

Interview with Mustafa Hafizoğlu

President, PMI Turkey Chapter
Program Director, SDT Space & Defense Technologies Co.



Interviewed by İpek Sahra Özgüler
Istanbul, Turkey

Mustafa Hafizoğlu, PMP® is President of PMI Turkey Chapter; Program Director at SDT Space & Defence Technologies Co., visiting instructor at Middle East Technical University having 20 years of experience in hardware and software development projects, especially on aerospace and defense industry. He established the PMO at SDT Space and Defense Tech. and managed the PMO for three years.

Mustafa is cofounder of the PMI Turkey Chapter and was Board Member between 2007 and 2012. He had 7 years volunteer experience at PMI and PMI Turkey Chapter at various areas from certification to standards. His last global volunteer experience is being Core Team member for PMI's Governance of Projects, Programs, and Portfolios: A Practice Guide.

Mustafa Hafizoglu is co-author of the book: Project Management Analytical Approaches. He's also a speaker at PMI Global congresses and various international seminars.

Note: this interview was conducted after the 2017 PMI Turkey Chapter's PM Summit conference in Ankara.

İpek Sahra Özgüler (Özgüler): *Good morning Mustafa. Overall, how was the PM Summit for you this year?*

Mustafa Hafizoğlu (Hafizoğlu): 20 Sponsors, 34 Speakers, 620 Attendees... Although the numbers imply the large scale of this Summit in Ankara by Turkey Chapter, the impact was even higher. This was one of Europe's largest PM summits and attendees felt the value of human factors in project management.

Ozguler: *What were the highlights in the PM summit?*

Hafizoğlu: First of all the summit was able to cover all sectors from IT to Construction; Aerospace and Defence to Energy with attendees over 50 different companies. So there occurred a huge synergy due to the sharing of different industries which was one of the main goals of this summit.

For the first time, Turkey Chapter collaborated with different NGOs for this summit. SASAD (Defence and Aerospace Industry Manufacturers Association) informed and recommended the summit to all of its member companies; PERYON (People Management Association of Turkey) not only informed and recommended the summit to all of its 4.000 members but also organized a panel with Human Resources Directors of 4 different international companies and the president of this association presented how to delegate in one of the sessions. Hence the Turkey Chapter was able to insert the strong sides of different associations into this summit which is a completely different success story and may be a model for all conferences.

And for the first time, Turkey Chapter collaborated with University Student Clubs for this summit. METU (Middle East Technical University) Statistics Club formed and collected and analyzed the summit surveys completely.

Also for the first time, the chapter volunteers took short films for the summit and these films were presented throughout the summit. Workshops, parallel sessions, interactive meals were other highlights from the summit.

Ozguler: *As you know, the main topic of PM Summit is "Human Factors in Project Management". What is the relationship between human factors and project management?*

Hafizoğlu: **As Paul C. Dinsmore** in his book *Human Factors in Project Management* states *"Everything on a project starts with people. And a project progresses as a result of human interaction"*. Regardless of the kind of project or the sector, the team, the leader and the stakeholders together determine the destination of the project. Without a great team or a leader, a successful project can never take place and without determined and dedicated stakeholders, the right success environment for the project cannot be provided.

Similarly, one of the biggest challenges in the timely completion of a project with a limited amount of budget and resources is to manage the development of the project team in the right direction. Working with a team of people with different backgrounds, experiences and expectations sometimes results in conflicting agendas, personal conflicts and unresolved issues. When it happens, the situation may delay the progress of the project or even suspend or halt the project. Thus, we cannot ignore the importance of the human factor in successful project management.



Ozguler: *What do you see for the future in terms of that? Why human factors so important in project management?*

Hafizoğlu: As we all know Project Managers spend most of their time with communicating. This mainly stems from the need to manage people, not only their expectations but also their moods, behaviors, and attitudes. So the project managers whom will be able to manage people will be more successful. The summit put emphasis on the Talent Management, Teamwork, Motivation, Coaching, Leadership and Delegation to support project managers first to have the awareness and then develop themselves on these in the future.

Ozguler: *In the future, robots are expected to place humans in almost every field of work. How will the project management be affected from this transformation?*

Hafizoğlu: As the robots have been replacing human for the work, although the number of people needed in projects may decrease, the quality of human needed to participate in the projects will increase which will also result in the increase of the value of project management. World Economic Forum's Future Of Jobs 2016 Report shows that the most needed skills in 2020 as we approach to the advanced robotics age are Complex Problem Solving, Critical Thinking, Creativity, and People Management. So

this is why Turkey Chapter focused on People in this summit for better projects in the future.



About the Interviewer



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İpek Sahra Özgüler graduated from the Istanbul University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Engineering and from Middle East Technical University with an MSc degree in Software Management. As a project manager, she has more than 10 years' experience in various areas such as portfolio management, program management, project management, software management, business analysis. She became a certified PMP in January, 2012 and a certified SCRUM Master in 2014.

She has managed a variety of projects across manufacturing, defence, FMCG (Cola Cola), insurance (Euler Hermes), audit (Deloitte), telecommunication, ICT and aviation sectors and gained broader insights. In addition, she has worked as international correspondent for the *PM World Journal* since 2014.

İpek is based in Isanbul and can be contacted at ipeksahra@gmail.com. Her portfolio is published at the <http://ipeksahra.strikingly.com/>.