
Newsletter, March 2024

Unlock Your Potential!

Harnessing AI for Productivity: Opportunities and Pitfalls

In today's fast-paced world, Artificial Intelligence (AI) stands out as a beacon of productivity, offering tools that can automate routine tasks, provide insightful analytics, and foster innovation. From streamlining project management processes to enhancing decision-making through data analysis, AI can significantly elevate your client's productivity. However, navigating the AI landscape requires awareness of potential pitfalls. Privacy concerns, over-reliance on technology, and the need for continuous learning to keep up with evolving AI capabilities are challenges to consider. By adopting a balanced approach, focusing on ethical AI use, and fostering a culture of lifelong learning, you can help your clients leverage AI to its fullest potential while mitigating risks.

When implementing AI tools and processes, consultants should consider several key risks to ensure that their integration is both effective and responsible. Here are three critical risks to consider:

1. **Ethical and Bias Concerns:** AI systems can inadvertently perpetuate or even amplify biases present in their training data. This can lead to unfair or discriminatory outcomes, especially in sensitive applications like hiring, lending, and law enforcement. Consultants should advise on the importance of ethical AI development practices, including the use of diverse datasets and the implementation of fairness checks to mitigate bias. Ensuring transparency and explainability in AI decisions is also crucial to maintain trust and accountability.
2. **Data Privacy and Security:** The implementation of AI often requires the collection, processing, and storage of large volumes of data, including potentially sensitive personal information. There is a risk of data breaches or misuse of data, which can lead to significant legal, financial, and reputational damage. Consultants should emphasise the importance of robust data privacy and security measures, compliance with data protection regulations (like GDPR in the EU or CCPA in California), and the ethical use of data in AI applications.
3. **Integration and Operational Risks:** Integrating AI tools into existing processes and systems can be challenging and may disrupt current operations. There is also the risk of over-reliance on AI, where critical decision-making processes are delegated without appropriate oversight, leading to potential errors or failures. Consultants should advise on the importance of a phased and carefully managed integration process, including staff training, the establishment of monitoring and oversight mechanisms, and the development of contingency plans to address AI system failures or inaccuracies.

PMINZ Conference 2024: Spotlight on P3M Governance with Phil Guerin, Scott Rodgers and Karen Clarke



The PMINZ Conference 2024 in Wellington, New Zealand, was thrilled to feature these three luminaries in the field of Project, Programme, and Portfolio Management (P3M) governance. They talked about the essentials of P3M governance, sharing invaluable insights and strategies to enhance your projects' efficiency and effectiveness. Additionally, as part of an expert panel on governance, Karen delved into the nuances of navigating complex project landscapes, offering attendees a unique opportunity to learn from a diverse and highly experienced panel. This event was highly successful and

provided attendees with a range of topics and themes including construction, Agile and governance.

The Key to High-Performance Teams: Insights from Adam Grant

Why isn't your executive leadership team achieving its full potential? According to Adam Grant's groundbreaking research in his recent NYT bestseller, *Hidden Potential*, the secret sauce of high-performance teams isn't just about who is on the team but how they work together. Grant identifies factors such as psychological safety, deep trust, and the diversity of thought as critical elements that distinguish top-performing teams. This research suggests that fostering an environment where team members feel safe to express ideas, challenge each other respectfully, and embrace diverse perspectives can significantly enhance team effectiveness and innovation.

- ***Play to your strengths is bad advice...***
 - If you only play to your strengths, it means you are not moving outside of your comfort zone.
 - Also - don't overplay your strengths. An example Adam gave: If you're a charismatic leader, it's easy to lean on that quality and "wing it" too much and under-prepare.
 - And while we are on the topic of comfort zones...
- ***Don't wait for confidence to come...***
 - Confidence comes from *taking* the risk and moving outside of your comfort zone. Don't wait to feel confident before taking action.
 - Likewise: Action leads to motivation (not the other way around). Don't wait to be motivated in order to make a start.
- ***Don't ask for feedback, ask for advice (or a score out of 10...)***
 - He said it's much more useful to ask for advice than feedback – not "how'd I do?" but "what would make [this] better?" or "what would you have done in my place/decision?"



- If you do want feedback, something Adam practices is to ask for a score out of 10. No one ever gives a 10, so it allows room for Adam to ask: 'What can I do to get closer to 10?'
- I was able to see this strategy in action during morning his keynote. He invited the moderator to score his presentation out of 10 for the keynote he had just delivered. (He also scored himself).
- After sharing scores, they spent a few minutes tossing around ways to get closer to 10 for the next event he was due to deliver later that week.

Other Events

Upcoming events are regularly added to the website - so do keep an eye out! IMCNZ Events

Fortnightly Friday Zooms

Our informal Friday zooms start again this week. These are a great way to stay in touch with other consultants over a Friday drink. Zoom details on the website.

AGM

This year's AGM will be held on Wednesday May 8th, both via Zoom and in person in Wellington. Further information will be circulated to members and is available on the website. A reminder too to get in touch if you are interested in being on Council – several terms are up so new members are very much needed!

Your Profile and 'Find A Consultant' Capability Areas

We are adding a new search function to the *Find A Consultant* page on the IMCNZ website. You will be able to update your profile with your key capability areas. We will be in touch with further details as soon as this is available. Just a reminder too – remember to login to the Member area to keep your details current and to log your PD hours. You can also pay your membership fees here.

The CMC Designation

Achieving the CMC status is more relevant than ever, especially now public sector panels recognise its value. We encourage eligible members to pursue this distinction. Again, refer to the website for criteria and the process.

Join Us on LinkedIn

Follow our LinkedIn pages for the latest news, events, and opportunities. It's a vibrant space to share and interact with the wider consulting community.

Your Council

Members will be voted on to Council at the AGM on April 27th. We need you – to vote, to stand, to bring your voice and vision to our collective future!

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