

CYBERSECURITY · TRANSFORMATION · AUTOMOTIVE

Nilesh Kulkarni

Cybersecurity Strategy, Governance & Product Security

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PROFILE

I combine more than 20 years of experience across automotive, systems engineering, software, process and transformation management with cybersecurity governance and product security. Focus: UNECE R155, ISO/SAE 21434, TARA-related risk activities, CRA/NIS2 and integrating cybersecurity into engineering and software processes. Tool practice includes DOORS, PTC Integrity/RV&S, Codebeamer, Azure DevOps, Jira/Confluence, SharePoint, Microsoft 365 and Articulate 360.

20+ years Engineering, technology and leadership

375% Revenue growth at Excelloit Germany in four years

580% Revenue growth at GAK Germany in two years

96% Reduction of liabilities in the UK turnaround

CYBERSECURITY EXPERTISE

Automotive Product Cybersecurity
UNECE R155, ISO/SAE 21434 and TARA-related risk activities on ADAS radar at ZF – contribution, not formal ownership.

ADAS & Radar
Mid-Range and Full-Range Radar; ECU cybersecurity: secure JTAG/debug access, HSM-supported key protection (BMW KaFAS4); UNECE R155 risk analysis during a radar RFQ (Software Configuration Manager, 2019–2022).

Cybersecurity Requirements & Engineering
Translating regulatory and technical requirements into governance, engineering and risk-management structures.

Security Governance / CRA / NIS2
Owner of CFU24; concept development: cyber risk, NIS2/CRA readiness, role/escalation models and security reporting.

Process integration
Cybersecurity Engineering requirements in the context of SEC.1–4 / ISO/SAE 21434 incorporated into the process and tool landscape.

Security-engineering evidence
Encryption and export-control tooling plus secure diagnostics/debugging concepts from ZF software work.

TOOLS DOORS, PTC Integrity/RV&S, Codebeamer, Azure DevOps, Jira/Confluence, SharePoint, Microsoft 365, Articulate 360

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Owner | Cybersecurity & Digital Resilience Advisor — Since Sep 2026

CFU24 – Cyber Fusion Unit · since Sep 2026

Owner; concept development for cybersecurity governance and digital resilience under CFU24 – Cyber Fusion Unit.

- Development of cybersecurity service and governance concepts: cyber risk, NIS2/CRA readiness, role/escalation models and security reporting.
- Conception of cooperation and service models with specialist security providers for assessments, monitoring and incident response.

Software Project Manager – DevOps & SDV Process Infrastructure — Sep 2022–Dec 2025

ZF Group · Mayen-Koblenz · Hybrid

Project and process ownership for DevOps platforms, software-process harmonisation and software-defined vehicle initiatives.

- Designed and technically steered an interface between the company-internal and customer-side DevOps platforms.
- Ensured continuous development, monitoring and operation of the platform interface.
- Analysed project requirements for processes, methods and tools including software security and agile trends.
- Worked in a SAFe / Agile Release Train (ART) context, including backlog and user-story work with Jira/Confluence.
- Owned processes for the Azure DevOps platform as Area Owner and used Codebeamer alongside Azure DevOps where the ALM landscape required it.
- Developed and implemented processes, methods and tooling for Problem Resolution Management (SUP.9) and Change Management (SUP.10), while incorporating Cybersecurity Engineering requirements in the context of SEC.1–4 / ISO/SAE 21434 into the process and tool landscape.
- Created process and training documents and delivered user training for international engineering teams.

Software Configuration Manager — Jan 2019–Aug 2022

ZF Group · Koblenz · Hybrid

Global responsibility for software configuration and software asset management as well as migration of core development processes to Azure DevOps.

- Global lead for software configuration and asset management; coordination of an internationally distributed team of around ten asset managers.
- Migration of more than 25 projects from PTC Integrity to Azure DevOps.
- Successfully delivered the DevOps infrastructure for rolling out software development from PTC Integrity/RV&S to Azure DevOps.
- Standardised cloud-based software development processes according to ASPICE and aligned them with the internal process model.
- Used DOORS, PTC Integrity/RV&S, Codebeamer, Azure DevOps and Jira/Confluence in ZF ALM and delivery work.
- Built repository structures, baselines, branch/merge strategies and BuildViews for software development and integration.
- Planned configuration audits, reported status, escalated deviations and trained international teams.
- Managed software assets, encryption software, export control and keys for secure debugging and diagnostics.
- In the radar-development environment, engaged with UNECE R155, ISO/SAE 21434 and TARA-related requirements; performed a risk analysis of R155 implications during a radar RFQ phase (requirements, development processes, technical risks, project execution).

System Project Lead — Sep 2016–Dec 2018

ZF Group · Koblenz · On-site

Leadership and coordination of systems-engineering work packages for international ADAS development programmes.

- Owned planning, steering, decision-making and on-time delivery of systems-engineering projects.
- Planned and controlled systems-engineering activities in global ADAS programmes including Functional Safety and Cybersecurity.
- Defined and applied methods, metrics and KPIs for multi-project monitoring.
- Led requirements elicitation workshops and represented systems engineering toward the overall project and customers.
  - **Project Configuration & Change Manager (May–Nov 2018)** — Configuration items, CM plan, milestones, changes and continuous process improvement in the core project with PTC Integrity/RV&S.
  - **System Project Office, ADAS Systems Engineering (Feb–Nov 2018)** — Global PMO support, budget and resource reporting, standards, templates, communication and project audits.
  - **KaFAS4 Platform Project Manager (Jun 2017–Feb 2018)** — Project management for BMW KaFAS4, steering of the system architecture and requirements team, and customer/stakeholder communication. Managed the implementation and integration of 12 Base Software Platform features for the BMW KaFAS4 project, including an ECU cybersecurity feature covering secure JTAG/debug access, HSM-supported cryptographic key protection and controlled key/access management; coordinated requirements, development, integration and validation across cross-functional teams. Steered more than 120 BMW KaFAS4 backlog/ticket items.
  - **KaFAS4 Requirements Infrastructure Engineer (Oct 2016–Jun 2017)** — Requirements infrastructure along the ASPICE V-model, DOORS integration, automated reporting, RM plan and tool qualification.

Manager – Requirements Management — Nov 2011–Sep 2016

Johnson Controls Automotive · Burscheid, Germany

Requirements and technical risk steering for international automotive seating programmes from RFQ/RFI through validation.

- Steered requirements, DVP&R and FEA planning, traceability and technical risk audits across project milestones.
- Supported the Recaro sports seat for the L538 programme within a development window of about 18 months.
- Managed parallel programmes for JLR, Ford and Toyota with durations of roughly 18–24 months.
- Received Merit Awards for Global Support Requirements Engineering and Core Metals and Mechanisms Requirements Engineering.

Lead Engineer – Requirements Management
Aug 2010–Nov 2011

Johnson Controls Automotive · Pune, India

Requirements lifecycle from needs analysis and planning through traceability to evaluation for Ford, Toyota, Fiat and Kia programmes.

- Prepared technical RFQ/RFI risk analyses and requirements management plans.
- Analysed OEM specifications, assessed gaps and tracked risk-reduction actions.
- Used tools and data pools for traceability, history and approvals.

Principal Engineer
Mar 2006–Aug 2010

Autoline Industries Ltd. · Pune, India

Technical project leadership and product development for fixed and adjustable pedal systems on international vehicle platforms.

- Led localisation of the VW Polo RHD pedal system on PQ25Ex within a development window of about 24 months.
- Owned product definition, development plan, changes, DFMEA, CAD/PDM and validation.
- Supported design reviews, prototyping, lab validation and series launch.

Design & Development Engineer
Jun 2005–Feb 2006

Padsons Industries Pvt. Ltd. · Maharashtra, India

Design and further development of seed and grain processing machines.

- Developed gravity separator, destoner, precleaner and a mobile seed-processing unit.
- Implemented reverse engineering, performance improvement and vibration reduction.
- Created 3D models, GD&T, drawings, bills of materials and layouts.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Founder & Managing Director – Excelloit Consultancy Services
Aug 2019–Present

Built and scaled a multi-country consulting and talent business with activities in Germany, the UK, the EU, India and the USA.

- Achieved more than 375% revenue growth in Germany within four years.
- Enabled year-over-year business growth of more than 85%.
- Brought the UK unit to profitability and reduced liabilities by about 96%.
- Built international delivery structures with more than 30 staff/resources; operational delivery delegated to team leads.
- Independently developed, set up and maintained Microsoft SharePoint.

Managing Director Germany & Shareholder – GAK Enterprises GmbH
May 2021–Present

Built the German company from market entry and incorporation into a strategic operating entity.

- Achieved more than 580% revenue growth within two years.
- Owned P&L, compliance, financial governance, sales, suppliers and delivery end to end.
- Reached early profitability with a lean, cash-efficient operating model.

Founder – EssNetz GmbH
Jan 2024–Present

Designed a sustainable food-tech subscription platform with local partners; product development is currently paused, investor search remains open.

- Steered platform design, investor relations and value positioning.
- Delegated operational tasks to leads for technology, logistics and compliance.

Advisor for strategic entrepreneur benefits – Unternehmerversorgung360.de
Aug 2024–Present

Guidance for entrepreneurs and managing directors on occupational pensions, executive benefits, protection and long-term wealth planning.

- Made complex pension topics understandable from an entrepreneurial and business perspective.
- Included individual goals of the company, leadership and family in the assessment.

CERTIFICATIONS

EITCA/IS Information Technologies Security Academy – 24 ECTS
European IT Certification Institute, Brussels · Aug 2026

EITCA/AI Artificial Intelligence Academy – 24 ECTS
European IT Certification Institute, Brussels · Jul 2026

intacs®-certified Automotive SPICE® Process Expert v4.0
German Association of the Automotive Industry (VDA) · Nov 2024

ThePowerMBA
thePower · Jan 2021

CPRE-FL – Certified Professional for Requirements Engineering
IREB · Feb 2019

PMI Professional in Business Analysis (PMI-PBA)®
Project Management Institute · Dec 2014–Dec 2026

Project Management Professional (PMP)®
Project Management Institute · Feb 2014–Feb 2029

PRINCE2® Practitioner in Project Management
PeopleCert · Feb 2017–Jul 2023

AWARDS

Merit Award
Jun 2015 · Global Support Requirements Engineering · Johnson Controls

Merit Award
Jan 2013 · Core Metals and Mechanisms Requirements Engineering · Johnson Controls

EDUCATION

Master of Business Administration (MBA)
thePower · Jan 2021–Jan 2023

Bachelor of Engineering – Mechanical Engineering
Government College of Engineering, Amravati · 2001–2005

Higher Secondary School Certification
Akola Arts, Commerce & Science Jr. College · 1999–2001

Secondary School Certification
New English High School, Akola · 1998–1999

LANGUAGES

Hindi
Native / bilingual

Marathi
Native / bilingual

English
business fluent

German
business fluent (verhandlungssicher)

VOLUNTEERING

Treasurer · Indian Association Koblenz e.V.
Sep 2020–Present · Financial planning, budgeting and transparent reporting; raised more than €15,000 in sponsorship for inclusive cultural events and community initiatives.

Blue Sky Projects · Johnson Controls
2013, 2014 and 2015 · Volunteer social projects for nature and sensory experience offerings in the region (Blue Sky 2013–2015; sensory trail, aroma station, nature school garden).