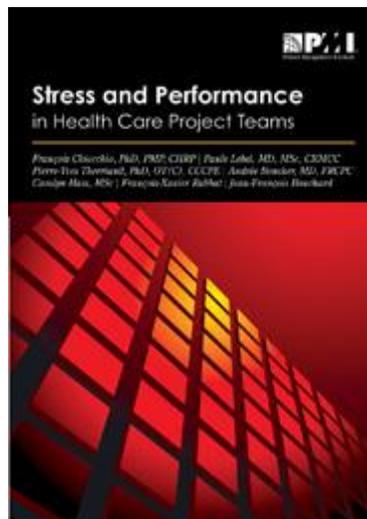

PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Stress and Performance in Health Care Project Teams***

Author: ***Francois Chiocchio, Paule Lebel, Pierre-Yves Therriault, Andree Boucher, Carolyn Hass, Francois-Xavier Rabbat and Jean-Francois Bouchard***

Publisher: ***Project Management Institute***

Format: ***soft cover; 151 pages***

Publication Date: ***2012*** ISBN: ***978-1-935589-64-8***

Reviewer: ***Stephen Strecker***

Review Date: ***August 2014***

Introduction to the Book

This book is primarily an easily readable but very insightful, unique, academic study (funded by PMI and SSHRC), that was conducted in 2011 and 2012, with project teams staffed from major universities and health care facilities in and around Montreal, Quebec, Canada. This study focuses on the problem of workload, stress, demands and control in the context of inter-professional health care project teams.

The premise paradoxes, study findings and resulting recommendations from this action research project are effectively presented to help improve the health care sector's project success rate, by showing how other hospital organizations can effectively acquire the required project management principles and inter-disciplinary professional collaboration knowledge, to implement simple, proven practices, to improve project performance and success rates.

Overview of Book's Structure

The book is organized into 7 chapters and 9 appendices that guide the reader through the study. It starts with identifying five paradoxes of inter-professional health care project teams. It then addresses how inter-professional team collaboration in health care projects is a direct response to complexity in everything from specific patient health problems to efficacy-seeking health network challenges. Next, the study process, projects and participants are clearly delineated. The specific projects employed in this health care study are not particularly clinical but instead focus on "changes and

improvements in the service industry” and “knowledge transfer and continuous education (best practices)”. Then, training efficacy considerations are explained (which is one of the take-away highlights of this book). This is followed by the longitudinal (survey based) quantitative analysis findings of workload, demands, control and perceived stress study factors impact. Then, there is a qualitative (interview based) retrospective examination of the recognition, autonomy and power study factors impact. Finally, a series of resulting, descriptive yet concise, transferrable study findings and recommendations are listed and explained.

Highlights: What’s New in this Book

The book is applied academic research on the relatively unique subject of challenges that healthcare workers face, when working inter-professionally in project teams (particularly on change initiative projects). The authors explain how collaboration’s main challenge in service work is the acute need for coordination between specialties, so that knowledge and expertise converge in high quality decision-making, designed to adequately respond to patient needs.

For health care project team participants; they need to transcend their regular professional expertise to a refocused collaborative type of expertise, for their projects to succeed. The right type of comprehensive, specific, just-in-time, related training in project management principles and applicable collaboration is required; which the authors do an excellent job of describing (with additional details found in the appendices). The credibility of the trainers (role-modeling), the convenient location of the training, the use of relevant templates and focusing on specific principles are important keys to the author’s successful training practices.

Highlights: What I liked!

This book focuses effectively on inter-disciplinary team level practices that foster (and work environment elements that impede) successful project completion in the health care arena. This is very useful information, considering the tremendous growth of project work in the health care sector and the general lack of useful published research on the related component topics. I am impressed with the practical inter-disciplinary team dynamics advice and the related training recommendations that are provided. The authors’ findings clearly suggest that their project management approach is definitely applicable (in a broader scope) to other health care organizations and that additional research in this area is definitely worth pursuing.

Who might benefit from the Book

This is a high value set of findings, practices and recommendations for healthcare (hospitals and large ambulatory sites) project staff. It is a good starting point for project managers seeking new project success efficacy techniques; where the key premise is

that inter-professional collaboration and project management are intimately intertwined, and that training on only one aspect is not sufficient.

Conclusion

This book provides an interesting exploration of the “blind spot” phenomenon of inter-professional collaboration, in the context of health care management. It goes on to provide a series of evidence-based practical recommendations on how to address this deficiency and how they apply to the goal of improving project performance to help ensure project success. While this was a limited action research study, it clearly has real-world applicability for a wide range of organizations (even beyond health care). It is both a fascinating read and a worthy reference guide.

More about this book can be found at
<http://marketplace.pmi.org/Pages/ProductDetail.aspx?GMProduct=00101372001>

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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Stephen Strecker is a Senior Consultant for Healthcare Provider Solutions at Xerox Consulting Company, Inc. in North Texas. He has over 25 years of experience in the IT and management industry, demonstrating comprehensive expertise with end-to-end PMO, program and project leadership in healthcare infrastructure and application development for major hospital organizations. Stephen can be contacted at stephen.strecker@xerox.com.