

Michael Harshbarger

Accessibility · Leadership · Human Judgment in AI
PMP · SAFe Agilist · Certified Scrum Master · Certified Product Owner ·
Masters in Project Management

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Speaking inquiries via website

ABOUT



Michael Harshbarger is a strategic accessibility training consultant at Deque Systems and a PMP-certified program and portfolio manager with over 20 years at State Farm leading large-scale modernization. He speaks at the intersection of digital accessibility, leadership, and the human side of AI with sessions that move practitioners from awareness to action.

His talks are built from daily practice. Monday through Friday, Michael is in front of groups of professionals teaching accessibility and leadership. When he builds a conference session, he brings what he has watched work and fail in rooms full of people with real deadlines and no patience for theory.

SIGNATURE SESSIONS

Seeing the Whole Enterprise

Leadership judgment in the age of AI, accelerated delivery, and hidden dependencies. Built for project leaders, PMI chapters, and senior teams navigating complex environments.

Interview with an AI

A live on-stage conversation with AI — examining where it delivers genuine value, where it falls short, and what those gaps reveal about what leadership actually requires.

Accessibility as a Delivery Signal

What accessibility failures reveal about upstream risk and leadership decisions. Built for accessibility professionals, engineering leaders, and conference audiences.

Building a Culture of Accessibility Leadership

Sustainable accessibility is not created by checklists. This session focuses on the leadership behaviors and delivery habits that make accessibility part of how teams work.

BOOKING-READY TOPICS

You Can't Afford Not To: Accessibility for Small Business on a Real Budget

Audiences leave with a practical roadmap they can act on without an enterprise budget or a dedicated accessibility team.

Checklists Don't Build Culture. Leaders Do.

Teams learn the leadership behaviors and delivery habits that make accessibility stick long after the training ends.

The One Thing AI Cannot Do (And Why That Changes Everything)

Leaders gain a clear framework for deciding where AI helps and where human accountability must hold the line.

Why Change Management Fails (It's Not the Technology)

Organizations get an honest look at the hidden risks of complex system change and how to lead through them with confidence.

Formats: keynotes · conference sessions · internal leadership workshops

Most conference speakers have given a talk a handful of times. I have delivered versions of these sessions hundreds of times, to hundreds of different rooms.

I know where people get stuck, which examples land, and how to read a skeptical audience and bring them along anyway. That is not something you get from a speaker who shows up once a year.

SPEAKING HISTORY

2026 CSUN Assistive Technology Conference (2 sessions)
2026 University of Illinois WebCon (2 sessions)
2026 PMI Mass Bay PDC — September (confirmed)
2025 PMI Global Conference — Phoenix
2025 University of Illinois WebCon
2025 CSUN Assistive Technology Conference
2024 University of Illinois WebCon
2022 Deque axe-con / AccessU
2021 AccessU
2016 PMI Global Conference — San Diego
2016 PMI Central Illinois Chapter Conference

AV & LOGISTICS

Presentation format: PowerPoint or PDF (provided 1 week prior)
Display: Projector or large screen, 16:9 preferred
Microphone: Lavalier or headset preferred; handheld acceptable
Clicker: Presenter will provide their own
Internet: Required for "Interview with an AI" session only
Session length: 45 to 75 minutes; can adapt to your program
Q&A: Preferred; 10 to 15 minutes recommended
Recording: Permitted with advance notice
Lead time: Confirmed sessions booked 6+ weeks in advance