

From Tool Obsession to People Leadership in Project Controls

Speaker Name:

Michael Lepage

Plan Academy Inc.



Who I am



Michael Lepage, PMP

Chief Learning Officer & Founder – Plan Academy

I've been teaching project controls topics since 2006. I founded Plan Academy in 2013, and I've written and recorded hundreds of tutorials on planning and scheduling, Primavera P6 Professional, and project controls. I'm also a member of AACE.

I'm a trainer, YouTuber, author, and advocate for better project controls.

I want to help train the next generation of project leaders.

Courses that leave a mark



**CRITICAL PATH
METHODOLOGY**

**Scheduling 101:
Essential CPM Theory**

 Michael Lepage
 1.5 Hours

★★★★★



P6 Foundations

**Primavera P6 PRO
Foundations**

 Michael Lepage
 20+ Hours

★★★★★



P6 Advanced

**Advanced P6 Planning
Construction Projects**

 Michael Lepage
 7 Hours

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**Advanced P6
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ScheduleReader™

**Analyze P6 Schedules
with ScheduleReader**

 Michael Lepage
 2.5+ Hours

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Power BI

**Power BI Foundations
for Project Controls**

 Yash Desai
 3 Hours

★★★★★



P Microsoft Project

**MSP for Engineering
and Construction**

 Faraz Khan
 7 Hours

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**LIVE Forensic Schedule
Delay Analysis**

 Tyler Konter
 8 Hours

★★★★★



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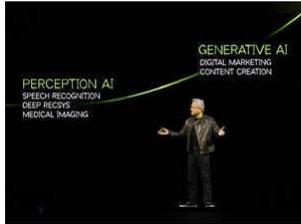
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2022

AI Mania News

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Jensen Huang, Nvidia CEO: Humanoid robots to roam around in five years

Nvidia's CEO, Jensen Huang, believes that humanoid robots will be widely used in factories in less than five years.



Manus AI - First Autonomous AI Agent?

China Launches Manus: The First Truly Autonomous AI Agent That Can Manage Other Agents



Google Gemini now Sees and Understands in Real-Time

Google Takes AI to the Next Level: Gemini Will Analyze Live Video and See Your Phone Screen



Perplexity AI's Deep Research available for free



OpenAI's Ambitious Roadmap: From \$5 Billion Losses to \$100 Billion Revenue by 2029

OpenAI, the company behind ChatGPT, is currently navigating significant financial challenges despite its rapid growth and ambitious revenue projections.



Mark Zuckerberg Announces the End of Mobile Phones

Meta's CEO, Mark Zuckerberg, believes that smart glasses will soon become the dominant platform. This bold prediction has sparked intense debates among industry experts and consumers.



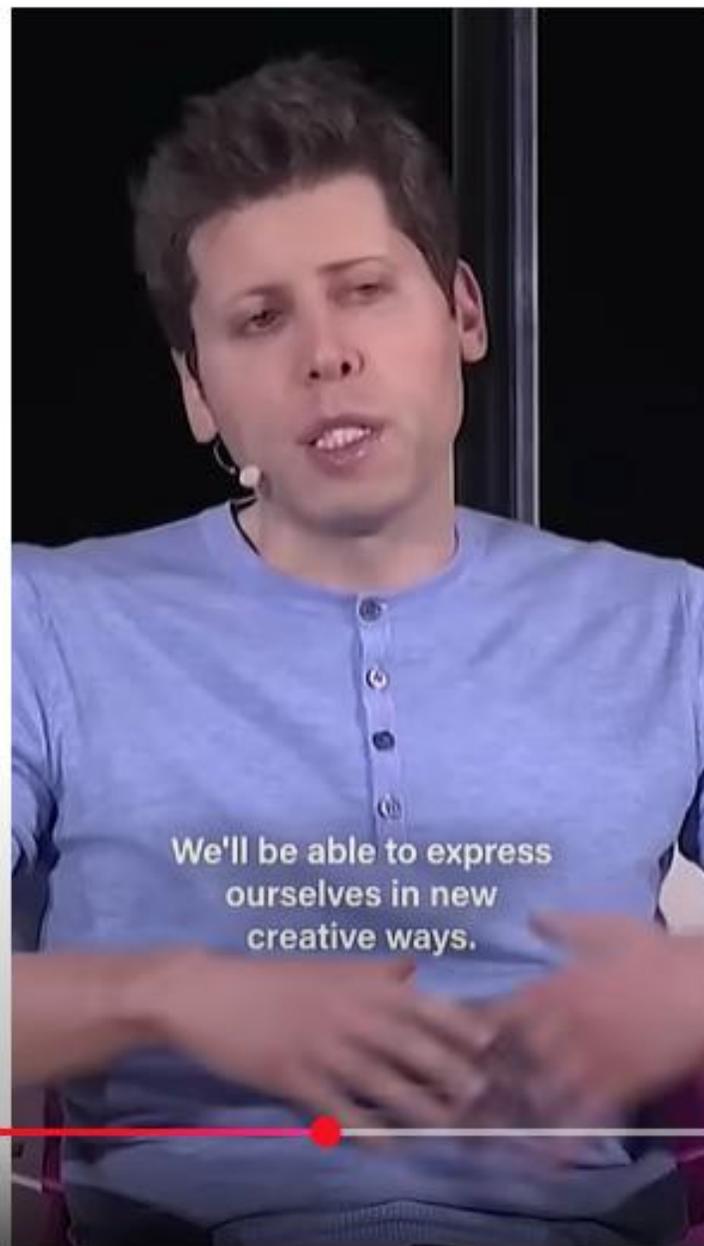
Sora Has Arrived: OpenAI's Game-Changing New AI

OpenAI has officially launched Sora, its innovative text-to-video AI generator, on December 9, 2024.



Elon Musk tries to stop OpenAI from becoming a for-profit company

Elon Musk has recently taken significant legal action against OpenAI, aiming to halt its transition from a nonprofit to a for-profit entity. Here are the key details surrounding this development.



We'll be able to express ourselves in new creative ways.



0:42 / 1:28



If AI takes over, at least us humans will have more "me time" ...right? #DailyShow

Hi Michael,

Your looks great—are you looking for ways to make faster and more engaging?

Arlo's AI-powered platform lets you build interactive e-learning—quizzes, flashcards, and more—in minutes. It also handles the admin: registrations, payments, and certificates.

Open to a quick chat to show you how it works?

Best,

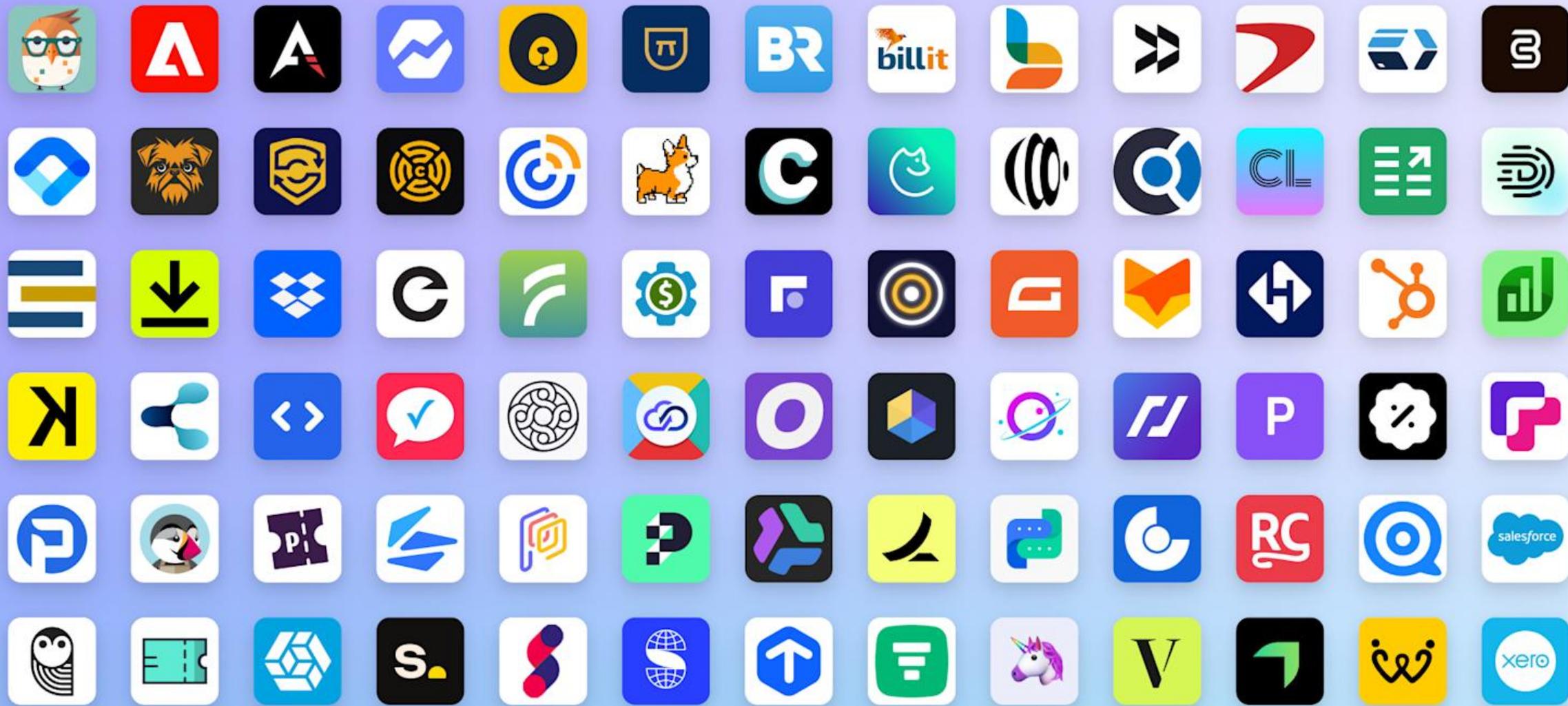
Ereen Yongca

Sales Representative

Arlo - Training Management Software



Tool Obsession





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Credit: dusanpetkovic

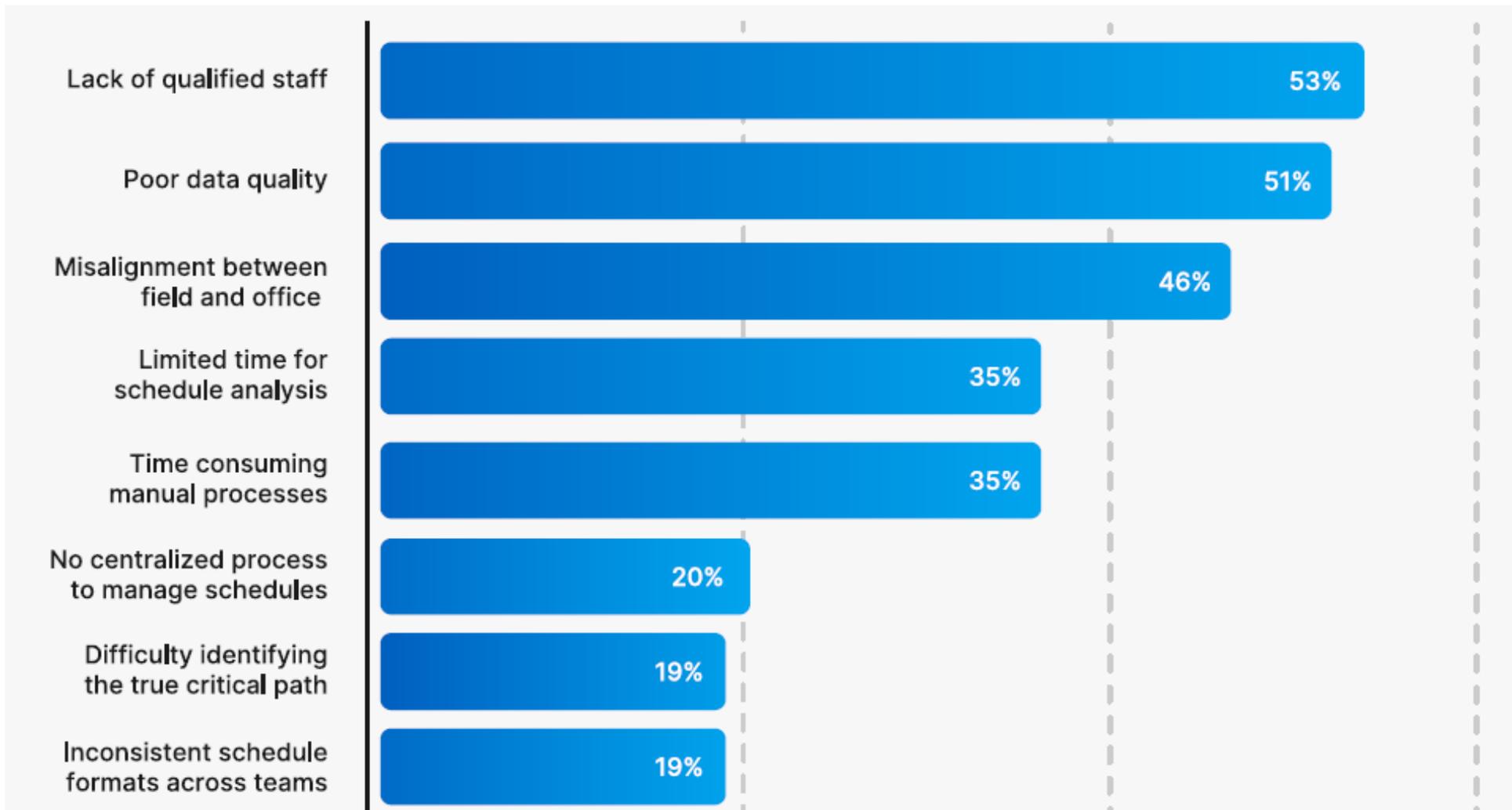
**What if people mattered more
than the plan?**

“Culture eats strategy for breakfast.”

– Peter Drucker

“When change initiatives fail (and they do so more often than not) they rarely fail on technical skills (hard skills), they fail on the **people skills**.”

– David A Shore, Harvard Business Review



53% of 3500 survey respondents say a lack skilled, knowledgeable project controls staff is the biggest challenge to overcome.

--2025 State of Construction Scheduling Report - SmartPM

Finding #2: Confidence is High. Performance is Not.

When we asked the industry to rate their team's schedule literacy, the average answer was 3.6 out of 5 – indicating people feel pretty confident about scheduling. However, when we looked into performance data, the reality didn't match the perception.

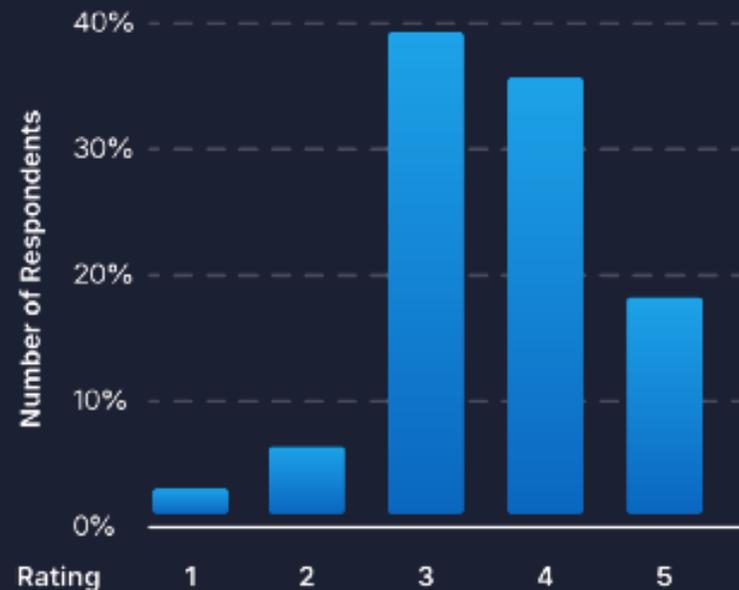
Out of 70,000 CPM schedules we analyzed, only 12% met best-practice quality standards, leaving 88% falling short. This suggests most teams are working with schedules that don't meet the structural criteria needed to manage a job effectively.

| Are we defining "schedule literacy" too narrowly?

So, what's behind the disconnect? It seems many teams equate schedule literacy with software fluency – for instance, knowing how to build or update in tools like P6 or MS Project.

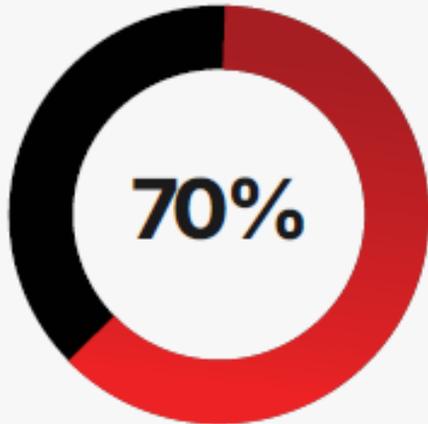
But real literacy requires a working knowledge of critical path methodology, logic relationships, float behavior, and how the schedule reflects project risk over time. These skills aren't always taught. And in the pressure of live project delivery, there's rarely time to step back and question assumptions.

How Would You Rate Your Team's Overall Schedule Literacy?

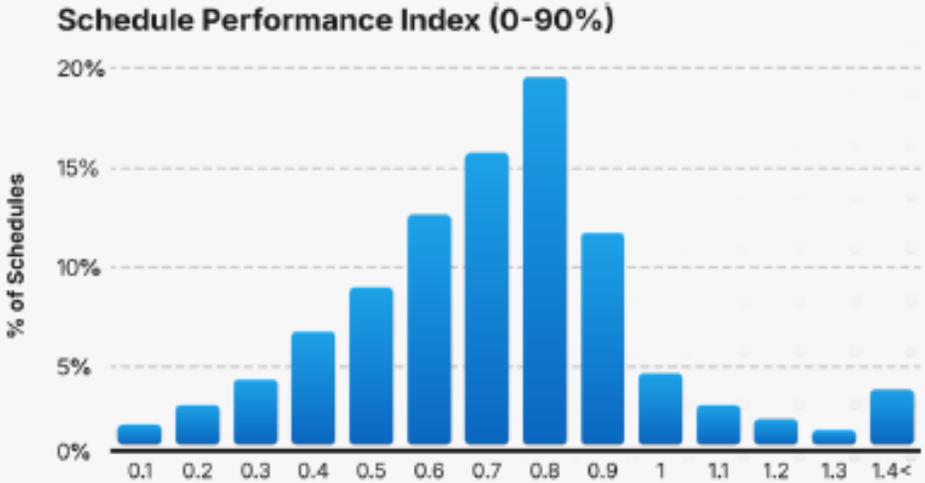


Source: SmartPM Industry Survey

Finding #2: Confidence is High. Performance is Not.



Over 70% of projects fail to meet baseline expectations (SPI < 0.90)



Over 70% of projects in our dataset missed their schedule targets (SPI < 0.90). This isn't just due to problems in the field - it's often because the schedules themselves aren't set up properly from the start.

Many schedules may look complete on the surface, but under the hood, they lack the structure needed to truly control the work. This can create extra float – making it seem like there's more time than there really is. That false sense of flexibility leads teams to delay action ("kick the can down the road") and makes it harder to fix issues in time.

When the schedule doesn't reflect real production rates or the true critical and near-critical paths, teams end up focusing on the wrong activities. They may think they're staying on track, but the data shows otherwise. Over time, as the schedule becomes less accurate, it stops being a tool to drive the job and starts just recording delays.

Source: SmartPM Schedule Analysis

Before the Tech, There's Training

Survey Insight

The biggest barrier to adopting AI or automation in scheduling isn't budget or complexity; it's a lack of awareness and training, cited by 35% of professionals as the top obstacle.

The tools exist. The data exists. But without shared standards and consistent training, scheduling practices vary widely, and the full potential of automation is harder to realize.

Even experienced teams face challenges manually reviewing schedules at today's scale and pace. That's why technology and training must go hand in hand: one supports smarter data, the other empowers smarter decisions.

Culture Over Courses

Organizations often assume that giving people access to training solves the problem. But real change takes more than logins.

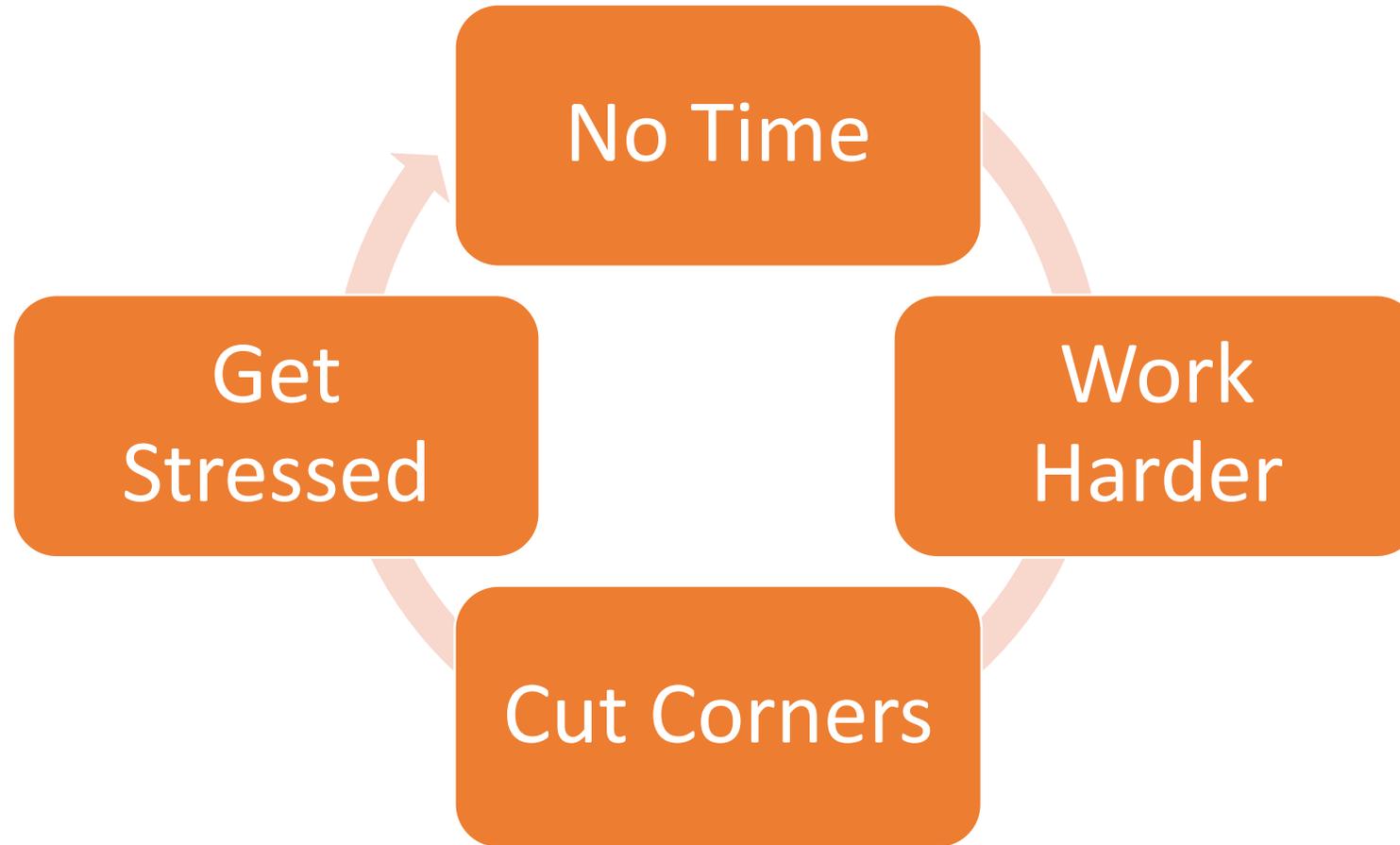
Skills matter—but so does mindset.

Teams need clear expectations, a shared language, and steady reinforcement from leadership. When that happens, better habits take root, and better project outcomes follow.

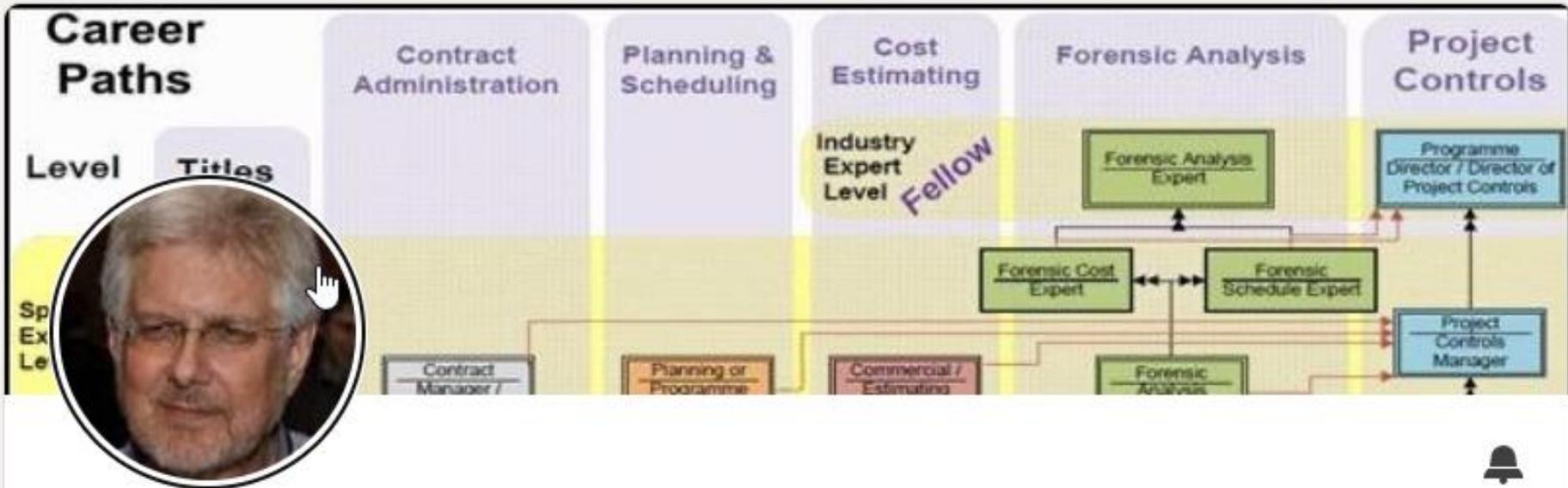
Improving scheduling isn't as simple as handing out logins to the latest course. Organizations need to champion good scheduling practices and create a culture that promotes them.



Michael Lepage
CEO of Plan Academy



This is why we become obsession with technology that promises so much.



Chris Carson FRICS, FAACE, FGPC, PSP, DRMP, CEP, CCM, PMP

· 1st

Enterprise Director of Program & Project Controls, and Vice President at Arcadis

Virginia Beach, Virginia, United States · [Contact info](#)

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Quick P6 baseline question for you >



Hi Chris,

I hope you are well. I heard from Raf a while back that he's coming this way in July. I'm sure you guys are planning to meetup. Not sure if I'll be around or not. Hopefully so.

Really quick question: Update Baseline in P6

Let's say a project has a change request and a few new activities are added to the forward schedule. a) Does it make sense to update your original (unprogressed) baseline with such a scope change? b) OR (my opinion) isn't it more sound to rebaseline from the current progress schedule, including any CR work in the rebaseline?

I'm asking because people seem to be struggling alot with P6 "Update Baseline" feature because they want new scope added to the original baseline schedule (a).

But, correct me if I'm wrong, don't we simply leave the original baseline as it was, and rebaseline from a current progress schedule, incorporating new CR or scope there (b).

If I'm right here, then why are folks struggling so much with the "Update Baseline" feature? Is there another reason?

Thanks so much for your help. I'm sure you're questioned like this all the time. I know I am for P6 things. ;)

Regards,
Michael



Carson, Chris

to me ▾

Michael:

I'm doing well and trust you are as well. You are correct with a couple of caveats, and one is that the federal government has created a mess in the way the defense industry schedules. They want to maintain a contract position with the re-baselined schedule so they can have a consistent PMB and that's used on programs that utilize formal 748-EIA Earned Value. But it really sucks to have to manage with that approach and not that much of the rest of the world operates that way.

My position on Re-Baselining is that the original Baseline Schedule should remain always and only as the benchmark for the contract cost and time, so I do want to see it Re-Baselined for cost and duration only. That is important since too often the scheduler and maybe the CM just doesn't really know their contract duration and often the cost. So we cost load the Baseline to match the contract, then whenever we get a change order for cost or time, I like to take that original Baseline and Re-Baseline it by adding activities solely to house the change order cost and time. With this process, we can always target back to the Re-Baselined Schedule to compare the contract. That does mean a bit of a process, such as:

- If there is just one completion milestone or phase, add one activity between the Substantial Completion milestone and any predecessors with the correct duration and cost
- If there are multiple milestones or phases, add one activity per milestone or phase correction needed, such that they force the milestones to show the correct duration and cost total.

But my process would never add a fragnet to the Baseline and would not attempt to replicate the logic among a fragnet in that Baseline – it's simply adding cost and time to the contractual milestones. Trying to "show" the logic changes in the original Baseline is a very bad idea and in the forensic world, it would amount to creating a MIP 3.6, "Modeled/Additive/Single Base method, commonly called an Impacted-As Planned analysis. This IAP is the single analysis that is least likely to survive any formal dispute resolution forum, and could cause an expert to be disqualified. The reasons are the same reasons why it's not useful and why you want to use the most recent schedule update for your benchmark, primarily that the accuracy of the duration of any critical path delay gets much worse the further you get from the baseline date because the field means and methods change too much in almost all cases.

New scope added to the Baseline is a very bad idea and provides no useful perspective. It doesn't tell us what the schedule would have looked like if the impact is now added because the job conditions are not the same as when the Baseline was developed. It leads to poor analysis and confusion.

But the logic related to the changed condition must be modeled, ideally in the current schedule for future delays, done by making the revisions necessary to model the change as a TIA so it can show the impact of the changed condition. If the impact has already been absorbed into the schedule, I don't see a need to add the changed condition other than to make sure that it's clear when and how it impacted. If we do a forensic schedule analysis, in most cases, we use the actual dates to identify the "delayed" activity (often called the "causal" activity of delay but it's really the "caused" activity that was delayed), then we have to do the research to identify the "delay driver" so we can determine entitlement/responsibility. The research is made easier if the changed condition was added to the schedule but we start with the actual dates showing delays.

What makes it complicated is that the delay driver might be a predecessor to the delayed activity but it also might be just another activity in the schedule that was not linked to the delayed activity, or it might be some issue that is not in the schedule. If the changed condition fragnet is added to the schedule, it would make the research quicker and easier but my concern is that if the contractor adds a fragnet based on their gut feelings that it drove delays, there is a likelihood that their new fragnet will indeed drive delays. That tends to pervert the schedule, so I'd rather there is something in the documents that clearly explains the changed condition and the logic needed. If they performed a TIA for a predicted delay, than the TIA fragnet shows up in the schedule and helps explain the delay driver.

I have had some projects where we did let the contractor insert changed conditions fragnets into the previous month's completed schedule, all with actual dates, so as to generate a good history of the project in case of later disputes. But whenever we've allowed the contractor to insert fragnets into the updated schedules without first performing TIAs to identify excusable delays, it just clogs up the schedules and, and this is the real problem, the fragnets almost always become the delay drivers whether or not they are true drivers. This happens because they stick in longer fragnets that drive the critical path even if it's not legitimate. I have allowed contractors to include fragnets for changed conditions as long as they do not link the fragnet successors; that way they just ride in the schedule and can be updated as the activities are progressed. Makes for decent documentation and clarity about the changed conditions.

Sorry if that's long-winded but I hope that answers your question; in general you are right.

Chris Carson, FRICS, FAACE, FGPC, CCM, PMP, PSP, CEP, DRMP



“IT’S NOT PERSONAL, SONNY. IT’S STRICTLY BUSINESS.”

Types of Leaders



3 Types of Leaders

- The Overwhelmed Leader
- The Autocratic Leader
- The Laissez-Faire Leader

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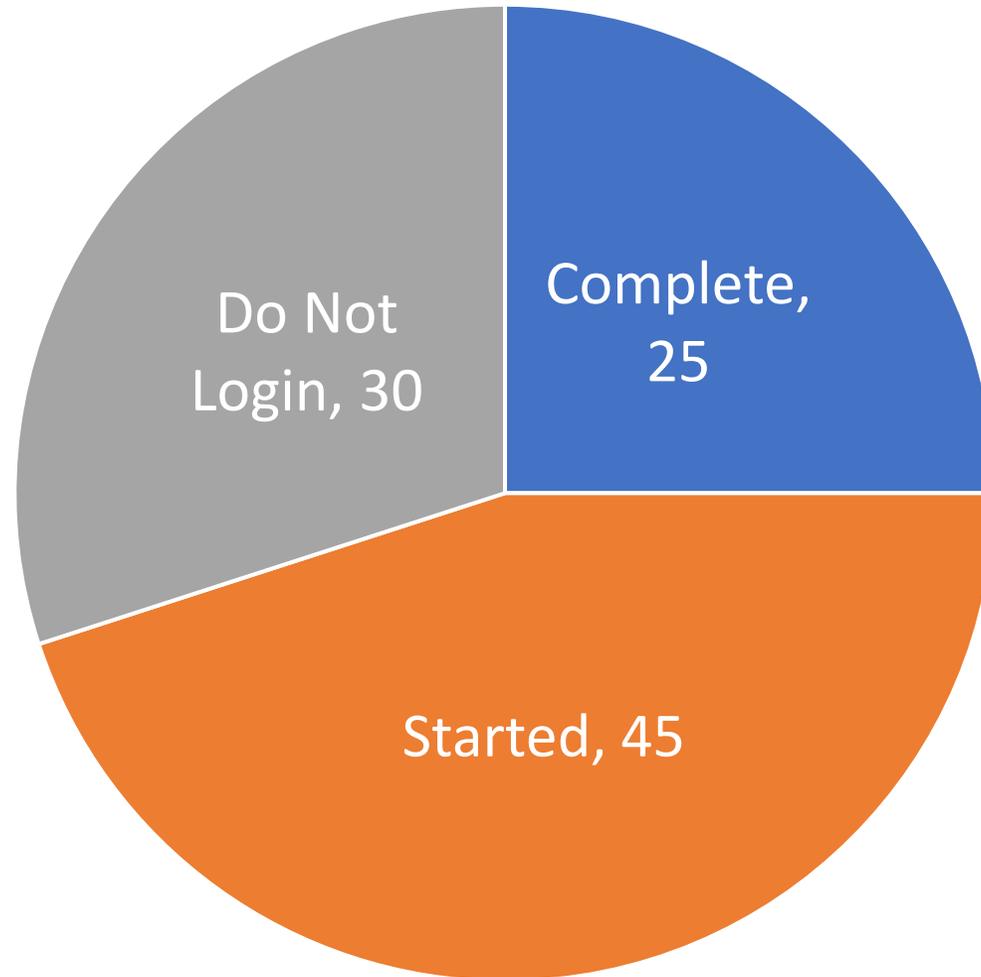
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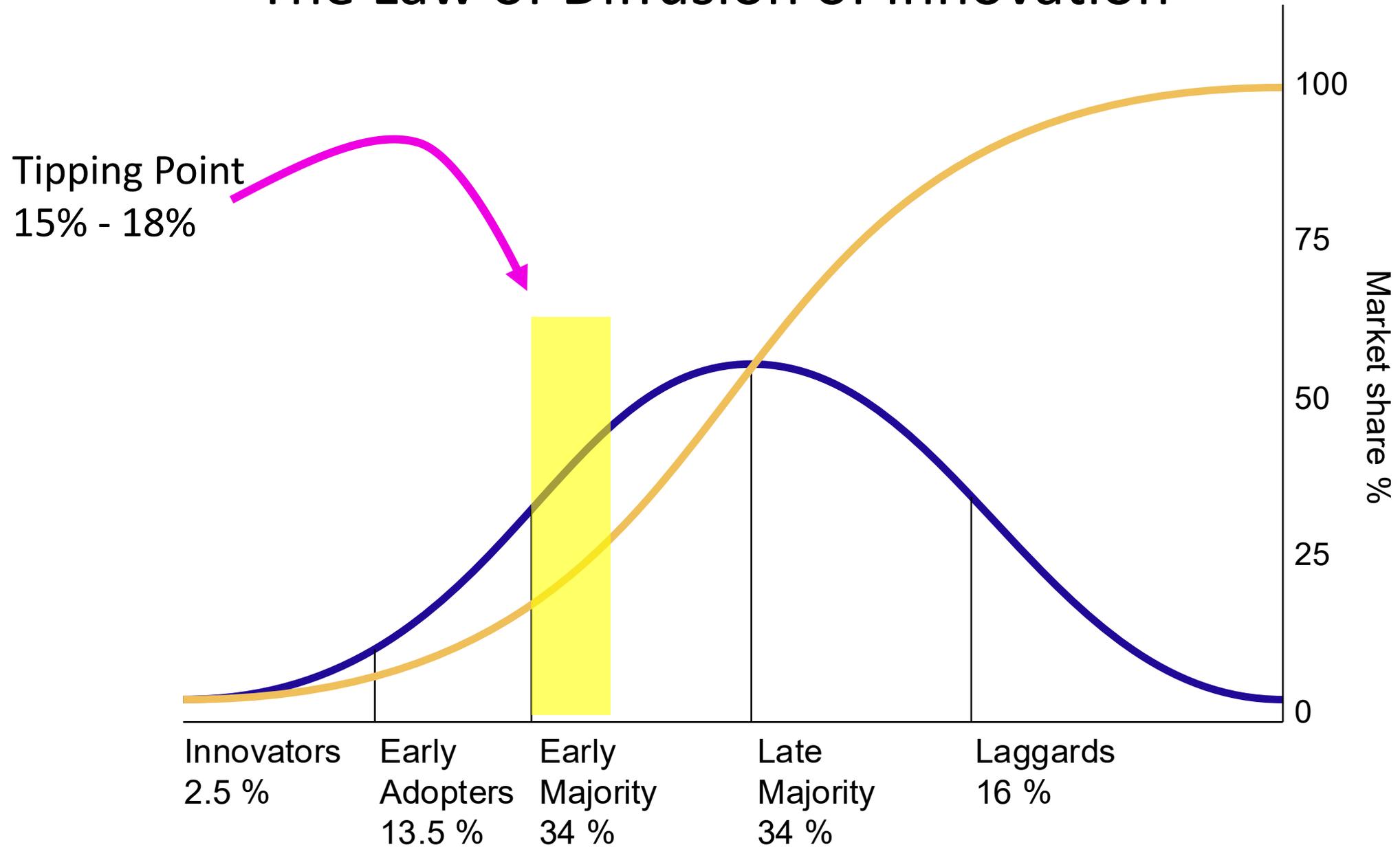
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Course Completions

- Complete
- Started
- Do Not Login



The Law of Diffusion of Innovation

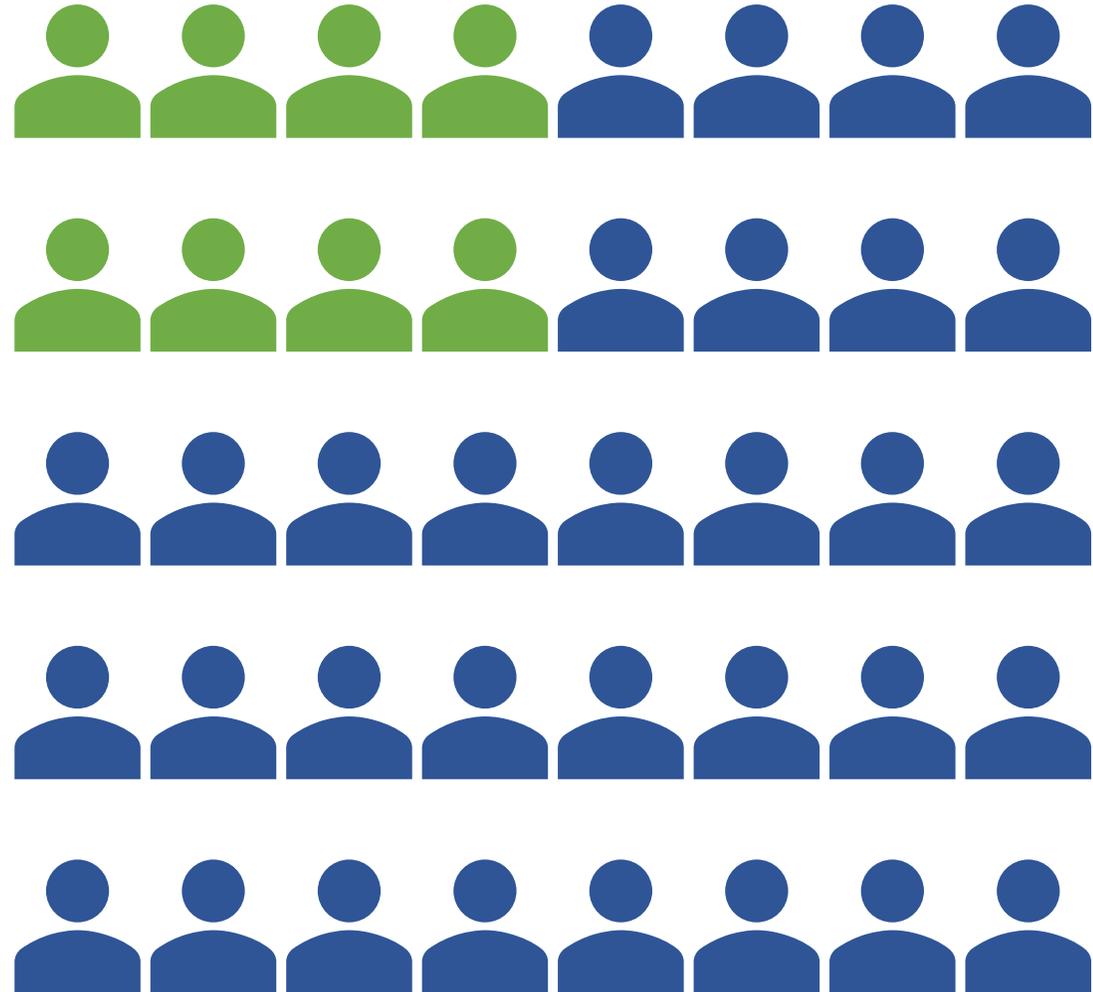


Strategic Leadership



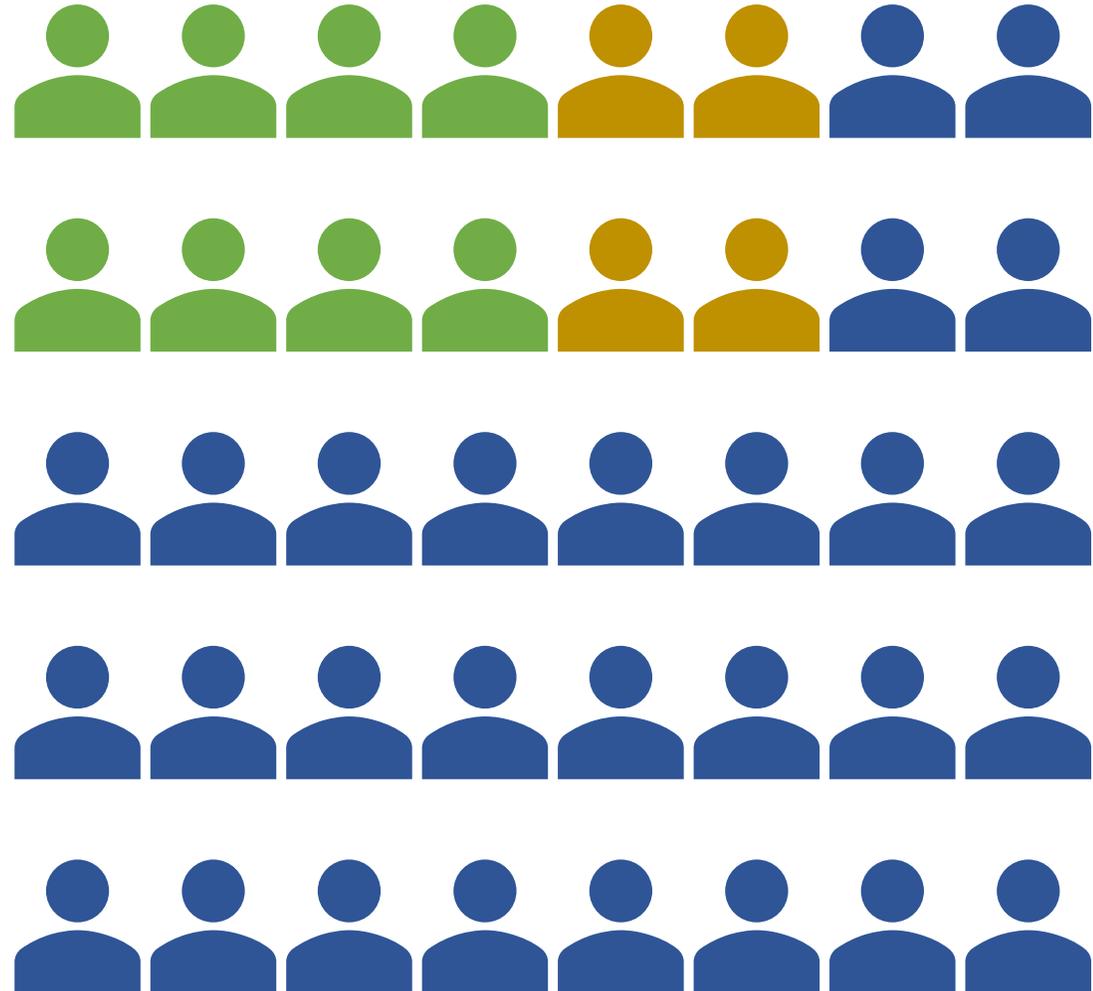
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1. Find Your Innovators + Early Adoptors
- Run a Pilot



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2. Create social Proof
 - Promote the wins



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 - show proof, lower risk.



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 - Shift language (“This is how we do it here.”)



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 - Don’t shame resistance — model patience.



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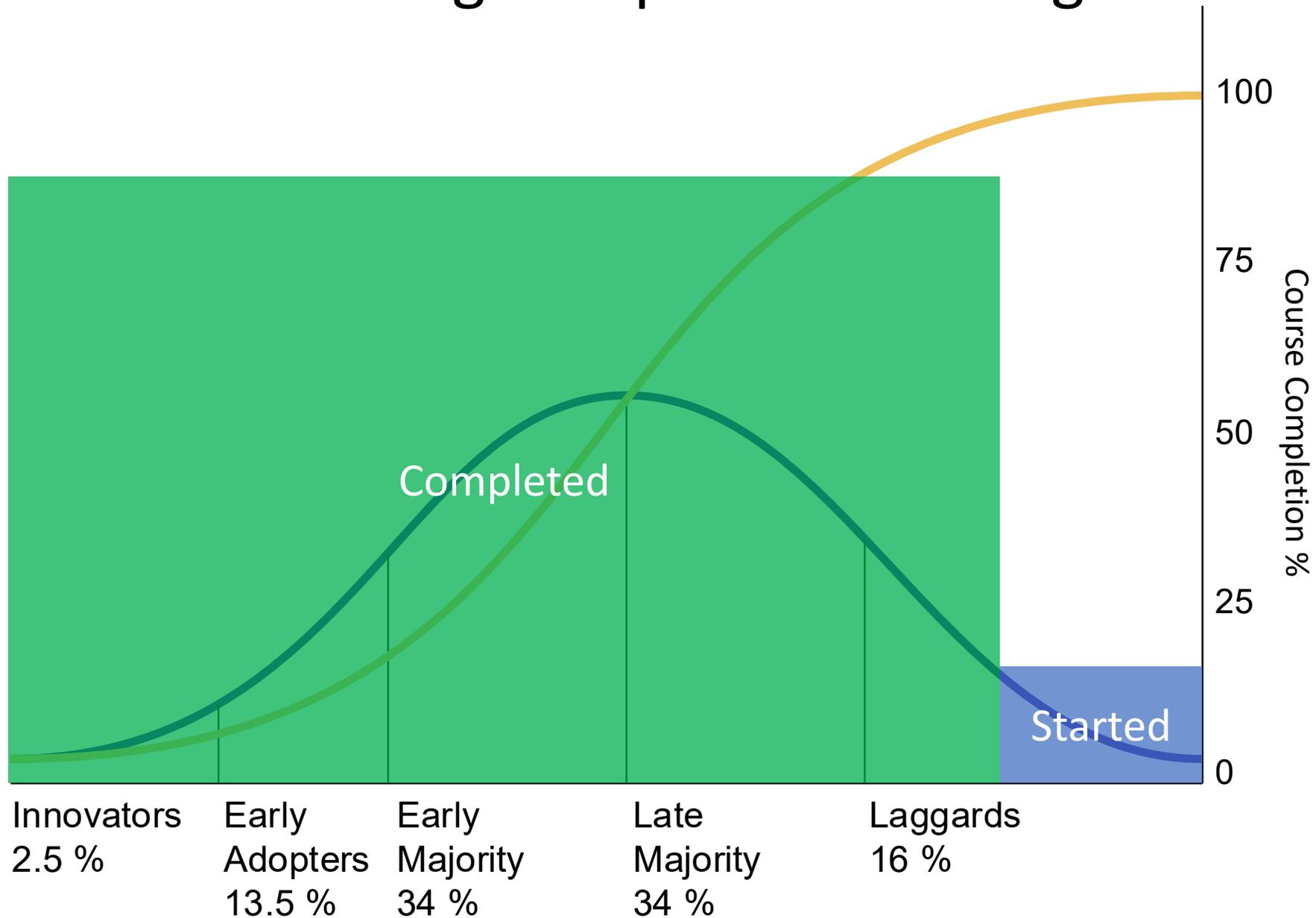


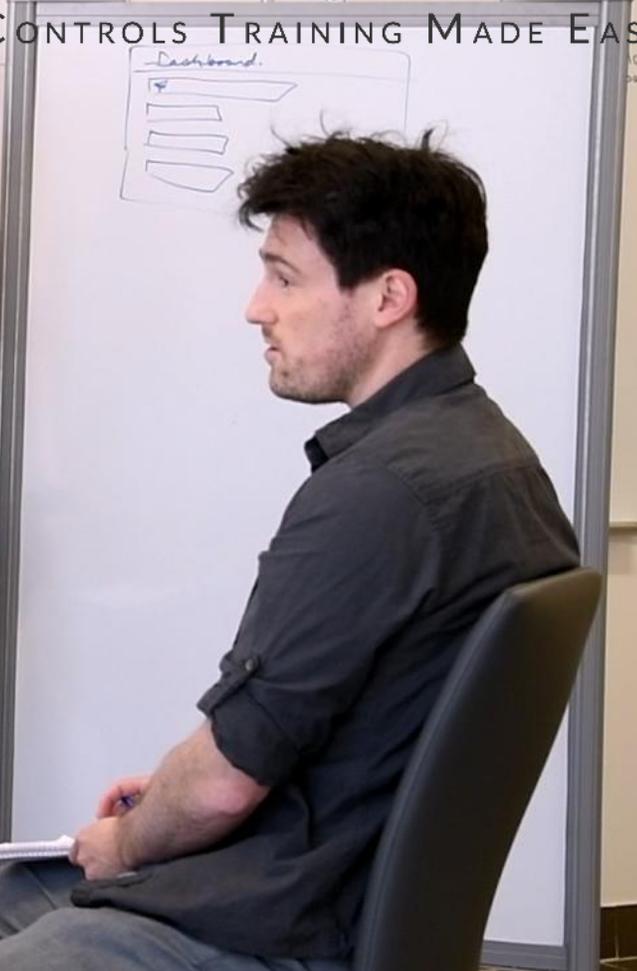
“When people are financially invested, they want a return.

When people are emotionally invested, they want to contribute.”

– Simon Sinek, author of *Leaders Eat Last*

Uncommon Training Completions for Organizations





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