

# Project Management Series

## SPOTLIGHT ON THE 2025 CANADA GAMES



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### **Jordan Wright** BA, MBA, PMP, Prosci CCP

**Lead, 2025 Canada Games at Memorial University**  
**Instructor, Gardiner Centre, Memorial University**

**Education:** Jordan holds a BA (2005) in French and Economics and an MBA (2008) from Memorial University. He has completed advanced executive training, earning the Master's Certificate in Project Management, the Master's Certificate in Leadership, the Project Management Professional (PMP) designation, and the Prosci Certified Change Practitioner (CCP) designation.

**Experience:** Jordan has extensive experience in project management, strategic planning, and stakeholder engagement at Memorial University and within the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. He has served as director of operations at Signal Hill Campus, as manager of strategy and planning in Facilities Management, and led Memorial's planning and execution for the 2025 Canada Games.



JORDAN WRIGHT

***"Project management methodology provided a framework for organizing, problem-solving and overcoming challenges."***

#### **How did you get involved with project management, and what drew you to it?**

I've always been drawn to projects but I didn't realize it was a discipline until I completed some training. I've always enjoyed planning, completing tasks, and being challenged. After my first training introduced me to the discipline, I became more involved from both a professional and educational perspective.

#### **Can you tell me a bit about your current role and what your day-to-day activities look like?**

I started in May 2023 with just over two years to plan and organize Memorial's responsibilities for the 2025 Summer Canada Games. Day-to-day, my work focused on planning, organizing and executing our responsibilities. That included engaging in capital projects like the Aquarena redevelopment, the Fortis Canada Games Complex, and several minor capital projects.

A large part of my role was business continuity, planning to ensure the university could function while hosting over 5,000 athletes and staff across more than 20 buildings. Risk management, along with communications, through documentation and stakeholder engagement was constant, both internally and externally. We aligned our recruitment and promotional efforts through national media airtime and community partnerships. Overall, it was a broad role that required co-ordination across many departments, organizations and levels of government.

#### **As the lead in the 2025 Canada Games at Memorial, what have been the biggest challenges?**

One of the biggest challenges was project integration, co-ordinating many stakeholders so everyone stayed aligned on decisions, timelines and follow-through. Capital projects were another major focus, especially when working with a fixed schedule, to ensure facilities, residences and inventory were fully prepared. As the largest Canada Games on record,

managing room capacity and move-outs added complexity. We also navigated emerging risks like measles planning and balancing operational needs such as building access and parking. Overall, the most significant challenges were stakeholder co-ordination, capital project oversight, and managing evolving risks.

***“One of the most important but often overlooked areas is project integration. It’s all about co-ordinating stakeholders so the left hand knows what the right hand is doing.”***

**Was there a particular “wow” moment during the Canada Games that really stood out to you?**

My biggest “wow” moments came from actually experiencing the event after years of planning. Attending the first official race at the Aquarena, taking in the energy, media and sheer scale was a proud moment. The opening ceremonies were another highlight showing the size and importance of the Games. I was also offered a chance to present medals at the Fortis Canada Games Complex, which was a very special experience.

**Given the major wildfires during The Canada Games, how did your risk management plan address unforeseen crises?**

We planned thoroughly using multiple risk registers and a tabletop readiness exercise. When wildfires escalated, co-ordination with emergency partners intensified as risks shifted from power loss to air quality. Twice-daily operations meetings kept everyone aligned. Some risks materialized, others didn’t, but strong planning, communication and clear roles proved essential.

**What motivated you to pursue your respective certifications, and how do they complement each other in your current role?**

I completed a bachelor of arts in French with an economics minor, and then pursued a master in business administration to build a broad, marketable skill set. The MBA gave me a strong foundation in leadership, human resources, communications and finance, and my project management training really built on that. I did my first PM course around 2007, completed the Master’s Certificate in Project Management in 2009, and later challenged the PMP exam in 2013. The PMP helped validate that I spoke the same language as other project managers and

gave me credibility. Prosci Change Management came later. I hadn’t realized the depth of the discipline but the training really opened my eyes. Project management focuses on the technical side of a solution while change management focuses on the people side such as readiness, adoption, awareness and ability. The certification helped me understand how to guide people through change and complements my PM background by pairing the technical and human elements. Together, the PMP and Prosci credentials make me more well-rounded, diverse and effective in my current role.

**What do you think is the single most important project management skill that you rely on day to day**

Throughout my career, one of the most important, yet often overlooked, skills is documentation. Initiating documents like project charters or work breakdown structures help set expectations, create alignment and lead to better outcomes. Project integration is also critical: making sure stakeholders are co-ordinated and on the same page. Strong communication skills; written, verbal, online or in person, are essential, along with embracing change and staying flexible. Being adaptable and agile makes a huge difference.

***“You can have a great technical solution but if people aren’t aligned, it won’t succeed.”***

**What advice would you give to students or anyone considering project management?**

I think project management is an amazing discipline. Projects have defined start and end points, which means variety and new challenges. Project management is everywhere and useful in both personal and professional life. It’s truly a life skill. If you’re interested in taking on responsibility, gaining broad experience, and seeing the impact of what you build, I’d encourage anyone to explore it. It’s incredibly rewarding to finish a project and see the benefit it creates for your community, your organization and your stakeholders.

## Contact us

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