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## PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Playing The Project Manager***

Author: Charles Smith

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Reviewer: Trellis Stewart    Review Date: January 2015

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### Introduction

The beginning of the book emphasizes that people engaged in project management should think of themselves as performers, and the world of projects as the stage on which they play their roles. The manager's credibility is not built on their knowledge of mechanized practices and administrative procedures, but on how they handle the complexities and challenges of the real project world.

### Overview of Book's Structure

The first three chapters give a high level overview of expectations. It touches on the psychological aspects of the manager's social behaviors with those with whom they interact. The information is conveyed through stories acquired from project managers as they describe their approach to specific challenges. The different performance types are categorized in subsequent chapters, with explanations of the psychology behind the project manager's actions.

### Highlights

The book covers the different categorization of various performers. The six archetypes identified are Analyst, Enforcer, Expert, Impresario, Master of Ceremonies, and Re-shaper.

The Analyst needs to know all the details and relies heavily on team members for facts, information, and cooperation. This performer strives to always derive suitable solutions.

The Enforcer is not necessarily interested in the minute details. The primary concern here is to ensure that all parties involved complete their tasks in a timely manner. This person emphasizes the consequences of failure.

The Expert works mainly in a specialized career discipline. This person relies heavily on knowledge as Subject Matter Expert more than on the principles of project management.

The Impresarios strives to produce something great that may have social or political impact. The objective is to contribute to an outstanding project which provides fulfillment to the manager. This archetype accomplishes tasks regardless of rules or regulations.

The Master of Ceremonies will approach the tasks at hand and be inclusive of internal and external forces. The Master of Ceremonies philosophy is about creating space; zones where people with diverse aims can come together.

The Re-shaper acts to align the project with the agenda of the powers which will prevail. The overall goal is to be a winner and manipulate the project in a manner which will put the project manager in the best light with the most powerful people.

### **Highlights: What I liked!**

I enjoyed reading the various stories and the final outcomes of each scenario. In reading this book, the reader considers how some of these personality traits can be utilized. The reader must decide which traits lie outside traditional project management rules and regulations.

### **Who might benefit from the Book?**

This is a good book for new project managers or managers who would like to deviate from their current style and incorporate new soft skills to their management style. It cannot be used for incorporating PMI techniques because it only deals with psychological behaviors and in some instances, disregards PMI rules and regulations.

### **Conclusion**

Playing The Project Manager is informative for the various approaches to different management styles. The stories are informative from a positive approach, but do not address the negatives that may accompany a specific style. The book was easy to read and provides insight into the behavior of certain project manager archetypes.

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For more about this book, go to: <http://www.projectcraft.org.uk/>

*Editor's note: This book review was the result of a partnership between the publisher, PM World and the [PMI Dallas Chapter](#). Authors and publishers provide the books to PM World; books are delivered to the PMI Dallas Chapter, where they are offered free to PMI members to review; book reviews are published in the PM World Journal and PM World Library. PMI Dallas Chapter members can keep the books as well as claim PDUs for PMP recertification when their reviews are published. Chapter members are generally mid-career professionals, the audience for most project management books. If you are an author or publisher of a project management-related book, and would like the book reviewed through this program, please contact [editor@peworldjournal.net](mailto:editor@peworldjournal.net).*

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## About the Reviewer

### **Trellis Stewart, PMP**

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**Trellis Stewart** acquired PMP status in 2012 and has a background in Mainframe Project Development, Quality Assurance, Project Management, and Business Analysis. She has served as a consultant in Information Technology for over 20 years and is currently an active member of the PMI Dallas Chapter.