



Pulse of the Profession[®] 2023:

Power Skills, Redefining Project Success | 14th Edition



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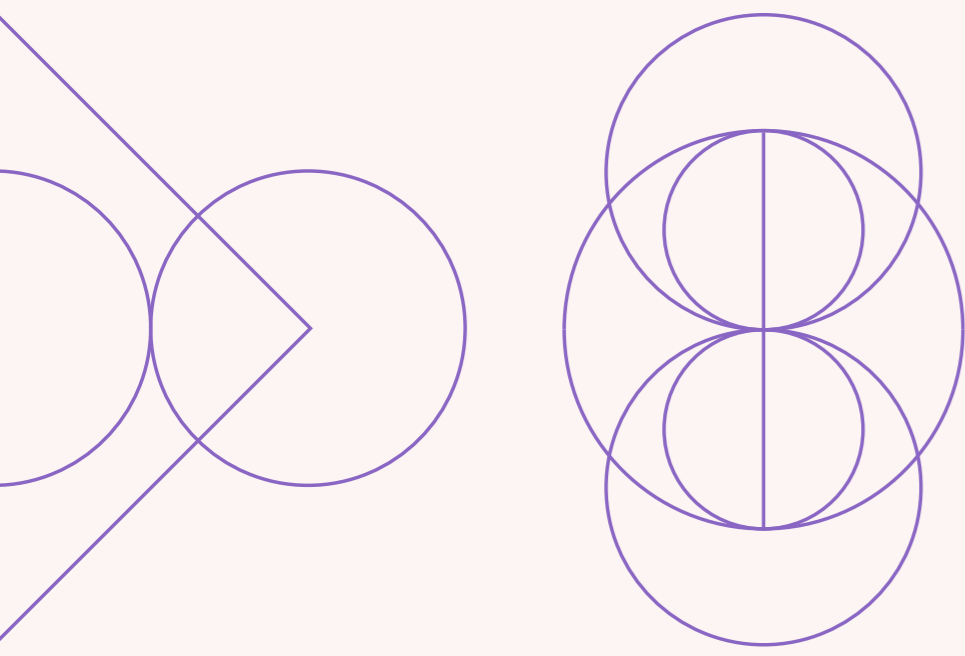
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Foreword



For several years now, PMI has been advocating the importance of power skills – those “soft” or “interpersonal” skills like communication and strategic thinking. Built on top of a solid foundation of technical skills, power skills enable project managers to align their projects to organizational objectives and inspire their teams to work together, solve problems and deliver results that contribute value to the organization and its customers.

We believe in this connection so strongly that we have updated the PMI Talent Triangle® – which represents the ideal skill set for project professionals – to reflect that power skills are a necessity for project managers. When integrated with strong technical skills that stay current with evolving ways of working, power skills help project professionals navigate the rapidly changing business landscape in which we now operate.

The connection is borne out through research. Our *Narrowing the Talent Gap* report, produced in collaboration with PwC, indicates that power skills top the list of the most important capabilities project managers need. And we have seen a number of other organizations echo this emphasis through reports that connect power skills to outcomes.

Our latest *Pulse of the Profession* research was designed to explore the connections between power skills and project success. The results reveal some compelling links. For example, 92% of respondents agree that power skills help them work smarter. And organizations that place a priority on power skills see higher rates of project management maturity, benefits realization management maturity and organizational agility.

Project professionals who hone their abilities in communication, problem-solving, collaborative leadership and strategic thinking will have the most critical power skills to help them fulfill organizational objectives.

The report also identifies opportunities for organizations to capitalize on these connections and drive increased project success and value. Organizations only spend about a quarter of their training budget on power skills, for example, and do not universally assess power skills in project managers or teams during performance evaluations.

When power skills are an organizational priority – communicated clearly by leadership and reinforced through professional development offerings and individual and team assessments – organizations can expect better project performance.

Read on to learn more about these connections and the steps that you and your organization can take to harness the competitive advantage of a strong emphasis on power skills.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pierre Le Manh". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Pierre Le Manh
PMI President and CEO

Introduction

Power skills — also known as interpersonal skills or soft skills such as communication, problem-solving and collaborative leadership — are proving essential for project professionals. They are at the heart of leading successful teams, engaging stakeholders and conquering challenges to the project plan. Technical skills enable project managers to chart the path from the start of a project to close, but power skills are how they bring the entire team along for the journey to execute a common vision.

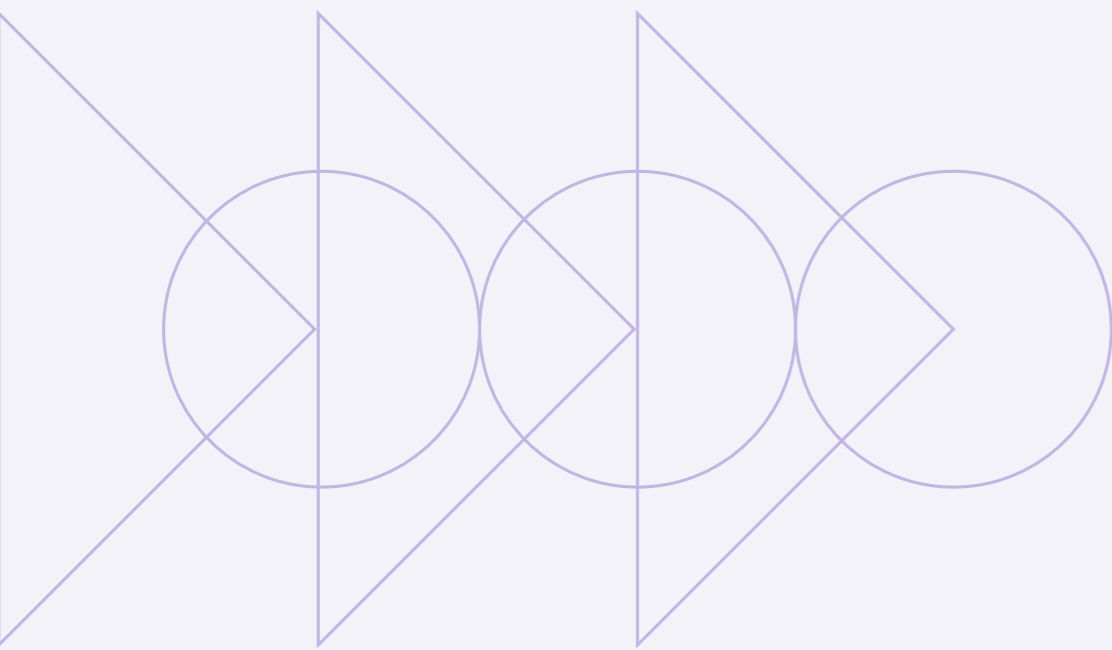
Technology-based project tools have begun to augment technical skills like reporting, scheduling and risk management — allowing project managers to focus on outcomes and elevating their role to one that drives value for the organization through collaboration, influence and strategic thinking. Power skills are the key to that higher level — in fact, nine out of 10 project managers say that power skills help them work smarter, according to our research.

For more than five decades, Project Management Institute (PMI), the leading authority for project management, has been committed to empowering project professionals to develop a robust set of skills to help them drive positive change in their organizations and communities. PMI's *Pulse of the Profession*® 2023 report demonstrates how putting a priority on power skills helps project professionals and organizations redefine project success in our fast-pivoting world.

The Annual PMI Global Survey on Project Management results show that organizations that place a higher value on power skills tend to perform significantly better on multiple key drivers of success such as benefits realization management (BRM) maturity, organizational agility and project management maturity — indicating that power skills work in concert with technical skills to bring new definition to an organization's project success.

To further examine the correlation between power skills and project success, PMI's *Pulse of the Profession*® 2023 report discusses:

- How power skills are critical to project value delivery and success.
- What the project management community considers the most critical power skills.
- Why cost and perceived value are barriers to prioritizing power skills development.
- How organizations continue to struggle with assessing power skills in individuals and teams, and what they can do to turn this around.



What Are Power Skills?

PMI defines power skills as abilities and behaviors that facilitate working with others and help project professionals to succeed in the workplace. Some individuals and other organizations also refer to them as “soft skills” or “interpersonal skills.”

Calling these abilities and behaviors “power skills” signifies the value they bring to project professionals, teams and organizations.



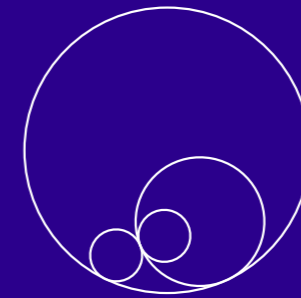
“When I first started my career, I wanted to understand how to deliver a project on time, within scope and on budget. The more that I learned about project management and the more I developed my skills, the more I realized that the impact you can have when you combine both those technical and business skills with power skills is much broader.”

Karen Dove, PMIEF Board of Directors, Ottawa, Canada

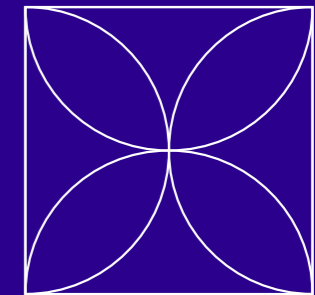
Through this new lens, power skills become critical in any professional’s toolkit.

In our survey, project professionals rated communication, problem-solving, collaborative leadership and strategic thinking as the most critical power skills in helping them fulfill organizational objectives. For the full list of power skills, see [About This Research](#).

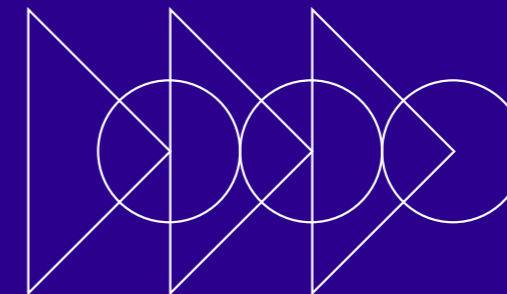
Top Four Power Skills That Help Project Professionals Fulfill Organizational Objectives



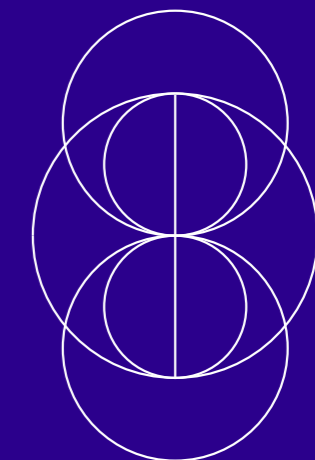
Communication



Problem-solving



Collaborative Leadership



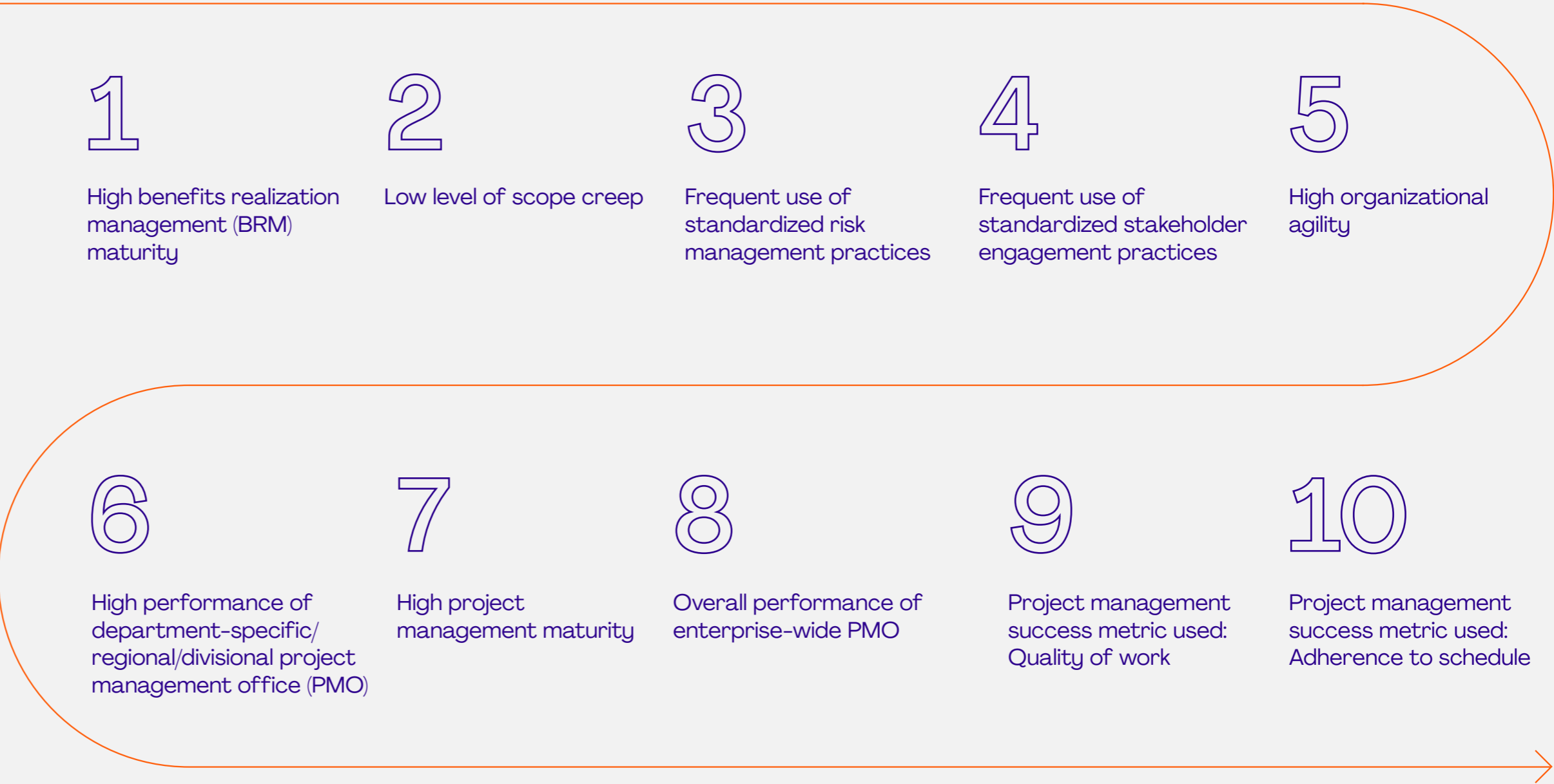
Strategic Thinking

The Relationship Between Power Skills and Project Success

To understand what drives project value delivery and success, PMI analyzed data from nearly 3,500 project professionals who responded to the Annual PMI Global Survey on Project Management (see About This Research). Benefits realization management (BRM) maturity, organizational agility and project management maturity emerged as top drivers of project success, alongside other factors (see Figure 1).

While many of these factors are often associated with project and organizational success, our research now connects these key drivers to power skills as well and shows that these factors are significantly more prevalent in organizations that prioritize power skills than those that do not (see Figure 2).

Figure 1: Key Drivers of Project Success



Note: Robust regression modeling is used to identify the factors that contribute most heavily to project success, based on respondent data. “Percent of projects that successfully met business goals” is the dependent variable (the measure of project success). “Drivers” of success are the independent variables from the survey ranked according to their relative contributions to the dependent variable.

Source: Annual PMI Global Survey on Project Management

Figure 2: Benefits Realization Management (BRM) Maturity, Project Management Maturity and Organizational Agility: Organizations That Prioritize Power Skills Versus Those That Do Not

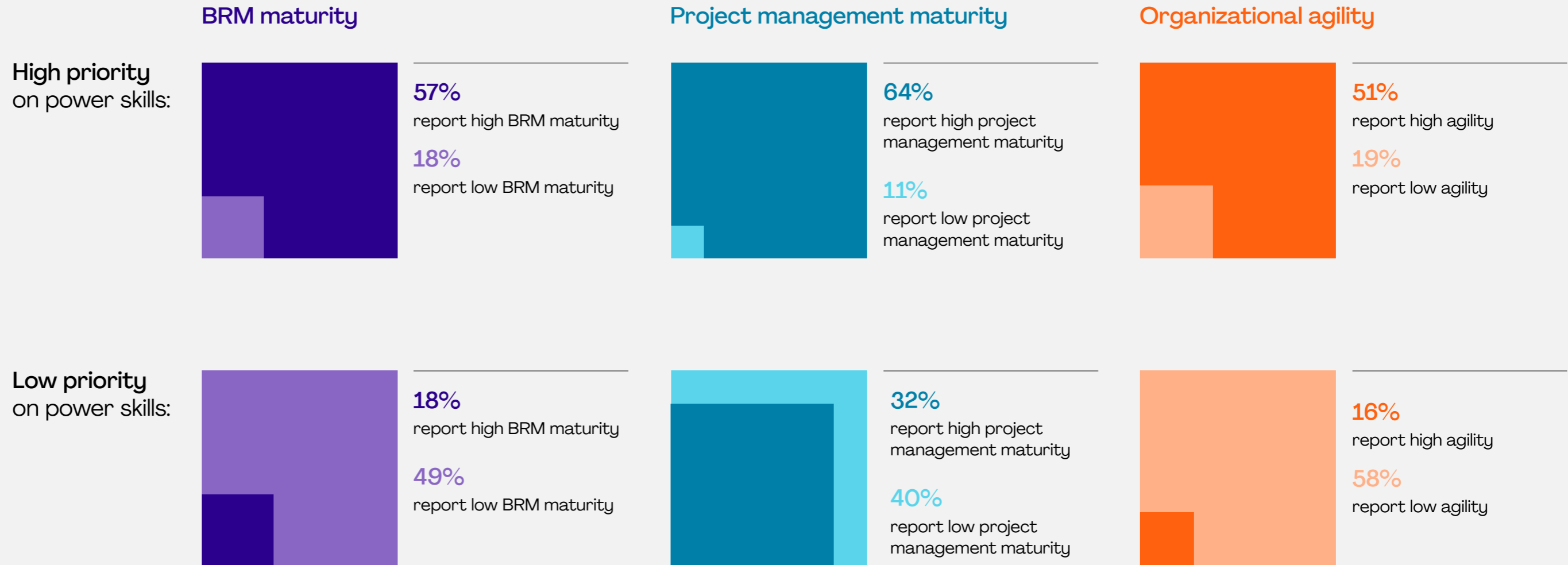
What Are BRM Maturity, PM Maturity and Organizational Agility?

Benefits realization management (BRM) is a set of processes and practices for identifying benefits and aligning them with formal strategy, ensuring benefits are realized as project implementation progresses and finishes and confirming benefits are sustainable — and sustained — after project implementation is complete.

Project management maturity is the extent to which the organization consistently uses formal methodology, aligns projects/ programs with organizational strategy, tracks benefits and focuses on continuous improvement.

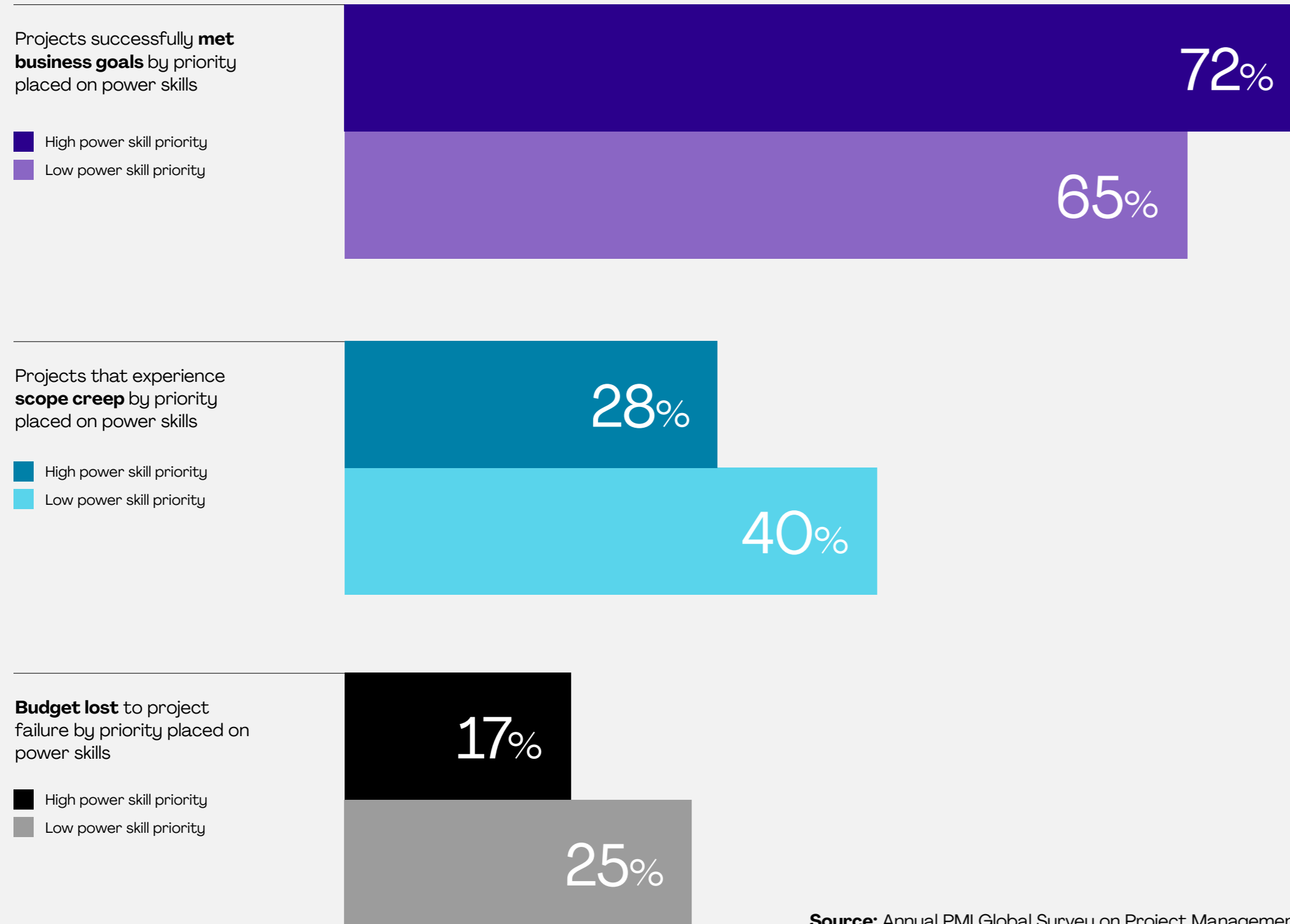
Organizational agility is the ability to adapt rapidly in response to changes in the market or other external factors. Organizational agility includes making use of all approaches to project delivery — traditional, agile and hybrid.

These definitions were provided to respondents in the PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management.



Source: Annual PMI Global Survey on Project Management

Figure 3: Power Skills and Project Success: Organizations That Prioritize Power Skills Versus Those That Do Not



Source: Annual PMI Global Survey on Project Management

Our research further indicates that organizations that place a high priority on power skills are significantly better at completing projects that meet business goals. They also experience significantly less scope creep, and even though they do not fare better at avoiding outright project failures, these organizations experience significantly less budget loss if the project fails (see Figure 3).

Prioritizing power skills pays off. Wasted investment due to poor project performance averages 4.8% for organizations that put a high priority on power skills, while it is nearly double — 8.8% — for those that put a low priority on power skills. The global average for wasted investment due to poor project performance is 5.2%.

From a regional perspective, project professionals report their organizations placing a higher priority on power skills in sub-Saharan Africa (67%) and India (64%), and report a lower priority on power skills in Asia Pacific (27%) and North America (24%). The industries most likely to place a high priority on power skills are information

technology, manufacturing, energy and telecommunications. Project professionals who work in government, healthcare and training/education are most likely to report that their organizations place a lower priority on power skills. Project professionals from the construction, consulting, financial services, automotive and retail industries report a mixed prioritization of power skills, with an almost equal number of respondents from organizations that place either a high or low priority on power skills.

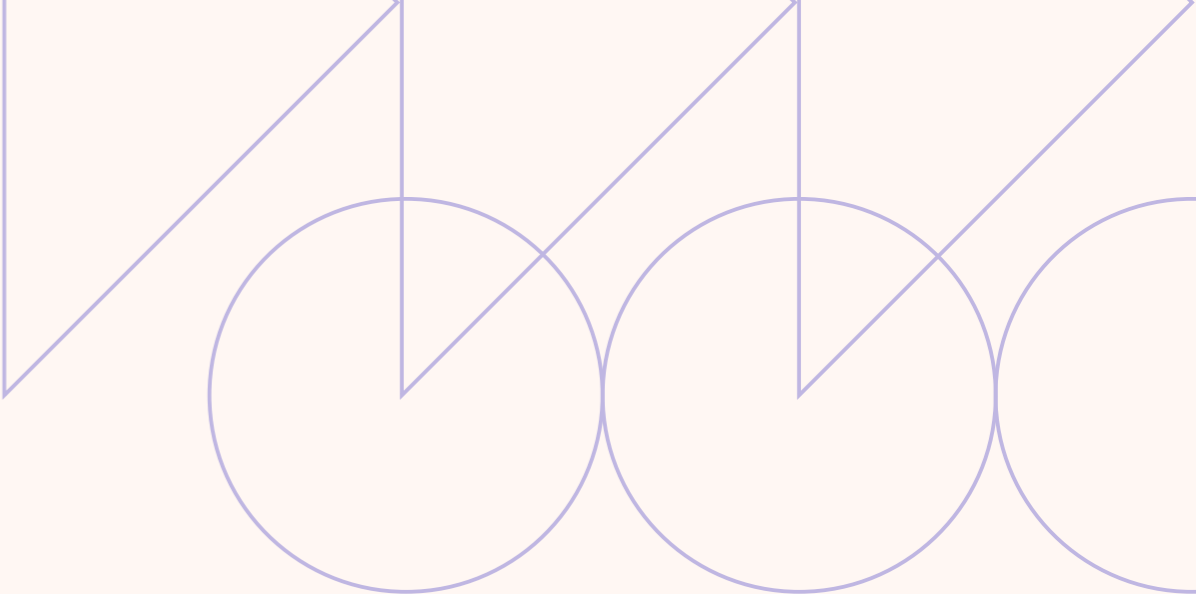
An emphasis on power skills, in concert with strong technical skills, boosts organizations' project management capabilities, leading to better performance on individual projects and project portfolios. Organizations leaning on power skills like problem-solving and strategic thinking can expect to see higher organizational agility and project management maturity to help them face complex project challenges, market changes, technological adoptions and socioeconomic pressures.

KEY INSIGHT



Organizations that do not place a high priority on power skills are at a higher risk for projects that do not meet business goals, that experience scope creep and that lose more budget if the project fails.

Consensus Across Project Management Community on Top Power Skills



Nine in 10 respondents to the PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management agree that power skills help them work smarter, while eight in 10 also agree that their organization places value on all employees possessing power skills.

When it comes to the power skills most critical to helping project managers fulfill organizational objectives, communication, problem-solving, collaborative leadership and strategic thinking ranked highest among our global sample, regardless of region, industry, years of experience, project management leadership level or PMP® status (see Figure 4). Project management approach — agile, traditional or hybrid — also did not impact these results.

These findings closely mirror those from recent research by PMI and PwC, which identified relationship building, collaborative leadership, strategic thinking and creative problem-solving as the top capabilities successful project managers need. On the other hand, empathy, discipline, for-purpose orientation and future-focused orientation rank consistently at the bottom.



“Technical skills are important, but so is understanding interactions between people. At the end of the day, projects are done by humans. We need to appreciate that. We need to work on that.”

Luis Revilla, Chief People Officer, Softtek, Monterrey, Mexico

“The important thing is people skills: engagement, seeing the bigger picture, understanding strategy and aligning with all of that. They are the things that really matter.”

Paul Jones, Europe P&PM Community Lead, Fujitsu, London, United Kingdom

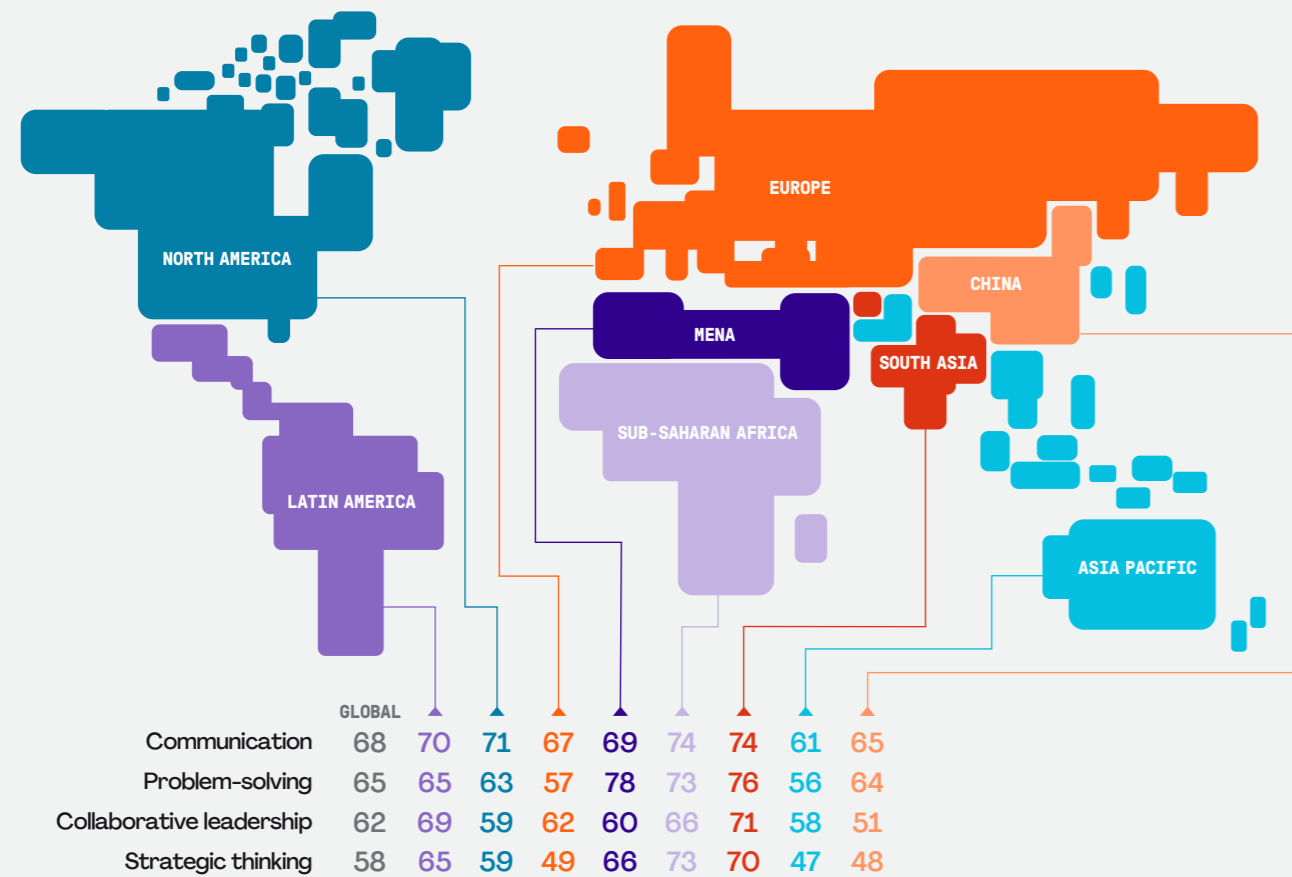
KEY INSIGHT

Communication, problem-solving, collaborative leadership and strategic thinking are consistently ranked as most important in helping project professionals fulfill organizational objectives.

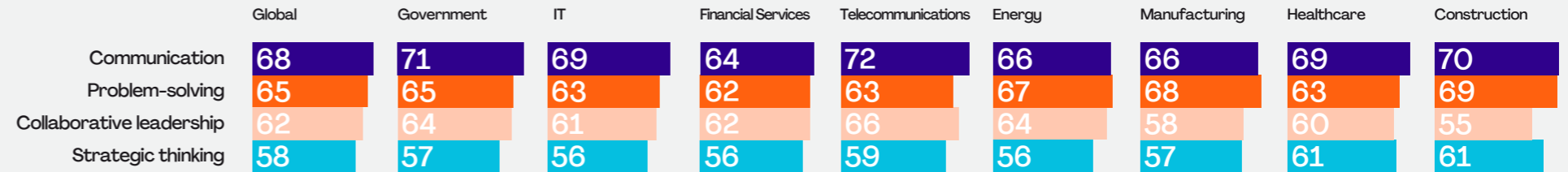
Figure 4: Individual Power Skills Ranked per Region; Industry; Years in Project, Program and Portfolio Management (PPPM); and Project Management Professional (PMP)® Certification

Percentage of respondents who indicate each power skill is critical to helping them fulfill organizational objectives. For the full data, see About This Research.

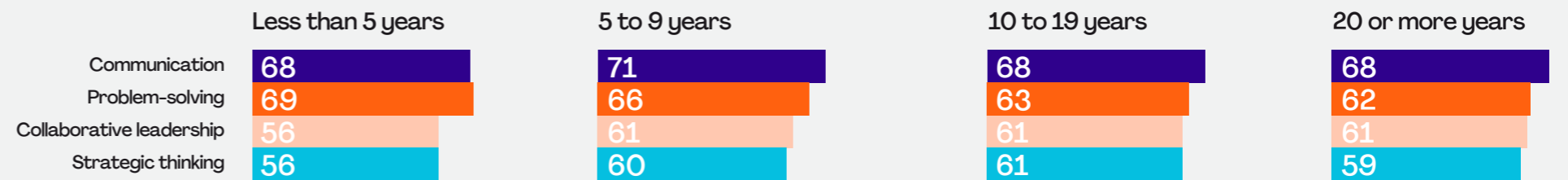
Most critical power skills by region



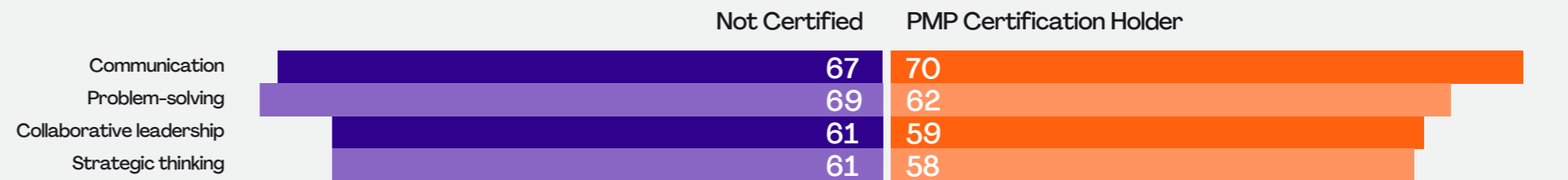
Most critical power skills by industry



Most critical power skills by years worked in PPPM

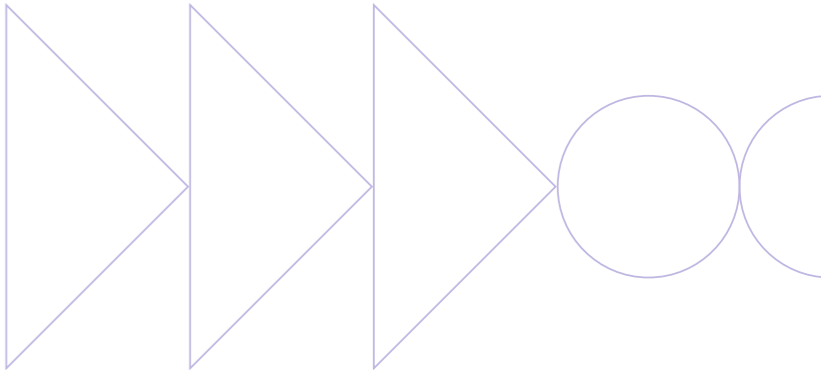


Most critical power skills by PMP® status



Source: Annual PMI Global Survey on Project Management

Professional Development Time and Budget: Power Skills Versus Technical Skills



Despite the strong connections between power skills and project success drivers, we discovered that many organizations still do not prioritize efforts to help employees develop them.

As part of our research, we also surveyed talent decision makers who focus on talent acquisition and development in their organizations. These talent decision makers report spending only one-quarter of their annual budget (25%) for training and development on power skills, whereas they spend more than half (51%) on technical skills like agile practices or proficiency in collaboration tools.

This breakdown is confirmed by project professionals, who report spending almost half (46%) of their professional development hours on technical skills, and less than one-third (29%) on power skills (see Figure 5). Further, nearly half (47%) of project professionals say their organization did not discuss power skills when they were hired or promoted into their role, highlighting that power skills are not being discussed in job descriptions and career growth as widely as they could be.

Project leaders and talent development professionals can work together to place more emphasis on training and

development for power skills to align with competencies like those outlined in *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide)* and the Project Management Professional (PMP)® certification, which are based on extensive research and analysis of the practices of project managers and reflect a stronger emphasis on power skills. For example, the PMP certification examination includes 42% of questions from the “People” domain. The need for balance when building skills is also represented in the PMI Talent Triangle® with three sides that represent the broad skill set project managers need: Power Skills, Ways of Working and Business Acumen.

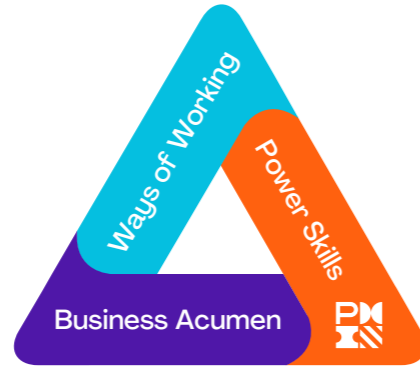
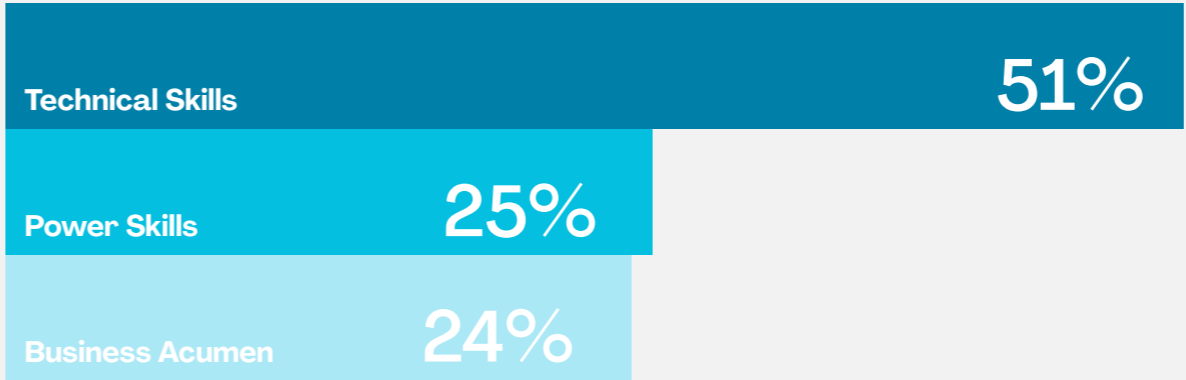


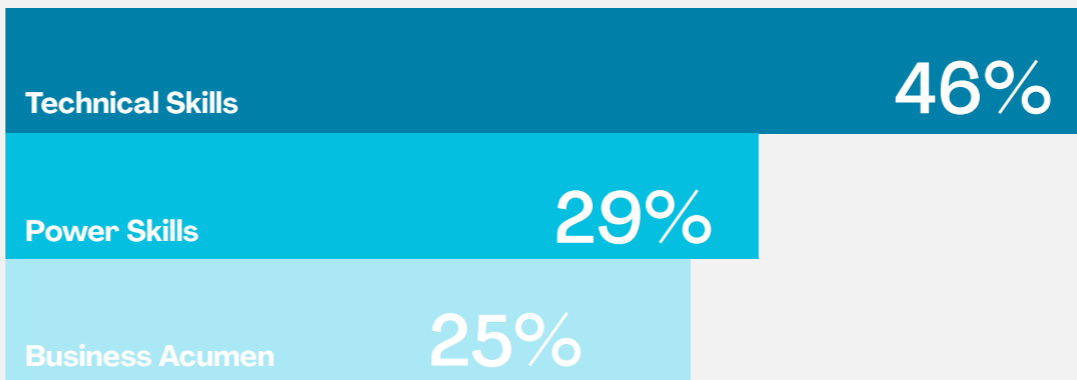
Figure 5: Training Budget and Time: Technical Skills Versus Power Skills

Training budget spent, according to talent decision makers



Source: PMI Global Survey on Talent Development

Training hours spent, according to project professionals



Source: Annual PMI Global Survey on Project Management

Who Are Talent Decision Makers?

Talent decision makers are recruiters and professional development specialists whose primary responsibilities are talent acquisition and professional development of nonexecutive employees within their organization. As part of PMI’s *Pulse of the Profession® 2023* research, these talent professionals shared their insights on their organizations’ commitments to recruiting, training and development of nonexecutive project professionals, especially regarding power skills. A global, cross-industry sample of 1,059 talent decision makers responded to the PMI Global Survey on Talent Development in May 2022.

Key Barriers to Prioritizing Power Skills Training and Development

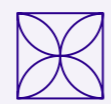
If power skills are so important, why do organizations not invest more heavily in them? According to our talent decision makers, the main barrier is cost, followed closely by a lack of perceived value. Even for organizations that prioritize power skills training and development, perception of value is no less of a challenge (see Figure 6).

From a regional perspective, talent decision makers report lack of perceived value of power skills development most often in Europe (57%) and sub-Saharan Africa (54%), and least often in Asia Pacific (28%) and the Middle East/North Africa (35%). By industry, the lack of perceived value is highest in energy (58%) and manufacturing (57%), and lowest in construction (34%) and financial services (45%).

Our research reveals steps that organizations can take to improve this perception problem. Organizations that start the conversation during the recruitment process by emphasizing

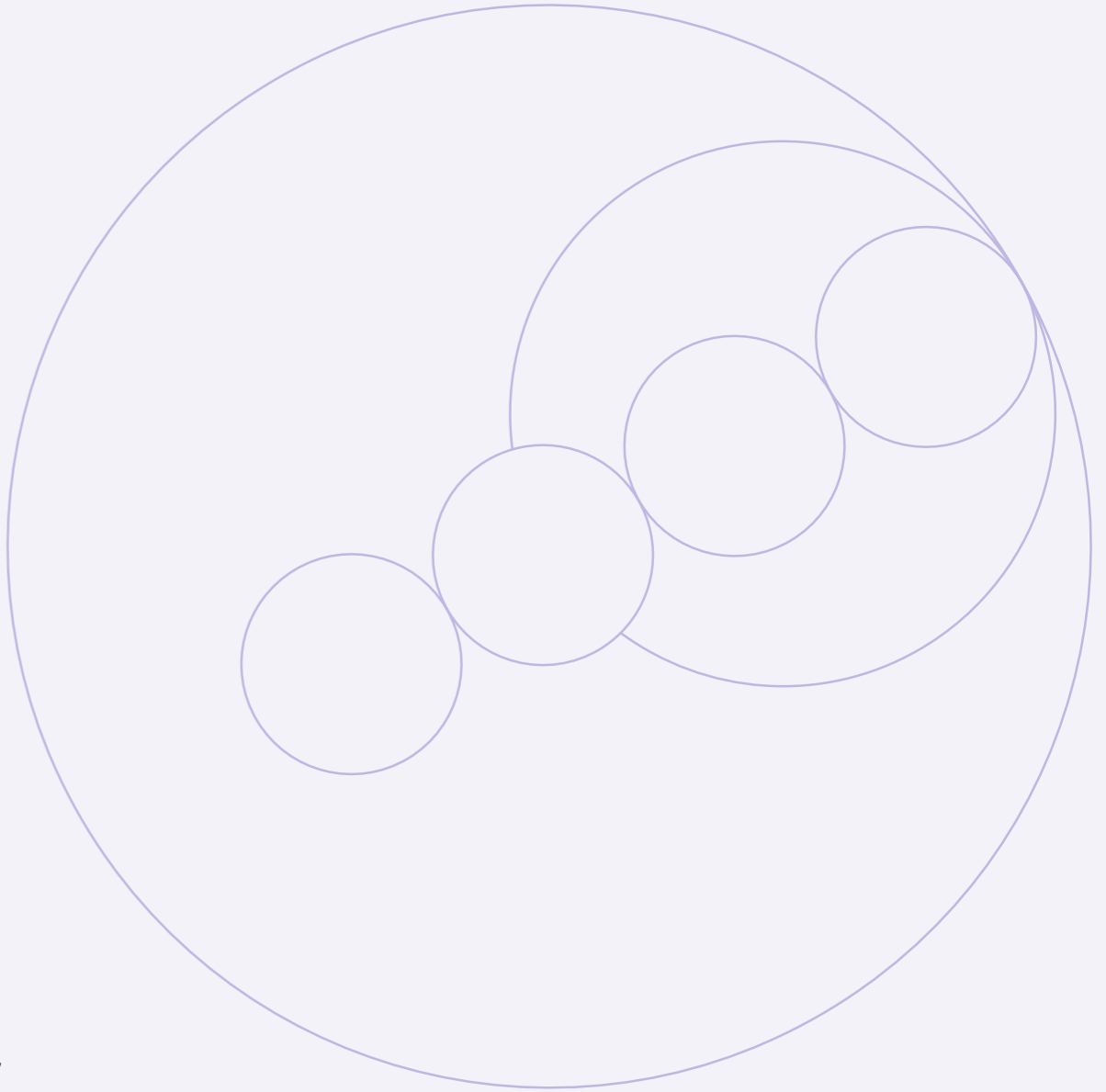
power skills training as a benefit of employment are much less likely to report perceived value as a barrier to prioritizing training. The same holds true for organizations that incorporate power skills into individual employee development plans and performance goals. Thus, those who weave power skills into regular touchpoints with employees are less likely to see the lack of perceived value as a barrier (see Figure 7), according to talent decision makers.

Project leaders and talent decision makers can also collaborate to ensure that professional development and training opportunities for project professionals provide ample and effective opportunities to learn and practice power skills. These opportunities – which can include formal coursework, online learning, mentoring relationships and more (see Appendix: Building Power Skills in Project Teams) – should be reinforced with project professionals and built into individual development plans.



My CFO... ask[s] about the return on investment [of] power skills. It is very complicated. I understand the concept of ROI, but we need to recognize that humans are of a very different nature than resources. I can measure resources, but for humans, we need to have faith in them.

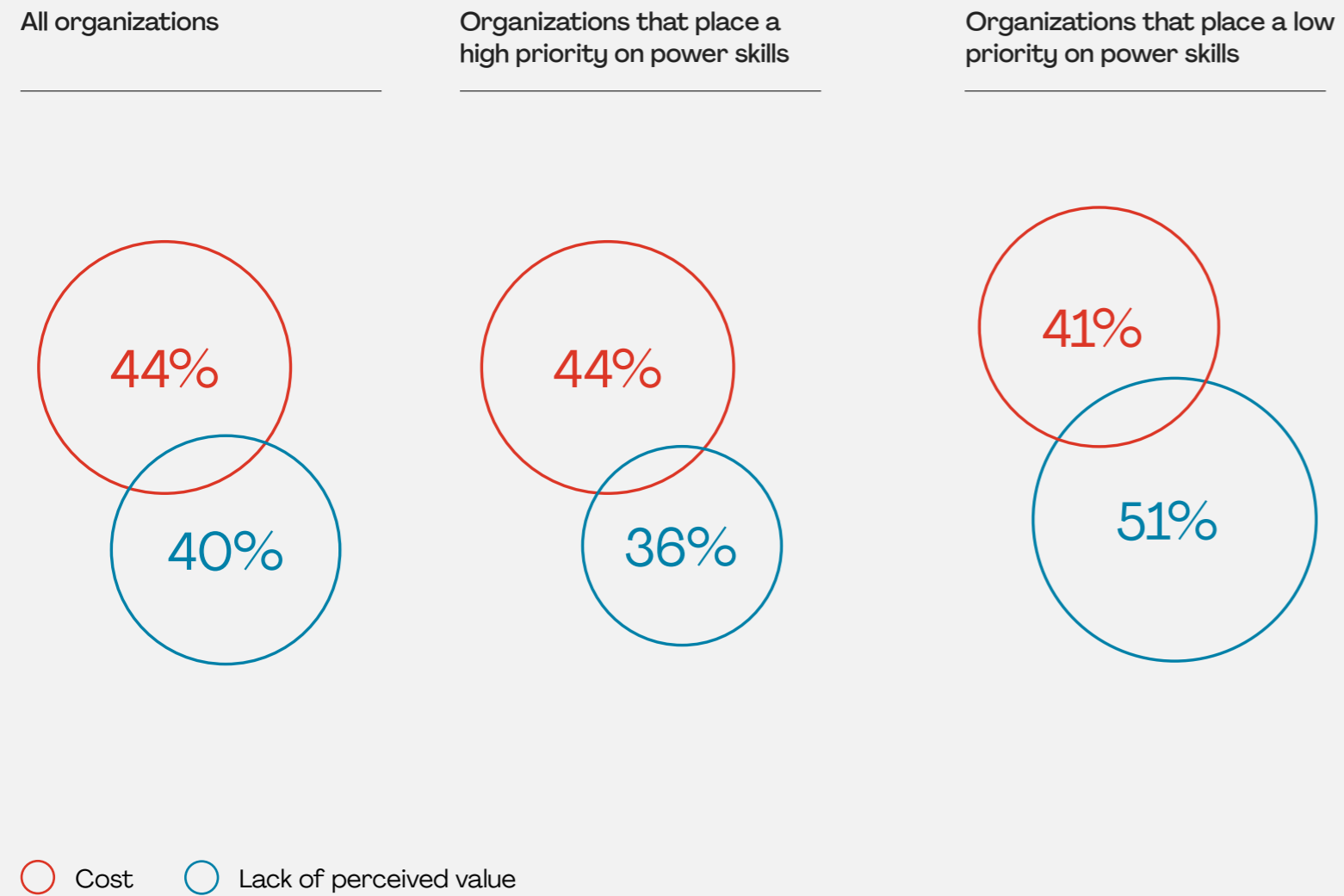
Luis Revilla, Chief People Officer, Softtek, Monterey, Mexico



KEY INSIGHT

Organizations that consistently reinforce the importance of power skills in frequent touch points with employees are much more likely to see the value of power skills training and development.

Figure 6: Barriers to Prioritizing Development of Power Skills



Source: PMI Global Survey on Talent Development

Figure 7: Is Low Value Perception a Barrier to Adoption of Power Skill Development?



Source: PMI Global Survey on Talent Development

Opportunity to Emphasize Power Skills Through Team Assessment

Perhaps unsurprisingly, organizations that prioritize power skills development are assessing these skills in individual employees and teams far more often (91% use individual assessments and 86% use team assessments) than organizations that place a low priority on power skills (69% and 43%, respectively). Twelve percent of respondents to the Annual PMI Global Survey on Project Management say their organizations do not measure power skills in individuals at all, and 20% say these skills are not measured in teams.

Organizations that do evaluate power skills in individuals use a variety of methods, including formal performance assessments (79%), supervisor/manager assessments (74%), customer feedback (47%), 360-degree surveys (41%) and standardized testing (29%).

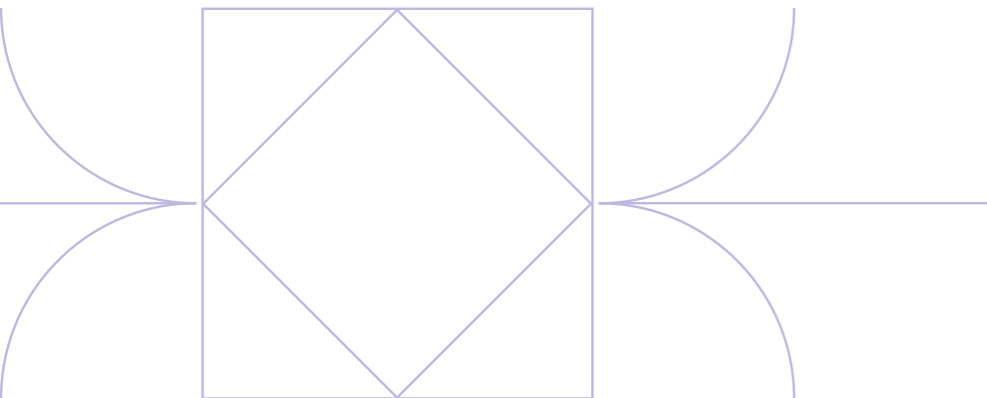
It is much less common for organizations to evaluate power skills among teams. Among those that do, customer feedback is the most common mechanism, used by 67% of organizations, followed by supervisor/manager assessment (53%), formal performance assessments (44%), 360-degree surveys (44%) and standardized testing (34%).

This gap in assessing teams on power skills could signal a major opportunity for organizations to demonstrate the value they place on these skills. Connecting team performance to power skills through team-based assessments could yield increased organizational efficiency.



“An annual assessment review is done for all projects’ employees. We assess communication and the ability to communicate. But I do not know if we do enough assessment of how effective the communication was, the style of communication or how successful they were in critical negotiations and persuading others. Maybe we can enhance these assessments to include a lot of the power skills.”

Mohammed Al Sadiq, Project Manager, Saudi Aramco, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia



KEY INSIGHT

Organizations can demonstrate the value they place on power skills by incorporating them into team-based assessments.

A Call to Prioritize Power Skills

When organizations put a demonstrable emphasis on power skills, the benefits are clear. These organizations stand out for their commitment to factors that drive project success: benefits realization maturity, organizational agility and project management maturity. Their projects are more likely to be successful and less likely to experience scope creep. When projects do fail, these organizations lose less of their invested budgets.

What can organizations do to prioritize power skills?

Our research revealed a number of approaches used by organizations that place high priority on these skills:

1.

Understand the connection between project success and power skills. Step outside the iron triangle of scope, cost and time, and take note of the power skills that contribute to the everyday dynamics of project management.

2.

Focus on the power skills most tied to fulfilling organizational objectives — communication, problem-solving, collaborative leadership and strategic thinking — and bake them into the organizational DNA. Have project management leadership model these critical power skills and communicate their importance consistently.

3.

Emphasize the value of power skills by connecting them to hiring and ongoing performance. Start talking to employees during the recruitment process by emphasizing power skills training as a benefit of employment. Build power skills into their individual career development plans, and track their mastery of these skills during performance evaluations.

4.

Evaluate professional development and training programming to ensure it reflects the organization's commitment to building power skills in employees. Back that commitment up by allocating the right funding to power skills offerings.

5.

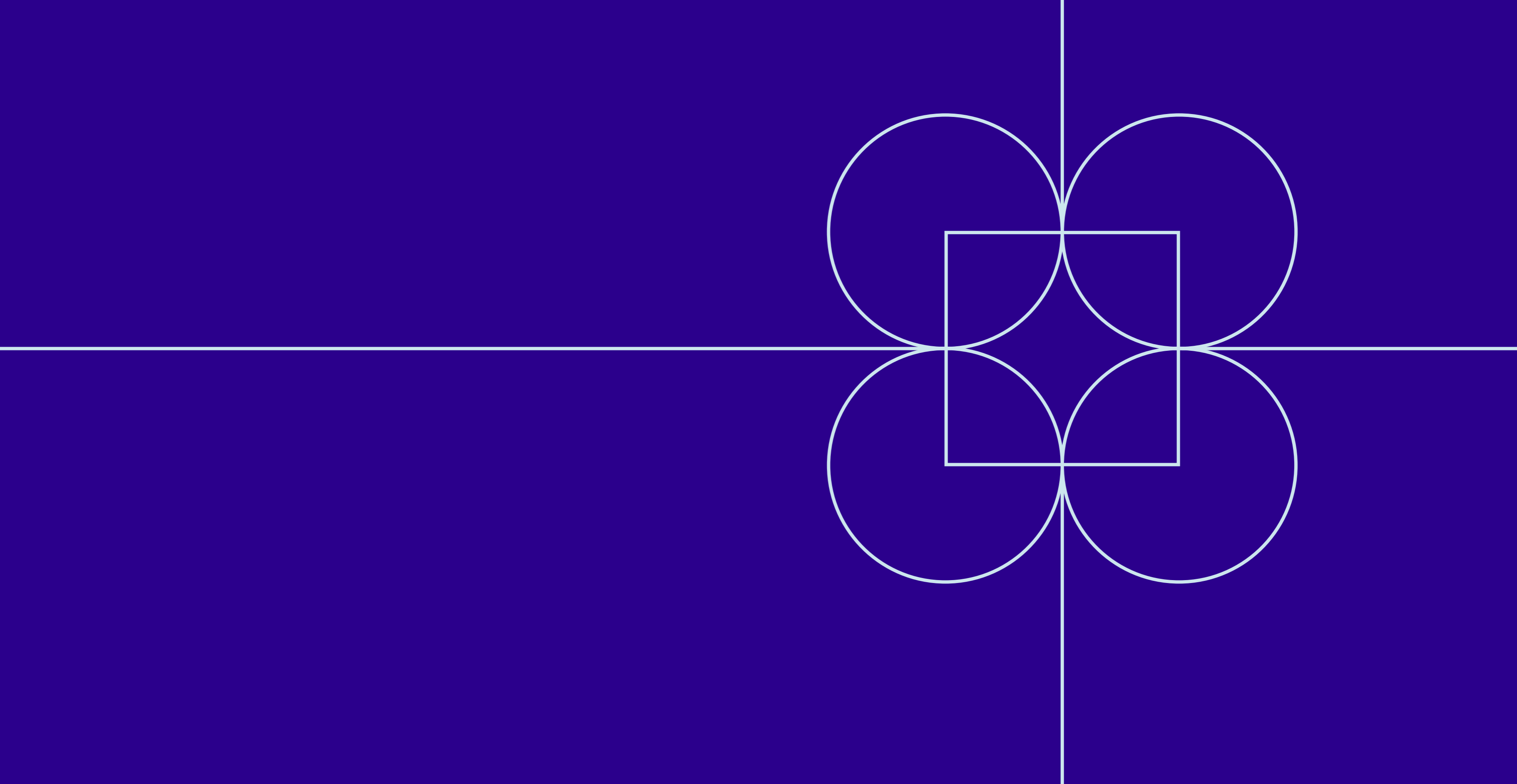
Consider introducing team-based assessments of power skills as an additional way to evaluate these skills in context and reinforce their importance in the organization.

Power skills can redefine success for both project professionals and organizations; those who use these approaches can see a clear return on their investment.

Visit the [PMI Power Skills Resource Hub](#) to explore other related content.

pmi.org/powerskills





About This Research

In March and April of 2022, PMI conducted and deployed the PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management to 3,492 project professionals (individuals who use project skills to deliver change), including 538 project leaders (individuals responsible for the organization-wide integration of consistent project management methodologies and terminology, including directors who lead the organization's project management office (PMO)). The survey explored multiple facets of project management, including key drivers of project success, power skills, evolution of the PMO, adoption of standardized project management practices and professional training and development.

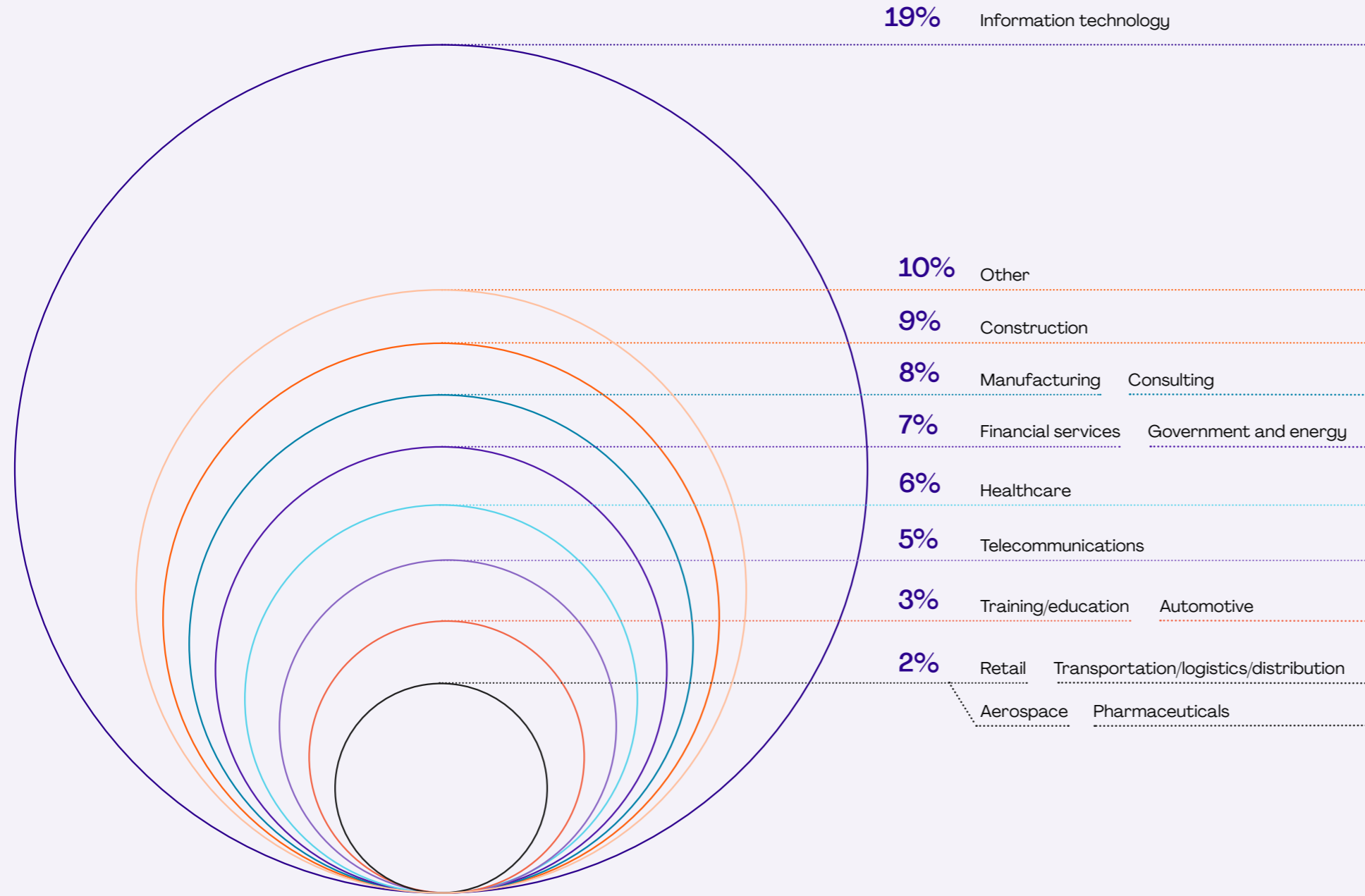
To better understand the factors driving the evolution of project management and the importance of power skills, we carried out interviews with 12 project management experts who serve in leadership roles in large organizations around the globe and have primary responsibility for projects and/or talent development for project managers. Their insights helped bring real-life examples to many of the key insights from the global survey. Here is the survey response profile.

Eight regions, including:



Source: Annual PMI Global Survey on Project Management

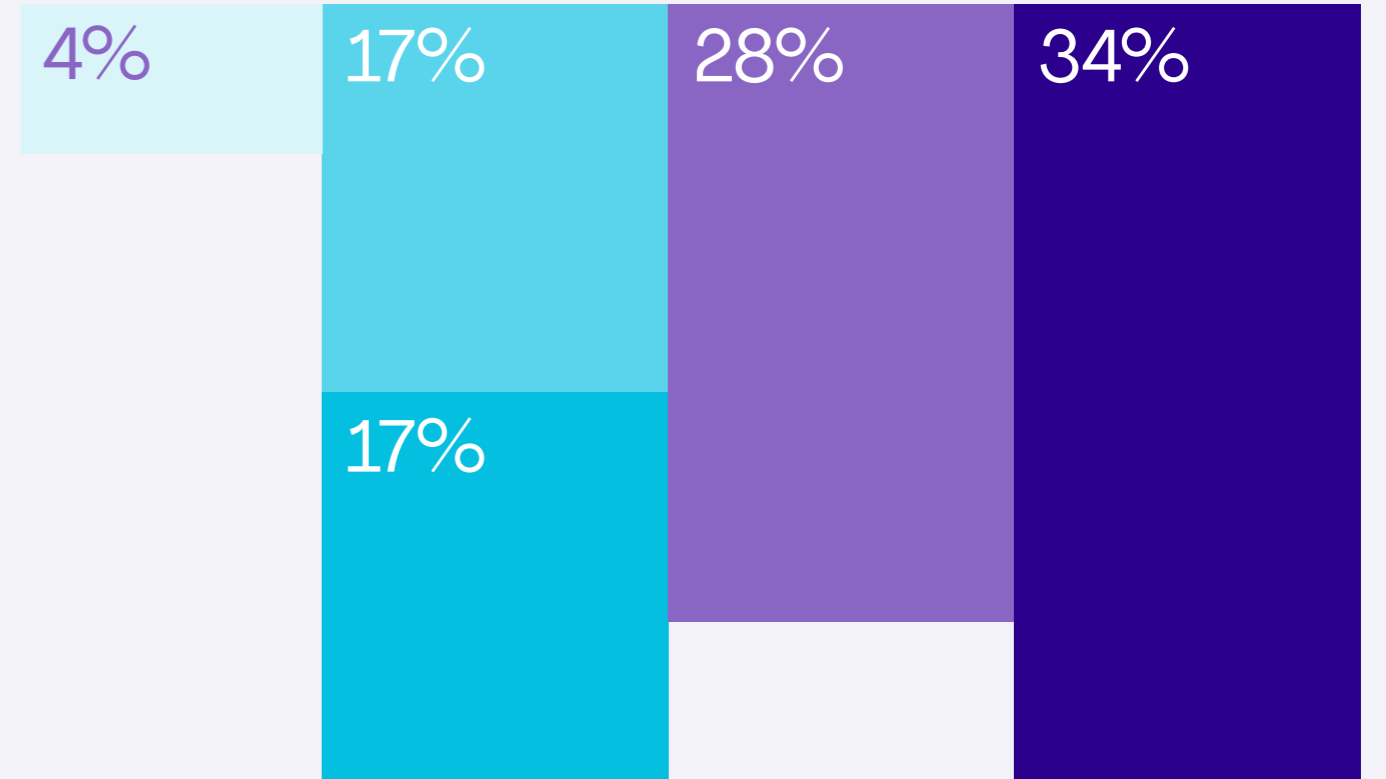
A broad range of industries, including:



Source: Annual PMI Global Survey on Project Management

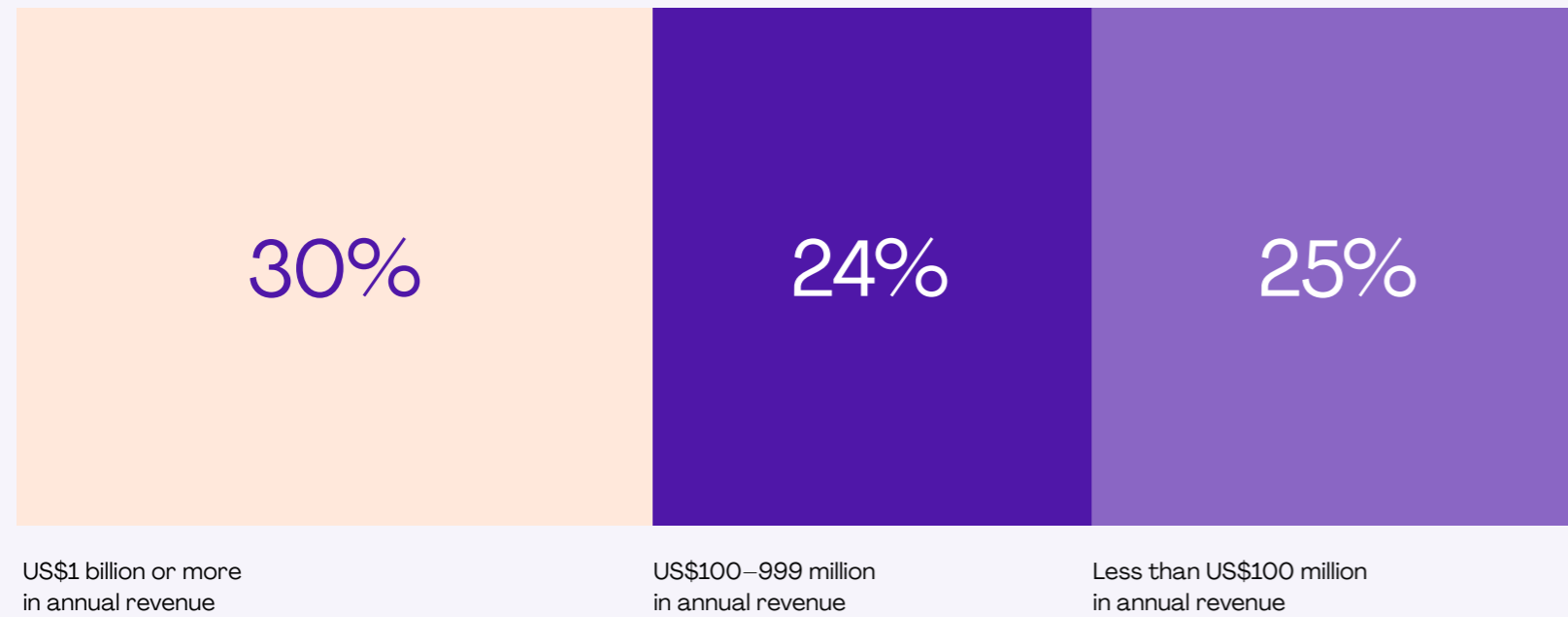
Project professionals across levels, including:

- 10 to 19 years of experience
- 5 to 9 years of experience
- 20 or more years of experience
- 2 to 4 years of experience
- <2 years of experience



Source: Annual PMI Global Survey on Project Management

Organizations across revenue tiers, including:



*Remaining respondents selected 'unsure'

Source: Annual PMI Global Survey on Project Management

Certified and noncertified project professionals, including:

- Project Management Professional (PMP)[®] certification holders
- Non-PMP[®] certification holders

Remaining respondents have inactive certification status



Source: Annual PMI Global Survey on Project Management

Power skills examined in this research include:

Accountability

Taking psychological ownership for what you say you will do

Adaptability

Ability to respond to unforeseen changes

Collaborative leadership

Ability to work with others across boundaries to make decisions

Communication

Effective in explanation, writing and public speaking

Discipline

Ability to impose structure through planning, routines and timelines

Empathy

Ability to sense others' emotions by imagining yourself in their situation

For-purpose orientation

Recognize the needs of others and actively seek ways to help them

Future-focused orientation

Ability to energize others with your vision of the future

Innovative mindset

Ability to generate creative ideas and act upon them to solve problems

Problem-solving

Ability to figure out what is wrong and resolve it

Relationship building

Ability to deepen personal relationships through building trust

Strategic thinking

Ability to see patterns and alternative paths rather than complexity

In our survey, project professionals rated **communication, problem-solving, collaborative leadership** and **strategic thinking** as the most critical power skills in helping them fulfill organizational objectives.

Most critical power skills by region

	Global	Asia Pacific	Europe	Latin America	China	MENA	North America	South Asia	Sub-Saharan Africa
Communication	68	61	67	70	65	69	71	74	74
Problem-solving	65	56	57	65	64	78	63	76	73
Collaborative leadership	62	58	62	69	51	60	59	71	66
Strategic thinking	58	47	49	65	48	66	59	70	73
Relationship building	49	38	48	42	42	62	55	61	57
Adaptability	48	33	44	55	37	61	50	59	58
Innovative mindset	43	27	38	45	46	51	40	58	56
Accountability	42	30	34	42	44	44	41	57	56
Empathy	37	31	39	49	23	31	36	47	45
Discipline	35	19	29	42	28	50	32	48	51
For-purpose orientation	31	30	23	26	55	30	20	34	33
Future-focused orientation	30	28	25	27	23	42	27	47	40

Most critical power skills by industry

	Global	Government	IT	Financial Services	Telecommunications	Energy	Manufacturing	Healthcare	Construction
Communication	68	71	69	64	72	66	66	69	70
Problem-solving	65	65	63	62	63	67	68	63	69
Collaborative leadership	62	64	61	62	66	64	58	60	55
Strategic thinking	58	57	56	56	59	56	57	61	61
Relationship building	49	49	48	47	47	49	44	48	48
Adaptability	48	50	44	46	48	50	45	48	51
Innovative mindset	43	46	41	43	43	43	40	45	43
Accountability	42	43	42	40	42	43	41	43	45
Empathy	37	40	38	40	39	37	32	37	33
Discipline	35	34	30	30	36	35	30	37	44
For-purpose orientation	31	27	33	32	31	31	33	28	27
Future-focused orientation	30	32	29	29	30	30	31	30	29

Most critical power skills by years worked in PPPM *

	Less than 5 years	5 to 9 years	10 to 19 years	20 or more years
Communication	68	70	68	68
Problem-solving	69	66	63	62
Collaborative leadership	56	61	61	61
Strategic thinking	56	60	61	59
Relationship building	47	47	50	52
Adapatability	50	52	48	49
Innovative mindset	43	49	42	42
Accountability	44	44	41	40
Empathy	32	37	39	36
Discipline	37	38	34	32
For-purpose orientation	34	33	27	25
Future-focused orientation	29	31	30	29

* Project, Program and Portfolio Management

Most critical power skills by PMP® ** status

	Not Certified	PMP Holder
Communication	67	70
Problem-solving	69	62
Collaborative leadership	61	59
Strategic thinking	48	58
Relationship building	54	50
Adapatability	48	46
Innovative mindset	44	42
Accountability	38	41
Empathy	40	35
Discipline	42	32
For-purpose orientation	32	28
Future-focused orientation	32	28

** Project Management Professional

Source: Annual PMI Global Survey on Project Management

Appendix: Building Power Skills in Project Teams

How can organizations prioritize power skills and reap the benefits they provide? The following examples showcase how three organizations provide training and development opportunities for project professionals to gain these skills. These organizations demonstrate their commitment to power skills through a variety of formal and informal interventions.

IBM Australia

At IBM, a regional program called “Lead to Influence” helps project managers in the organization’s Asia Pacific region (including Australia, India, China, Japan, Korea and Singapore) learn the power skills to become true leaders. Six 3-hour modules, built in collaboration with experienced program managers, focus on skills like stakeholder management, negotiation, problem-solving and storytelling.

“We have so many courses on how to manage a risk log or things like that, but this one is actually helping you work with your stakeholders and your teams,” says Janelle Delaney, a delivery excellence executive based in Sydney, Australia. “It is about ‘How do I, as a project manager, lead my team, work with my team and influence my client to be where we want them to be?’”

While the program was created for the Asia Pacific region — and offers courses in local languages for staff in different countries — Delaney is now working to take it global through IBM’s Project Management Center of Excellence. She is also working to integrate it with IBM’s internal certification system, which offers badges to indicate skills and abilities.

Safaricom

At Safaricom, PLC, a telecommunications company in Nairobi, Kenya, employees are required to pursue professional development goals, and are given the time and resources to do so. Meetings are discouraged on Fridays to focus on learning activities, and staff have access to a wide range of online training resources, including LinkedIn Learning. A dedicated coaching program offers professionally trained coaches to anyone in the organization.

When it comes to assessing power skills, managers regularly review teams’ power skills during performance appraisals and offer coaching and feedback. “We talk about things like clear communication, project objectives, stakeholder engagement and making sure that the users you are delivering for are satisfied with your engagement with them,” shares Mary Murekio, Senior Program Manager - Digital IT. “We talk about leading your project team members toward achieving the goal.”

Mentoring, whether from formal coaches or managers, can help employees connect what they learn to their work, Murekio believes. “When I first did the emotional intelligence training, I was a fairly new manager in the organization. However, I did not really connect with it on a personal level until I got a coach. That is when I realized I need to implement everything I learned in my emotional intelligence training.”

Kalyani Steels

Project professionals at Kalyani Steels, Pune, India, have access to a variety of learning and development opportunities over the course of their careers. “Soft skills are more important in driving through or negotiating through the project more smoothly,” says Partha S. Ghose, PMP, Director - projects. However, not all employees come in with the power skills they need to succeed. “We try to train them, and we keep training them continuously. Sometimes it is informal through one-to-one interactions, and sometimes through formal meetings and organized classroom training.”

Junior and mid-level project team members are assigned an experienced mentor when they are assigned to a new project team. Mentors coach them on a range of skills, from technical skills to power skills like communication, people skills and instilling in them cultural and environmental awareness.

Soft and behavioral skills are also incorporated into both individual and team assessments. On the individual level, annual reviews include quantitative criteria for power skills. Team evaluations are less structured but more frequent. During weekly or monthly team meetings, project leaders review the team’s performance and identify difficulties — including those related to power skills — where the team needs support.

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