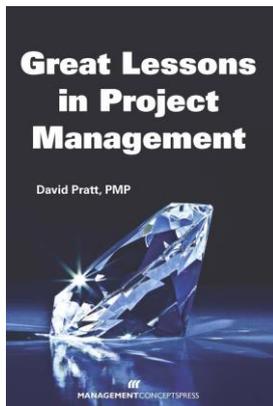

PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Great Lessons in Project Management***

Author: ***David Pratt***

Publisher: ***Management Concepts Press***

List Price: ***US\$29.00***

Format: ***soft cover; 143 pages***

Publication Date: ***2015*** ISBN: ***978-1-56726-472-2***

Reviewer: ***Stephen Strecker***

Review Date: ***March 2015***

Introduction to the Book

This book is a fast paced collection of 19 fascinating lessons learned short stories that drive home key principles for success in project management, with a general emphasis on rescuing troubled projects. The book presents a relatively concise yet lively business background scenario for a wide range of challenged (primarily government organization) IT projects that are resuscitated by the author (or one of three of his peers), with effective solution techniques.

The author seeks to teach useful, widely applicable project management lessons learned solutions in short, easily digested chapters, where each one focuses on a single principle. It is a solid contribution to the field, with material that is easily approachable, a quick read and applicable to most types of IT projects. Overall, it provides an insightful consultant perspective, where the author's extensive experience clearly shines through.

Overview of Book's Structure

The book is organized into 19 short chapters that guide the reader through 19 interesting case studies. Each one presents a problem scenario, along with the solution and a clearly labeled lessons learned summary section. The topics include scope management, management and control, project team management, stakeholder management, project initiation, communications management, quality management, time management, HR management, cost management, project governance, procurement management, project planning, risk management, project execution and project management integration.

The first eighteen chapters can safely be read in any order but the reader should probably save the final (integration) chapter for last.

Highlights: What's New in this Book?

Personal narrative stores are an excellent teaching tool for sharing practical experience, in a way that draws in the reader. The author is very good at using that approach to compiling a page-turner collection of useful advice that clearly focuses on the PMBOK process groups and knowledge areas. Credible troubled project scenarios set the user up for appropriate project manager empowered solutions, which are then clearly summarized as broadly applicable lessons learned. Each of those lessons learned is descriptive yet concise and directed to either the project manager or the project sponsor (or both).

The stories date back over the author's personal career experience, from the last ten years, where he has specialized in resurrecting damaged or failing projects, as either a project manager, project mentor or QA analyst. Each story ends successfully on a high note and focuses on proven project management practices that are relatively easy to apply. However, the book would have benefitted from including a single tear-out quick reference sheet (in an appendix) that lists all of the lessons learned.

Highlights: What I liked!

This book is a fascinating read that can easily be completed within a day or two. The stories are well chosen, vicarious learning opportunities, as we walk in the author's footsteps. He shows intelligence, perception and tenacity, when problem solving, in a very believable manner. Practical take-away advice is presented in a straight-forward manner that applies to both the project manager and the project sponsor.

I found the chapters on Risk Management, subtitled "Even the Best Planning Does Not Eliminate Risk" and "Always Follow Up On Your Plans", particularly interesting. Those intriguing stories provide good examples of integrating risk management into a project and applying risk management principles for a successful recovery from catastrophic events. The writing style is conversational but the message shines through clearly.

Who might benefit from the Book?

This book is written for both project managers and project sponsors. It is a great addition to any library of practical lessons learned advice for resurrecting severely challenged IT projects and, even more important, avoiding such pitfalls in your projects. Professionals at all levels would benefit from this book. It would be particularly valuable, as required reading, with a PMO, for team building and edification of the project manager staff.

Conclusion

Great Lessons in Project management is a concise book, filled with practical advice and broadly applicable solutions, based on 19 troubled IT project case study stories. It is an interesting exploration of applied PMBOK principles and related practices.

The collection of stories demonstrates problem-solving techniques that have applicability to a wide range of organizations (beyond the government entities' software and hardware circumstances that are covered). This fascinating read is David Pratt's third book on project management. His goal is to provide a good start on a treasure trove of valued lessons learned experiences that project managers can draw on, to validate their own good experiences and avoid the pitfalls of others. To that extent, I believe that he has strongly exceeded expectations and this book is a worthy addition to every project manager's professional reference library.

For more about this book, go to:

http://store.managementconcepts.com/Great_Lessons_in_Project_Management_David_Pratt_p/b722.htm

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.

About the Reviewer



Stephen Strecker

Texas, USA



Stephen Strecker, MBA, PMP, ITIL is a Senior Consultant with Healthcare Provider Solutions, a Xerox consulting company, in north Texas, USA. 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.