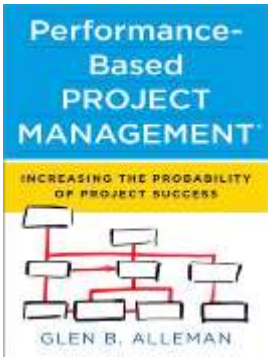
PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Performance-Based Project Management***

Author: **Glen B. Alleman**

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Reviewer: **Johnny Gan, PMP**

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Introduction to the Book

What's Performance-Based Project Management? We all know that managing a project isn't a linear progression from start to end, and sometimes your customers could change their minds or not know exactly what they want to begin with. Any unexpected factors can cause your project losing the way in the forest easily.

"To achieve the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to earth."

President John Kennedy, May 15, 1961

This statement is very good example of Five Immutable Principles of successful project management, which will be introduced in this book: *Performance-Based Project Management*. This book is about successfully managing projects based on your early processes, but with the added concept of "capabilities". For all projects, a set of "capability" statements is the starting point of describing what "done" looks like. In another word, Performance-based Project Management is knowing what you can do, what can be done, and how it can be done.

The book's author, Glen B. Allman has more than 30 years of experience as a program manager and performance management consultant in the aerospace, defense, and enterprise information technology fields. This book is the result of his cumulative experience, and brings you safe advice in an easy-to-swallow style. You will learn from this book about Five Immutable Principles, Five Immutable Practices, and Five Governing Processes, which can help you to increase the probability of a project's success.

Overview of Book's Structure

Performance-Based Project Management is about the principles, practices, and processes of project management that make those connections.

The book is organized in a layered manner, starting with the concepts, principles, practices, and then processes, which the book's structures as listed below:

- Chapter 1. The Ten Drivers of Project Success
  The success drivers are organized into three classes:
  i. Planning, a plan, a schedule, a budget, a description of the work to be performed.
  ii. Execution, execution of the work packages can take places.
  iii. Performance Management, while the work is being performed, we need to measure our progress against the plan. The measurement must be tangible, not an opinion.

- Chapter 2. The Five Immutable Principles of Project Success
  Once the drivers of project success are in place, we have what we need to confirm that the customer understands:
  i. What "done" looks like
  ii. How we are going to get there
  iii. What it is going to cost and how long it will take
  iv. How we're going to handle all the impediments along the way
  v. Most important, how we are going to measure all these things to confirm we are actually making progress, not just spending money and passing the time.

- Chapter 3. The Five Immutable Practices of Project Success
  With the principle in place, we move on to how to do the following practice
  i. Develop a description of the needed capabilities to be produced by the project
  ii. Develop the technical and operational requirements that produce those capabilities
  iii. Plan the work needed to deliver those requirements
  iv. Perform that work.
  v. Manage all the risks that result from normal project work

- Chapter 4. The Five Governing Processes of Project management
  Now, we are ready to implement the five processes to increase the probability of project success:
  i. Organize the project
  ii. Plan, schedule, and budget

iii. Execute project accounting
iv. Execute project performance analysis
v. Record revisions and maintain data

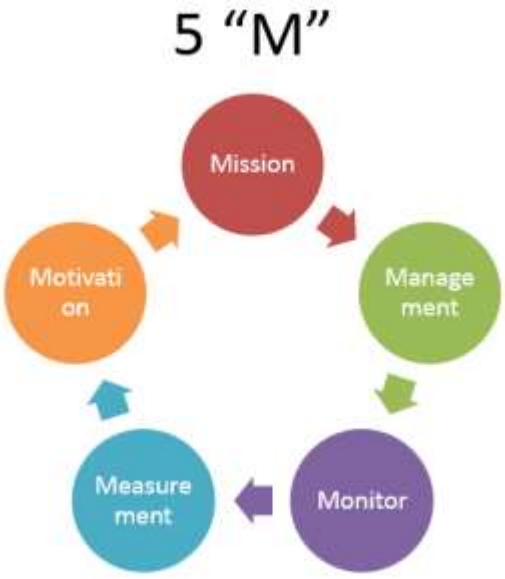
- Chapter 5. Project Management Execution
  In this chapter, it shows 3 simplified, hypothetical, but real-world projects to demo how to apply the principles, practices, and processes across each project.

- Chapter 6. Tailoring the Principles and Practices for Project Success
  In this chapter, it goes deeper to gain an understanding of why certain things were down and others were skipped over.

- Chapter 7. Deliverables Needed for Project Management Success
  Performance-Based Project Management produces tangible documents that are evidence that the method has been used or effort has been done.

Highlights: What's New in this Book?

All principles, practices, and processes in this book are looked neither new nor unique. But even the principles are always the same, (this is why it called immutable principle), the practices are adjusted to provide the appropriate level of detail needed to manage the project, and the process are tailored to fit the real needs of the project's planning, cost, resource management, reporting, and risk management. These steps make a 5 "M" cycle.



All these steps based on performance in the project management. You need clear mission as your project performance import, therefore, you can setup a performance baseline, and then you can build up performance metrics, which allow you can monitor and measure the performance, and depends on performance feedback to adjust schedule and resource allocation.

Highlights: What I liked!

How to manage creative people while getting the work done on-time, on-budget, and on-specification! The answer may be quite simple – Give these creative people a clear, concise, definitive, and measurable task, provide all the needed resources, and let them do their job.

So you can see that a clear, concise, definitive and measurable task is the first aspect of this book:

- How to clearly define the purpose of the project; that is, how to have clarity of purpose,
- How to construct the artifacts, or elements, that represent that clarity, and
- How to measure the performance of the technical outcomes from the work on the project performed by the people.

Creating a clearly defined purpose starts with identifying the capabilities needed for business success. These capabilities are not just technical and operational requirements, they also are the "value" delivered by the project. Not just a statement of value, but the actual measures of that value.

The second aspect of this book is accountability, which involves the roles and responsibilities assigned to each position on the project. To create accountability, we have to convince all the participants in the project that they are actually "accountable" for the outcomes, which is the key point to lead the project to succeed.

Who might benefit from the Book?

This book can help project managers at different levels. But whoever you are, it is important to note that applying the practices and processes, tailored to your own project, results in a set of artifacts that are needed to actually manage the project.

This is the important step in changing how projects are managed – moving project management from simply implementing technical and operational requirements to providing the needed capabilities that produce measureable business value to the customer.

Performance-based project management will let you realize your capabilities before you start your project, and what your project will looks like, and how your project can be done. And of course, it will be finally help your project to be successful.

Conclusion

Project management approaches are numbers – PMBOK, Prince2, Agile Methodology, and more, but in this book, Performance-based Project Management integrates strategic, technical, and managerial processes into a framework build on 5 immutable principles and 5 immutable practices that can be widely applied into your project. And it makes possible that performance-management drivers your project going forward to successful completion.

More about this book can be found at http://www.amacombooks.org/book.cfm?isbn=9780814433300

Editor's note: This book review was the result of cooperation between the publisher, PM World and the Dallas Chapter of the Project Management Institute (PMI Dallas Chapter – www.pmidallas.org). 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. Reviewers can keep the books and claim PDUs for PMP recertification. PMI Dallas 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.

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Johnny Gan had many years of software R&D experience at HRsmart.com (http://www.hrsmart.com/), and now is working as consultant at Yoh (http://www.yoh.com/) Company. Mr. Gan received his MS degree from Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, USA, and is also certified by the Project Management Institute as a Project Management Professional (PMP®). He has been an active member of PMI for several years. Johnny can be contacted at qianggan@gmail.com .