

Great question! — adding the *right* data to an MPX/MSPDI schedule is one of the fastest ways to unlock much deeper insights, detect risks earlier, and generate far better analysis with Copilot (and any PMO tooling).

Below is a **clear, practical list** of the most valuable fields you can add to your schedule to improve analytics, forecasting, dashboards, and strategic insights.

1. Task-Level Data That Greatly Improves Analysis

Baseline Fields (Essential for variance analysis)

If you haven't added or saved a baseline, do it. It unlocks:

- Start variance
- Finish variance
- Duration variance
- Budget vs actual
- Trendlines across time

Fields to include:

- Baseline Start (1–10)
 - Baseline Finish (1–10)
 - Baseline Duration
 - Baseline Cost & Baseline Work
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Unique IDs / WBS Codes

These allow Copilot to:

- Track hierarchy
- Map tasks to workstreams
- Detect missing deliverables
- Create RACI charts

Recommended fields:

- WBS
- Outline Level
- Unique ID

✓ Dependencies With Lag/Lead

Dependencies are powerful for risk and critical path analysis.

Include:

- Predecessors (with types: FS/SS/FF/SF)
 - Successors
 - Lag/Lead values
 - Constraint types (e.g., "Start No Earlier Than")
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✓ Resource Assignments

If you only have durations but no resource assignments, insights are limited.

Add:

- Names of assigned resources
 - Resource type (Work / Material)
 - Max units
 - Cost rates
 - Calendars (resource-specific)
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✓ Percent Complete + Physical % Complete

These allow Copilot to evaluate:

- Work progress
 - Slippage
 - Cost performance (with EV formulas)
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2. Cost & Work Data for Financial Insights

✓ Cost Tracking

Add:

- Standard rate
- Overtime rate

- Cost per use
- Fixed cost per task
- Actual cost (if tracking progress)

With this, Copilot can:

- Run Earned Value (CPI, SPI)
 - Detect cost overruns early
 - Build financial dashboards
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✓ Work Tracking

Add:

- Work
- Actual Work
- Remaining Work
- Peak Units

This improves:

- Capacity insights
 - Burn-down charts
 - Overload detection
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3. Risk, Priority & Classification Metadata

These are *optional* fields, but they dramatically improve the quality of insights.

✓ Risk / Priority Tags

Custom fields such as:

- Risk ID
- Risk Category (Technical / Vendor / Scope / Schedule / Resource)
- Risk Probability (High/Med/Low)
- Impact (High/Med/Low)
- Mitigation owner

Copilot can then:

- Correlate risks to schedule impact

- Identify high-risk dependency chains
 - Build RAID logs automatically
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✓ Project Categorization

Add classification metadata in custom fields:

- Workstream
- Department
- Value stream
- Sprint/iteration (for hybrid Agile)
- Deliverable category

This helps Copilot reorganize and summarize the plan automatically.

☑ 4. Milestone & Deliverable Metadata

Add fields to identify:

- Deliverable owner
- Acceptance criteria
- Milestone category (Internal / External / Governance / Payment)
- Stage-gate indicator

This allows:

- Better executive summaries
 - Clearer milestone health analysis
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☑ 5. Deadlines, Buffers, and Slack/Float

From these fields, Copilot can:

- Analyze schedule flexibility
- Highlight bottlenecks
- Suggest compression strategies

Include:

- Deadline

- Total Slack
 - Free Slack
 - Buffer tasks and “buffer size”
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6. Calendar and Working Time Enhancements

If you include:

- Project calendar
- Resource calendars
- Exception days

Copilot can:

- Detect holiday conflicts
 - Identify schedule compression opportunities
 - Improve timeline forecasts
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Summary: The Most Valuable Additions

If you want the *biggest improvement* in insights, prioritize adding:

Top 10 most impactful fields

1. Baseline Start/Finish/Cost/Work
2. WBS structure
3. Predecessors with dependency types
4. Resource names + rates
5. Actual Work / Remaining Work
6. Cost fields (Actual, Fixed, Standard Rate)
7. Percent Complete + Physical % Complete
8. Slack/Float
9. Deadline
10. Custom fields: Risk rating, Workstream, Milestone owner

These unlock **trend analysis, risk detection, Earned Value, schedule optimization, cost visibility, resource balancing, and executive-ready reporting.**

If you want...

I can help you:

-  **Design a data model for your MS Project files**
-  **Build a template MSPDI file with all recommended fields**
-  **Create automated analyses for your future uploads**
-  **Generate reports/dashboards directly from your files**

Would you like me to create a recommended field template for your MPX/MSPDI projects?