, October 5
1:15pm - 2:15pm

Clarity Is the New Code: The BA's Opportunity in the Age of AI

Dave Saboe
CEC, Enterprise Agile Coach, Mastering Business Analysis

As AI reshapes software delivery, the bottleneck is shifting. The constraint is no longer writing code, it's defining what the code should do in a clear and meaningful way. In other words, the constraint is exactly what Business Analysts have been trained to do their entire careers. In this session, you'll discover why the rise of AI-powered coding isn't a threat to the BA role, it's the BA's moment. This isn't a session about surviving the age of AI. It's about leading in it.

Learning Objectives
- Discover how this AI inflection point is a BA's big opportunity
- Understand what spec-driven development is and its benefits
- Learn the pitfalls of shifting your role and how to overcome them

From Project Manager to Strategic Operator: The AI Advantage

Ahmad Noordin
PMP, CSM, C-OKRP, Prosci CCP, LSSGB, SHRM-SCP, SPH, Vice President, Strategic Programs & Systems, RPM Living

Project managers and business analysts are being asked to do more than manage tasks. This session shows how AI can help professionals become strategic operators who improve decisions, anticipate risks, align stakeholders, and connect project work to business outcomes.

Learning Objectives
- Develop a mindset and framework for using AI responsibly to increase influence, business alignment, and enterprise impact.
- Identify how AI is changing the role of project managers and business analysts from execution-focused support to strategic business partnership.
- Apply practical AI use cases to improve prioritization, stakeholder communication, risk identification, planning, and decision support.

The Power of Your Voice: Skills for Crucial Conversations

Elias Mokole
Leadership Communication Consultant, ELM consultants

This session guides professionals through the transition from project management to product management in regulated industries. Learn how to evolve your role, retain compliance, and drive continuous value in environments where governance and agility must co-exist.

Learning Objectives
- Identify how to leverage existing project management skills to build successful product practices
- Understand the differences between project and product management within compliance-driven environments
- Learn strategies to introduce iterative, product-focused delivery within regulated frameworks

Symposium Sessions

Monday, October 5
2:30pm - 3:30pm

AI Didn't Replace the Business Analyst - It Raised the Bar

Pulkit Singhal
Sr Salesforce Business Analyst, Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago

AI Didn't Replace the Business Analyst It Raised the Bar - reframes business analysis as a human centered discipline rooted in judgment, clarity, and trust. This symposium session explores how BAs create value beyond documentation by navigating ambiguity, influencing decisions, and aligning stakeholders. Attendees gain fresh perspective on elevating impact and leading with confidence in complex organizations.

Learning Objectives
- Gain a clearer understanding of how the Business Analyst role is evolving
- Leave with a renewed perspective on professional value
- Learn how to elevate personal impact beyond deliverables

Guide Path: Project Management in the world of Agile and Product Delivery

Hans Eckman
Research Fellow, Info-Tech Research Group / Eckman Guides

Project Management is DEAD! Long live Project Management! Do you ever wish that you could just ask your question and get the information you're looking for when sitting in a session? If so, then this is the session for you. Our small panel will discuss the topics and situations most concerning to you. Enjoy this high-spirited, often humorous, and informative edutainment panel with some of the top thought leaders I found at breakfast this morning.

Learning Objectives
- Does project management change or disappear with the shift to more AI-based solutions?
- How can project managers be most effective when projects cross products and product families?
- What is the role of project managers in an Agile DevOps or Product-centric world? Do we really have to become Scrum Masters?

The EQ Advantage: Emotionally Intelligent Workplaces

Connie Holmes
Confidence with Connie

Emotional intelligence is vitally important. To understand your own emotions, to be able to manage and control your emotions, and to understand the emotions of others is at the core of relationships. In professionally working environments, relationship and team cohesion is the foundation to a successful business. Designed for professionals, attendees will have strategies and tools to enhance collaboration, navigate challenging conversations, and lead with greater clarity and understanding.

Learning Objectives
- Learn strategies to communicate with colleagues for deeper impact and influence to help move projects forward more efficiently and effectively.
- Implement leadership strategies into every interaction for increased momentum, impactful collaboration, effective communication, and performance excellence.
- Understand emotional intelligence at a deeper level to improve and enhance working relationships.

Symposium Sessions

Tuesday, October 6
10:00am - 11:00pm

Code More Naturally with Artificial Intelligence

Norman Eliaser, PhD
Business Systems Analyst, Prospect Resources. President, IIBA Chicagoland Chapter

With the growing use of Large Language Model (LLM)-based Artificial Intelligence, many organizations are looking to cut staff, believing that a smaller workforce can leverage the new technology available to complete tasks that previously took more time and people. In doing so, they leave themselves open to losing quality employees with strong legacy knowledge. Avoid being undervalued: deepen your skillset for building or improving applications.

Learning Objectives
- Improve your coding abilities while getting work done
- Create a set of subgoals for developing an application
- Hone prompts to maximize useful code and minimize frustration with AI

The Art of No: Saving Your Sanity One Boundary at a Time

Jennifer Battan
CSM, CSPO, CBAP®, Founder, Spark Collaborative

The most scarce resource in modern work isn't time—it's attention. Yet many of us unintentionally give ours away through over-commitment, reactive communication, and porous boundaries. Let's reframe "no" as a strategic skill that strengthens performance, prevents burnout, and enables high-value work. We'll learn proven techniques for calendar protection, streamlined communication habits, and intentional time design. You'll walk away with practical steps to reclaim your headspace and flourish.

Learning Objectives
- Learn ways to "make time" through techniques that encourage hyper-focus, deep thinking, and a sustainable workflow
- Discover which tasks should be declined, deferred, delegated, or redesigned
- Learn to recognize the cognitive and productivity costs of saying "yes" too often

Transformation Consulting 103: Human Intelligence (HI) in the Adaptive Hub Strategy

Lola Adesegha
SBA, SOC

In an AI-driven world, technical documentation is now a commodity, but Human Intelligence (HI) remains a premium. Join Lola (MBA, CBAP, PMP, CSM, CCMP) to discover the "Adaptive Hub" strategy: a framework for senior leaders to bridge the gap between AI efficiency and human-centered strategy. Learn to synthesize analysis, execution, and change management to move beyond outputs and become an indispensable "Value Architect" who leads with empathy and contextual wisdom.

Learning Objectives
- Gain a practical "Monday Morning" checklist to shift your daily focus from just managing tasks and documentation to architecting high-level business value that AI cannot replicate
- Learn how to combine Business Analysis, Project Management, and Change Management into one seamless strategy to ensure technical solutions are actually adopted by users
- Identify exactly which project tasks to automate with AI and which critical Human Intelligence moments require your direct leadership to ensure project success

Symposium Sessions

Tuesday, October 6
11:15am - 12:15pm

Beyond Efficiency: How Business Analysts and Project Managers Engineer Opportunity

Frank Kowalkowski
President, Knowledge Consultants, Inc.

In an environment where automation is accelerating execution, those who can engineer opportunity will shape strategy rather than simply deliver it. Drawing from real-world examples and a patented ideation method, Opportunity Engineering equips Business Analysts and Project Managers with a repeatable framework to move beyond execution and become architects of measurable strategic impact.

Learning Objectives
- Integrate AI and analytics into opportunity recognition and execution
- Redesign scoping and delivery approaches to maximize strategic impact
- Apply the Opportunity Engineering framework to active initiatives

The Modern BA in an AI World

Michael Hanninen
CBAP, Director Business Analysis, Thomson Reuters

AI is rapidly becoming part of everyday Business Analysis—but knowing how to use it effectively is what separates good analysts from great ones. This session is designed for Business Analysts who want to use AI tools to work faster, think clearer, and deliver higher-quality outcomes—without sacrificing professional judgment or accountability.

Learning Objectives
- Incorporate AI into everyday BA workflows responsibly
- Identify where AI tools can effectively support core Business Analysis activities
- Apply AI differently based on experience level

Influencing Organizational Culture as Project Professionals: A Foundation to Successful Outcomes

Jeff Porter
Project Manager, IS Senior Project Manager, Mutual of Omaha

Understanding strategy and organizational culture is a critical component to thriving in the workplace, but often project teams and cross functional teams are not aware of their strategy or culture. “Some organizations show that 95% of employees either don’t understand or are not informed on organizational strategy”. Kaplan & Norton, 1996, The Balanced Scorecard: Translating Strategy into Action. Those are astounding numbers and the same research, also shows that lack of strategy and organizational culture awareness is linked to 30% of project failures. So what are the 4 main organizational cultures and combinations therein? What can be done to be informed, act on, and promote positive organizational culture as a project professional? In this session, attendees will learn how to identify their organizational culture and what unique roles Project, Program, and Portfolio Managers have as they drive their strategic initiatives within the culture. The session uses real life examples and beautiful media in partnership with PowerCourt Estate the #3 Top gardens in the world (National Geographic 2024) to illustrate how to drive success in your projects and promote positive organizational culture. Sadly not all workplace cultures promote growth and excellence. What happens as a professional one finds themselves in this unfortunate situation?. Are you stuck? This talk will discuss practical ways how project professionals can use their unique role to turn around “negative” organizational culture with continuous improvement and stakeholder relationships.

Learning Objectives
- Learn practical methods and tips on how to turn around negative culture with continuous improvement
- Understand organizational culture and it’s direct link to strategy and project success
- How to promote positive organizational culture as a project professional to ensure success with objectives and stakeholders

Symposium Sessions

Tuesday, October 6
1:15pm - 2:15pm

Get Rid of the Waste! How to Boost Your Communication by Shrinking It

Pamela Paterson
Consultant

Have you ever sat in a meeting saying to yourself: "This could have been an email." And then we get the email... and it's ten paragraphs long. In this session, we'll tackle one of the biggest productivity drains in tech teams today: communication waste. Using best practices from Lean Six Sigma, we'll explore how to strip away the fluff and get to the good stuff—so your messages land faster, clearer, and with real impact.

Learning Objectives
- Apply Lean Six Sigma principles to create clearer, shorter, and more impactful written and verbal communication
- Design leaner meetings and documentation practices that save time while improving understanding and results
- Identify common forms of communication waste in emails, documents, and meetings that reduce productivity in tech teams

The Dark Side of AI: What Every PM and BA Should Know

Dave Saboe
CEC, Enterprise Agile Coach, Mastering Business Analysis

AI is transforming the way we plan, analyze, and deliver value, but also brings great risk. In this provocative and practical session, we'll explore the side of AI that rarely makes it into conference keynotes. We'll address the AI elephant in the room and examine the real-world risks to your role and to organizations. You'll learn how to avoid these risks and how to elevate your role by doing what Artificial Intelligence can't. Join us to challenge the hype and prepare for what's next.

Learning Objectives
- Discover how to future-proof your career in an AI-driven world
- Learn how to avoid common pitfalls associated with using AI tools
- Understand the unintended consequences of AI in project and analysis work

The Essential Skill Sets Project Managers Need Today and Tomorrow

Jamie Champagne
CBAP, PMP, Champagne Collaborations

Project management today requires more than managing schedules and budgets. This session explores the essential skills modern project leaders need to navigate complexity, influence stakeholders, and deliver meaningful outcomes. Learn how strategic thinking, communication precision, risk foresight, and adaptive leadership position project professionals as trusted leaders in dynamic environments.

Learning Objectives
- Identify the critical competencies required for effective project leadership in complex environments
- Develop adaptive leadership approaches that enhance team performance and long-term relevance
- Apply strategies to strengthen stakeholder engagement, communication, and risk management

Symposium Sessions

Tuesday, October 6
2:30pm - 3:30pm

Alignment Collapse: Why Enterprise Transformations Fail Between Strategy and Delivery

Candice Benson
PMP, CQ, Prosci, CEO, Benson Consulting, Inc.

The Alignment Gap: Why Smart Organizations Still Fail at Transformation Despite significant investment in transformation, many initiatives fail to deliver expected results. The problem is not effort, it is misalignment between strategy and execution. This session reveals the early warning signs of failure and the structural gaps that derail progress. Learn how to strengthen alignment and lead initiatives that translate into real, measurable outcomes.

Learning Objectives

- Learn why the pressure to deliver measurable transformation outcomes is intensifying as organizations invest more in large-scale change initiatives
- Recognize the patterns successful organizations use to maintain alignment between strategy, leadership expectations, and delivery teams
- Understand the role project managers and business analysts must play in identifying alignment failures early in complex initiatives

Guide Path: Career Paths - What will our roles look like in the future?

Hans Eckman
Research Fellow, Info-Tech Research Group / Eckman Guides

Do you ever wish when sitting in a session that you could just ask your question and get the information you're looking for? If so, then this is the session for you. Our small panel will discuss the topics and situations that concern you the most. Enjoy this high-spirited, often humorous, and informative edutainment panel with some of the top thought leaders I found at breakfast this morning. You drive the content, and we'll make up plausible and often correct answers.

Learning Objectives

- Examine the skills and knowledge domains needed in the future
- Understand the state of the market and what employers are looking for
- Discuss how traditional project roles will change in Product=centric Agile DevOps

The BA Growth Loop: 10 Habits That Separate Average Analysts from Exceptional Ones

Obeid Raheel
SSM, CSM, CSPO, Business Analyst, NCSBN

What makes exceptional Business Analysts stand out? It's rarely years of experience alone, it's the habits they develop throughout their careers. Every project presents an opportunity to learn, yet many Business Analysts move from one project to the next without intentionally reflecting on what worked, what didn't, and how they can improve. Over time, this can lead to years of experience without meaningful growth. In this interactive and practical session, you'll discover The BA Growth Loop, a simple framework built around ten habits that high-performing Business Analysts consistently practice to accelerate their professional development. Drawing from nearly 15 years of real-world experience, this session focuses on practical techniques that can be applied immediately, regardless of your industry or level of experience. Attendees will learn how to: • Turn every project into a learning opportunity. • Identify strengths, blind spots, and areas for improvement. • Gather and apply meaningful feedback from stakeholders and project teams. • Build a personal toolkit of reusable techniques, templates, and lessons learned. • Develop habits that strengthen communication, stakeholder relationships, facilitation, and business analysis skills over time. Whether you're a new Business Analyst or a seasoned professional, you'll leave with a practical roadmap for continuous improvement and a set of habits that will help you become a more confident, effective, and valuable Business Analyst one project at a time.

Workshop Descriptions

Wednesday, October 7
9:00am - 3:00pm

BEING A SUCCESSFUL CHANGE AGENT – BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER - ENGAGING OTHERS TO BUILD POSITIVE CHANGE

Jamie Champagne
CBAP, PMP, Champagne Collaborations

Change rarely fails because of tasks; it fails because of people. This interactive workshop focuses on building deliberate engagement strategies before, during, and after change initiatives. Learn practical techniques to manage resistance, navigate stakeholder conflict, and foster collaboration. Through real-world exercises, you'll strengthen your ability to lead people through change and deliver sustainable, value-driven outcomes.

Learning Objectives

- Apply practical techniques to manage resistance, conflict, and stakeholder dynamics effectively
- Develop a structured engagement strategy to support stakeholders before, during, and after change initiatives
- Strengthen communication and facilitation skills to drive sustainable, value-focused change outcomes

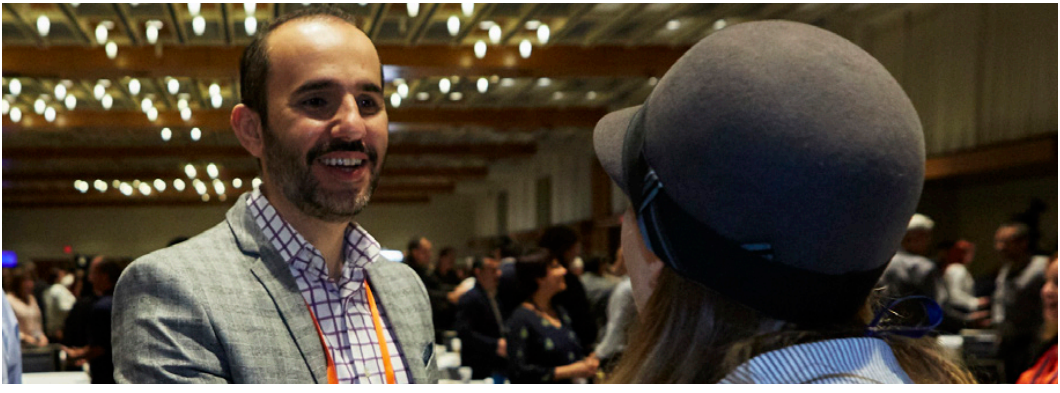
REMAIN IRREPLACEABLE: MASTER THE HUMAN SKILLS TO LEAD IN AN AI-POWERED FUTURE

Hans Eckman
Research Fellow, Info-Tech Research Group / Eckman Guides

The rise of Agentic AI and hyper-automation is the next revolution, automating tasks, accelerating service delivery, and reshaping how we define success. But even as technology takes on more of the routine, the most valuable organizational skills remain deeply human. Future-ready thought leaders will stand out not by competing with AI, but by mastering the capabilities that machines can't replicate and partnering with AI on low-value/high effort activities. *laptop required for this session

Learning Objectives

- Exercise Empathy and Ethical Judgment: Understand stakeholder needs, anticipate potential unintended consequences, and make informed, nuanced decisions grounded in ethics, equity, and the impact on your organization's vision and goals.
- Think Strategically and Critically: Elevate from managing tasks to shaping vision. Develop the ability to connect AI capabilities to business outcomes and navigate ambiguity in ways algorithms cannot.
- Communicate with Influence: Translate complex AI-driven insights into compelling stories that inspire action, gain buy-in, and bridge the gap between technical and business worlds.



Workshop Descriptions

Wednesday, October 7
9:00am - 3:00pm

SMART PLANNING WITH AI: A FULL-DAY INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP FOR PROJECT MANAGERS AND BUSINESS ANALYSTS

Phil Barth
PMP, CEO, Great Things Happen LLC

This full-day, hands-on workshop teaches project managers and business analysts how to use generative AI to improve planning, prioritize effectively, and stay focused when priorities shift. Led by Phil Barth, the session delivers practical strategies and real-time tools to break down goals, streamline communication, and boost productivity. Attendees will leave with AI-powered systems they can apply immediately to real projects.

Learning Objectives

- Leverage AI to Enhance Project Planning and Prioritization
- Use AI to Stay Focused and Flexible When Priorities Shift
- Integrate AI for Communication, Documentation, and Stakeholder Alignment

THE PROJECT CONNECTION: FROM REQUEST TO REQUIREMENTS

Jennifer Battan
CSM, CSPO, CBAP®, Founder, Spark Collaborative

Struggling to bridge the gap between high-level ideas and fully defined requirements? Wrestled with the right level of detail for your documentation? In this simulation we'll take a request from initial spark through the requirements process—writing user stories, stakeholder requirements, functional requirements, and acceptance criteria. We'll cover the essential supporting documentation that helps your team deliver real value. You'll connect the dots and bring clarity to complex requests.

Learning Objectives

- Bridge the Gap Between Vision and Delivery: Discover strategies to effectively translate abstract concepts into detailed, practical requirements that drive successful project outcomes.
- Apply Practical Tools for Complex Scenarios: Develop hands-on skills and techniques for tackling even the most challenging or ambiguous requests, ensuring your projects stay on track.
- Understand the Journey of Requirements: Learn how to take an idea from its initial inception through the entire requirements lifecycle, transforming high-level requests into actionable deliverables.

2026 SPONSOR

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PMO Partners is a niche staffing firm based out of Massachusetts, with 20 years of experience in the recruitment and management of Project Management professionals. Our clients know that as experts in PM recruiting, we can find the right candidate for them for their projects, reducing wasted time, limiting frustration, and mitigating the risk of costly project delays. Due to the network we've nurtured thru 20 years of dedication to the project management community, we have access to a greater talent pool than other staffing firms that are not PM-focused. Our reputation in this space has resulted in greater loyalty and reliability with the project managers we have partnered with.

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IIBA Chicagoland Chapter

The Chicago Chapter of the International Institute of Business Analysis has been serving the Chicagoland area for over 10 years with Chapter programs and activities, career development, mentoring, and other professional support services. All are welcome at our Chapter meetings which are held the first Wednesday of most months. Please visit our Chapter web site at www. chicago.iiba.org to see more.

IIBA Southeast Wisconsin Chapter

The mission of the IIBA Southeast WI Chapter is to support the business analysis community throughout Wisconsin . We do this in two ways:
* By growing the network of people who are doing business analysis
* By strengthening or expanding the industry standard toolkit of Business Analysts

IIBA West Michigan Chapter

For more information about IIBA West Michigan, please click this link: Https:// westmichigan.iiba.org

2026/2027 CONFERENCES

PROJECT SUMMIT BUSINESS ANALYST WORLD

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