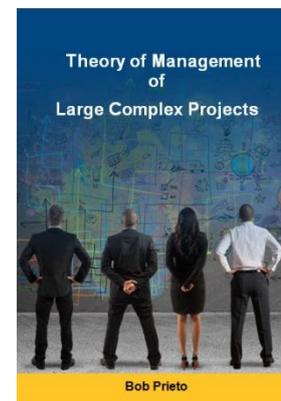

P/PM PUBLISHING NEWS

Theory of Management of Large Complex Projects

New book by Bob Prieto published by CMAA in USA

29 March 2016 – Princeton, NJ, USA – The management of projects is an increasingly important endeavor across all industries and all organizational types. It is no longer solely the purview of engineers and other students of the scientific method which represent its intellectual foundation. Today, organizations of all types, public, private and non-governmental organizations, rely of the management of projects to deliver the services and outcomes that represent their respective areas of focus. Similarly, these organizations utilize so called “change projects” to improve efficiency and effectiveness as well as transform themselves to meet the ever expanding array of challenges faced by organizations in the 21st century.

Projects come in many sizes, are varied in duration, and cover the full spectrum of complexity. “*Theory of Management of Large Complex Projects*”, authored by construction industry executive Bob Prieto, focuses on a subset of this universe of projects, namely large complex projects that often are undertaken over extended durations. While this is the dominant perspective throughout this book, the constructs suggested and the lessons conveyed are more broadly applicable.



The world of large complex projects is challenging to say the least, with a majority of these projects significantly underperforming. It is this weak performance regime that underpins the key premise of this book – **project management theory as it currently exists and is applied to large complex projects falls short**, significantly short, of what these projects require.

The book explores some of the performance challenges large complex projects face; question current project management underpinnings and suggest a new construct and considerations for the management of large complex projects. Finally, it offers some insights into how to respond to the challenges this new construct highlights.

The essence of the “*Theory of Management of Large Complex Projects*” can be captured in three central thoughts. First, that project readiness is a good but not sufficient first step in the broader project initiation process. Project readiness typically presupposes that the owner’s organization is itself ready to undertake the project. This is more often than not, not the case.

Second, that the classical theory of project management which focuses on the “transformational” processes which occur in discrete activities, strung together such that the output of one or more is the input to others, is no longer adequate in considering large complex projects. This activity based focus, memorialized in work breakdown structures, neglects the importance of “flows” within the project context.

As we more tightly link supply chains into project processes, we begin to see some of the flow considerations that are core in the realm of logistics as being analogs for efficient project management. Precedence's and unnecessary coupling of activities may harm a project's performance in ways that may not be evident on initial inspection. Additionally, these flows are no longer static or predictable.

Third, a core underlying premise that projects are "bounded" is breached in the world of large complex projects. Rather than well-defined boundary limits we discover semi-permeable boundaries across which "influencing flows" transit, impacting the transformational flows within the project proper. These flows arise from a multiplicity of stakeholder's and other agents who in turn are influenced by the project itself.

Theory of Management of Large Complex Projects; ISBN 580-0-111776-07-9 may be found as an e-book on the Construction Management Association of America website at <http://cmaanet.org/ebooks>