The Human Advantage

Leading High-Performing Projects in an AI-Driven Workplace



Use AI to Increase Your Capacity.
Use EI to Increase Your Impact.



Interactive Workshop | 45 Minutes



PMI Talent Triangle Alignment: Ways of Working | Business Acumen | Power Skills



Venice Henderson | Life Design Specialist | Certified EQ-i Practitioner | Project Leadership Professional

Why This Workshop Matters

Session Premise

AI is changing project work

- Analyzes information and identifies patterns
- Automates routine work and accelerates decisions
- Generates options, drafts, and insights



Central Message

**AI can accelerate the work.
EI strengthens the leadership.
Business acumen keeps both focused on value.**

Project success still depends on people

- Human judgment and accountability
- Stakeholder engagement and trust
- Communication, conflict, and change leadership
- Delivering value in complex environments

Project professionals create the greatest value when they integrate technology, judgment, relationships, and business context.

Learning Objectives



By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

1 1. Ways of Working



Differentiate project activities that are best suited for AI automation, AI augmentation, or human-led decision-making.

2 2. Power Skills



Apply emotional intelligence techniques to situations involving pressure, conflict, stakeholder resistance, or change.

3 3. Business Acumen



Evaluate project decisions through the lens of strategy, stakeholder value, risk, tradeoffs, and organizational outcomes.

4 4. Integrated Application



Use the P.A.U.S.E. Framework to move from reaction to intentional project leadership.

The goal is not just to work faster with AI, but to lead better and deliver greater value.

Ways of Working: Work Smarter

Choose the right approach for the work

Automate

- Meeting notes and status summaries
- Routine reporting
- First-draft documentation
- Administrative follow-up

Augment

- Risk identification
- Scenario generation
- Data analysis
- Forecasting support

Human-Led

- Stakeholder conversations
- Tradeoff decisions
- Conflict resolution
- Ethical judgment
- Change leadership

The strongest project professional is not the person who uses AI for everything.
It is the person who knows where AI creates value and where human judgment creates more value.

Power Skills: Lead Better Under Pressure

Emotional intelligence in action

High-impact power skills

- Self-awareness
- Self-regulation
- Empathy
- Communication
- Influence
- Adaptability
- Conflict management
- Collaborative leadership

Project moment

- AI-supported analysis shows the current deadline is unrealistic.
- The sponsor resists the message.
- The team is frustrated.
- A key stakeholder questions the analysis.

What happens next?



AI may help determine what the data says.
Emotional intelligence helps determine how to lead people through what the data means.

READ THE ROOM: The Project Is Green… But Is It?

Interactive scenario • AI + EI + project leadership

AI **AI HAS ANALYZED THE PROJECT.** › EI **NOW YOU HAVE TO LEAD THE PEOPLE.**

Your challenge: identify the human signal before it becomes project data.

AUDIENCE PROMPT **What can a dashboard know — and what can it miss?**

Facilitator: 30–45 sec

AI Reads the Project

You are Marcus. Your AI project assistant gives you a reassuring assessment.

SCHEDULE
92% on plan

BUDGET
3% under forecast

DESIGN
95% complete

PROCUREMENT
✓ major POs issued

OPEN RISKS
4 logged

SAFETY
0 incidents

AI **AI PROJECT ASSISTANT** **“Current data indicates LOW risk of significant delay.”**

Ask: What would you trust — and what would you verify?

You're Marcus. Lead the Status Meeting.

AI says LOW delay risk. Now listen to the people delivering the project.

1	**DANIELLE** Scheduler	Normally detailed and outspoken. Today: "Yep. Schedule looks fine." Then she goes quiet.
2	**ANDRE** Construction Lead	Leans back: "If engineering says they're 95% complete, I guess we're 95% complete."
3	**PRIYA** Engineering Lead	Immediately: "My team has completed everything we've been given."

THE ROOM GOES QUIET.

What do you notice — and what do you do next?

Pause before revealing choices

Read the Humans

A signal is not a conclusion. It is an invitation to investigate.

1. **BASELINE** — What is normal?
2. **CHANGE** — What shifted?
3. **CLUSTER** — What else changed?
4. **CONTEXT** — What happened around it?
5. **QUESTION** — What can I ask?
6. **VERIFY** — What evidence follows?

WHAT CHANGED?

- Danielle's behavior deviated from her baseline.
- Andre qualified his agreement: "If engineering says..."
- Priya qualified completion: "everything we've been given."

NOT PROOF.

A cluster worth exploring.

Teach: observation ≠ interpretation

You're Marcus. What Do You Say Next?

Vote A, B, or C.

A "Danielle, are we going to miss the date?"

Direct — but invites a yes/no defense.

B "Okay. Let's keep moving."

Efficient — but leaves the signal unexplored.

C **"I'm hearing we're technically on plan, but I'm noticing some hesitation. What aren't we discussing that could affect October?"**

Observation + curiosity + psychological safety.

Audience vote + 60-sec debrief

The Human Signal Becomes Project Intelligence

The dashboard wasn't wrong. It was incomplete.

DANIELLE

"We're green because the IFC package isn't due for three weeks — but construction is consuming the available float."

ANDRE

"The field team found something Friday that could require a redesign."

PRIYA

"Engineering is 95% complete against the current scope. We haven't received the field condition yet."



✓ **HUMAN OBSERVATION → BETTER QUESTION → EARLIER RISK IDENTIFICATION**

Reveal after audience chooses

Which EQ Skills Protected the Project?

Emotional intelligence becomes a project-control capability.

1 **EMPATHY**
Notice discomfort without dismissing it.

2 **REALITY TESTING**
Ask what evidence might contradict the dashboard.

3 **IMPULSE CONTROL**
Resist rushing, defending, or closing the topic.

4 **EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION**
Make concerns speakable.

5 **INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS**
Build enough trust for bad news to surface.

6 **PROBLEM SOLVING**
Convert the human signal into action.

EI **EI is not decoration around project management. It helps surface risk before the system can measure it.**

Connect to EQ-i 2.0

The Human Advantage

Marcus needs both: AI to see more, and EI to understand what the data cannot yet tell him.

AI READS THE DATA

- Patterns
- Variance
- Forecasts
- Dependencies
- Historical signals

LEADERS READ THE ROOM

- Context
- Hesitation
- Trust
- Unspoken risk
- Meaning

AI + EI = AUGMENTED LEADERSHIP

What is sitting inside your project team right now that has not made it onto your dashboard yet?

Let the final question sit for 10 seconds

Business Acumen: Deliver What Matters

Move from project activity to organizational value



Key question

Are we solving the project problem, or creating the right business outcome?

Old question: Are we on schedule?

Better question: Are we still creating the outcome the organization needs?

The P.A.U.S.E. Framework

A practical tool for intentional project leadership



Ways of Working | Power Skills | Business Acumen

Move from emotional reaction to intentional leadership.

Your Human Advantage Toolkit

What participants will take away



1. Automate | Augment | Human-Led

A simple decision guide for choosing how AI should participate in the work.



2. P.A.U.S.E.

A practical framework for moving from reaction to intentional project leadership.



3. The Value Lens

A checklist for connecting project decisions to strategy, stakeholders, risk, benefits, and business impact.



ACTION COMMITMENT

The next time AI gives me an answer, before I act I will _____.

About the Speaker

Venice Henderson

- Life Design Specialist
- Certified EQ-i Practitioner
- Project leadership professional
- Experience managing a $500 million construction portfolio
- Helps leaders optimize people, processes, and technology
- Connects data, emotional intelligence, and human judgment to stronger project outcomes

> *Technology can change how we work.*
> *People determine how well we work together.*



Questions?

