

What's possible with AI in project management

Evidence current to mid-2026.

A clear breakdown of where AI does and does not fit across the core tasks of a project manager. A practical starting point, not the last word.

Where AI is mature: strong fit today

Proven and available today. AI does the bulk of the work and the project manager reviews it.

Function	The job today	With AI
Status report drafting	Pull updates from the team, write the weekly status narrative, send to the steering committee	AI drafts the status report from notes, tickets and prior reports; the project manager checks the facts and sends
Meeting notes and action capture	Listen, write notes, pull out actions with owners and due dates, circulate after the meeting	AI transcribes and extracts actions, owners and decisions; the project manager checks the list is correct and complete
Risks, Assumptions, Issues and Dependencies (RAID) log drafting and maintenance	Capture risks, assumptions, issues and dependencies from team input and meetings, write them up, keep the log current	AI drafts RAID entries from meeting notes; the project manager owns the ratings, treatment decisions and keeps the log
Stakeholder updates and comms	Write the same update in different registers for the steering committee, the sponsor, the team and the client	AI drafts each version from the source narrative; the project manager adjusts tone, checks accuracy and sends

Where AI is emerging: consider piloting with a human gate

Promising but not yet proven at this scale. AI assists and the project manager stays in the loop, so trial it on a contained scope first.

Function	The job today	With AI
Project plan and Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) first drafts	Build the work breakdown structure from scratch, sequence tasks, assign owners, set durations	AI generates a first-draft task list and WBS from a brief; the project manager restructures, adds context and owns the sequencing
Schedule narrative and re-plan summaries	Explain what moved, why, and what the new plan means for the delivery date	AI drafts the re-plan summary from before/after schedule data; the project manager adds the real drivers and owns the stakeholder message
Business case and project brief drafting	Structure and write the case for investment: problem, options, costs, benefits, risks, recommendation	AI drafts the skeleton and standard sections from a brief; the project manager owns the numbers, the options and the recommendation
Lessons-learned synthesis	Gather retrospective notes and post-project reviews, find the patterns, write the summary	AI synthesises themes across multiple inputs; the project manager validates and owns the organisational recommendation
Dependency and milestone tracking	Keep a live register of what this project needs from others and what others need from it; chase for updates	AI drafts status summaries and flags missed milestones from data; the project manager investigates and owns the recovery conversation

Where AI is not ready or suitable today: keep with people

These stay with people, either because the judgement required is irreducibly human or because accountability cannot be delegated.

- **Estimating and committing to dates.** AI can surface analogous estimates or flag common biases. The commitment itself, and the accountability for it, stays with the project manager.
- **Critical-path and trade-off judgement.** AI can model scenarios. Deciding what to cut, defer or resequence when the schedule slips requires context about relationships, contracts and strategy that no model has.
- **Stakeholder politics and escalation.** Reading the room, deciding when to escalate and to whom, managing conflict and competing interests: this is real-time human judgement in a political context, not a documentation task.
- **Go or no-go and resourcing calls.** The authority to proceed, pivot or stop a project, and to commit resources, sits with the project manager. AI can surface information; it cannot carry the accountability.

Worth weighing: for the strong-fit tasks, the upfront setup (templates, building the assistant's context, connecting to your project data) is a one-off. The ongoing effort on those tasks is mostly review, not the old grind of writing from scratch each week. The time that comes back goes to the parts AI cannot touch: reading the room in a difficult stakeholder conversation, making the judgement call on what to cut when the schedule slips, and being present in the delivery rather than catching up on documentation.

One honest gap worth naming: an AI-drafted status report can look polished and confident even when the underlying project is in trouble. The draft is only as good as the input you give it, and a thin or over-optimistic input produces a thin or over-optimistic report. The project manager still owns the forecast, the risk assessment and the escalation call. The AI handles the formatting, not the judgement.