

## **Interview Assessment #4**

**Name of Professional:** Gaurav Shekhar

**Profession/Title:** Associate Professor of Instruction for Information Systems & Program Director of Business Analytics, MS

**Business/Company Name:** UT Dallas Naveen Jindal School of Management

**Date of Interview:** October 29, 2020

My fourth interview was with Gaurav Shekhar. I got to know him through a search through the UT Dallas Naveen Jindal School of Management faculty webpage and Dr. Dawn Owens. My goal with this interview was to gain some insight into the realm of project management and its correlation with data analytics.

Prior to this interview, I emailed Mr. Shekhar with some background information about myself and plans for ISM this year. I emailed because I believed that with the number of questions I had prepared for the interview would take up the majority of the allotted time for the interview. I am glad I wrote the email prior to the interview, because as I predicted, we didn't have enough time to provide each other with introductions.

Before I began the interview with my questions, Mr. Shekhar wanted me to provide him with some more information regarding the purpose of the interview and I told him it was for ISM and that the interview was for research purposes. He told me that some of his fellow UT Dallas colleagues were also partaking in the ISM program with other students. Then, I proceeded to ask my first question.

My first question to Mr. Shekhar was: "What are some technologies that project managers typically use?" Mr. Shekhar answered this question by listing some of the new web-based applications that assist project managers in the world today. Those technologies include, but are not limited to: Monday.com, Salesforce, and Microsoft SharePoint. He mentioned that these technologies are revolutionizing the industry because it makes it easier for project managers to keep track of the many aspects of their projects. I was aware that Monday.com was used in business, because I had seen many advertisements on YouTube (especially through specific channels). However, I had never heard of Salesforce or Microsoft SalesPoint before. After I took a minute to analyze the answer, I went ahead and moved onto questions that delved into the integration of data analytics into project management.

The next question I asked Mr. Shekhar was: "How is data analytics related to or utilized in project management?" He responded to this question by emphasizing that data analytics plays a major role in project management, because project managers use data (and sometimes their previous experience) to make informed decisions to ensure that their project goes well.

However, Mr. Shekhar stated that the industry experiences a “30% success rate” when it comes to their projects. So, data analytics and technological advancements together should help project managers to increase their project success rate. I found the success rate to be alarming, because I didn’t understand what could potentially make a project fail - but then I realized that the technologies that Mr. Shekhar mentioned earlier were only starting to be widely used in the business world. After this second question, I followed up with a question about the management consulting industry’s future.

My third question (the final research-related question I had) was: “How do you think the field of project management or any ITS-related professions will change within the next 5 years?” As he answered this question, he referred back to the new technologies that he mentioned earlier. By referring to those technologies, he talked about how project management is leaning towards the younger generation because of the fact that the younger generation is more tech-savvy. Mr. Shekhar also credited this shift to the fact that the technology is a huge boost for the industry and that it allows the younger generation to utilize that technology to their advantage - to become project managers at a younger age. This was not what I expected for him to say, but hearing this gave me some more hopes to become a project manager sooner than I anticipated - which is really great! As he finished answering the question, I asked him a question that I didn’t expect myself to ask Mr. Shekhar.

My final question that I had for Mr. Shekhar was whether I could work with him on a project that he was going to begin in November - he mentioned that he was going to start a project very soon in the upcoming month. He then proceeded to ask me about what would want to gain from this project, and I promptly responded by stating my mission and that I wanted to work on a project that gives me the best exposure to MIS that will prepare me for my post-secondary education. After I told Mr. Shekhar about the purpose of the project I wanted to do, he suggested that I could work on a simulation for my project. I decided to take his suggestion and now I am going to be working with Mr. Shekhar on my Original Work!

After talking with Mr. Shekhar, I felt really good about the interview because I was able to take the opportunity to talk about a potential simulation project and to get him as my second mentor, which is amazing! Also, I am one step closer to achieving my goal in ISM.