

PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***The GPM Reference Guide to Sustainability in Project Management***
Authors: **Joel Carboni, Monica Gonzalez, and Jeff Hodgkinson**
Publisher: Green Project Management
List Price: \$19.95
Format: electronic; 157 pages
Publication Date: 2012
ISBN: 978-1-62209-660-2

Reviewer: **David M. Simon**

Review Date: March 2013

My Overall Assessment

In recognizing the frightening position we find ourselves in modern day times surrounded by inferior quality of workmanship, process, products, and etc., we often look for a mechanism by which we can right our wrongs from actions past.

When we take a look from a project management standpoint, we can see our efforts have contributed to this very pitfall in today's world where "cheap cheap cheap" is the motto, and cutting cost is the mechanism.

When we do this we fail to understand the long term implications of this way of "doing business" and we slowly degrade the very basis that made us great.

This book, *The GPM Reference Guide to: Sustainability in Project Management* would be considered in my opinion, the Holy Grail of Project Management Guides with a focus on Sustainability in Project Management. It is a body of knowledge by which we can move forward to fix the erroneous practices of maximizing profit at the expense of everything and everyone.

What the Authors Convey

By covering the fundamentals of what sustainability is the Authors are able to show what sustainable methods in Project Management truly are and how this methodology

(Projects integrating Sustainable Methods, aka PRiSM) they have developed will be the world changing system of processes we desperately need in the Project Management Community (PMC).

By focusing on simply the Profit as our only bottom line, we in the PMC have contributed to a world full of projects which have been performed with the cheapest labor, the cheapest materials, and ultimately the cheapest practices acceptable to produce a service or product.

What the Authors do is show how a triple bottom line (People, Planet, and then Profit) can be focused upon in project managing which will ultimately result in a better solution for all of those stakeholders who we have the responsibility to perform for as project managers.

The most interesting aspect developed in this book is the Sustainable application to the Triple Bottom Line which they have dubbed as P5. P5 is a groundbreaking concept which focuses on Sustainability in regard to the People, the Planet, and Profit (P3) through the Practices and the Products.

The significance here is found in the breakdown of the Project Management Cycle being injected with Sustainability Metrics and Planning from the beginning (Front Loading); and carried through with a Sustainability Management Plan to ensure the execution is in line with the Sustainable Requirements of the Organization for which they are managing projects.

Why Project Managers Should Read This Book

Without a solid understanding of finite and infinite it might possibly be understood how this book could be overlooked for its value. However, in a day of such modern advancements and understandings about our world, it is hard to overlook the harsh reality that we are strongly marching towards. This reality of which I speak is a lack of resources such as clean air, water, minerals, and other such life sustaining necessities brought about by humanities careless waste and abuse of such resources.

It is not hard to observe the damage which we are doing to our world by implementing projects that lack sustainability metrics and guidelines. We see them in the pacific garbage patch that poisons our oceans, or the fracking for oil which poisons our water tables. We find it in the mutations of animal species or in the perpetual haze that overhangs most metropolitan areas.

For these reasons, and many more, we as project managers should seek out methodologies and systems which will bring back into harmony the people and the planet while still making a profit. In this reason alone we can find much solace in the comprehension and practical application of this book's methods.

Target Audience

This book is targeted towards the PMC and anyone who is in an organization which employs project managers to perform project-based delivery of services or products. For anyone who has ever had a doubt or a wonder about the way we do things and whether we can do them better in order to ensure the longevity of life on earth, while still ensuring a nominal financial profit, then this book is most definitely for you.

More about the *GPM Reference Guide to Sustainability in Project Management* can be found at <http://www.greenprojectmanagement.org/107-featured/179-gpm-handbook>

About the Reviewer



David M. Simon, PMP, GPM-b



David M. Simon is a former U.S. Army Ranger and current Project Manager and Owner of DarNofa Construction & Interior Design, a construction and project management company in Kuwait and the USA. He has a broad range of experience in project management and sustainability consulting in the Middle East and in the USA. David is a member of PMI-AGC Kuwait, was the Director of Performance for the Kuwait Chapter, and is active in the Global Sustainability Community of Knowledge for PMI. David can be reached by email at simon.david.m@gmail.com