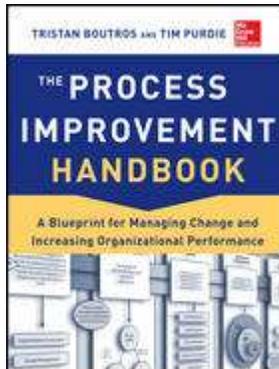

PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***The Process Improvement Handbook***

Author: **Tristan Boutros and Tim Purdie**

Publisher: **McGraw-Hill Education**

List Price: US\$90.00 Format: hard cover; 416 pages

Publication Date: September 2013 ISBN: 978-0-07-181766-0

Reviewer: **Jason S. Bird, PMP**

Review Date: April 2014

As a recent PMP recipient and one who has spent many years in work environments in serious need of process overhaul, I was glued to the pages of this meaty text.

There is a wealth of information here for anyone interested in improving their organization's operating environment, as well as for those who base their core profession on creating and maintaining process mature organizations. Continuous Improvement Professionals, Process Improvement Managers, Process Analysts, and Enterprise Solution Architects can employ this book as a baseline of skills and competencies for themselves and their colleagues.

As the PMBOK® Guide does for Project Management, *The Process Improvement Handbook* offers a common vocabulary for use within the Process Improvement profession. Those familiar with the PMBOK® Guide, will recognize some chief commonalities such as this text being introduced as a "Body of Knowledge" and the main portion of the book encompassing a set of "Knowledge areas".

The Introduction contains a Process Improvement Manifesto delivered as a set of core values that would be found in model organizations. The list encompasses the concepts of: Agility, Quality, Leadership, Communication, Respect, Discipline, Enterprise Perspective, Service Orientation, Continuous Learning, and Human Centered Design. This provides a foundation for superior results through flexibility, progressive thinking, and synergistic relationships enterprise-wide extending to customers.

In Part Two, the body of this text, the reader is guided through the Process Improvement Knowledge Areas where we are introduced to the world of Process Maturity, Process-Oriented Architecture, Process Ecosystems, and Process Improvement Organizations. It begins by describing the basic concepts and fundamentals to help put process improvement into context. Next, we are provided the tools to 1) determine where our organization falls within the process maturity model,

helping to identify areas for improvement, 2) design and implement a solution in the form of a strategic architectural framework, 3) create an environment that will support the new structure, and 4) manage this framework once it is in place.

The chapter on Process Improvement Aptitudes provides a dictionary of the skills, competencies, and techniques used by managers and practitioners in the Process Improvement field. It is a helpful baseline with which one may gauge their own suitability to the profession, as well as to note the areas where they have experience and areas that may need focus.

PMP's will appreciate that the Process Improvement Handbook goes into more depth in some areas that the PMBOK® Guide only touches on such as the continuous improvement models: Plan-Do-Check-Act Cycle, Lean Six Sigma, Total Quality Management, and Agile Methodology. Also, many of the process improvement tools and techniques align with those covered in the Quality Management section of the PMBOK® Guide such as Force Field Analysis, Fishbone Diagrams, Pareto Analysis, Affinity Diagrams, etc.

An important area where this book succeeds where past process improvement books have failed (as noted in the forward) is its attention on how to prepare an organization to accept a new operating philosophy. The Process Improvement Handbook describes how to make this cultural change by providing the foundational context to train all participants involved, and the means of creating an ecosystem linking all activities within an organization, demonstrating their interconnectedness.

The Process Improvement Handbook is loaded with diagrams and charts, and has a chapter containing 32 templates with instructions, some more immediately accessible than others, and some of which you may need your glasses to read, as they appear to have been intended for a larger format. (The templates can be downloaded and customized to size from the given web address)

With at least fourteen professional designations held between the two authors, including Lean Six Sigma Black Belt, Project Management Professional, Certified Scrum Master, and decades of advanced process implementation, and business, technology, and management consulting experience, this text is written with a true command of the subject matter. I highly recommend this comprehensive text to anyone with even a casual interest in improving functions at their own organization, and in particular to those intending to specialize in or branch into the field.

The Process Improvement Handbook, by Tristan Boutros and Tim Purdie, published by McGraw Hill Education, ISBN 978-0-07-181766-0 ; \$90.00 USD; 416 pages, hard cover. More information at <http://www.mhprofessional.com/product.php?isbn=0071817662>

Editor's note: This book review was the result of cooperation between the publisher, PM World and the Portland, Oregon, USA Chapter of the Project Management Institute (PMI Portland Chapter – www.pmi-portland.org). Publishers provide the books to the PMI Portland Chapter, where they are offered free to PMI members to review; book reviews are published in the PM World Journal and PM World Library. Reviewers can keep the books and claim PDUs for PMP recertification. PMI Portland 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@pmworldjournal.net or asst_newsletter_dir@pmi-portland.org.

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Jason Bird, PMP is a Project Manager of seven years in the field of architectural cast parts manufacturing.