

## **Interview with Süleyman Çavuşoğlu**

President  
PMI Turkey Chapter



***Interviewed by İpek Sahra Özgüler***  
*Istanbul, Turkey*

**Süleyman Çavuşoğlu** has been born in Konya, 1973. After primary school he went to Konya Meram Anatolian High School. He finished university education at Yildiz Technical University Computer Sciences and Engineering department. During his university years he started to work as software developer. After the years he worked as software developer, he started to work for Turkcell in 2000. Until 2013 May, he worked as respectively, System Support Expert/Developer, Business Analyst/Project Manager, Project Manager, Project/Program Manager for Turkcell. Between 2013 and 2014 he worked as Project/Program Management Consultant at Turk Telekom, Between June 2014 and March 2016 he worked as Senior Project/Program Manager for Mirsis Information Technologies. Since March 2016, he is working as Expert Project Manager for Turk Telekom.

Süleyman Çavuşoğlu has been certified as PMP since 2005. In 2012, he joined PMI TR Chapter. He was volunteer Project Manager of PMBOK5 Turkish Translation Translation Project. Within PM TR Chapter, he served as Assistant Director of Governance&Finance in 2013. He was elected as director in the elections held in December 2013. Between 01 January 2014 and 31 December 2015, he served as Istanbul Professional Development Activities Director for PMI TR Chapter. He was elected for PMI TR Board in December 2015. Between 01 January 2016 and 31 December 2017, he served as Professional Development, Education, Certification Vice President for PMI TR Chapter. In 2017 he was elected as President Elect, successor

president of PMI Turkey. Since 1 January 2018 he is the President of PMI Turkey Chapter.

Süleyman Çavuşoğlu is married, and has two sons at the ages of 15 and 8.

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**İpek Sahra Özgüler (Özgüler):** Dear Süleyman, first of all thank you very much for the interview. Please introduce yourself for PM World Journal readers.

**Süleyman Çavuşoğlu (Çavuşoğlu):** Thank you İpek. I have a B.S. degree in computer engineering. After working for nine years as a software engineer, I switched my career to project management. Since then I have been working as a Project/Program manager in one of leading telecommunication companies in Turkey. My project teams have been ranged from 10 to 250 people and budget up to 10M\$. In September 2005 I got my PMP certification and since 2012 I have been a volunteer of PMI Turkey Chapter.

**Özgüler:** How did you get involved with PMI Turkey Chapter?

**Çavuşoğlu:** Thank you İpek. I have a B.S. degree in computer engineering. After working for nine years as a software engineer, I switched my career to project management. Since then I have been working as a Project/Program manager in one of leading telecommunication companies in Turkey. My project teams have been ranged from 10 to 250 people and budget up to 10M\$. In September 2005 I got my PMP certification and since 2012 I have been a volunteer of PMI Turkey Chapter.

I attended PMI EMEA Global Congress for the first time in 2012, in Marseille. I saw there how immense PMI was. I met with Mr. Tolga Özel, 2012 President of PMI Turkey Chapter, there and he invited me to join PMI Turkey Chapter. The immensity of PMI and the invitation that I got, inspired me to be part of PMI. When I returned back to Turkey, I started to attend PMI Turkey Chapter's monthly events. A few months later, President Tolga Özel and President-Elect Ms. Gamze Karayaz offered me a volunteer project management position in PMI Turkey Chapter. The project was translation of PMBOK5 into Turkish. When I accepted the offer, my PMI Turkey journey has started.

**Özgüler:** You are President of PMI Turkey Chapter. Could you give detail information about your role?

**Çavuşoğlu:** President role is an elected volunteer role in PMI Turkey Chapter. President is responsible for oversight of the chapter and the board. President shall direct the activities of the other board members in accordance with the chapter bylaws. My responsibilities include making decisions about chapter's strategic goals, directing the chapter to realize it's vision, mission and objectives as detailed by the chapter

board, monitoring chapter business plans, ensuring performance of the chapter board as a team, representing the chapter at public events, acting as a liaison between the chapter and PMI, ensuring all chapter business is being done legally and ethically, developing and implementing a succession and transition plan and promoting leadership development opportunities for board development and sustainability.

There is also some mandatory responsibilities demanded by PMI yearly. Such as; strategic alliance, planning and annual reporting, chapter renewal updates, the chapter's compliance as specified by PMI and managing periodic policy audits.

**Özgüler:** What are the main features of the PMI Turkey Chapter strategy in 2018?

**Çavuşoğlu:** Thank you İpek. I am glad that you asked this question. As PMI Turkey Chapter board members, we understand the importance of strategic planning for the success of our organization. Therefore, we closely examined new PMI Strategy and have aligned our vision, mission and strategy with PMI 2.0. Our new strategy is;

*“Developing and disseminating our services to achieve our brand promise and our mission. Accordingly, reorganizing our organization and management style to be strategy-oriented and more effective”*

Our new strategic themes for 2018 are; Strategic Focus, Customer Centricity, and Organizational Efficiency and Agility

**Özgüler:** Which initiatives and projects are you planning to implement?

**Çavuşoğlu:** As you may know, PMBOK Guide Sixth Edition has just been released. One of our most important projects is Translation of PMBOK Guide Sixth Edition into Turkish. We started the project at the beginning of 2018 and expecting to finalize it by July. Since PMBOK Guide 4th Edition, PMI Turkey Chapter has offered their Turkish version and PMP exams could have been taken in Turkish.

The other project that we are giving importance is "Corporate Membership" program. Surveys show that 80% of our members pay their membership fees from their own pocket, and only 20% of members' membership fees are paid by their employers. If we increase the number of companies who pay for project management professional's membership fees, both number of our members and our retention rate will increase.

**Özgüler:** What activities does PMI Turkey Chapter perform on an annual basis?

**Çavuşoğlu:** Every year, PMI Turkey Chapter organizes two major 2-day Summits in Ankara, and in Istanbul. This year Ankara Summit will be held on Jun, 22-23 and Istanbul Summit will be held on September, 14-15. In each Summit, there will be around 5-6 speakers around the World and a speaker from PMI upper management as well as Turkish Speakers.

Every month, we organize two Professional Development Activities(PDA) in Istanbul; one in the European side of Istanbul and the other in Asian side of Istanbul. We also organize one PDA in Ankara and one PDA in İzmir every month. This year, we are planning to organize workshops quarterly for personal and professional development of our members. And also we want to organize one or two PDAs in different cities other than Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir.

A Membership meeting that we invite all our members is held in every March. This is a mandatory event that PMI requires from all chapters on an annual base.

Besides professional development activities, we are planning to offer social and networking activities to our members such as Bowling tournaments, Karaoke nights and so on.

**Özgüler:** How do you use your project management experience for PMI Turkey Chapter?

**Çavuşoğlu:** The majority of our volunteers are project managers. They carry out the practices they master in their own companies to PMI Turkey Chapter, and they learn new things from their roles in PMI Turkey Chapter. Because each company has different processes, our volunteers usually manage PMI Turkey Chapter projects according to their own company practices.

This year as PMI Turkey Chapter we established the PMO Directorate to standardize our project management style and manage projects in the same way. Under this directorate, we will write and standardize our project management procedures with reference to the PMBOK Guide.

**Özgüler:** I am curious, what is the daily routine as President of PMI Turkey Chapter?

**Çavuşoğlu:** In PMI'S Chapter Volunteer Role Delineation Study, it is said that estimated Volunteer Hours per month is expected from a Chapter President is 30-40 hours. But in reality, PMI Chapter presidency is 7/24 volunteer job. As president, you need to focus on strategy, but in many days you get lost in chapter operations, conflict resolutions between volunteers.

Apart from our volunteer position in PMI Turkey, we also have a professional business life. I try to make my PMI Turkey chapter related calls in the lunch time and after work hours.

We organize our meetings in the evening hours, at the weekends. For instance, our weekly chapter board meetings are on every Sunday at 09:00 p.m.

If I need to visit a sponsor or a partner in business hours, I have to take a day off or hour off from the company I work for.

During a regular day, I receive a lot of emails. I try to read and answer them as soon as possible. My day starts at 6:30. I finish my daily routine generally around 10:30. After 10:30 I spend half an hour to read and reply my PMI Turkey Chapter e-mails. Everyday, I talk several times with vice presidents, directors or asistant directors. At the end of a long day, it is nice to to know that you did what you are passionate about, for the good people around you and your hard work will make a change for them.

**Özgüler:** Thank you.

**Çavuşoğlu:** Thank you İpek.

## About the Interviewer



### **İpek Sahra Özgüler**

Istanbul, Turkey



**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.

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