

Nilesh Kulkarni

Project & Transformation Manager

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PROFILE

Steering of projects, programmes and PMO structures where engineering, processes and stakeholders meet: from systems-engineering delivery through DevOps platforms to the harmonization of ways of working.

SKILLS

Project & Transformation Management: Project, program and PMO management; Agile, Scrum and classical delivery models; Digital transformation and process harmonization; Stakeholder, risk and escalation management; Budgeting, resource planning and KPI reporting; International, cross-functional collaboration Processes, Requirements & ALM: Automotive SPICE 4.0; Requirements and business analysis; Configuration and asset management; Change and problem resolution management; Release, baseline, branching and audits; Application lifecycle management

Cybersecurity & Digital Resilience: Cybersecurity readiness and gap assessments; NIS2 and Cyber Resilience Act (CRA); ISO/IEC 27001-oriented ISMS structures; ISO/SAE 21434 and cybersecurity engineering; Security governance and risk prioritization; Secure development and DevSecOps processes DevOps, Cloud & Software: Azure DevOps and Microsoft Azure; CI/CD and YAML pipelines; PTC/MKS Integrity and Rational DOORS; Software process management; Encryption software and export control; QlikView, MS Project, Visio and Office

Automotive & Engineering: ADAS, embedded systems and ISO 26262; Systems and product engineering; Automotive seating and chassis systems; DFMEA, DFM/DFA and GD&T; Verification and validation planning; Product development through series launch

Entrepreneurship & Growth: P&L and financial steering; Turnaround and profitable scaling; International business development; Delegation and organizational build-up; Strategic partnerships; Talent, digital and energy consulting

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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 harmonization 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.
- Analyzed project requirements for processes, methods and tools including software security and agile trends.
- Owned processes for the Azure DevOps platform as Area Owner.
- Developed and implemented processes, methods and tools for Problem Resolution Management (SUP.9), Change Management (SUP.10) and Cybersecurity Engineering (SEC.1-4 / ISO/SAE 21434).

System Project Lead

Sep 2016-Dec 2018 | ZF Group | Koblenz | On-site

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

- Owned planning, steering, decision-making and on-time delivery of systems-engineering projects.
- Planned and controlled system activities in global projects including functional safety and cybersecurity.
- Defined and applied methods, metrics and KPIs for multi-project monitoring.
- Moderated technical meetings and represented systems engineering toward the overall project and customers.

Additional roles:

- May-Nov 2018 - Project Configuration & Change Manager: Configuration items, CM plan, milestones, changes and continuous process improvement in the core project with PTC Integrity.
- Feb-Nov 2018 - System Project Office, ADAS Systems Engineering: Global PMO support, budget and resource reporting, standards, templates, communication and project audits.

- Jun 2017-Feb 2018 - KaFAS4 Platform Project Manager: Project management for BMW KaFAS4, steering of the system architecture and requirements team, and customer/stakeholder communication.
- Oct 2016-Jun 2017 - KaFAS4 Requirements Infrastructure Engineer: Requirements infrastructure along the ASPICE V-model, DOORS integration, automated reporting, RM plan and tool qualification.

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 localization 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.

Manager - Requirements Management

Nov 2011-Sep 2016 | Johnson Controls Automotive | Burscheid, Germany

Requirements and technical risk steering for international automotive seating programs 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 program within a development window of about 18 months.
- Managed parallel programs for JLR, Ford and Toyota with durations of roughly 18-24 months.
- Received Merit Awards for Global Requirements Management and Core Requirements Management.

Owner | Cybersecurity & Digital Resilience Advisor

Since Sep 2026 | CFU24 - Cyber Fusion Unit | Germany | Self-employed

Independent cybersecurity and digital-resilience consulting for German mid-sized companies, focused on governance, regulatory readiness and secure engineering processes.

- Cybersecurity readiness and gap assessments for management and technical teams.
- Preparation for NIS2, CRA and ISO/IEC 27001-oriented security structures.
- Advisory on ISO/SAE 21434, security risk management and secure development processes.
- Translation of complex security requirements into prioritized, economically sound measures.
- Coordination of specialized delivery partners when deeper implementation support is required.

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.

- Successfully delivered the DevOps infrastructure for rolling out software development from PTC Integrity to Azure DevOps.
- Standardized cloud-based software development processes according to ASPICE and aligned them with the internal process model.
- 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.

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 programs.

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

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.

VENTURES

Founder | 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%.
- Scaled international delivery capacity by more than 300% through a delegation-based model.
- Built three practices: Talent Consulting, Digital Transformation and Energy Consulting.

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 | Unternehmensversorgung360.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/IS/FXR26004716
- EITCA/AI Artificial Intelligence Academy - 24 ECTS | European IT Certification Institute, Brussels | Jul 2026 | EITCA/AI/SLJ26004716
- intacs(R)-certified Automotive SPICE(R) Process Expert v4.0 | German Association of the Automotive Industry (VDA) | Nov 2024
- ThePowerMBA | thePower | Jan 2021 | 36954541722896
- CPRE-FL - Certified Professional for Requirements Engineering | IREB | Feb 2019 | CPRE Insignia ID 6037
- PMI Professional in Business Analysis (PMI-PBA)(R) | Project Management Institute | Dec 2014-Dec 2026 | PMI-PBA #1788580
- Project Management Professional (PMP)(R) | Project Management Institute | Feb 2014-Feb 2029 | PMP #1692795
- PRINCE2(R) Practitioner in Project Management | PeopleCert | Feb 2017-Jul 2023 | GR634034682NK | Renewed through Jul 2023
- German B1 | telc GmbH | Mar 2016 | 090054

EDUCATION

- Master of Business Administration (MBA) | thePower | Jan 2021-Jan 2023 | Business Administration and Management | Grade: Outstanding
- Bachelor of Engineering - Mechanical Engineering | Government College of Engineering, Amravati | 2001-2005 | First Class | Capstone project: design and modeling of a radial blower for seed and grain machines
- Higher Secondary School Certification | Akola Arts, Commerce & Science Jr. College | 1999-2001 | Distinction | General sciences

- Secondary School Certification | New English High School, Akola | 1998-1999 | First Class

LANGUAGES

- Hindi: Native / bilingual
- Marathi: Native / bilingual
- English: Full professional proficiency
- German: Professional working proficiency | B1 certified

AWARDS

- Jun 2015 | Merit Award | Global Support Requirements Engineering | Johnson Controls

RECOMMENDATIONS

"One of the best requirements engineers in the seating industry - with an exceptional drive for continuous improvement and strong collaboration across cultural and language boundaries."

Dan Boboescu | Global Automotive Consultant | direct manager at Johnson Controls

"Highly competent, proactive and always ready to propose new ways of preparing and generating data against project deadlines."

Dave Swann | Collaboration at Johnson Controls

"Outstandingly organized, highly motivated, detail-oriented and strong in communication - with a remarkable ability to deliver complex programs in shortened development cycles."

Shalil Akre | Direct manager at Autoline

"A true professional with strong technical comprehension, practical problem-solving know-how and high commitment to on-time results."

Randall Bushong | Teammate at Autoline

"Organized, detail-oriented, collaborative and inclusive - fully committed to getting the job done successfully."

Chris Rixon | Senior project colleague at Autoline

COMMUNITY

- Sep 2020-Present | Treasurer, Indian Association Koblenz e.V.: Financial planning, budgeting and transparent reporting; raised more than €15,000 in sponsorship for inclusive cultural events and community initiatives.
- 2013, 2014 and 2015 | Blue Sky Projects, Johnson Controls: Volunteer social projects for nature and sensory experience offerings in the region (Blue Sky 2013-2015; sensory trail, aroma station, nature school garden).

CONTACT

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