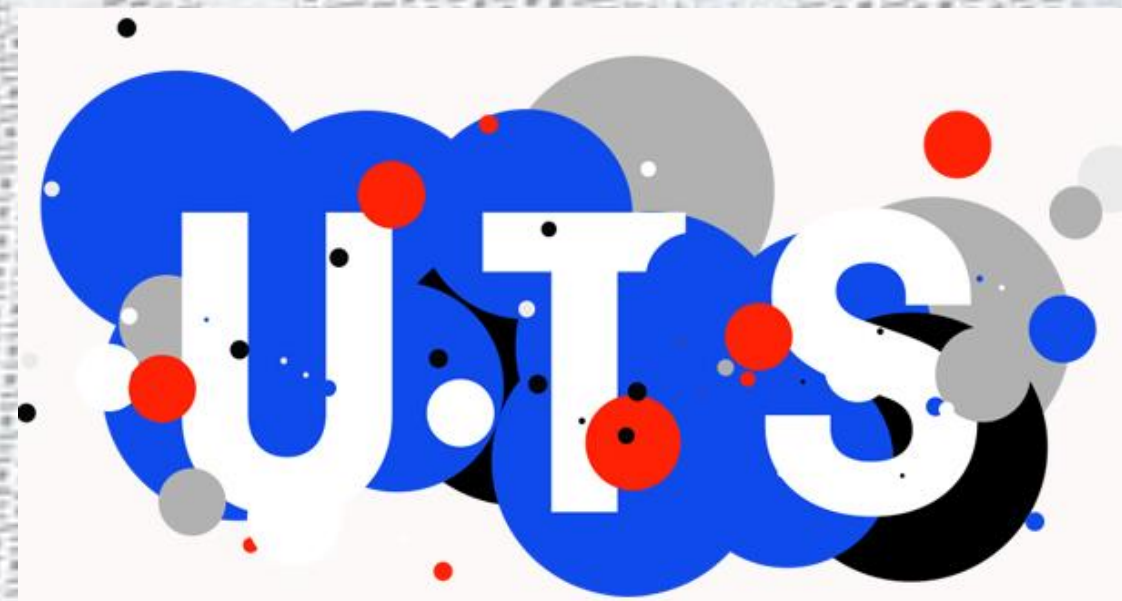




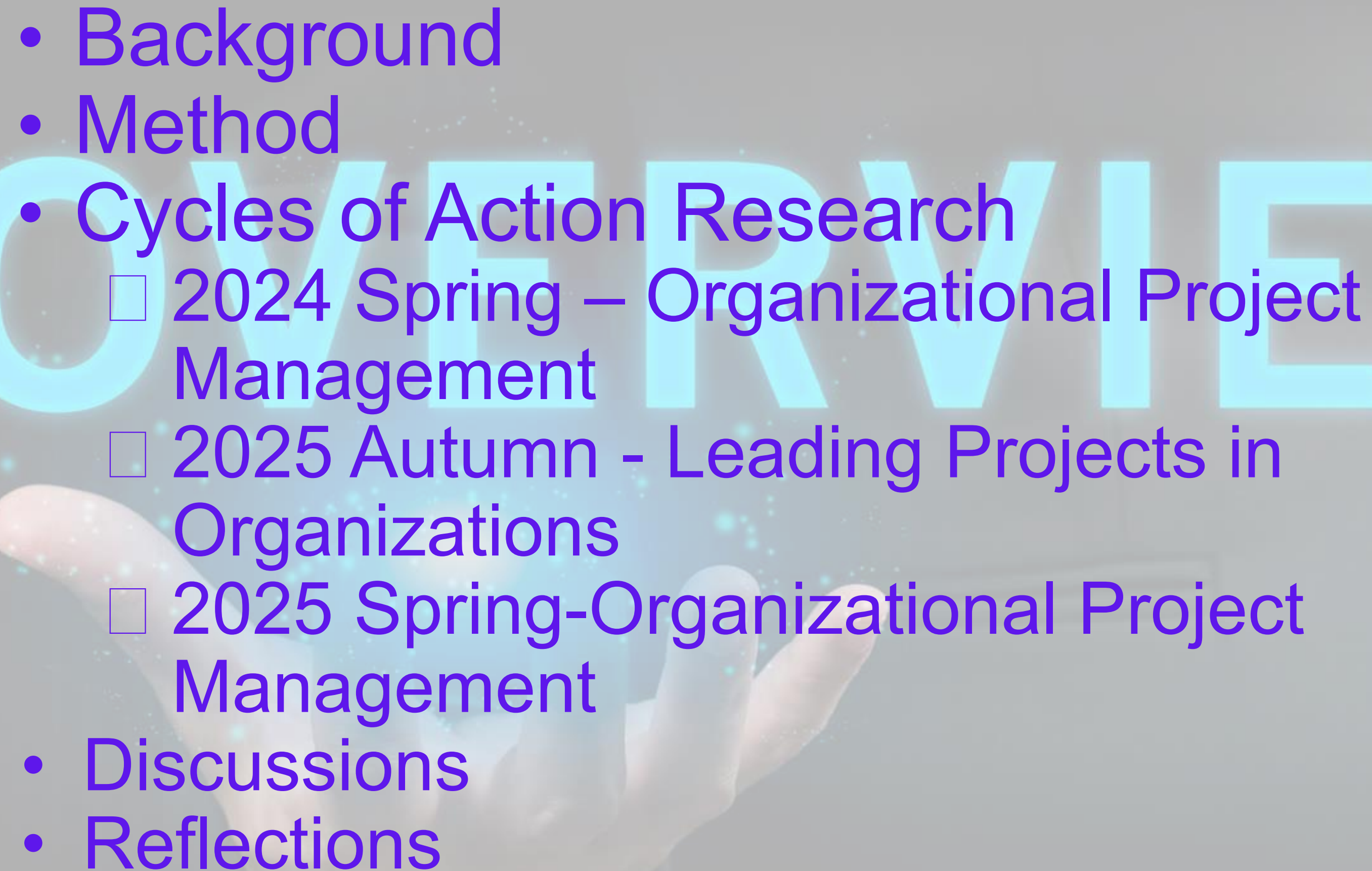
**AUT SPORTS PERFORMANCE  
RESEARCH INSTITUTE NEW ZEALAND**



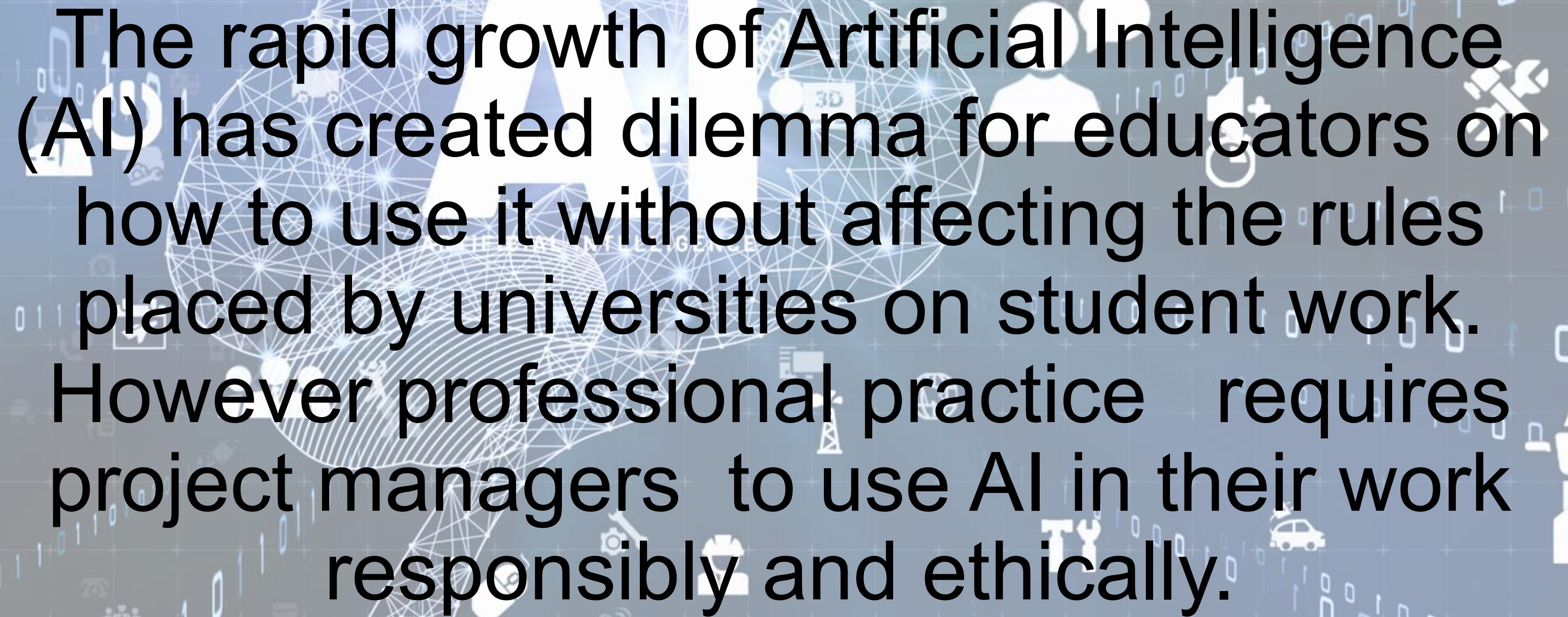
**Action Research  
to investigate the use of AI  
in Higher Education  
Shankar Sankaran  
School of the Built Environment  
University of Technology Sydney  
September 23-24, 2025**

**11th Action Learning Action Research and  
15th Participatory Action Research  
World Congress**



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- Background
  - Method
  - Cycles of Action Research
    - 2024 Spring – Organizational Project Management
    - 2025 Autumn - Leading Projects in Organizations
    - 2025 Spring-Organizational Project Management
  - Discussions
  - Reflections





The rapid growth of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has created dilemma for educators on how to use it without affecting the rules placed by universities on student work. However professional practice requires project managers to use AI in their work responsibly and ethically.





Bright Idea



Collaboration



An Experiment



Enthusiastic  
Writing



Sorry

# Cycle 1

# Organizational Project Management (2024)

## Group Assignment Capturing Daily Learning

- ☐ Lecture on Prompting
- ☐ Ask students to use Gen AI to embellish their power point slides
- ☐ Use the slides to present their learning

## Final Essay assignment

- ☐ Indicate if and how they used GenAI to prepare this assignment

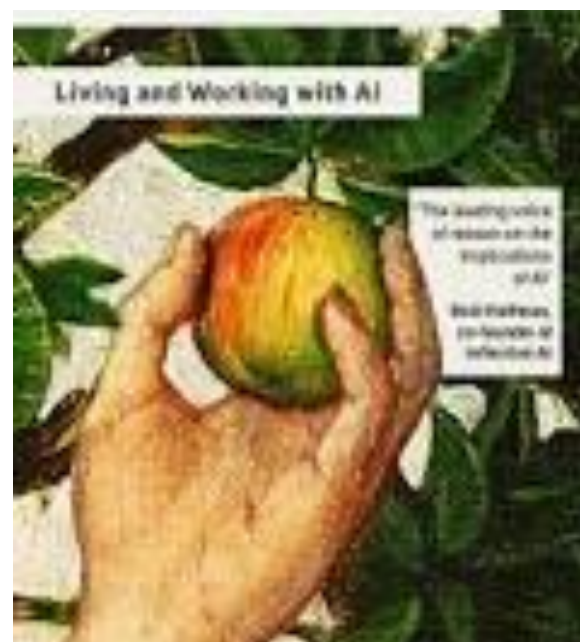




Restart



USYD Webinar



Revelation



More Ideas

# Cycle 2



Worked Well

# Leading Projects in Organizations (2025)

## Preworkshop Assignment

- ☐ Use GEN AI (MS Copilot) to summarize three varied on 'Traditional and emergent leadership theories'

- ☐ Critically reflect on the AI summaries and comment.

## Group Assignment

- ☐ Scenario planning exercise on Gen AI will impact on your leadership using Gen AI as expert
- ☐ Four given scenarios (As good as it gets, Slow growth, Exponential growth, AI as Machine God) (Mollick , 2024)
- ☐ Present the anticipated scenarios with signposts for 10 minutes and how your will prepare your teams. What if another scenario is showing signs of occurring
- ☐ Other teams question the presenting team to validate their work

# Reflections and Outputs



- In 2024 we were more cautious in our approach.
  - ☐ Students did not use Gen AI prominently in group assignment
  - ☐ We did find evidence that they used it more creatively in their final assignment compared to previous years
- In 2025 we provided specific guidance to use Gen AI
  - ☐ Students did well in preworkshop assignment
  - ☐ The scenario planning exercise was a hit.
  - ☐ It generated a good debate. Attending Coursera course helped.
- Outputs
  - ☐ Submitted paper with Biyanka and Melinda on our experience in using Gen AI in 2024.
  - ☐ Investigating the use of AI project management course with PMI GAC accredited programs and submitted a paper to a special issue on AI.
  - ☐ Planning a third round of using AI in the OPM collaboratively in Spring 2025 and write a paper for IRNOP 2026



Thank you  
for  
listening!

