

The PMO's Playbook: How To Thrive in Any Environment



Introduction

Just when you thought your PMO office achieved operational efficiency, the pandemic hit us all. Workforces went remote overnight and many companies scrambled to adapt and execute at the same level of efficiency...

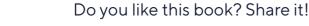
Fast forward to present day and distributed workforces are still commonplace. The pace of work is the fastest it's ever been. Employee burnout remains a challenge. PMOs are feeling the heat to execute programs amid tighter budgets and changing priorities — all during uncertain economic times.

As we've all adapted to working in the 'New Normal', achieving operational efficiency remains a priority. Yet checking off that box is proving to – yet again – pose significant challenges. Where do PMOs turn to regain

control of their work, align strategy to execution, and roll up all their projects, programs, and portfolios that support executive leadership vision?

This eBook examines the four key areas organizations must improve on and the strategies that will produce results and speed recovery. Additionally, we'll look at how PMOs adapted to the changing landscape, including the new ways of working that emerged with the transition to digital and accelerated with the shift to remote work.





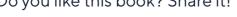






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PMOs' changing landscape and the "Next Wave" of digital transformation

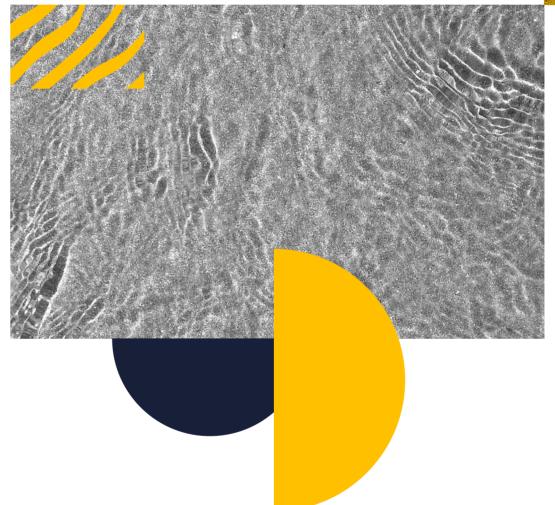


The proliferation of remote or hybrid workforces since the 2020 pandemic presents a significant challenge for PMOs, who must adapt to support the increased and specific demands of their digital teams and rapidly launch digital products. According to a <u>Gartner study</u>, by 2024, 50% of all program and portfolio management leaders will integrate complementary technologies to enable portfolio decision making and adaptive work management for digital business transformation.

In a separate report, Gartner says that by 2023, 80% of organizations will have an enterprise product, program, or product management office focused on integrating digital products and programs. Although excellent news, this growth also means that PMOs must adapt how they guide teams that are creating new kinds of products by using new tools to work together in new ways — at a faster pace than ever before.













"Work your way:" What it means, why it matters



The pace of technological innovation is <u>increasing</u> exponentially. SaaS technologies have shortened project timelines from annual and quarterly to monthly or even weekly. As the pace of work accelerates, the need for teams to work their way — the way that makes them the most efficient — becomes imperative. For example, a product development team may choose Agile, while marketing may use Waterfall. By accommodating both methodologies, both teams can accomplish their work successfully, leading to better team dynamics and increased efficiency.

Another byproduct of the pandemic has been the increase in both the pace of change and the need for teams to work their way. Beyond the pandemic and the "New Normal" we focused on adapting to in 2020, Forbes points out that leaders need to be focusing on the "Next Normal." Zabeen Hirji, executive advisor on the Future of Work at Deloitte Canada and former Chief Human Resource Officer for Royal Bank Canada, explains that we've been "thrust out of our old models and ways of working and reached this point without planning for it."

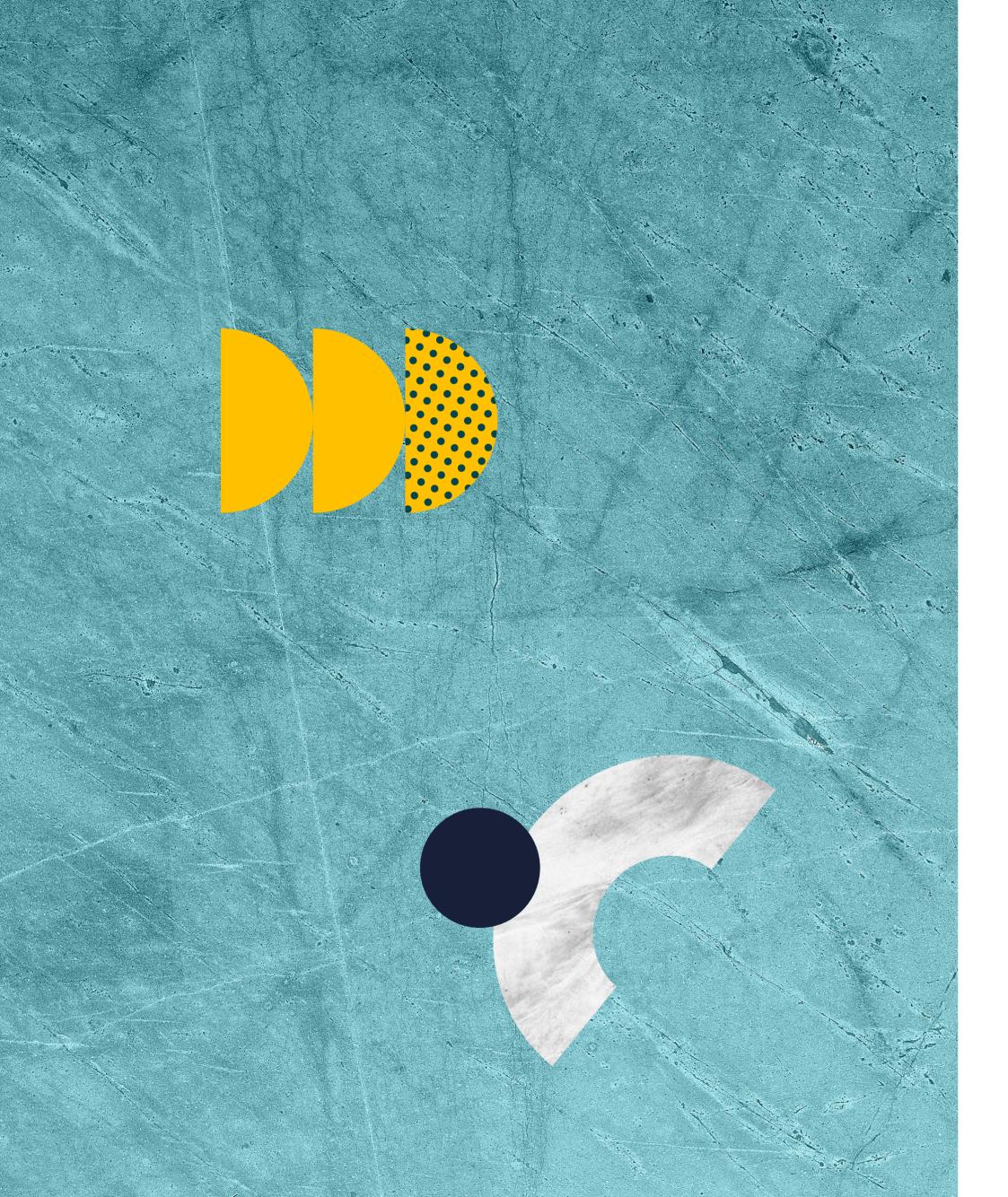
Forbes contributor Dr. Shaheena Janjuha-Jivraj offers a solution: rather than thinking about working from home and virtual working, we need to be thinking about and planning for distributed working.

Focusing only on temporary remote working is short-sighted. PMOs should instead focus on the shift to a permanently distributed workforce, with team members working from anywhere, some in office and some remote. Janjuha-Jivraj says, "By consciously adopting a distributed working approach, leaders need to move beyond policy and outputs to understand how culture and practice is adapting and how it needs to be strengthened."









When planning, revisit your processes, technologies, and operations to ensure that you're setting your teams up for success regardless of their location, enabling them to work in the way that's best for them. Ask yourself questions like:

- What purpose do all of my team's processes serve?
- Can any process be streamlined, optimized, or eliminated?
- What tool(s) are my teams using the most and why?
- Is the technology they're using helping or hindering them?





Goal-setting: Three areas to focus your efforts



When creating plans and implementing process improvement changes, it helps to focus on these items first:

Strategic and operational planning

Planning is the first area you should focus on, as it will ensure that you have a reliable foundation in place to organize your work.

Start with your strategic plan, as it will inform the operational plan. If you begin with outlining operational plans before a complete strategy is in place, you'll find those plans will feel directionless. Move the dial on your strategic initiatives and achieve business results by ensuring that every program, project, and activity is connected in some way to your organization's overall strategy.

Collaborative execution

Collaborative execution requires ongoing and effective communication between teams and 24/7 transparency into project completion status. For collaborative execution to work, teams rely on each other to complete tasks and hand projects off on time.

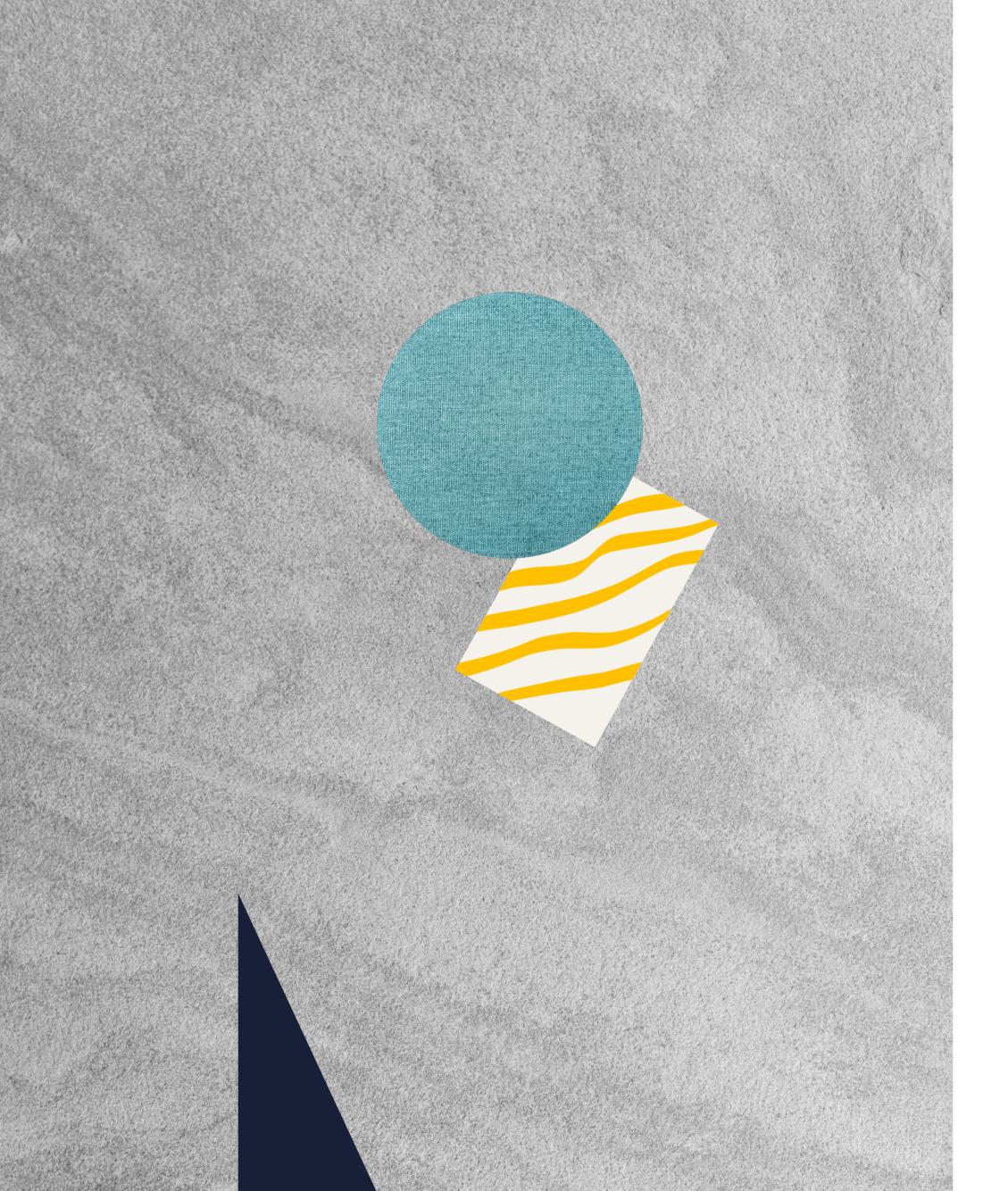
Begin improving collaborative execution by aligning your team around a shared vision and purpose. Then, reinforce the idea of collaboration in all communications to your team and in your execution plans.











Efficient communication

Efficient communication is much easier in theory than many teams find it in practice. It's important to be intentional about communication and create a comfortable environment for it.

To do that, demonstrate examples of effective communication in your interactions with your team. Provide clear information, practice active listening, and handle conflicts with diplomacy. Make sure to also provide a single channel of communication, or one source of truth, where project changes take place.







Top five PMO pain points and how Wrike can resolve them



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Pain point

Connecting portfolio strategy to project execution and deliverables.

PMOs spend a lot of time planning out portfolios but can't close the gap between planning and execution. Without this connection, they lack clear visibility into everyday activities and cross-team initiatives, leading to gaps that leave critical tasks unattended.

Wrike solution

Wrike gives PMOs advanced analytics dashboards that show project, program, or portfolio progress. With one click, pull up a dynamic real-time visual report that breaks down how you're doing with budget, risks, status, and which OKRs each initaitives rolls up to. Drill down further to the most granular level of detail and make informed decisions to help stear the team back on the right direction.

Pain point

Collaborating with other teams while maintaining confidentiality.

PMO leaders need to keep cross-team initiatives separate to ensure the privacy of confidential activities. They also need to track the progress of each team's activities at all times.

Wrike solution

Wrike gives PMO teams full control of how they organize initiatives and who can access them. Leaders can limit access to portfolios, projects, folders, or even tasks to only the team members who need to work on them - while still getting full visibility into progress on all activities.

Pain point

Coordinating and prioritizing new work requests.

PMOs' processes are often very disconnected with too many requests coming in from all over the place via Slack, email, a tap on a shoulder, phone calls, and Zoom meetings. With many communication channels, PMOs spend a lot of time trying to piece the full story together, which delays execution. It's too confusing to know which initiative is highest priority, and which strategic goals they support.

Wrike solution

Eliminate the chaos and bring harmony back to your project teams across the entire PMO. In Wrike, you can standardize how your process should work, with customizable request forms that streamline how new ideas and projects get initiated, planned, and executed on. Each form helps ensure the right details and data points are captured in the project charter every time. Plus, our custom forms are part of easy-to-configure workflows that match your end-to-end portfolio/ program/project needs.

Pain point

Communicating progress to leadership.

PMOs need to provide weekly or even daily updates on program progress to C-suite leadership, with full confidence that status updates and KPIs tell an accurate story.

Wrike solution

Walk into leadership meetings with confidence by having full visibility of how all initiatives across your PMO are progressing. Wrike's custom fields and one-of-a-kind <u>Custom Item Types</u> help you track and group work by any type of custom attribute, budget, deliverable type, company OKR, total weight, score, and more. Then, our executive-ready dashboards can show the status of the portfolio and critical initiatives in a digestible format, based on the actual progress of active tasks. This allows PMOs to have strategic conversations with C-suite leadership and showcase their proven success.

Pain point

Monitoring portfolio health and pivoting.

Monitoring a complex portfolio of parallel and interconnected initiatives is necessary. and often tricky, for any PMO. A missed milestone or bottleneck in one program can trigger issues that put the organization's progress at risk.

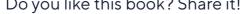
Wrike solution

In Wrike, PMOs have access to Gantt chart view, which gives them oversight into how work stacks up and how dependencies might impact overall milestone dates. Furthermore, advanced analytics dashboards offer powerful visuals that show project, program, and portfolio progress, rolled up from the task and subtask level. These dynamic dashboards highlight activities critical to key milestones as well as any KPIs that are unique to the business.



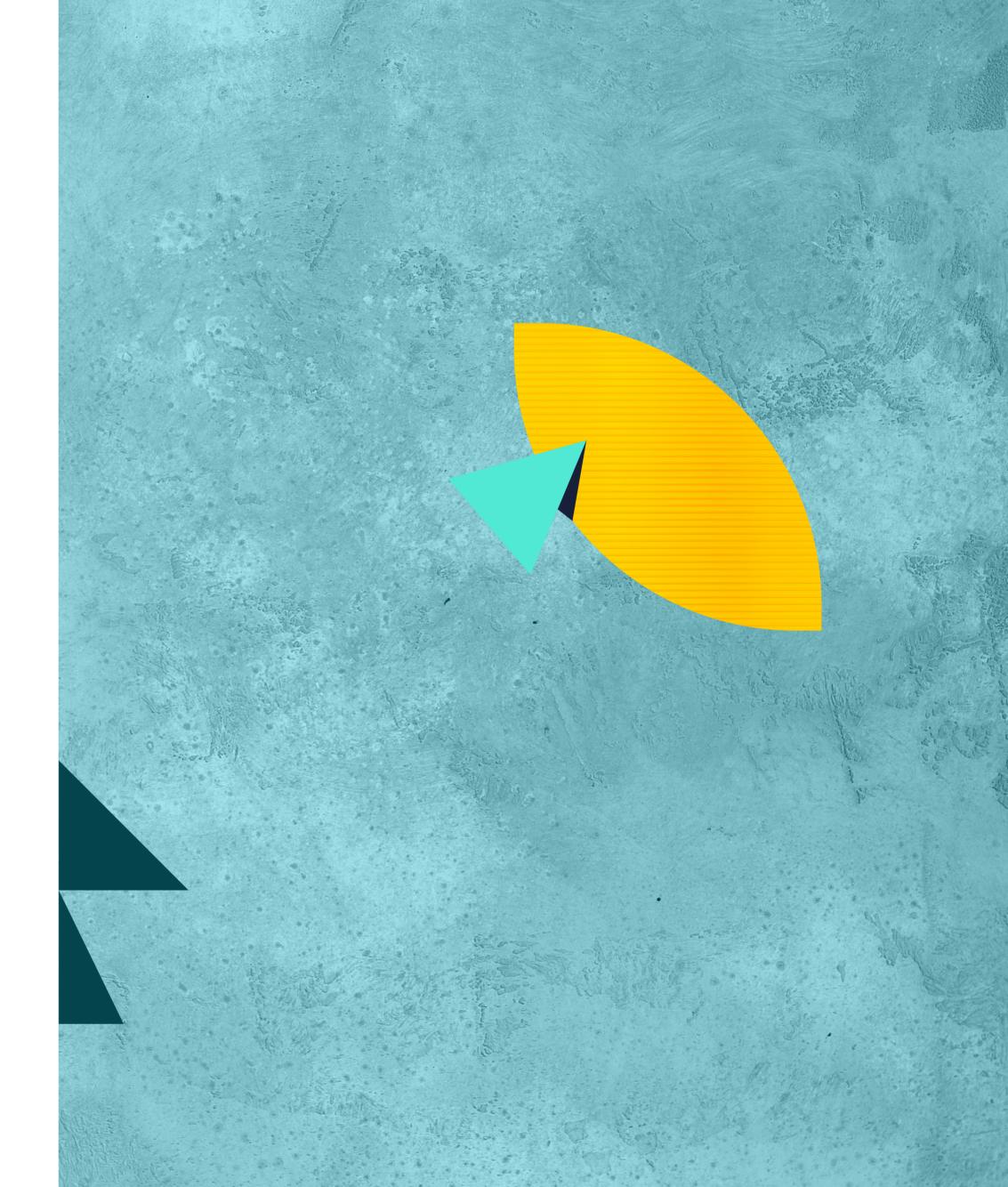






What's next?

Wrike's capabilities for PMO teams were inspired by best practices from thousands of Wrike users across more than one million projects, processes, and activities. Our platform offers templates, custom workflows, and powerful business intelligence dashboards suited for your unique needs. With it, you can confidently make decisions based on real data and ensure every PMO activity is aligned with your organization's strategic goals.









Learn more about how Wrike can help your teams excel by contacting us today!

Try Wrike