

*Making a Modern Project Manager*¹

Stay Open to Novelty²

Yasmina Khelifi

Cultivating an open mind must be done intentionally.

Stay Open to New People

At work, we interact with many people from different backgrounds, cultures, countries, ages, academic or social levels. But we interact with them in a transactional way, in the context of a project with a list of tasks and actions. What if you were interacting with a songwriter? Or a conductor? How would you behave? What would you learn?

Since 2020, I have engaged more in various communities (marketing, coaching, and project management). [Dorie Clark](#)'s Recognized Expert Community has a firm belief in the power of introductory video calls. These were not easy for me at first because I wondered what I could talk about.

Now I've gotten into the habit of doing introductory video calls. It is a great way to talk to people on the other side of the world and develop your communication skills.

Thanks to this, I have spoken with musicians, architects, project managers in other industries, and volunteers on the other side of the world. Some unexpected collaborations were born.

Some conversations have led to new books or new resources.

When you take an online course, or when you attend a webinar, don't hesitate to reach out to people, connect with them on social media, and have a real conversation. This is a way to expand your network, but more importantly, your horizons.

¹ Editor's note: This series of articles is for Gen X, Y and Z project professionals by a real project manager. The author Yasmina Khelifi is an actual project manager with a large multinational telecom in France while also an active PM professional, authoring articles, interviews and a popular LinkedIn blog as well as a podcast with a global audience. Also active in PMI France for many years, she has been an international correspondent for the PMWJ since 2021. We are delighted that she agreed to author a series of articles based on her personal experiences over the last decade.

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Stay Open to New Ways of Doing

You may be used to using the same tool, but someone comes along with a new tool. Why change when yours has been working for ages? By changing the tool, you'll discover new ways of doing things. A tool in itself does not do the work, but the way you use it can develop new ideas.

Volunteering has helped me a lot to discover different ways of doing things and different ways of working together. It has forced me to adapt and explain how I work.

Volunteering has also given me opportunities to [experiment with new things](#) . For example, I had to quickly transfer knowledge and then create short videos, something I wouldn't have thought to do.

If you force yourself to go into new areas, you'll learn a lot, sometimes the hard way, but that's good for your growth.

Stay Open to New Knowledge

Since the Covid pandemic, webinars and online meetings are more common than ever. I'm not a video specialist, but I know that the way people speak and present themselves affects their connection with their audience. So, I had to look for information and talk to experts about the video: equipment, clothes, and backgrounds.

Thanks to my podcast, I learned a lot about sound, which helps me with videos as well.

All of this has helped me improve my people skills and nurture my creativity.

Here are some suggestions to help you stay open to new things:

- Volunteer whenever you can
- Stay attuned to new tools, technologies, and trends by being part of a community or subscribing to a thought leader newsletter or two
- Build a diverse network
- Participate in introductory video calls

What best practices can you share to remain open to novelty?

"When you experience novelty at work, job satisfaction increases, along with creativity and overall performance. Novelty also leads to greater confidence." - [Francesca Gino](#), from "What the World's Best Restaurant Knows About Keeping Its Creative Edge", *Harvard Business Review*, June 2018

About the Author



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Yasmina Khelifi, PMP, PMI-ACP, PMI-PBA, is an experienced project manager in the telecom industry. Along with her 20-year career at [Orange S.A.](#) (the large French multinational telecommunications corporation), she sharpened her global leadership skills, delivering projects with major manufacturers and SIM makers. Yasmina strives for building collaborative bridges between people to make international projects successful. She relies on three pillars: project management skills, the languages she speaks, and a passion for sharing knowledge.

She is a PMP certification holder since 2013, a PMI-ACP and PMI-PBA certification holder since 2020. She is an active volunteer member at PMI France and PMI UAE, and a member of PMI Germany Chapter. French-native, she can speak German, English, Spanish, Italian, Japanese and she is learning Arabic. Yasmina loves sharing her knowledge and experiences at work, in her volunteers' activities at PMI, and in [projectmanagement.com](#) as a regular blogger. She is also the host and co-founder of the podcast [Global Leaders Talk with Yasmina Khelifi](#) to help people in becoming better international leaders.

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