



Department of Defense Intellectual Property Forum 2023

Paul Nelson

Director Engineering – Digital Transformation, Northrop Grumman Space Systems



Paul Nelson leads engineering digital transformation for the Space Systems sector at Northrop Grumman. Nelson is passionate about promoting processes and tools that drive speed and affordability while meeting customer requirements. Nelson has BS and MS degrees in mechanical engineering from Brigham Young University. He is INCOSE CSEP certified, holds a graduate certificate in Systems Engineering from the University of Utah, and is CM2-Professional certified. He has 20+ years of digital engineering experience spanning the lifecycle of complex systems of systems development.

Nelson joined Northrop Grumman via the mid-2018 acquisition of Orbital ATK and shortly thereafter moved into a role as Chief Technical Strategist, NG Fellow for Northrop Grumman where he led the establishment of a cloud based Integrated Digital Environment for use company wide until 2022. At Orbital ATK, Nelson was a Tech Fellow for the Product Lifecycle Management (PLM) Discipline. Nelson was at Orbital ATK for just over 10 years and had the privilege to work several amazing programs including Space Shuttle, Trident D5 missiles, Space Launch System, Orion Launch Abort, and several commercial programs to meet their model based data management needs.

Prior to joining Orbital ATK, Nelson lived in St. Louis where he worked closely with a major aerospace and defense company on their digital transformation for fighter jet programs, Space Station in Houston, and Product Data Management (PDM) across their defense systems landscape as a technical architect for several years.

Nelson loves a technical challenge, but also realizes the hardest variable in the enterprise digital transformation equation is and always will be people including their need for training, education, organization change, and cultural adoption.

Nelson currently serves as a director-at-large on the INCOSE Wasatch Chapter officers board. Nelson serves on the IpX CM2 Global Congress. Nelson is the technical co-chair of the GPDIS (Global Product Data Interoperability Summit) conference. Nelson lived in Siberia for 2 years and is fluent in Russian.

Nelson is married with five children and resides in Logan, Utah. He enjoys the outdoors, continuing to learn scientific and technology principles, programming Legos and Christmas lights with his children, and exploring various forms of story telling.

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