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Effective Project Mangement, 7th Edition
Author: Robert K. Wysocki
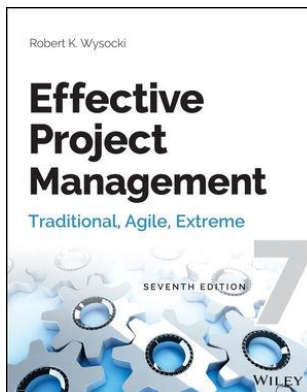Book Review   Reviewer: Amy N. Stevens

PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW

Book Title: **Effective Project Management: Traditional, Agile, Extreme, 7th Edition**

Author: **Robert K. Wysocki, PhD**

Publisher: Wiley

List Price: $65.00 USD   Format: Soft cover, 726 pages

Publication Date: 2014   ISBN: 978-1-118-72916-8

Reviewer: **Amy N. Stevens**   Review Date: 04/2015

Introduction

Effective Project Management: Traditional, Agile, Extreme is the 7th edition of a highly successful book on project management. The author, Robert Wysocki, PhD has used his 40 years' experience as a project manager, consultant and trainer to scribe a book that appeals to a wide variety of individuals including: project management professionals, trainers/educators and students. Each edition builds upon the previous volume as the author is constantly updating the material based on feedback he has received as well as from his own observations as a practicing project manager.

In Effective Project Management: Traditional, Agile, Extreme, the author provides a decent overview of projects, a variety of project management processes, and tools for ensuring success. The author makes a point early on in the book that he does not believe in a single model for all projects. By definition, each project is unique and therefore there is not a single best fit model that can be applied to any and all projects. Different projects require different approaches and processes must be adapted to reflect the unique nature of each project. The author is very quick to point out that as project managers, we need to be chefs and not cooks. A cook follows a recipe, a chef is formally trained on how to blend ingredients into unique recipes. A project manager has the foundational tools and knowledge to be able to tailor processes to meet the unique demands of each project.

For readers who may be familiar with previous editions of this book, in the 7th edition, the author incorporates two major changes. In the 5th edition of the PMBOK, the stakeholder group is elevated to a Knowledge Area and this change is reflected within the 7th edition of Effective Project Management: Traditional, Agile, Extreme. In addition, the author has added a new chapter to discuss the Enterprise-level Project Portfolio Model (EPPM). The EPPM is a nice addition to the book as many of today's executives require more rigor for the project review and approval process.

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Overview of Book's Structure

At 726 pages, this is a robust book that not only serves as a decent training text but also a nice addition to a project manager's library for reference. It is very well organized with a concise introduction that clearly explains how the book can be used by both educators as well as practitioners. The author has organized the information into 18 chapters which span 5 clearly defined parts or sections. In addition to the soft copy book, the author provides additional resources on the publisher's website that can be used in the classroom. These materials include: power point decks for each chapter as well as classroom exercises, training exercises and case studies.

These 5 parts are key to the book's layout and are as follow:

Part 1: Understanding the Project Management Landscape
In this section, the author covers the basics with an overview of a definition of a project, project management and the project management groups.

Part 2: Traditional Project Management
Once the overview is provided in Part 1, the author dives in with a detailed discussion of the traditional approach to project management.

Part 3: Complex Project Management
In Part 3, project management models that may be new to many readers are introduced. These include: agile, extreme and a model coined by the author he refers to as Emertxe (ee-MERT-zee), which is cleverly extreme spelled backwards since in this model you start with the solution.

Part 4: Managing the Realities of Projects
Part 4 introduces the reader on ways to recognize and manage distressed projects, on how to work with different types of teams, how to define and build a Project Support Office, and finally provides recommendations on how to continually improve the project processes.

Part 5: End State: Maturing to an Enterprise-Level Project Management Model
The book concludes with a decent overview on how to bring the project selection process into the C-Suite and provides a suggested framework for analyzing and selecting projects at the enterprise or portfolio level.

Several appendices follow at the end of the book including: a glossary of acronyms, an overview of the website materials, and a bibliography and index. The only section I would like to see added in a future edition may be a glossary of terms as used in his text. The author has definitions highlighted throughout the book but in many cases, his definitions are not standard but reflect the adaptions he has made throughout his long career.

Highlights

Throughout the book, the author is adamant that he prefers simple and intuitive models. In reality, who doesn't prefer this approach? Within this context, projects can

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be defined by two major characteristics: the goal and the solution. Every project must have these two basic characteristics which are further simplified by being clear and complete or by being not clear or incomplete. By using this approach, projects can be categorized into one of four quadrants:

Q1 Traditional Projects (TPM): Clear solution and clear goal
Q2 Agile Projects (APM): Not clear solution and clear goal
Q3 Extreme Projects (xPM): Not clear solution and not clear goal
Q4 Emertxe (MPx) Projects: Clear solution and not clear goal

The unique characteristics of each project must be identified in order to determine the best fit model for that project. The four-quadrant project landscape is used to assign a project to a quadrant and then within that quadrant, the best project management lifecycle model is identified. For each quadrant, the complexity and certainty of each project is also considered to further refine the project landscape into five high level models:

1. TPM: Linear and Incremental Models
2. APM : Iterative and Adaptive Models
3. xPM and MPx: Extreme Models

These five models are further subdivided into twelve models that most readers are familiar with including: waterfall, RUP, SCRUM, and APF. Many chapters within the book cover the specifics of each model, the tools, templates and processes for each model and which models are best utilized for each project type identified using the four-quadrant method.

This approach may sound complicated but the author makes it very straightforward. Once a reader understands the four-quadrant project landscape and how to map projects into it, the models fall into place and the books becomes an excellent reference guide for how to approach each unique project.

Highlights: What I liked!

This book is extremely well organized. Each chapter is prefaced by clearly stated learning objects and then a "putting it all together" section with key take-aways following at the end. Discussion questions are also added at the end of each chapter for use in the classroom. In addition to the book, the author provides web links to power point decks and exercises that can be used in a classroom setting by an instructor. The decks are very complete and a nice supplement to the chapters within the book.

Who might benefit from the Book

This book is probably not the best resource for someone who is preparing for the PMP exam. The basic elements found within the PMBOK including the knowledge and process groups are well represented but this is not the sole intent of the book. The author's goal is to educate the reader on the uniqueness of each project and to

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help provide tools for classifying a project and determining the best project model for that specific project.

I believe this book is an excellent resource for someone who is new to project management and wants to understand the breadth of projects and the various project models. In addition, this book is an excellent reference for the experienced professional project manager who may be encountering new types of projects (i.e. agile or extreme) and wants to learn methodologies and tools for delivery.

Conclusion

Every project is unique and therefore a model that works well on one project, may not work well on your next project. This is the main theme that Robert Wysocki drives throughout the Effective Project Management: Traditional, Agile, Extreme, 7th edition. With over 700 pages of content, and power point decks and classroom exercises available via a URL, the seventh edition of this popular reference provides a comprehensive overview of the traditional as well as cutting edge project management approaches and models for both the new and seasoned project manager. Clearly defined objectives, concise instruction, useful tools and practical case studies show the reader how to achieve better outcomes for his or her projects.

For more about this book, go to: *www.wiley.com/go/epm7e*

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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About the Reviewer

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Amy N. Stevens M.Sc., PMP, ITIL is the IT Director of Finance and Business Analytics for Rexel USA. Amy has over 20 years of experience in software development, project delivery and global team management. She is a success oriented IT leader who has the technical experience and management skills needed to analyze and organize complex deliverables into tangible results in a fast-paced, ever-changing environment where priorities and deliverables are moving targets. Amy is a member of the Dallas chapters of the Project Management Institute and the Society of Information Management (SIM). She holds a Master of Science degree in Computer Science from George Mason University and a Bachelors of Science degree in Mathematics and Computer Science from the University of Illinois, USA.