

Influential Women Highlights Kelsey Cooling: Driving Enterprise Transformation With Human-Centered Project Leadership

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Combining Strategic Execution, Cross-
Functional Collaboration, and
Adaptability to Deliver Complex Programs
Across Regulated Industries

Kelsey Cooling is a Senior Project Manager with approximately 10 years of experience leading enterprise transformation initiatives at the intersection of business operations, technology, and regulated financial services. Throughout her career, she has developed a reputation for stepping into complex, high-stakes, and at-risk initiatives and bringing structure, clarity, and momentum to programs where precision and execution are essential.



Based in Bonita Springs, Florida, Kelsey specializes in delivering enterprise programs across mortgage servicing and telecommunications environments. Her experience encompasses large-scale transformations requiring extensive stakeholder coordination, financial oversight, regulatory awareness, technology integration, and disciplined program governance. Her ability to translate complicated technical and operational requirements into clear strategies has made her a trusted leader for organizations navigating significant change.

Kelsey's portfolio reflects the scale and complexity of the initiatives she has led. Among her accomplishments is coordinating more than 100 stakeholders on a critical payment portal initiative that helped preserve \$7.5 million in monthly client revenue. She also managed a \$172.5 million subservicing acquisition covering approximately 1.97 million loans, demonstrating her ability to coordinate complex organizational and operational transitions involving significant financial and regulatory considerations.

Her experience also includes executing an 840 TB enterprise data migration with zero business disruption. Such initiatives require meticulous planning, risk management, stakeholder alignment, and technical coordination, and Kelsey has consistently demonstrated an ability to maintain focus on business continuity while managing complicated transformation efforts.

In addition, she has led compliance-focused initiatives, including resolving more than 100 audit-related findings ahead of a Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) review. She has also supported multi-hundred-million-dollar integration and rebranding initiatives involving major enterprise systems and organizations.

Across each engagement, Kelsey's leadership philosophy centers on clarity, trust, and human-centered execution. She believes successful transformation is ultimately about people as much as processes and technology. Her approach incorporates humor, transparency, and honest communication to create environments where team members feel connected, respected, and included.

Kelsey attributes much of her success to adaptability, creativity, and relationship-building. Rather than relying exclusively on traditional leadership structures, she focuses on developing genuine relationships and establishing trust across organizational boundaries. She has found that people are more capable of navigating significant change when they understand their role, feel heard, and recognize how their contributions connect to a broader objective.

Her ability to build relationships has also been strengthened by influential women throughout her personal and professional journey. Her sister Kate has played an important role in helping Kelsey develop her mindset, while her sister Jill, who has held senior positions in the technology sector, helped normalize strong female leadership for her from an early stage.

Professionally, Kelsey credits Karen Rohrkemper with giving her an important start in enterprise program management. She also recognizes Leslie Peeler and Kelly O'Donnell for supporting her development and helping her expand and elevate her capabilities while working in complex, cross-functional environments.

One of the most important lessons Kelsey has carried throughout her career is the principle of "progress over perfection." Earlier in her career, she placed significant pressure on herself to make everything perfect. Over time, however, she realized that perfection can sometimes prevent progress, particularly in fast-moving environments where decisions must be made, and teams must continue moving forward.

Embracing progress over perfection helped Kelsey become more confident in making decisions, move initiatives forward more efficiently, and guide teams toward completion without creating unnecessary pressure around every individual deliverable. The mindset also strengthened her personally, helping her become more adaptable, resilient, and comfortable with ambiguity.

For young women entering project management, technology, or other corporate fields, Kelsey encourages authenticity above conformity. She believes one of the greatest assets a professional can bring into a workplace is simply being who they are.

Early in their careers, women can sometimes feel pressure to fit a particular mold, particularly in highly technical or corporate environments. Kelsey believes, however, that the professionals who stand out are often those who bring authenticity, humor, personality, and humanity into the room.

She encourages young women to remain grounded in who they are rather than attempting to imitate what they believe leadership is supposed to look like. Authenticity, she believes, creates trust, strengthens relationships, and can ultimately open more doors than perfection ever will.

Looking toward the future, Kelsey identifies artificial intelligence as both one of the greatest challenges and opportunities facing project management. The rapid development of AI is changing how organizations structure work, manage information, communicate across teams, and deliver outcomes.

For project managers, this transformation requires continuous learning and a willingness to rethink established approaches. At the same time, Kelsey sees tremendous potential for professionals who embrace AI and become involved in AI-driven initiatives.

She believes project managers have an opportunity to help shape how organizations operate in the future—not merely by using AI to improve efficiency, but by reconsidering how teams deliver outcomes and lead transformation at scale.

At the foundation of Kelsey's leadership are three core values: resilience, integrity, and joy.

Integrity means doing the right thing consistently, particularly when no one is watching. Resilience means understanding that failure is inevitable and recognizing that what matters most is how a person learns from setbacks and continues forward.

Joy, meanwhile, is a value Kelsey believes is often overlooked in professional environments. She believes people should find ways to bring joy into their daily lives because doing so can make them more effective across every aspect of their work and personal lives.

Through her combination of strategic discipline and genuine human connection, Kelsey continues to demonstrate that successful transformation is not simply about delivering projects on time. It is about building trust, creating alignment, empowering people, and ensuring organizations are equipped to move confidently through change.

As technology and AI continue reshaping the business landscape, Kelsey Cooling remains

committed to leading with adaptability, authenticity, and purpose—helping organizations turn complex challenges into meaningful progress while bringing humanity to the work of transformation.

Learn More about Kelsey Cooling:

Through her Influential Women profile: <https://influentialwomen.com/connect/kelsey-cooling>

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