The critical path method (CPM) scheduling process is not being optimally deployed within many construction organizations, and some may even say the process is "broken." Despite having many talented schedulers, and scheduling programs that work well, the industry hasn't always successfully executed the scheduling process across the board. Some data even suggests that the way the CPM process was introduced to the industry has been a large contributor to the litigious nature of

and reduced trust in the process.

Although focus on the schedule seems to be heightened, only a small percentage of people in construction actually understands CPM scheduling. Unfortunately, that group does not typically include executives, risk managers, operations managers and, most notably, project managers (PMs), and superintendents — the people who need to live and breathe the schedule to maintain budgets and timelines. The reality is that most non-schedulers don't have a fundamental understanding of this process and, as a result, they don't truly embrace it. That's especially true of PMs and superintendents.

This is the root of why the process is not optimal: Many people think they understand CPM scheduling in a good-enough way, but in most cases, they don't understand it enough to trust or appreciate it. As a result, they do not truly embrace it — and the schedule inevitably becomes a reporting mechanism rather than the management tool it was designed to be.
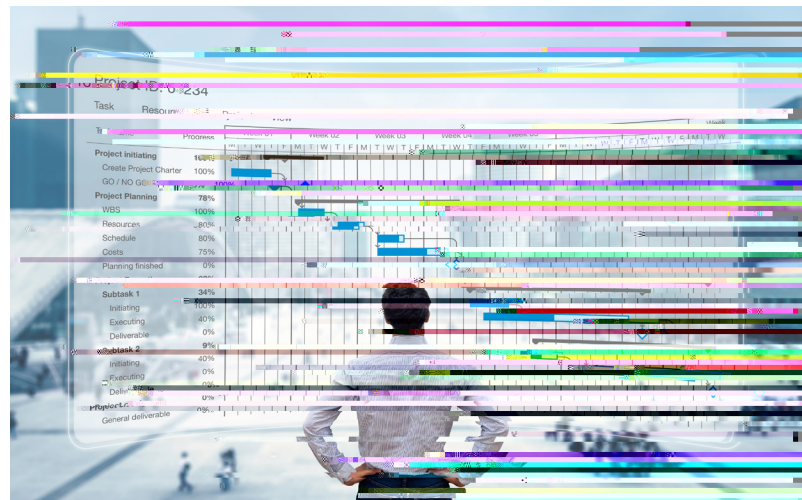
members so they better understand and appreciate the CPM scheduling process. Due to their day-to-dayen-USo their daTTCl Tf10m

executives need to step it up and learn what to do. Analytics

## Augment scheduling with technology

Schedulers have enough on their plates and consultants are expensive, so analytics get placed on the back burner. During the past several decades, schedule analytics were discovered and best practices were formed. Technologies evolved that support this broken-down process. So, companies have these choices to make if they want to do this right: train everyone,

process.

The construction industry's scheduling process, as it currently exists, contributes to delays, litigation, and other challenges that plague projects. For real change to take place, PMs and supers are two groups that need to understand and implement the CPM scheduling process effectively. A little education goes a long way and is worth its weight in gold.
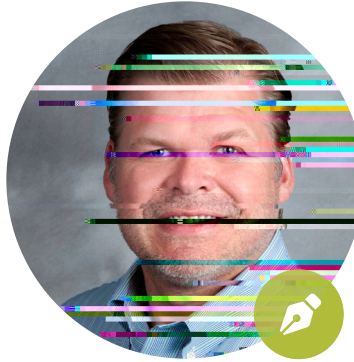
## About the Author

Michael Pink, PSP, is the CEO and founder of SmartPM Technologies, a SaaS software company headquartered in Atlanta. SmartPM is a cloud based, full-service schedule analytics and project controls platform designed by industry experts with one mission in mind: to provide stakeholders with a tool to evaluate project performance in real-time, identify critical risk issues, and reduce delays and potential disputes.

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