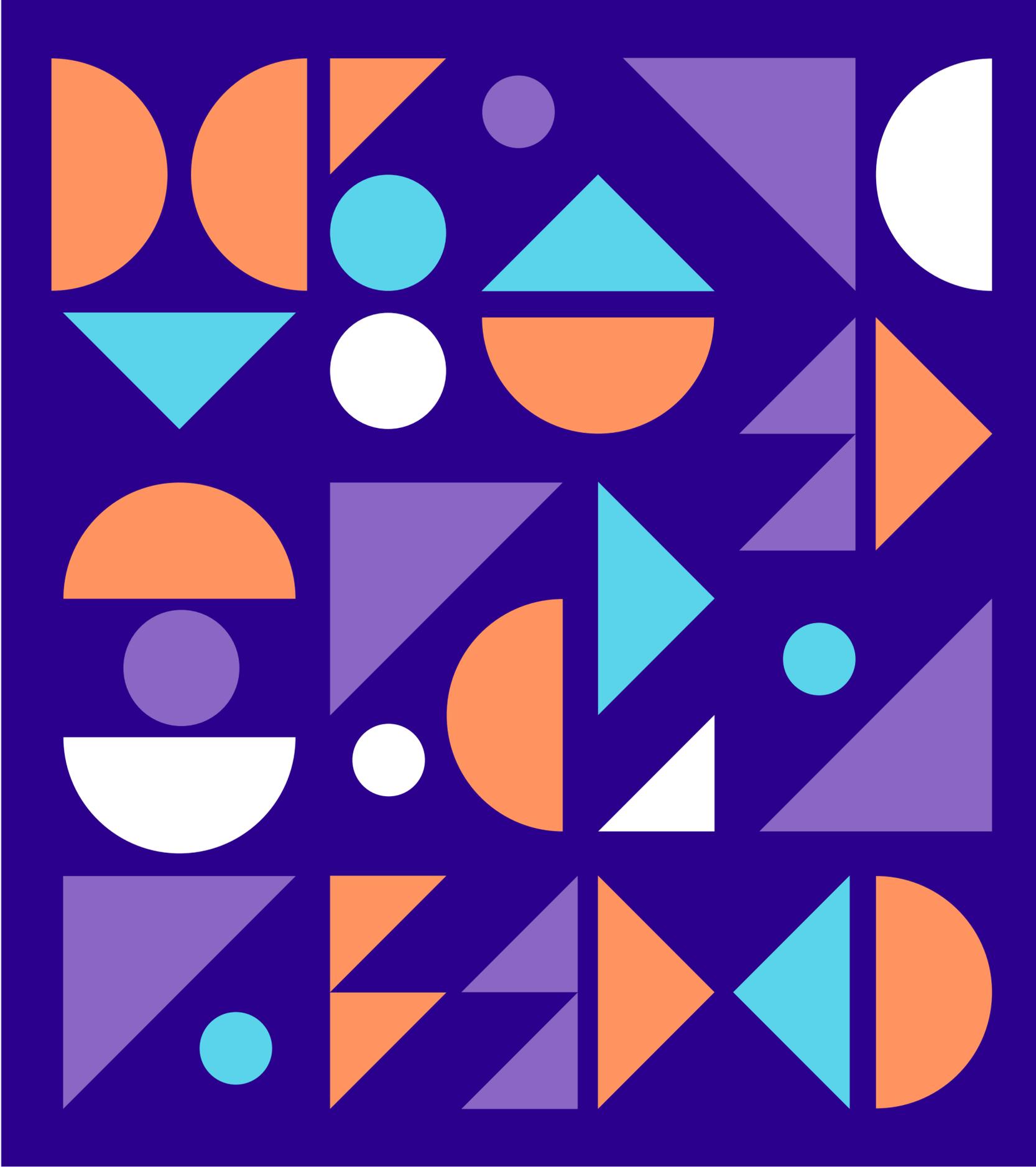


Pulse of the Profession® 2024

The Future of Project Work:
Moving Past Office-Centric Models
15th Edition



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Foreword



PMI's 15th annual Pulse of the Profession® report focused on the adoption of project management approaches and their evolution over the past years. We also explored the impact of onsite and remote types of work arrangements on project delivery and project performance.

We can confidently say that project management's future success is defined by adaptability to the changing environment, which constantly brings new challenges to achieving top project performance. Organizations that take the lead in adapting to the evolving landscape of work, empowering their project teams, and investing in continuous learning can not only become more resilient to the impact of frequent changes but will also thrive and unlock their full potential.

As the future of work changes, preferences for project management approaches are changing as well. Our research shows that organizations have shifted toward flexible, fit-for-purpose project delivery practices as they face new challenges and requirements driven by post-pandemic effects and increased digitalization. In fact, the use of these hybrid approaches has increased from 20% in 2020 to 31% in 2023.

Today's project management professionals are also dealing with other significant changes to conventional ways of working. For example, the pandemic accelerated the adoption of "work from anywhere" arrangements. Today, approximately 61% of project management professionals work remotely at least some of the time.

The Pulse of the Profession findings offer compelling evidence that organizations can provide flexibility and empowerment without affecting project execution and performance. In fact, our research shows that project teams perform equally well using predictive, hybrid and agile project management approaches and within onsite, hybrid and remote work arrangements.

Our research also offers insights into how organizations can drive above-average project performance by providing resources that further enhance employees' skills and capabilities, enabling them to adapt to different project and business circumstances, challenges and needs. Equipping employees with the right skills and empowering teams with flexibility can drive stronger innovation, agility and efficiency.

Organizations that provide supportive programs (we call them enablers), such as mentoring and communities of practice, to help individuals and teams learn new skills demonstrate better project performance. In fact, there was an 8.3% percentage point increase in project performance among organizations that offer at least three of these resources versus those that offer none.

I encourage you to read on to learn more about these enablers and the steps that you and your organization can take toward better project performance. To gain a competitive advantage, enable your teams through programs that enhance their capabilities even further, including the many resources PMI provides to help project managers upskill and gain new competencies.

Pierre Le Manh, PMP
President & CEO
Project Management Institute

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Introduction

Projects and the ways to manage them are continually evolving, driven by the influence of global megatrends¹ and by the impact of constantly changing forces including technological advancement, work arrangements and business complexities. Project professionals, tasked with meeting these forces head on, want their organizations to support them through a more flexible and empowered environment, providing them with enough autonomy to choose the most appropriate approach for managing their projects and building effective teams.

The ability to choose suitable work arrangements — including on-site, hybrid or remote — is still being negotiated within organizations. Research has shown that leaders may be reluctant to accept different ways of working based on perceived impacts on costs, work effectiveness and productivity.^{2,3}

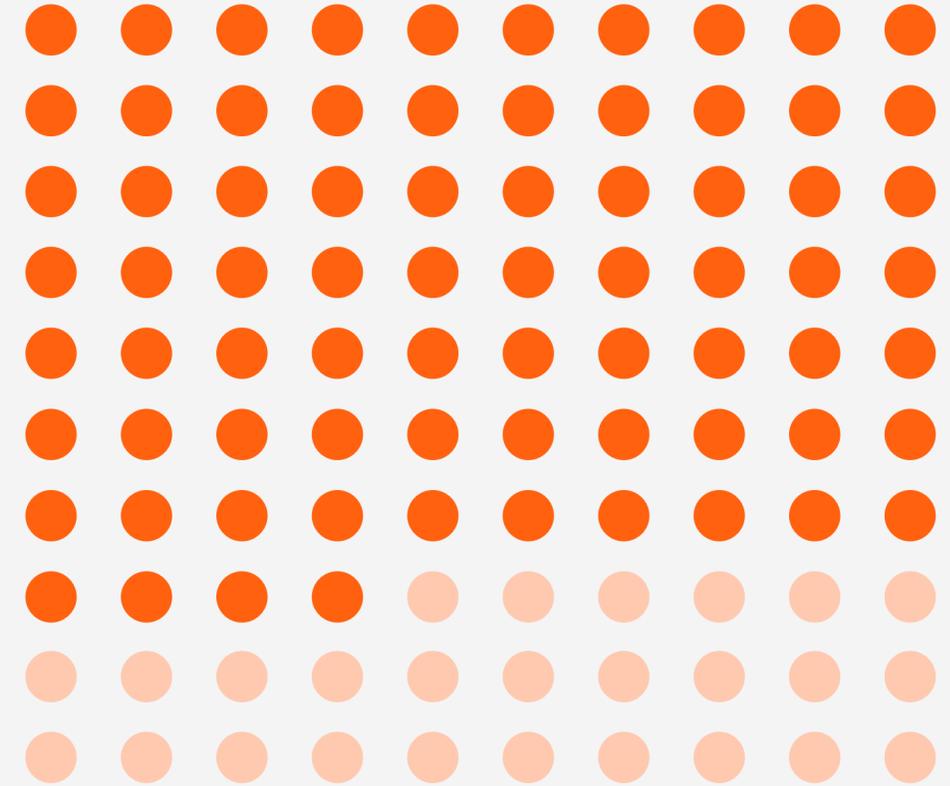
Organizations can provide flexibility and empowerment without worrying this will hurt project execution and performance.

This year's *Pulse of the Profession®* research provides compelling evidence that each organization can make decisions about the most appropriate project management approach and work situation without worrying that it will undermine project performance. Creating a work environment that enables teams to choose the most appropriate way of working is now the starting point.

Our research shows that organizations can unlock above-average project performance by providing resources that build employees' capabilities, enabling them to adapt to different project and business circumstances, challenges and needs.

In this report, we will explore how different project management approaches, as well as different work arrangements, support average project performance rates. Our findings emphasize the importance of key enablers — supportive programs organizations can offer to help teams develop new skills and competencies to cope with current and emerging business challenges — to improve project performance.

The average project performance rate across all respondents in our survey is 73.8%.



Project performance is calculated as the mean percentage of an organization's completed projects that met business goals, as reported by the respondents in the survey. Projects with higher levels of performance also demonstrate lower rates of scope creep, a key project execution metric, and lose less budget if the project fails.

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SECTION 1

Choosing The Right Approach Is Just The Beginning

INSIGHT

Hybrid management frameworks are gaining ground as the fit-for-purpose approach, and organizations are combining predictive and agile practices to cope with different challenges and needs in their project work. Adopting the right approach for managing projects should be considered the starting point from which to seek additional strategies to increase project results.

Today's project managers are using hybrid approaches more often than ever before, and the evidence shows several ways to combine practices, tools and techniques from predictive and agile approaches. Currently, predictive and agile approaches are well understood — at least at a high level.

Results from Project Management Institute (PMI) research indicate that the choice of project management approach does not play a critical role in driving project performance rates beyond the average. While it may seem counterintuitive, we see comparable rates of project performance regardless of the approach used, indicating that most organizations are consistently using the right approaches for their projects.

In this section, we will dive deeper into these findings:

- The trends in the adoption growth of hybrid project management approaches.
- The patterns of hybrid management approaches and how organizations are combining practices from predictive and agile disciplines.
- The impact of project management approach choice on project performance.

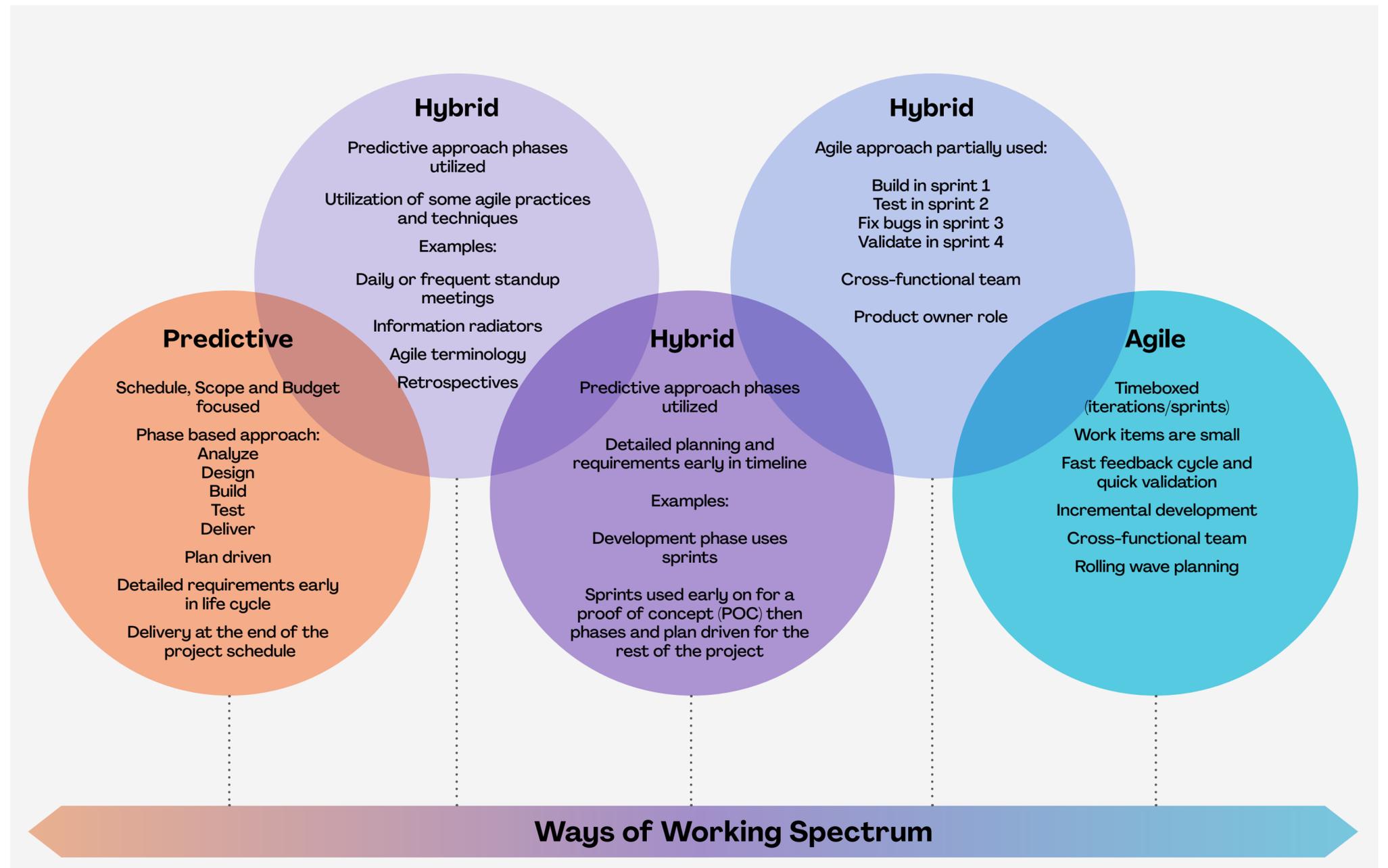
HIGHLIGHTING HYBRID

The Ways Of Working Spectrum

One way to think about the hybrid approach to project management is to envision a spectrum where predictive anchors one end and agile the other. The range between these poles represents a blend of elements from both, commonly termed “hybrid.” Unlike predictive and agile approaches, hybrid lacks a universally accepted definition or a specific framework delineating its practices.

Disciplined Agile® (DA®) proposes a nuanced approach to this hybrid model, identifying three distinct levels within the spectrum to provide clarity and context. These levels are not exhaustive but serve as benchmarks to locate a team’s way of working within the predictive–agile spectrum (see Figure 1). These levels are not rigid classifications, but rather markers to help identify the dominant characteristics of a team’s methodology at a specific point on the spectrum. Beyond these three levels numerous nuances exist, allowing teams to pinpoint their unique blend of predictive and agile practices.

FIGURE 1
Disciplined Agile® Ways of Working Spectrum



Source: [Project Management Institute](#)

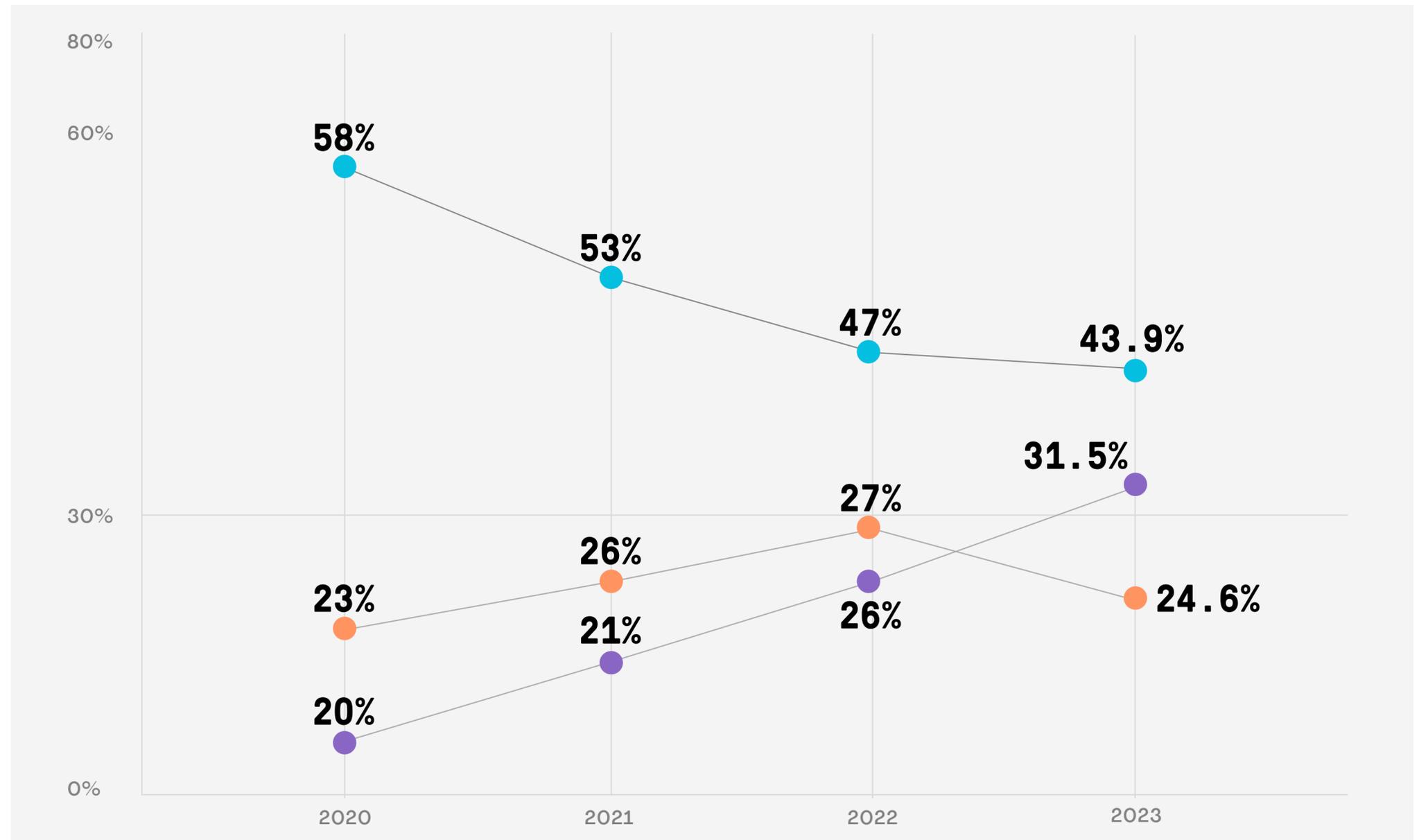
Hybrid Gains Ground as the Fit-for-Purpose Approach

Over the last three years, respondents to the PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management have reported a steady increase in the use of hybrid approaches in their projects — up 57% from 20% in 2020 to 31.5% in 2023. While predictive approaches are still the most common, they have declined 24% (from 58% to 43.9%) over the same period. Agile use is up 6% over the same period (from 23% in 2020 to 24.6% in 2023) but has changed negligibly over the last two years, dropping 8.8% from 2022 to 2023 (see Figure 2).

Overall, these growth trends toward using hybrid project management approaches are expected to continue, with 76% and 73% of our respondents expecting an increase in their organization’s usage of agile and hybrid approaches, respectively, over the next five years; and 34% expecting a decline in their organization’s usage of predictive approaches over the same period.

Experience with successful hybrid approaches will help drive this shift, along with the growing complexity and variety of projects and increasing volatility of the business environment. Our experts indicate a growing awareness that most projects and programs cannot be managed solely using either end of the predictive–agile spectrum; therefore, organizations need to support project professionals and teams to acquire and evolve new skills.

FIGURE 2
Use Of Hybrid Project Management Approaches Rising Among Project Professionals



Percentage of respondents who report using each approach always or often (on a 5-point scale) in their practice. Respondents can report using more than one approach with this higher level of frequency.

Source: PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023

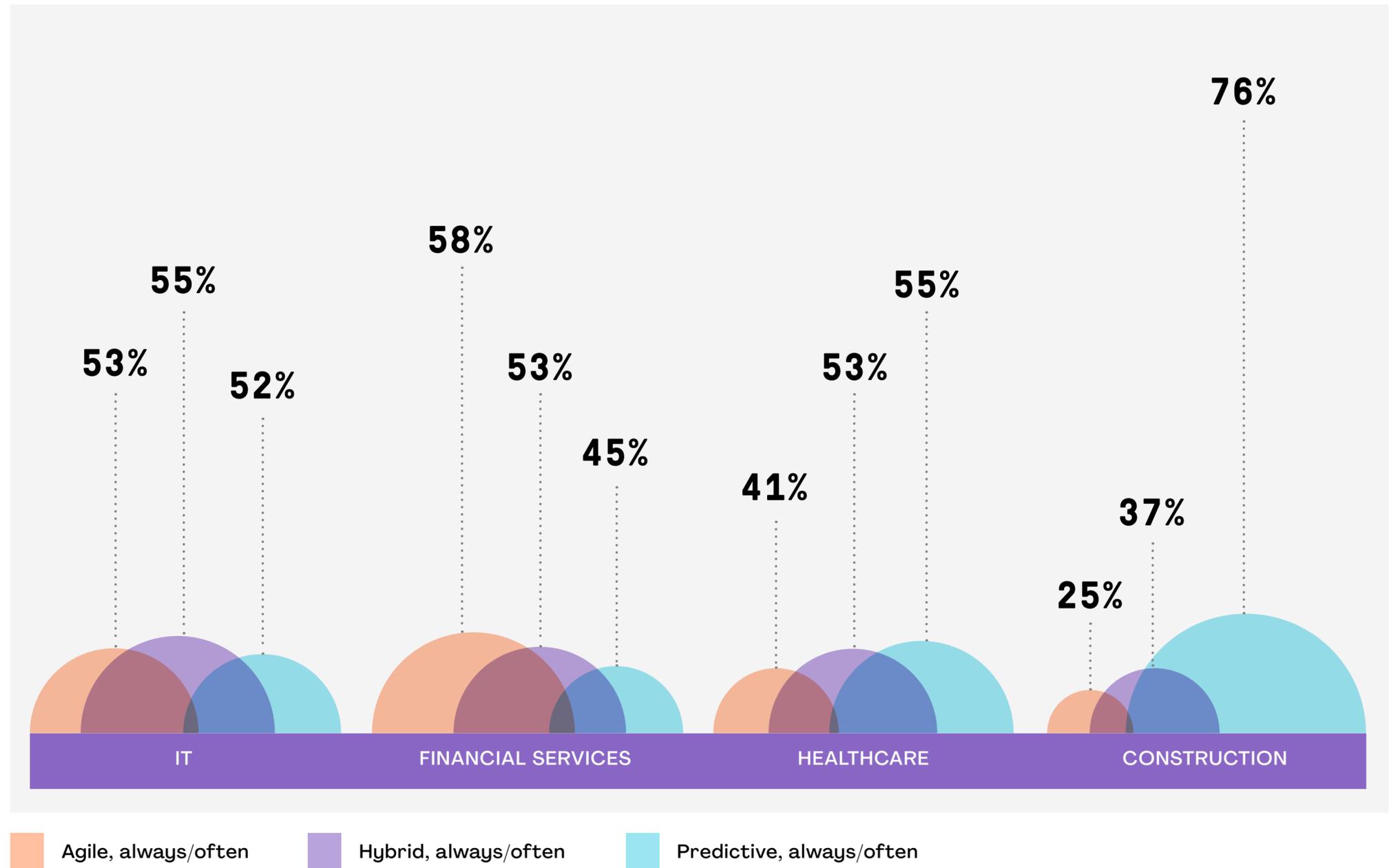
● Predictive ● Hybrid ● Agile

Additionally, project teams are exploring different ways to develop agility by combining various practices and techniques that most fit their project needs and challenges.

When broken out by industry, there are wide gaps in the use of agile, hybrid and predictive approaches, further indicating that organizations are using the approach that best suits their projects (see Spotlight: How are organizations around the world combining agile and predictive approaches?). These variations by industry, coupled with conversations with subject matter experts around the world, indicate that organizations are choosing the ways of working that best meet the increasingly complex needs of each project and help them balance predictability with uncertainty and innovation in an ambidextrous fashion, where agile, hybrid and predictive approaches coexist and are adopted depending on the business needs and strategy.⁴

Financial services organizations are most likely to report using agile always or often (58%) and least likely to use predictive (45%). On the opposite side of the spectrum, construction organizations are least likely to use agile (27%) or hybrid (37%) and most likely to use predictive approaches (76%). Information technology (55%), healthcare (53%) and financial services (53%) are most likely to use hybrid approaches (see Figure 3). See the Appendix for a full breakdown of approach usage by industry (Figure 16) and region (Figure 17).

FIGURE 3
Agile, Hybrid And Predictive Approach Use By Industry



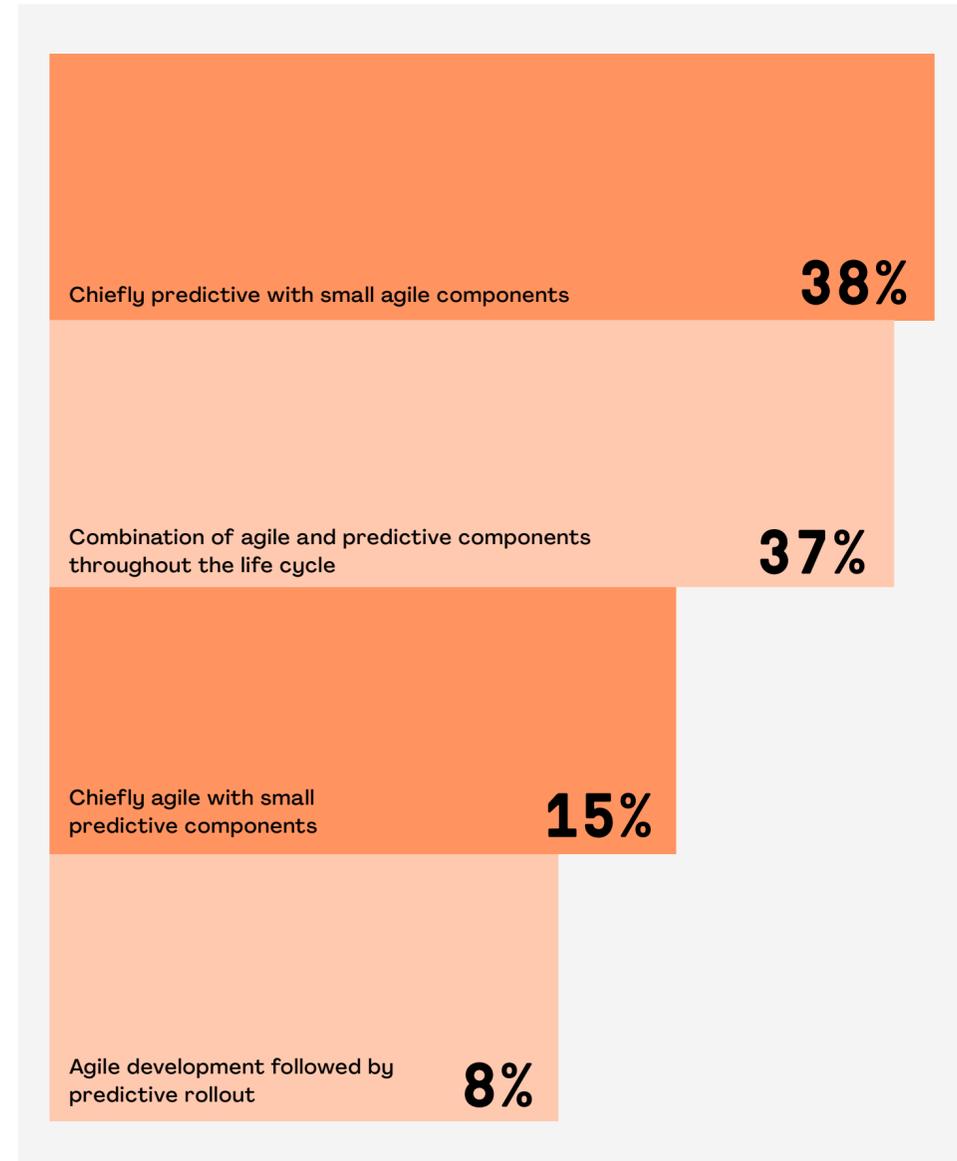
Percentage of respondents who report using each approach always or often (on a 5-point scale) in their practice. Respondents can report using more than one approach with this higher level of frequency.

The Winning Blend of Approaches Is Unique to the Organization

Our research has revealed that there is no single way to work "hybrid" (see Figure 4), but at its core, hybrid incorporates both predictive and agile approaches to provide the predictability, flexibility and agility that the project requires, reflecting the Disciplined Agile® spectrum shown in Figure 1. The combination will depend on many variables, including the type of project based on the expected result (e.g., product, service, software, etc.), business environment characteristics, project team characteristics and many others. It will also depend on the industry sector, as previously mentioned, and the current standard framework or approach used in most projects of the company. Whether it is predominantly agile or predominantly predictive, a hybrid solution frequently enables project teams to best address the specific needs of the project.

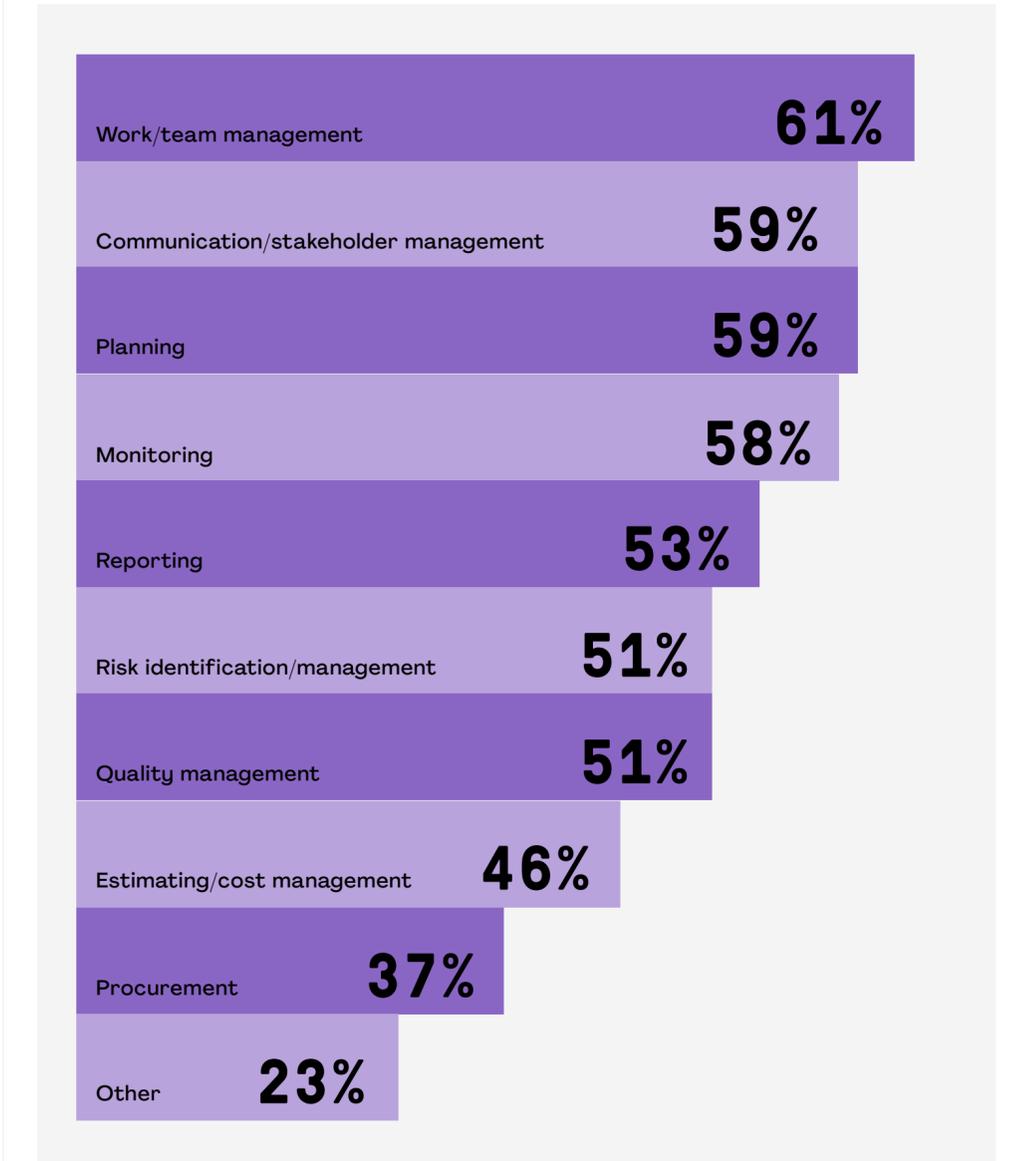
Figure 5 shows that agile approaches can be incorporated into most project functions; the most common are team management, communication, planning and monitoring. The hybrid solution is determined in part by which agile practices and techniques are combined and for what purpose. For this reason, project professionals should consider different factors, such as the nature of the problem, business constraints and organizational culture, when choosing the right approach for projects.⁵

FIGURE 4
Patterns of Hybrid Approaches Used by Project Managers
(N=2,132)



Source: PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2023

FIGURE 5
Project Functions Where Agile Practices Are Incorporated Most Often When Using A Hybrid Approach (N=2,132)



Source: PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2023

 **SPOTLIGHT**

How are organizations around the world combining agile and predictive approaches?



FELIPE GARRO
Project Specialist
Indorama Ventures,
Brazil

Agile behavior is critical to survive the dynamic markets of today, where you can't predict tomorrow. With agile behavior you embrace change and you iterate, and don't fixate only on building schedules and budgets. While the structure that a predictive approach delivers is very important, you also need to have pockets that are iterative — it's like being agile on the inside and predictive on the outside.



HEBA AL SHEHHI
Head of PMO
Dubai Municipality,
UAE

Our projects primarily follow either a fully agile or a hybrid approach with a sequential foundation. The project management office (PMO) reviews the scope, plan and implementation approach for each project, and if they find a fit for the criteria for an agile approach, they recommend implementing an agile approach. Nowadays, many projects are adopting agile approaches not only based on the PMO's agile fit criteria, but also due to recommendations from leaders who experienced the benefits of agile projects in the previous implementations.



FESTUS OJEKHEKPEN
Senior Manager PMO
Federal Inland
Revenue Services,
Nigeria

For projects in the IT domain, we use mostly agile project approaches with very small bits of predictive for structure and compliance needs. Agile gives us the flexibility to act quickly, get approvals because we can access the stakeholders and come back the next day to report progress. It also helps us respond to change much faster, without the need to document every detail and go through the change control board to get approvals for next steps.



ZHIGUANG LI
General Manager
China Petroleum
Engineering &
Construction
Corporation Amursky
Branch



FENG JIANG
General Manager
China Petroleum
Engineering &
Construction
Corporation Middle
East Branch

In the initial stage of the project, we adopt a series of predictive approaches that help us arrange the project schedule reasonably, use project resources effectively, ensure the project can be completed on schedule and reduce the project costs. However, when facing sudden challenges, agile management methods are used to handle the broken-down secondary goals based on macro adjustments, ultimately ensuring the achievement of the overall primary goals.

It Is Time to Move Beyond the Emphasis on Approach

Our data shows that the project management approach adopted alone has no significant impact on higher project performance rates. The average project performance rate varies only marginally across predictive, agile and hybrid approaches (see Figure 6).

This indicates a potential paradigm shift with important implications. First, a fit-for-purpose approach may be more difficult to implement but it pays off, especially when the organization has identified potential opportunities to improve its project management processes and get better results.

Second, organizations seem to be aware that combining approaches can help balance the needs for predictability, adaptability and innovation — critical characteristics inherent in any company’s project portfolio. This second implication aligns with the advance of digital transformations and digitization processes across all industry sectors. In their search for resilience, agility and flexibility, while also maintaining operational efficiency, many organizations are reviewing their project management processes and practices.

The third and perhaps most interesting implication of this paradigm shift is that, given the evolution of the project management discipline toward the use of more hybrid approaches, most organizations have reached a level of project performance that indicates they have a general command of the key requirements for effective project management.⁶ They understand the advantages of different approaches and of combining practices, tools and techniques to deliver a consistent level of project

performance. Focusing on project management approach alone will yield minimal additional gains.

This does not obviate the need for standardized and effective practices — for example, our *Pulse of the Profession*® 2023 report identified standardized risk management and stakeholder engagement practices and high project management maturity, as key drivers of project performance.

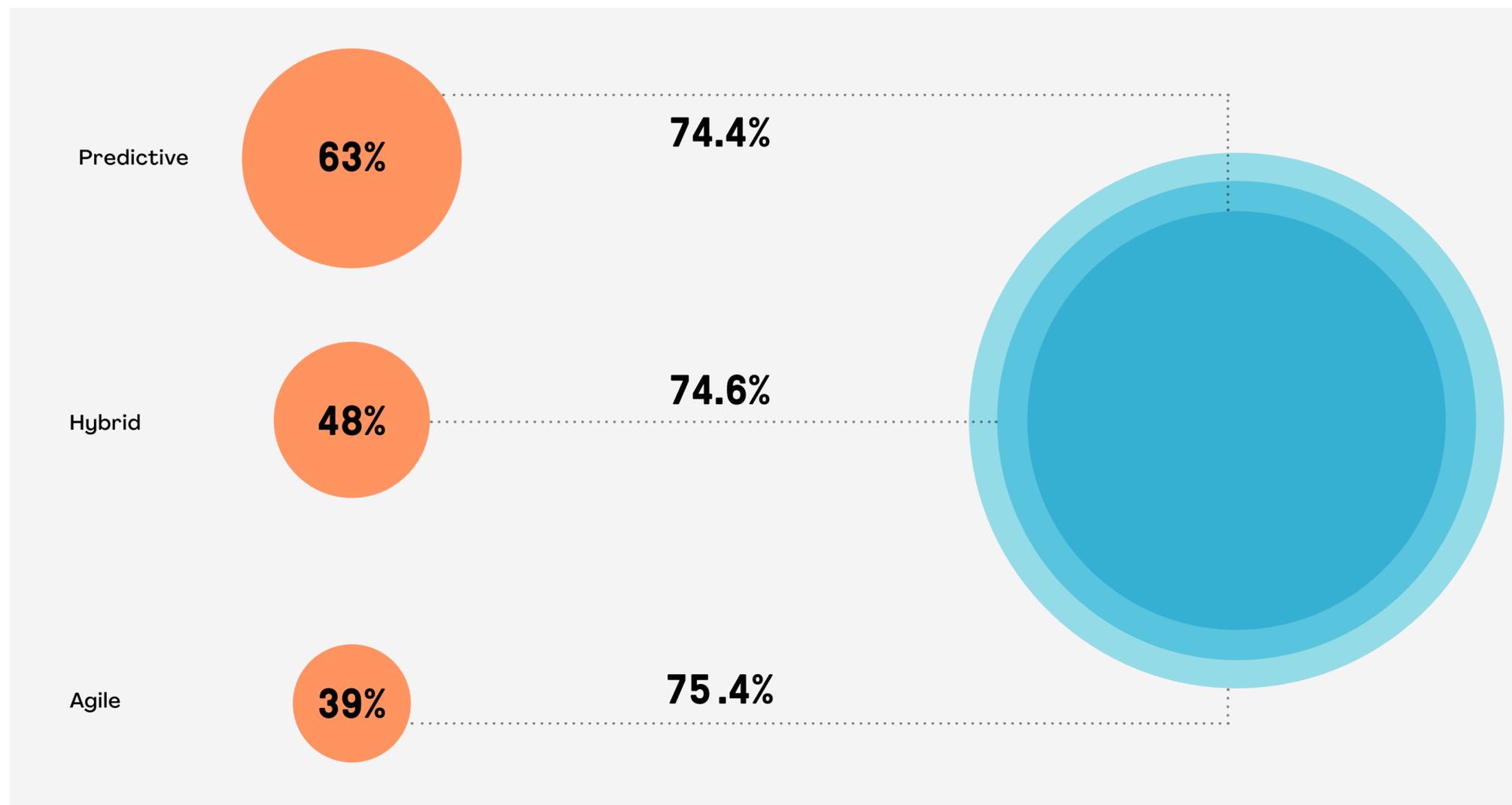
Further, our data shows that organizations that use a particular approach always or often (see Figure 6) report performance rates that are slightly above the global average, indicating that organizations on an individual level are choosing consistent approaches, but those approaches on the agile–predictive spectrum vary and are based on the organization’s unique needs.

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Our finding that the choice of project management approach does not drive higher project performance corroborates the results of a comprehensive study⁷ published in the *Project Management Journal*[®] that investigated the correlation between project management approaches and general project performance metrics. The study considered a global sample of 477 cross-industry projects, in which 52% of projects could be categorized as using hybrid approaches. The study concluded that there are no statistically significant differences in terms of project performance metrics (budget, time, scope and quality) when comparing the different management approaches adopted such as predictive, agile or hybrid. While our research used a measure of project performance based on self-reported achievement of business goals for a project, both studies indicate that project management approach does not impact outcomes.

These findings contribute to a new frontier for the project management discipline, focused on creating and developing new skills and capabilities, including interpersonal skills (power skills) and industry-specific knowledge (business acumen)⁸ to push project management beyond average and drive greater project performance and results.

FIGURE 6
Organizations Are Choosing Approaches That Yield Project Success



Percentage of respondents who report using each approach always or often (on a 5-point scale) in their practice. Respondents can report using more than one approach with this higher level of frequency.

Source: PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2023

Note: The project success averages shown here are higher than the across-the-board average project success rate of 73.8% because this data looks only at those who say they use these approaches always/often.

■ Project performance rate (average)
■ Organizational usage of approach (always/often)

Takeaways

Adopting a fit-for-purpose approach equips project professionals to navigate complex landscapes more effectively. For example, a customized approach can put more focus on organizational priorities such as risk mitigation, regulatory compliance or speed to market.



Project professionals must be able to align and tailor the project management approach to unique project environments, needs and challenges; industry characteristics; and organizational culture and strategic goals.

Project managers have achieved a level of mastery of ways of working within their organizations. As a result, organizations should aim higher and look to other factors to further increase project performance rates.

To increase project performance rates, modern project management requires a combination of skills and competencies, along with the right culture, mindset and work environment.



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SECTION 2

Breaking Myths — Different Work Arrangements Are Equally Effective

 **INSIGHT**

As we move away from the traditional, office-centric model, the demand for flexibility and the ability to work from anywhere are becoming key factors in how teams operate and deliver projects, with a significant majority of employees favoring flexible work models. Organizations need to adapt their strategies to a diverse array of scenarios, combining different management approaches and work arrangements to optimize team collaboration, innovation, agility and efficiency, as well as access to and retention of top talent.

Remote work has become a permanent fixture in the modern workplace. In fact, new work arrangements that include remote and hybrid-location arrangements as well as distributed teams — which we refer to collectively as “work from anywhere” — have been the number one factor contributing to the different ways teams are working and delivering projects in the last three years, as reported by 61% of senior leaders. This has been enabled by technology, which has made it possible for professionals to be productive anywhere, and further supported by increasing demand from employees⁹ for greater flexibility. The change has been both rapid and significant and, as a result, organizations have struggled to adapt.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, most organizations expected employees to spend more than 80% of their time in an office. During the pandemic, people perceived different benefits from working remotely versus working on-site. For instance, the top perceived benefits of working remotely were safety, quality of life and freedom; the top benefits of being on-site were access to technology, interaction with colleagues and routine.¹⁰

Today, however, only 10% of organizations expect in-person work all of the time, and 90% of organizations have embraced a range of flexible

work models that allow employees to work remotely from off-site locations some or most of the time, according to McKinsey’s *The State of Organizations 2023* report.¹¹ Furthermore, four out of five employees who have worked in these flexible work models over the past two years want to retain them.

In this section, we will cover:

- What the shift to work from anywhere looks like for project managers and the challenges they face with perceptions of remote work.
- The neutral effect work location has on project performance, even across different project management approaches.



DAVID DABSCHECK
CEO and Co-Founder
Giant,
USA

David compares the shift in remote working to the invention of the television: “For the first few years, TV shows were essentially radio plays with visuals, until we understood how the audiovisual medium was different from the audio-only medium. Similarly, with remote work, we are in the stage where we haven’t started fully taking advantage of all the possibilities, and we’re too focused on replicating the office environment. Both in-office and work from anywhere have different strengths and we must adapt our work environments to be able to tap into them.”

What Does Work From Anywhere Look Like in Project Management?

While McKinsey’s research indicates that 90% of organizations use flexible work arrangements, project professionals lag significantly behind. Only 61% of respondents to our survey say they work remotely one day a week or more. This indicates a rebound from high levels of remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic (see Figure 7).

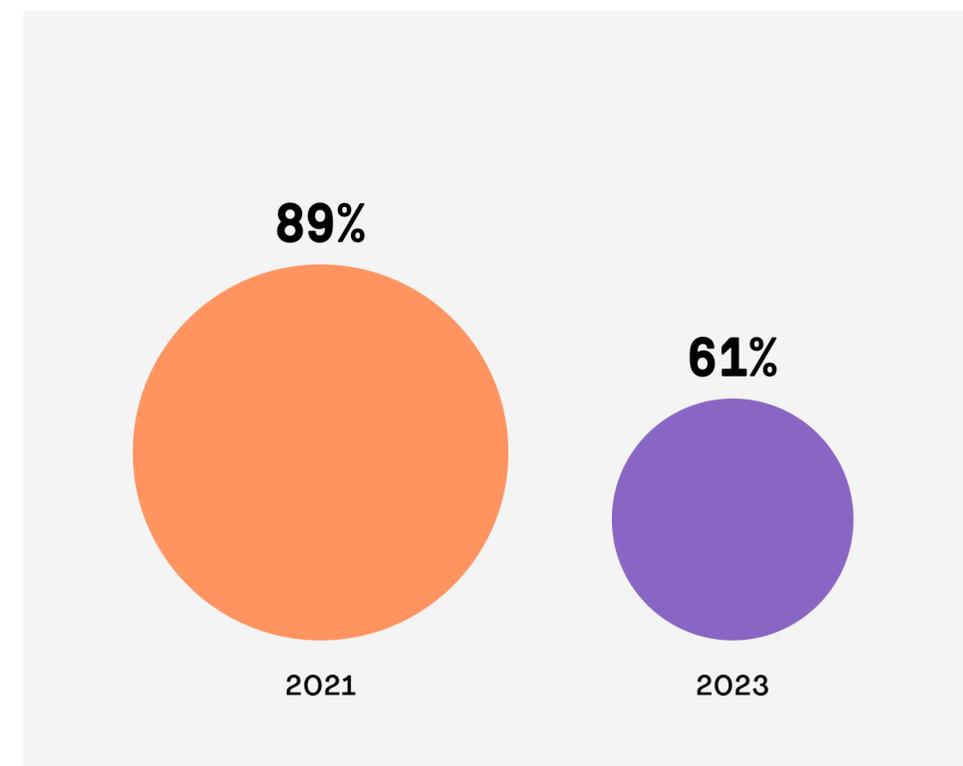
This shift back toward in-person work also likely comes from the difficulty of remote work in some industries that may have shut down in part or in full during the pandemic. For example, our data shows that project managers in construction (63%) and manufacturing (51%) are most likely to work entirely in-person and least likely (3% and 10%, respectively) to work fully remote. For a full breakdown of work location by industry and region, see Figures 20 and 21 in the Appendix.

Furthermore, there are significant inequities in how senior leaders perceive their organization’s approach to work from anywhere compared to how project managers report their current work location requirements (see Figure 8). More than one-third (39%) of project managers say they work in-person all the time (five or more days per week), whereas only 16% of leaders say this is a requirement of their organization. This discrepancy may

indicate that project managers are expected to be in-person more frequently than other employees within their organization. It may also reveal a disconnect in how leaders understand their own organization’s remote work policies. Perception of lack of fairness in work policies can significantly impact both productivity and retention.

FIGURE 7
Snapshot of Work From Anywhere During and Post-COVID-19

Working Remotely at Least Some of the Time



PMI and PwC Global Survey on Transformation and Project Management, July–August 2021

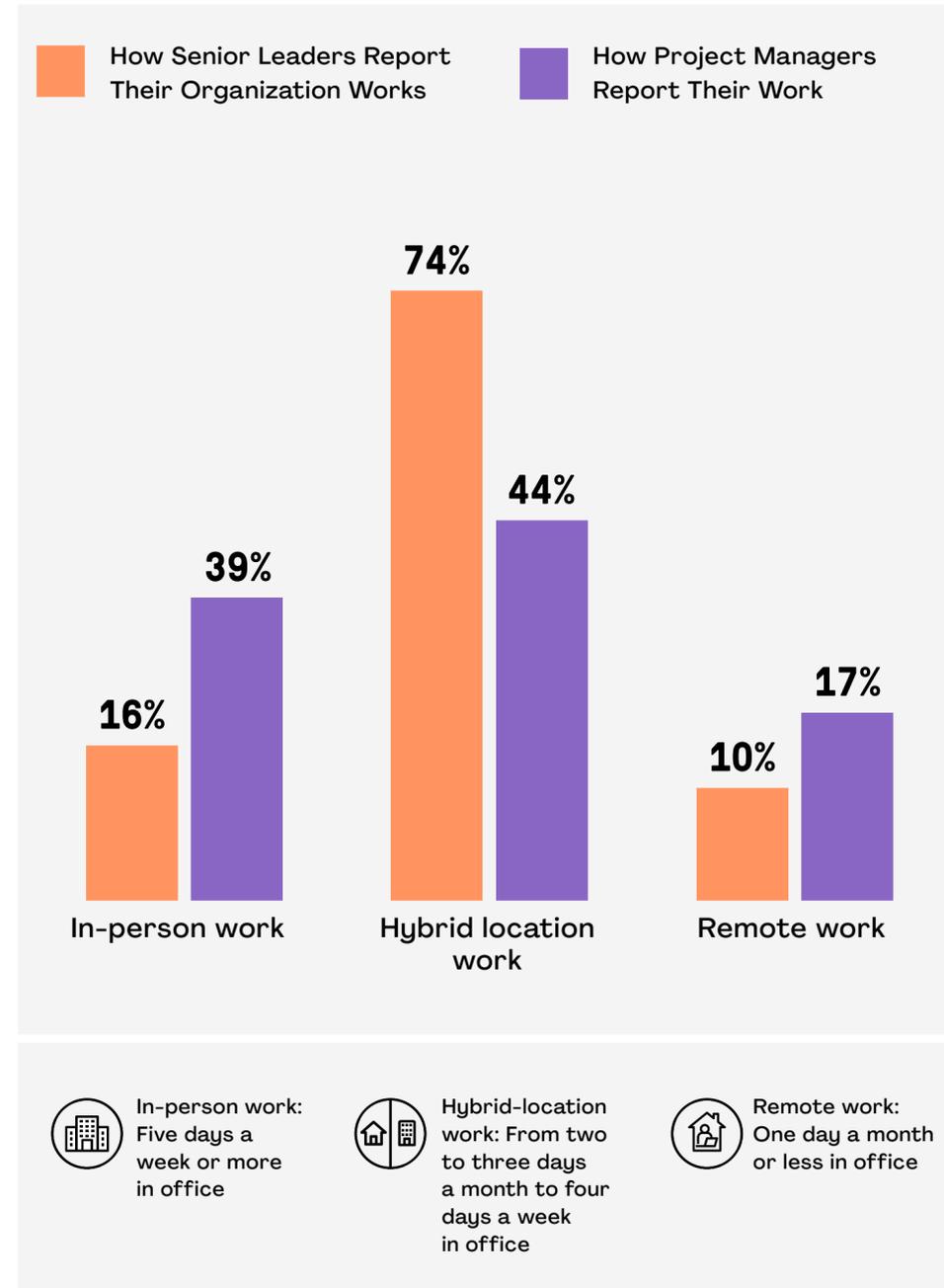
PMI Annual Global Survey, June–August 2023

There are also significant inequities in how leaders perceive the effectiveness of remote work. Senior leaders are significantly less likely (25%) than project managers (33%) to say that remote work is more effective than in-person work (see Figure 9). The gap we see between the outlook of senior leaders and project managers could be a result of “productivity paranoia,” which Microsoft¹² describes as leaders fearing that remote work is leading to lost productivity “due to employees not working.”

One potential factor behind this phenomenon may be related to leaders’ capabilities. A recent McKinsey study¹³ found that only 41% of leaders are comfortable leading remote teams. Other strategies to boost leaders’ confidence in the effectiveness of remote work include gathering feedback from employees about productivity and remote work, deploying collaboration tools and training employees to use them effectively, and evaluating productivity based on progress toward objectives and key results (OKRs) rather than focusing on hours and minutes worked.¹⁴

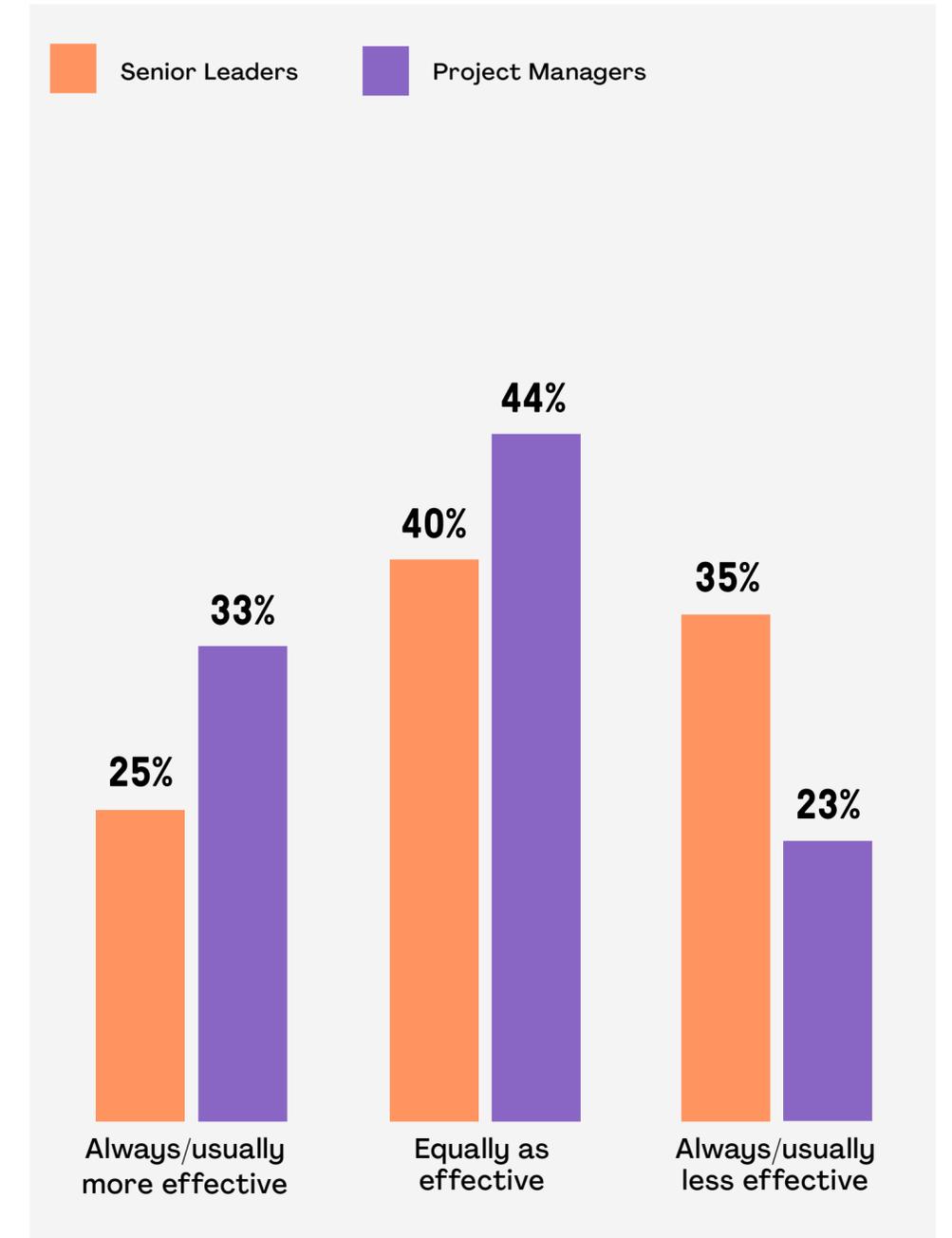
Our report, on *Building and Leading High-Performing Teams*,¹⁵ shows that one of the key success factors for teams operating in a virtual world is to forge real connections and develop a sense of purpose. It is more than adapting meeting invites and schedules to accommodate time zone differences. Project leaders need to find ways to spark a sense of connection, rethink team engagement strategies and develop a flexible and inclusive mindset.

FIGURE 8
Differences in Perceptions of Work Flexibility Among Project Managers and Senior Leaders



Source: PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2023

FIGURE 9
Effectiveness of Remote Work Compared to In-person Work: Perceptions of Senior Leaders Versus Project Managers



Source: PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2023

 **SPOTLIGHT**

What does work from anywhere look like for organizations around the world?



GARÉ AVELAR AGUIÑAGA
Project Management
Competency Lead
SLB,
Scotland, United Kingdom

We have a Flexible Work Policy, company-wide directive on work from home/office, and flexibility arrangements. For positions that must be in office because of the nature of their job, the directive provides options such as compressed weeks. For those who can work partly from home, the directive offers 3 days from office and 2 from home. So, work and flexibility arrangements are not on the basis of what the team wants or the manager approves, but in alignment with this company directive.



DEEKSHA SINGH
Head of PMO
Discovery Limited,
South Africa

We've tried to make it meaningful to come into the office for one or two days by providing a reason to be together — to connect, to exchange ideas or to solve problems. We are cognizant that our office environment should encourage interaction rather than people confined to their desks, attending virtual team meetings.



VIKKI KAPOOR
PMO Manager
Ericsson,
Australia

FORUM METPALLY
Manager
Ericsson,
Australia

At an individual level, I can engage in discussions with my manager to collaboratively determine the most suitable arrangement, whether it involves a compressed workweek, fully remote work, partial office attendance, or any other appropriate option. Our teams also maintain close collaboration with the rest of the organization, ensuring alignment in our Ways of Working (WoW), encompassing considerations for remote work, in-person collaboration, shift-based arrangements or hybrid models, as deemed suitable.



MOHIT MATHUR
Head of Strategy and
Operations, Walmart
Global Tech, India

For organizations such as us, we are spread across the globe. While work from anywhere is critical for such distributed teams to function, making it purposeful for people to get together in the office has shown a lot of positive impact. It gives people the platform to discuss their projects, ideas, and collaborate better with their peers, as well as adds to the overall organizational energy that engages people beyond work tasks.

Work Location Does Not Impact Project Performance

Research reveals that negative perceptions of work from anywhere are unfounded, both at the project level and more broadly throughout organizations. Data from the PMI 2023 Annual Global Survey on Project Management suggests that, comparatively, work location has no negative impact on project performance (see Figure 10).

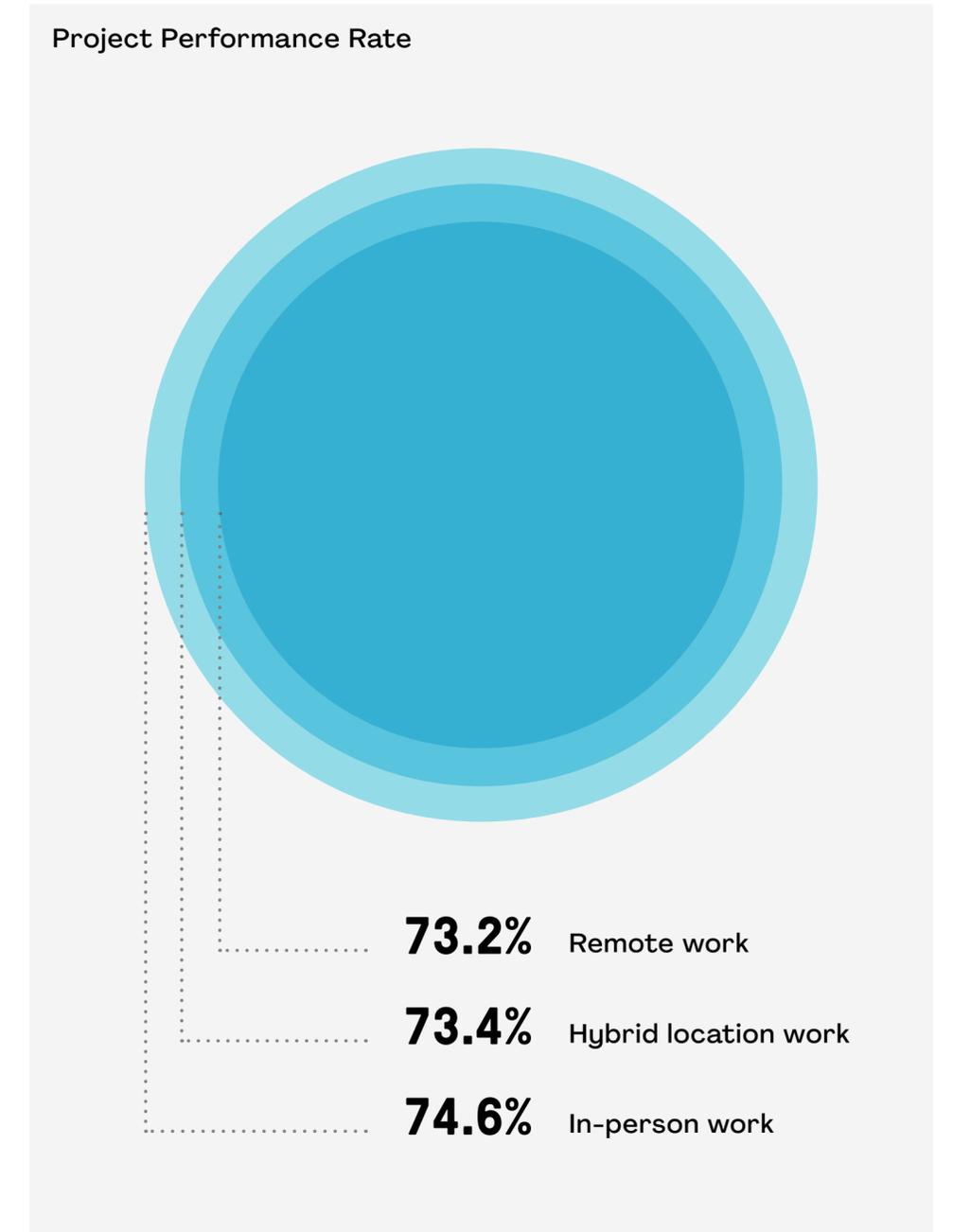
Furthermore, when we examine the data across both work location and project management approach, we continue to see a marginal difference in project performance considering any combination of ways of working (see Figure 11). Our data shows a slight but not statistically significant edge in project performance rates for in-person work across all management approaches.

These results indicate that organizations will not see a significant benefit to project performance by bringing employees back into the office, especially considering the negative impact such a move would have on employee morale and retention and the operational costs of in-person work. Rather, organizations should focus on empowering project professionals with flexibility in the how, where and when they work, without worrying about negative impacts on project performance.

Organizations need to design their own strategy to meet their needs. These different ways of working should help foster connections, helping teams collaborate, innovate and experiment, and leverage technology and team capabilities to deliver the best results with flexibility, agility and efficiency.¹⁶

A study recently published by Scoop,¹⁷ in collaboration with the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), not only supports these findings that organizations are not negatively impacted by flexible work but found that, in fact, they benefit from it. The research analyzed remote work policies in over 7,000 companies in the United States and compared the existing work policies with these organizations' performance. Fully flexible companies significantly outperformed their peers (companies with office time required) in revenue growth at a rate of 21% versus 5% (16 percentage points difference) based on three-year, industry-adjusted revenue growth.

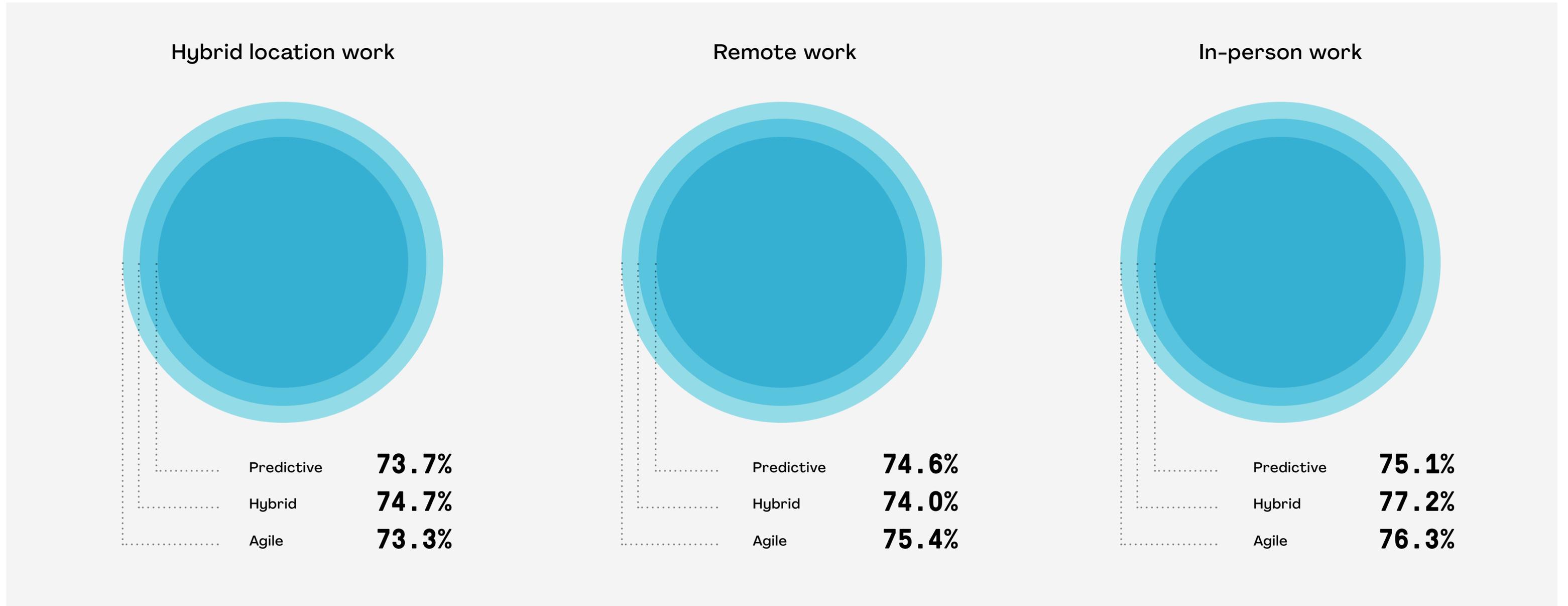
FIGURE 10
The Neutral Effect of Work Location on Project Performance



Source: PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2023

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FIGURE 11
Greater Project Performance Is Not Driven By The Project Management Approach And Location



Source: PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2023

Note: Most project performance averages here are higher than the across-the-board average project performance rate of 73.8%. This data reflects only those who say they use these approaches always/often. The differences between the project performance rates when comparing project management approaches and work location are not statistically significant.

Takeaways



Address perception gaps regarding different work arrangements. Be aware of potential discrepancies between stakeholders and leaders about the effectiveness and benefits of flexible work arrangement models.

Provide project managers support in leading remote teams and recognize that in-person work requirements may impact recruitment and retention.

Leverage technology and collaboration to foster connections, team collaboration and communication in remote and hybrid work settings.

Recognize that work location has a minimal (or neutral) impact on improving project performance. Instead, focus on the right combination of management approaches and work arrangements tailored to specific project needs.



SECTION 3

The Future of Project Work — Enablers of Greater Project Performance

 **INSIGHT**

In today’s dynamic business environment, supporting the evolution of work styles is crucial. Organizations must not only provide technological tools but also focus on building employee capabilities to navigate the demands for flexibility and agility.

If neither project management approach nor work location drives greater project performance, what does? PMI research shows that the way organizations can move the needle is to invest in capabilities-building for both individuals and teams.

Senior leaders report that their teams need new skills for the evolving work environment: 64% of their teams need new or different technical skills (e.g., data analysis, agile project management practices), 61% power skills (e.g., communication, collaborative leadership) and 54% business acumen skills (e.g., understanding the organization and/or industry).

As explained in our *Narrowing the Talent Gap report*,¹⁸ “unless capabilities-building is recognized and treated as the central enabler of successful strategy execution, organizations will be unable to meet their goals, projects will falter and the profession as a whole will be unable to avoid the impact of a global talent crisis.” The report identified the top capabilities project managers should have, including relationship building, collaborative leadership, strategic thinking, creative problem-solving and commercial awareness.

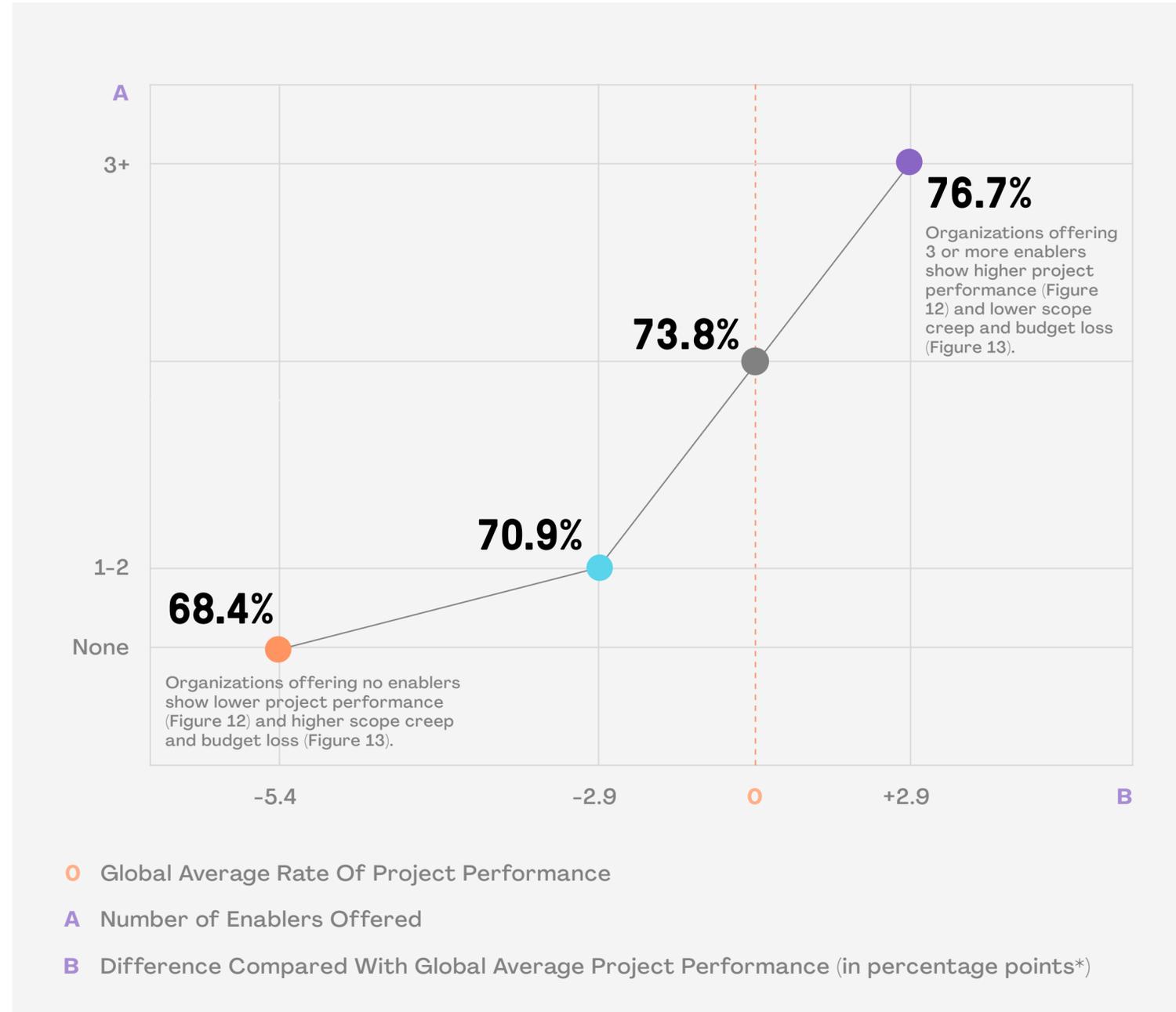
However, when we asked project managers how their organizations are supporting them in developing these

skills, less than one-half said their organization offers any single specific enabler such as mentoring programs or communities of practice.¹⁹ In fact, 9% said their organization offers no such enablers at all. Further, our data shows that only one in four organizations prioritize learning culture or employee engagement.

Providing these enablers isn’t just nice to do. We found that organizations that offer at least three enablers report significantly higher project performance rates (see Figure 12).

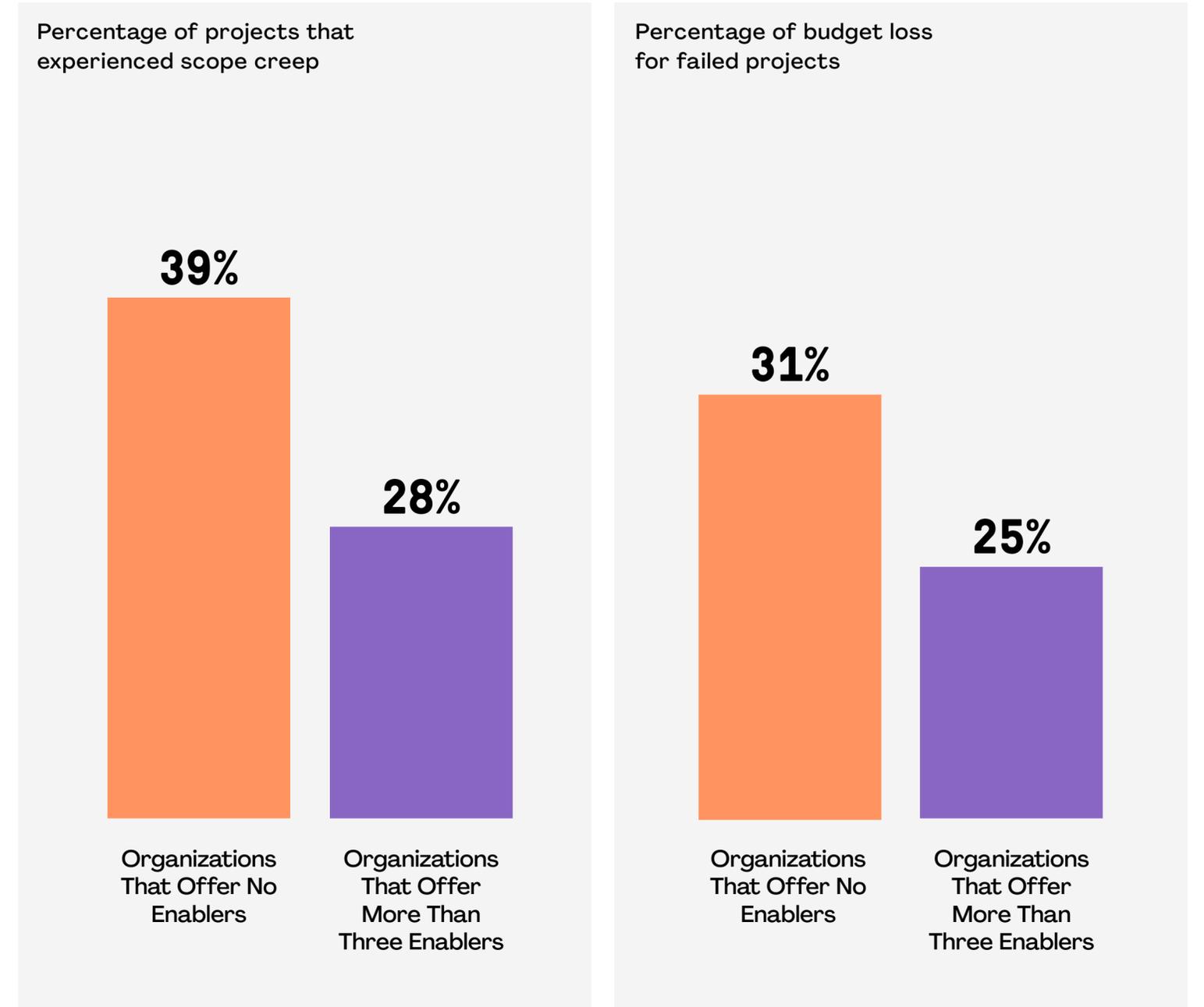
Furthermore, for the organizations that reported no enablers, the evidence shows that their projects are more likely to be impacted by scope creep challenges (at least an 11-percentage-point difference based on the group average) and a higher proportion of budget loss (at least 6 percentage points based on the group average), as shown in Figure 13.

FIGURE 12
The Relationship of Greater Project Performance and Enablers



Source: PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2023

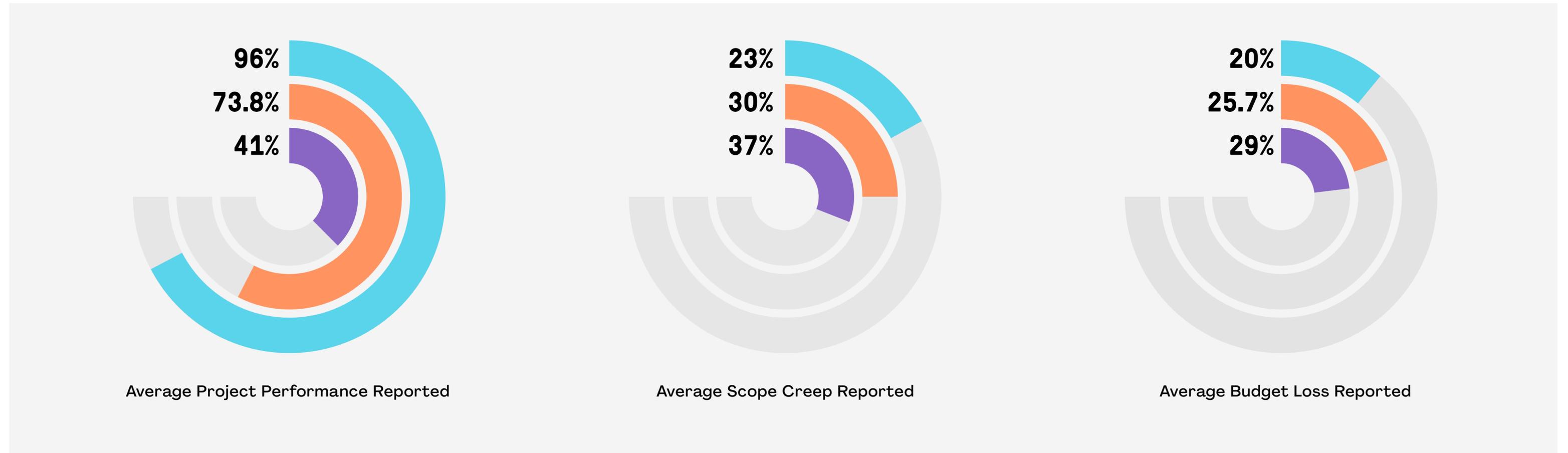
FIGURE 13
Presence of Enablers and the Impact on Project Scope Creep and Budget Loss



Source: PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2023

In looking at organizations in the top and bottom quartiles of reported project performance, the data shows a correlation among higher project performance, lower scope creep and lower average budget loss for failed projects (see Figure 14).

FIGURE 14
Average Project Management Performance Metrics Reported in 2023



■ Highest quartile (top 25%)
 ■ Average
 ■ Lowest quartile (bottom 25%)

Source: PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2023

At the individual level, the data shows no significant distinction between specific enablers and project performance (see Figure 15). This can be partially explained by business environment characteristics and specificities of the projects in each organization, as well as the diversity in employees' needs and responsiveness to different interventions. The data indicates that greater project performance rates are present in organizations investing in a combination of three or more of these enablers.

The three most common enablers organizations provide are coaching and mentoring, training on new ways of working and communities of practice. However, these enablers are only provided by one-half or fewer of the organizations in our survey, leaving ample scope for organizations not providing any enablers to tap into them.

For those already providing some enablers, there is an opportunity for organizations to do a better job of creating employee resource groups (ERGs) and providing mental health support to help employees navigate changing ways of working. Currently, these enablers are provided by only 28% and 21% of organizations, respectively. In addition to providing these enablers, organizations also must help project professionals find time in their busy work-lives to take advantage of them.

FIGURE 15
Types of Enablers and Their Relationship With Project Performance Rates



Source: PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2023

At the industry level, different enablers show correlations to higher levels of project performance (see Figure 16), indicating that specific enablers may be better suited to meet the needs of project professionals based on the demands of their industry. Offering these enablers is correlated to higher-than-average project performance rates across all industries, except financial services.

Our research indicates that PMOs have the capability to provide project professionals and teams with the right enablers so they will be equipped to deliver better project results, ultimately leading to increased project performance rates. While we plan to dive deeper into how PMOs can amplify key enablers in subsequent research, in the Spotlight are some examples of how organizations around the world are relying on their PMOs to support professionals in adapting to evolving ways of working.

FIGURE 16
The Top Three Enablers Related to Project Performance by Industry

Industry	Top Three Enablers Associated with Higher Project Performance	Project Performance Rate	Industry Average Project Performance Rate
Construction	Employee resource groups Mental health resources Coaching and mentoring	78.9% 77.2% 76.7%	70.8%
Energy	Mental health resources Training on new ways of working Communities of practice	78.3% 76.9% 76.0%	72.7%
Financial services	Dedicated communication channels Coaching and mentoring Training on new ways of working	71.2% 71.2% 70.9%	70.3%
Government	Employee resource groups Training on resilience Mental health resources	81.2% 80.2% 78.4%	75.1%
Healthcare	Coaching and mentoring Utilizing vendors/consultants Employee resource groups	77.9% 77.5% 77.2%	73.6%
IT	Employee resource groups Mental health resources Communities of practice	80.1% 79.7% 79.5%	76.7%
Manufacturing	Employee resource groups Dedicated communication channels Training on resilience	79.2% 78.6% 77.7%	74.5%
Telecommunications	Training on resilience Dedicated communication channels Mental health resources	83.9% 83.3% 80.9%	75.4%

Source: PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2023

SPOTLIGHT

How can organizations amplify key enablers to help teams navigate changes and become more resilient?



HEBA AL SHEHHI
Head of PMO
Dubai Municipality,
Dubai, UAE

Key Enabler: Mental Health Resources

The base of the challenge with adapting to new ways of working is the notion that somehow work life and personal life are two different planets. They are not! They share the same set of emotions with the same human being living those lives.

Professionals are going to have emotional baggage from their personal lives, from their work challenges, from the constant change in the world, and they are going to bring it to the workplace. And this is one of the reasons why people fear change as they are already overwhelmed.

It's the job of the organization to understand why people are behaving the way they are behaving, finding out what is encouraging or demotivating them, and find support for them. This was resolved by Dubai Municipality's PMO through activating a coactive coach role within the PMO to provide a sense of psychological safety and who works with team members for well-being or work-life issues support.



AVRONEIL GUHA
Client Service Excellence
Leader
IBM Consulting,
India

Key Enablers: Training on new ways of working and communities of practice

In the rapidly changing technology landscape and shifting client priorities, the project managers need to constantly learn and scale up. At IBM, we have the Project Management Centre of Excellence (PMCoE) to cater to the needs of the project managers by focusing on 2 key areas. One is the enablement, which focuses on project management capability building by bringing in the latest tools, assets and learning from past projects to create the right training programs with customized learning paths for individual project managers.

The other part is to focus on building a vibrant project management community that encourages experienced project managers to share their experiences, collaborate with others around them. We realized that it's not enough to tell people to share best practices and experiences, we have to create a platform for that, bring various channels to them so that the vast amount of knowledge that exists in our PM community can be shared across projects, teams and locations.



VIKKI KAPOOR **FORUM METPALLY**
PMO Manager Manager
Ericsson, Australia Ericsson, Australia

Key Enablers: Dedicated communication channels, training on new ways of working and communities of practice

In our organization we have a collaboration-based structure that promotes a learning environment. An example would be the quarterly sessions we host to make space for internal knowledge sharing. For these, we sometimes bring in external speakers, aligned with what learning and development identifies as future trends and how these impact project management Ways of Working. These would mean areas such as data analytics, database decision making, power skills, automation and AI.

For individual needs, the PMO works with line managers and the individuals themselves to identify skills gaps and provide support to bridge them. Further, when required, especially in cases of transition for individual team members, the PMO works with line managers to try to align the work that individuals are working on, to the training they are receiving, giving them the opportunity to apply what they are learning.



DEEKSHA SINGH
Head of PMO
Discovery Limited,
South Africa

Key Enablers: Dedicated communication channels, training on new ways of working and communities of practice

Discovery has created a PMO forum in the organization, to share ideas and discuss AI concepts. The forum consists of all the heads of the project areas in the company that can come together and connect on these ideas. It gives project professionals a space to ask questions, talk about what they've tried, what their experiences have been.

Creating spaces such as these allows the PMO to explore the evolving ways of working, new tools and the AI landscape and how they can bridge the gaps. There on, PMOs can develop tailored roadmaps for themselves and their teams.

Takeaways



Employing a combination of enablers such as coaching, training and communities of practice can significantly improve project performance rates.

Due to the complexity of projects and the unpredictability of internal and external forces, organizations should focus on enhancing employees' power skills for adapting to new work environments.

Essential enablers such as mentoring, mental health resources and communities of practice are positively correlated with greater project performance.



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SECTION 4

The Bottom Line

In today's evolving world, project professionals need the right skills and support to continually adapt to new ways of working. They need the technical skills to use AI to manage projects more effectively, the power skills to lead virtual teams through complex projects and the business acumen to deliver results that align with organizational goals. By supporting this development, organizations can enable their project practitioners to take project performance to new heights.

So how can organizations support project professionals through this development? Our research has revealed that there is no one-size-fits-all answer. Rather than attempting to force arbitrary work arrangements or strict project management approaches, organizations should empower project professionals and teams to find the most appropriate way of working to excel in this era of flexibility and agility.

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Here are three things organizations should start doing:

1. Be aware that project teams are achieving comparable levels of performance with agile, hybrid and predictive approaches. Choosing the right project management approach is the starting point; it is not enough to give the organization an edge in terms of increasing project performance rates.

2. Bridge the leadership perception gap around the myth that work location impacts productivity and effectiveness. Leaders need to empower teams to choose the right way of working and think beyond traditional, office-centric models.

3. Champion a holistic approach to provide critical enablers to help teams become more empowered; build new skills; nurture culture and resilience; and practice a continuous learning attitude. This approach will give the organization an advantage and contribute to greater project performance rates.

Furthermore, our conversations with subject matter experts around the world reveal that organizations can leverage PMOs to provide necessary enablers, focusing on people and culture, and adapt to new ways of working.

Our recent *PMO Maturity: Lessons from the Global Top Tier* report²⁰ confirms that the most mature PMOs encourage a learning mindset, promote a continuous learning culture and provide coaching and mentoring. They support the acceleration of new ways of working; improve knowledge management, sharing and transfer; continuously adapt processes for different projects and teams; and help develop strong interpersonal skills in project managers. Organizations with PMOs that deliver this value were twice as likely to report much better revenue growth over the previous year and three times as likely to report much better customer satisfaction.

Take Action

Embracing this evolution in work brings advantages by increasing project performance rates. As organizations continue to evolve toward work from anywhere and hybrid project management approaches, supporting and empowering project teams will drive even more value and prepare them to adapt to whatever comes next in the world of work.

Learn more through the following PMI resources:

- [Disciplined Agile® \(DA®\)](#)
- [AI Impact: Transforming the Future of Projects Resource Hub](#)
- [PMO Insights Hub](#)
- [Navigating the Future of Work With an Agile Mindset](#)
- [Projectified® Podcast: Project Leaders Embrace New Ways of Working](#)

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SECTION 5

About This Research

In June, July and August 2023, we conducted the PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management. Respondents included 2,246 project professionals (individuals who use project skills to deliver change) and 342 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]).

To better understand the factors driving the evolution of project management and the evolving ways of working, we conducted interviews with 15 project management experts who serve in project leadership roles in large organizations around the globe. Their insights helped bring real-life examples to many of the key insights from the global survey.

Roles:

Project Managers - Level 1, 2 or 3	Program Managers	Directors Of Project Management Or Leaders of a PMO	Project Leaders
30%	11%	10%	8%

Senior leaders, agile project managers and nonagile project managers were defined by the job titles they selected, as follows:

- Agile project managers selected the following job titles: agile coach, agile portfolio manager, product owner and scrum master.
- Senior leaders selected the following job titles: chief project officer, chief transformation officer, chief strategy officer, other C-suite role, vice president, director of project management/PMO, portfolio manager and project leader.

Industries:

Government	IT	Financial Services	Telecom	Energy	Manufacturing	Healthcare	Construction	Other
8%	18%	8%	4%	7%	9%	5%	9%	8%

Regions:

North America	Latin America	Europe	Sub-Saharan Africa	MENA	South Asia	Asia Pacific	China
20%	9%	15%	6%	7%	5%	12%	26%

SECTION 6

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- Feng Jiang, General Manager, China Petroleum Engineering & Construction Corporation Middle East Branch, China
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- Forum Metpally, Manager, Business Operations, Ericsson, Australia
- Vikki Kapoor, PMO Manager, Radio Access Network, Ericsson, Australia
- Mike Griffiths, Agile Thought Leader, PMI, Canada
- Mohit Mathur, Head of Strategy and Operations, Walmart Global Tech, India
- Garé Avelar Aguiñaga, Project Management Competency Lead, SLB, Scotland
- Krishnan Srinivasan, Director, PMI Global Accreditation Council, retired Project Management Advisor, Malaysia
- Nicholas Dacre, Director, Project Management Research Centre, United Kingdom

SECTION 7

Appendix

This appendix contains additional supporting data on ways of working from the PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2023.

Project Management Approaches

FIGURE 17
Project Management Approaches, by Industry

Q: How often does your organization use these approaches?

Industry	Government	IT	Financial Services	Telecom	Energy	Manufacturing	Healthcare	Construction	Other
Agile, always/often	40%	53%	58%	38%	31%	27%	41%	25%	37%
Hybrid, always/often	42%	55%	53%	41%	43%	45%	53%	37%	49%
Predictive, always/often	66%	52%	45%	62%	75%	75%	55%	76%	65%

N = 2,588 PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2023

FIGURE 18
Project Management Approaches, by Region

Q: How often does your organization use these approaches?

Region	North America	Latin America	Europe	Sub-Saharan Africa	MENA	South Asia	Asia Pacific	China
Agile, always/often	38%	39%	37%	49%	36%	62%	33%	34%
Hybrid, always/often	49%	46%	44%	50%	46%	56%	43%	47%
Predictive, always/often	60%	68%	67%	62%	72%	56%	70%	62%

N = 2,588 PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2023

FIGURE 19
Senior Leaders' Perceptions of Functions Shifting Toward Agile, by Top Five Functions

Organizational Function	Significant/Moderate Shift Toward Agile	Use of Agile Having a Significant/Moderate Positive Impact
IT	58%	60%
Customer service	42%	42%
Sales and marketing	40%	37%
Research and development	41%	44%
Production	37%	41%

Q: In the past five years, how have these functions shifted toward agile ways of managing projects, if at all, in your organization?

Q: In the past five years, how have these functions been impacted by the use of agile ways of managing projects, if at all, in your organization?

N = 329 (senior leaders only) PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2023

FIGURE 20
Organizational Support — Usage of Tech Tools by Project Professionals

Q: How often do you use the following tools when managing projects?

Technology Tool	Usage Frequency: Always/Often	Usage Frequency: Sometimes
Document management software (e.g., Sharepoint, Google Drive)	83%	10%
Collaboration tools (e.g., MS Teams, Slack, Miro)	81%	10%
Budgeting/financial tools (e.g., QuickBooks, MS Excel)	75%	12%
Project management software (e.g., MS Project, Asana)	66%	19%
Analytics and reporting tools (e.g., Google Analytics, Power BI)	46%	23%
Enterprise resource planning tools (e.g., SAP, Microsoft Dynamics)	41%	18%
Portfolio management software (e.g., Primavera, PlanView)	32%	19%
Time-tracking software (e.g., Toggl, Harvest)	31%	17%
Low-code/no-code development platforms	21%	23%
Product development software (e.g., Amplitude, ProductPlan)	21%	16%

N = 2,588

PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2023

Work Location

FIGURE 21
Work Location, by Industry

Q: Thinking about your own personal work circumstances in 2023, how often do you go into a physical office location for your job?

Industry	Government	IT	Financial Services	Telecom	Energy	Manufacturing	Healthcare	Construction	Other
In-person work	36%	33%	22%	29%	41%	51%	18%	63%	32%
Hybrid location work	48%	48%	64%	51%	48%	40%	47%	34%	50%
Remote	16%	20%	14%	20%	11%	10%	35%	3%	18%

N = 2,588 PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2023

FIGURE 22
Work Location, by Region

Q: Thinking about your own personal work circumstances in 2023, how often do you go into a physical office location for your job?

Region	North America	Latin America	Europe	Sub-Saharan Africa	MENA	South Asia	Asia Pacific	China
In-person work	18%	28%	17%	52%	74%	45%	43%	72%
Hybrid location work	53%	53%	73%	43%	23%	44%	53%	27%
Remote work	29%	18%	10%	5%	3%	10%	4%	1%

N = 2,588 PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2023

FIGURE 23
Work Location, by Project Manager Type

Q: Thinking about your own personal work circumstances in 2023, how often do you go into a physical office location for your job?

		Agile Project Managers	Non-Agile Project Managers
In-person work	More than five days a week	6%	10%
	Five days a week	14%	31%
	Four days a week	2%	9%
Hybrid location work	Three days a week	13%	13%
	Two days a week	8%	10%
	One day a week	14%	6%
Remote work	Two to three days a month	6%	5%
	One day a month or less	15%	6%
	Never go to the office	22%	10%

n = 2,246
PMI Annual Global Survey on Project Management 2023

SECTION 8

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About PMI Thought Leadership

We are a multidisciplinary team of subject matter experts, experienced leaders and researchers dedicated to creating, retaining and disseminating innovative and thought-provoking project management research and content. Partnering with the PMI community, industry thought leaders and prominent authorities, we build and sustain a community-generated knowledge platform. Thought Leadership is dedicated to offering cutting-edge perspectives, contributing meaningfully to solving problems, and providing solutions to a broad, diverse global community spanning from early career professionals to executives. We are committed to the diversity of opinions and community contributors to represent all voices of the project management profession equally.

Our work has three core areas of focus:

- **Individuals** – Equip project professionals with high quality, actionable recommendations to drive individual growth, performance and continuous learning.
- **State of the Profession** – Inform project professionals of the latest trends and practices to improve project management effectiveness and success as well as to advance the profession.
- **Enterprise & Innovation** – Inspire and provide strategic direction to senior executive leaders to help transform their organizations for long-term growth.

Grounded in analytical insights and practical recommendations, our work empowers our community to successfully navigate dynamic business landscapes and society.

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PMI is the leading authority in project management, committed to advancing the project management profession to positively impact project success. We empower professionals to excel in project management practices through our growing global community, knowledge sharing, and best-in-class certifications—driving positive change in organizations and communities. Since 1969, our unwavering mission has been to advocate for the profession by offering life-long learning and connections to sharpen high-demand skills. Today, PMI provides professionals at every stage of their career journey with the globally recognized standards, online courses, thought leadership, events, and tools they need to succeed. With more than 300 chapters around the world, PMI members can network, find mentors, access career opportunities, and learn from peers, working together to drive greater impact.

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