



# Get Your PMO Ready for AI-Enabled Project Management

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# Introduction

The rapid rise of artificial intelligence across organisations is undeniable. With advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) transforming organisations and professions, project management will not be exempt from AI-enabled work practices. To future-proof your Project Management Office (PMO), it is imperative to consider and prepare for AI enablement.

AI integration can bring numerous benefits to the PMO, including efficiency, accuracy, and enhanced decision-making capabilities. As with any major change, particularly where technology is involved, it's critical to take people, processes and platforms into consideration.

This guide will help you understand what AI enablement could do for you, your key stakeholders, and your project teams, and provide the necessary steps to successfully incorporate AI into your PMO.

# Why AI enablement is inevitable

Gartner's prediction that 80% of project management tasks will be eliminated by 2030 might seem daunting. However, the reality is more nuanced. AI isn't about replacing project managers; it's about augmenting their capabilities by automating mundane tasks, better managing risks and accessing useful information and data.

At the same time, the definition of project success is evolving, moving beyond the traditional iron triangle (cost, time, scope) to encompass value delivery, stakeholder satisfaction, and overall consensus on the project's worth. AI is a critical enabler for

project managers to achieve this new definition of success by freeing up time to focus on delivery, stakeholder management and strategic alignment of projects.

Already, AI can help streamline and automate processes, predict project outcomes with greater accuracy, identify potential risks early, and offer insights from lessons learned that were previously either unattainable or at best, difficult to find.

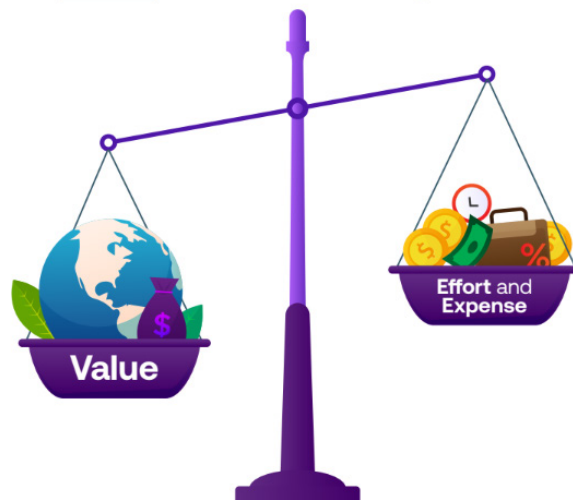
Embracing AI is not just an option; it is a competitive necessity for organisations wanting to stay ahead in the project management field.

## Project Success

[proj-ekt suhk-ses]

The consensus view across intended beneficiaries, other stakeholders and project participants that a project was perceived to have:

*Delivered **value** that was worth the **effort** and **expense**.*



Source: Project Management Institute

# Getting ready for an AI-enabled PMO

It's all well and good to sound the warning bell regarding the need to prepare for AI enablement but many organisations are struggling to understand where and how they could (or should) start incorporating AI into their work practices.

Like any new capability, there is likely to be initial caution and some confusion about

where to start, but the very nature of AI indicates the adoption curve will accelerate rapidly. Now is the time to start preparing for and trialling AI to ensure your PMO is future ready.

The following steps outline a structured approach to start your PMO's AI journey:

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## 1. Define your objectives

Understand why you want to implement AI and what you aim to achieve. This will guide your AI strategy and ensure alignment with your PMO's goals. Consider specific problems you want AI to solve, such as automating repetitive tasks, enhancing data analysis and reporting, or improving decision-making processes.

**Recommendation:** Spend time understanding your organisation's approach to AI and ensure your approach and objectives for the PMO align with this. Where possible, utilise experience from other areas and involve subject matter experts to help articulate the PMO's AI objectives.

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## 2. Assess Your Current Capabilities

Evaluate your existing tools, processes, and skills to determine what needs to be upgraded or enhanced for AI integration. Assess whether your current project management software supports AI functionalities or if new tools are required. Identify skill gaps in your team and plan for necessary training or hiring to build AI competencies.

**Recommendation:** Rather than making AI a 'special project' or assigning it to one person to investigate, start by involving all team members early, encourage them to learn about AI, share and build knowledge with each other and workshop where it could work most effectively in the PMO. This will increase capability across the team as you go through discovery, help to calm any objections or concerns, and set the team up well for the start of the AI journey.

### 3. Develop a data strategy

Ensure you have high-quality, clean data for AI to work with effectively. This involves data collection, cleaning, and management practices. Establish data governance policies to maintain data integrity and ensure compliance with privacy regulations. Determine how data will be collected, stored, and accessed to support AI initiatives. As with any use of data, the better the quality, the better and more reliable the outcomes.

**Insight:** Many organisations are consolidating into one main technology ecosystem (e.g. Microsoft 365) to support effective data and information management for organisational AI enablement. Read more on the importance of data management for your AI strategy in the section below.

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### 4. Focus on security

If you use the right AI tools, such as Microsoft Copilot, your data is secure and is not sent out of your environment. However, you also need to consider your users ability to view documents and data. AI will generally respect your existing security and access controls. If you do not have any AI will make it easier for users to find documents they should not. AI does not introduce security issues but brings your existing ones to the surface.

**Recommendation:** You can expect your security team to be interested in this. Start the discussion early. But do not get held back while they potentially address years of security neglect. You can still begin small AI projects in a controlled manner.

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### 5. Pilot AI projects

Start with small pilot projects to test AI capabilities and gather insights before a full-scale rollout. Select projects with clear objectives and measurable outcomes to demonstrate AI's value. Use pilot results to refine your AI strategy and address any challenges before wider implementation.

**Recommendation:** Involve your team in suggesting, prioritising, delivering and reviewing the pilot projects to encourage AI ownership, learning and experience from the beginning of your journey.

## 6. Select the right AI tools

Choose AI tools that fit your PMO's needs. Consider whether you need generative AI, machine learning, or other types of AI based on your specific use cases. Evaluate different AI vendors and solutions, and pilot them to understand their capabilities and limitations. Ensure the chosen tools integrate well with your existing project management systems. Consult with your technology team who should be able to guide you on tool preferences.

**Insight:** If you are unsure about the type of AI that will best suit your PMO's needs, you can find out more [here](#).

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## 7. Focus on change management

Develop a plan to manage the transition to AI, including stakeholder buy-in and advocacy, training and change management programs, and communication strategies for your team. Address potential resistance by highlighting the benefits of AI and involving stakeholders and team members in the planning process. Provide continuous support and resources to help your team adapt to new AI tools and workflows and communicate the positive impacts achieved with the assistance of AI.

**Insight:** In a recent [Forbes article](#), the CEO of Ice Innovations, a company at the forefront of integrating advanced AI and machine learning into its operations, dispelled myths about the future of AI and work. They predict AI will create more jobs than it replaces and encourage an approach of 'human and AI collaboration' freeing workers from repetitive, time-consuming tasks to focus on value-adding and innovative work. AI will soon be part of most people's roles, so being given the chance to embrace this change is setting people up for future career success.

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# Effective data management in an AI-driven world

Effective data management is crucial for AI enablement. Organising your PMO and project data makes AI more efficient and trustworthy for project and portfolio managers as well as key stakeholders. Areas to focus on:

**Data quality:** Ensure that your data is accurate, complete, and up-to-date.

**Data accessibility:** Make sure that data is easily accessible to AI tools and relevant stakeholders. And likewise make sure that users can only see what they are meant to.

**Data storage protocols:** Spend time determining where and how data will be stored, implement consistent naming and filing protocols, and reinforce these across every team to maximise AI effectiveness.

**Data security:** Use the right AI tools which by default protect your data from breaches and ensure compliance with data privacy regulations. Beware of internal data access hierarchies and ensure your access protocols enforce these.

**Data integration:** Map and combine data from different sources to provide a comprehensive view for AI analysis.

**Historical data:** Maintain historical data for AI to learn from past trends and make accurate predictions.

While most organisations understand data is a major asset, very few invest in managing it well, other than ensuring it is secure. AI driven outcomes can only be as accurate as the information accessed, so spending time organising the PMO's approach to data management will be time well spent.

The advantages of effective data management are wide-reaching and include improved decision-making, enhanced project outcomes, and increased trust in AI-generated insights.

# Preparing your people for AI-enabled project management

There is no doubt AI will impact project management roles and the work delivered by project management teams. There are many upsides to this:

**Enhanced efficiency:** AI can automate repetitive tasks, allowing project managers to focus on more strategic activities.

**Improved decision-making:** AI provides timely, data-driven insights, helping managers make informed and faster decisions.

**Better risk management:** AI can predict potential risks and suggest mitigation strategies.

However, for your people there may be concerns about job displacement and the complexity and trust of AI tools. There is no doubt that AI enablement is an inevitability in project management. Embracing the use and advantages of AI has the potential to benefit everyone in their daily work while keeping their capabilities and careers current.

To prepare your team for AI:

**Provide Training:** Offer training programs to help employees understand and use AI tools effectively.

**Foster a positive mindset:** Communicate the benefits of AI and how it will help the team succeed.

**Encourage exploration:** The more your people experience the benefits of AI for themselves, the more open they will be to incorporating it into their work.

**Reskill and upskill:** Equip your people with new skills to work alongside AI and leverage its capabilities.

**Emphasise data security:** Educate employees on the importance of data security and responsible AI use.

**Share the learnings:** Create forums, interest groups and feedback channels to share the latest experience, developments and use cases for AI.

# What are AI agents?

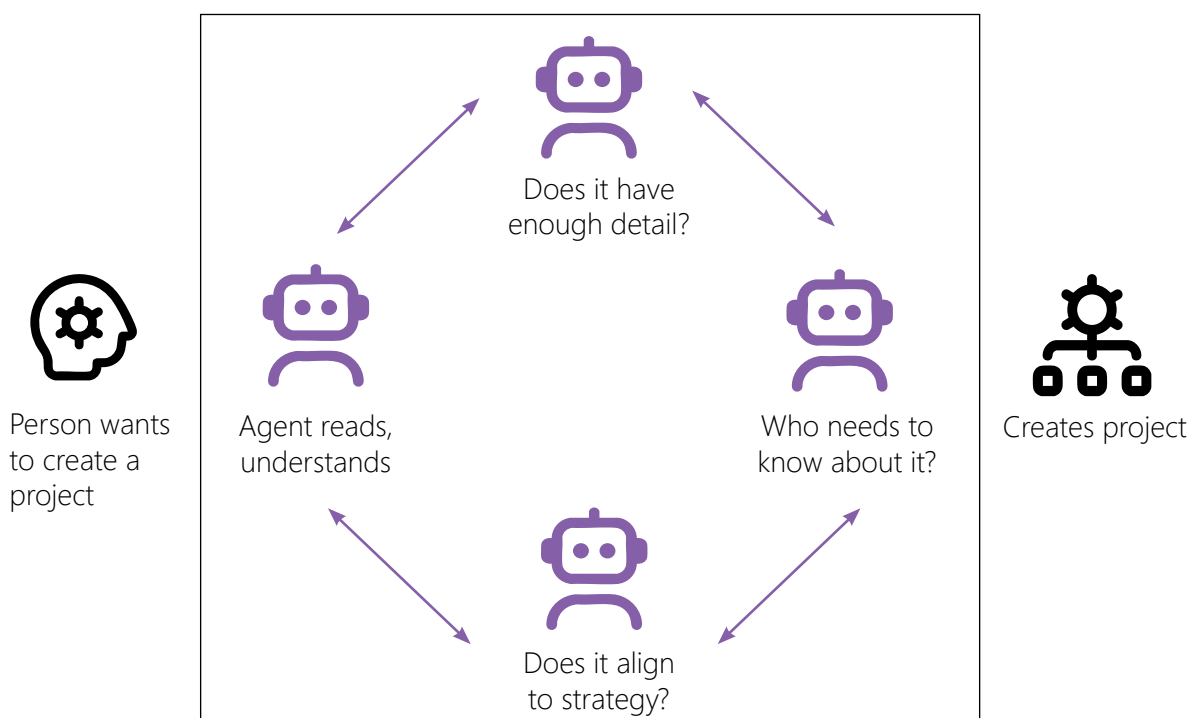
An agent is a powerful, tailored knowledge workflow designed to integrate artificial intelligence and information across processes. It autonomously gathers and processes data from multiple sources, using AI to interpret instructions, reason over the data, and perform tasks such as updating systems, sending emails, or executing specific actions. Unlike traditional workflows or chatbots, which typically lack reasoning capabilities, agents are intelligent entities that add value far beyond simply embedding AI into existing systems. Their ability to collaborate with other agents enables the creation of fully AI-powered workflows.

For example, Microsoft is heavily promoting the use of agents, augmented by the availability of Microsoft Copilot. Copilot serves as the interface through which users engage

with agents. Acting as the front-end to agents, Copilot allows users to communicate their requirements in natural language. Once the request is made, Copilot delegates tasks to the relevant agents to achieve the desired outcome. This seamless interaction makes Copilot a central element in leveraging agent-based systems.

AI agents and Microsoft Copilot represent a transformative shift in workflows. Together, they provide not just automation, but reasoning and decision-making capabilities embedded in processes. To unlock their full potential, organisations must actively embrace the necessary preparations to integrate these tools into their operations, thereby driving innovation and efficiency.

You can find out more about AI Agents [here](#).



# AI enabled PPM platforms

To take advantage of the many benefits available from AI, the PMO needs a modern portfolio and project management (PPM) platform that is AI ready and able to integrate with other enterprise systems and tools to ensure data can be efficiently captured and accessed.

Most modern, cloud-based PPM tools, like [Altus](#), are AI ready but there is a raft of considerations beyond AI that will determine which platform is most suitable for your PMO. It's important to have a clear understanding of your core requirements and deliverables from the platform including considerations like:

**Flexibility:** Are the AI functions fixed and potentially not that useful, or are you provided a platform of AI tools that can be configured to provide for your specific use cases?

**Data security:** Is all data stored in your own tenant, or does it reside in the vendor's cloud?

**Useability:** Is the platform suitable for both your project teams and your managers and leaders? Can the AI be surfaced in existing tools such as Microsoft Teams that are in daily use? If you struggle to gain system usage, you will get limited benefit from AI enablement, and the data and insights available to your key stakeholders will be limited.

**Integration:** Does the platform allow you to integrate with existing project tools and other enterprise systems, like finance or human resources, to give you end-to-end process visibility and automation opportunities?

**Visibility and reporting:** Is one of the main pain points in many PMOs with numerous hours spent finding, chasing and collating information that is already out-of-date. Can you access real-time dashboards and reports giving you visibility and decision-making capability across your organisation?

**Support:** Is there dedicated support and ongoing knowledge transfer for you and your teams as you learn the new platform and to ensure the long-term success of your solution, including AI enablement?

Sensei is happy to work with you to develop your PMO maturity roadmap and discuss the technology platforms that would be best suited to your needs and plans, including the use of AI.

# Conclusion

AI integration in project management is not just about adopting new technologies but also understanding the transformational impact on the PMO and the value it delivers. Preparing your PMO for AI enablement opens it up to opportunities to drive efficiency, improve decision-making, and achieve better project outcomes. AI in project management is inevitable, and we hope this guide provides a starting point to help you navigate this transformation, ensuring that your PMO is ready for the AI-powered future.

Sensei's AI and PPM experts are happy to have an initial discussion with you.

[Get in touch today.](#)



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