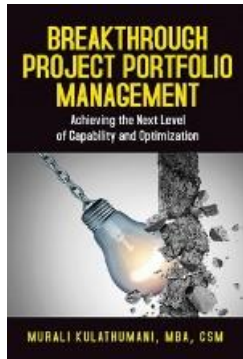


PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Breakthrough Project Portfolio Management: Achieving the Next Level of Capability and Optimization***

Author: **Murali Kulathumani, MBA, CSM**

Publisher: J. Ross Publishing

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Reviewer: **David Kressin PMP** Review Date: March 2018

Introduction

Breakthrough Portfolio Management is one of the first real “How To” books for creating, monitoring and managing a portfolio process that I have ever read. This book goes beyond other similar product, project, program and portfolio reference books to physically lay out the steps to take to implement and build a successful portfolio and yourself as a successful Portfolio Manager.

Like all books dealing with business processes it starts out slowly defining and laying out all of the of concepts that a Portfolio Manager may need to know and understand. Then it provides the tool (mEVM) for successfully monitoring the performance of a portfolio. Finally, it provides proven tactical and strategic processes and step needed to startup, monitor and maintain a successful portfolio. If you read this book because it is your first portfolio process as a Portfolio Manager or because it is your 100th and simply want to know more, this book will provide what you need.

Overview of Book’s Structure

The book is laid out in 4 parts: Defining the essential components of a Portfolio process, Understanding and applying the mEVM to portfolio management, Implementation and startup processes and ongoing monitoring and support of a Portfolio process. Within these parts each has several chapters explain the concepts and proving the essentials for us to successful creating and maintaining a portfolio process on our own. It not only tells you how to build and maintain a portfolio but it provides proven steps and FAQs that empower you to feel as though you can do it because you have experienced all the aspects of Portfolio Management before.

Highlights

I was once told that a mark that separates a great employee, manager, consultant, etc. from a good one is that they care. They care about the people that they work

with and the projects that they work on. They show you in the way they approach and do their work. I see that caring attitude in the pages of this book. Kulathumani does not just provide global concepts or pencil in a few bullet points on implementing and managing a portfolio process. He actually provides detailed descriptions on how to start up the process and how to manage it once stated. He even takes it a step further and providing a chapter on real world gotcha's and question and answers on how to either avoid or resolve common issues.

I cannot praise Kulathumani enough for dedicating a large section of his book on the definition and utilization of what he believes to be the best performance monitoring tool available for ensuring successful performance monitoring and management of a portfolio. The modified Earned Value Management (mEVM) is not the only performance management tools out there. There are many others, however, Kulathumani settle on this one because it does the job and It's easy for us to understand and use in the future. And I agree. So many books do not commit to a tool or concept. They try to provide all of the options and we end up never getting enough detail to allow us to create our own portfolios.

Highlights: What I liked!

Being a portfolio, program and project manager for over 30 years I find that Kulathumani and I have very similar ideas around portfolio management. The key to a successful portfolio is organization. Organization allows for everything from planning and budgeting to monitoring and control.

My favorite part of the whole book is the part on implementation strategies. Specifically, the chapter on common portfolio questions / problems. The author suddenly becomes human in those pages. Describing and providing resolutions for common real world situation we have all encountered. Kulathumani is no longer some academic writing a book about portfolio management. He becomes a true business sage with real world experiences and knowledge that I can learn from. And the book goes beyond the flavor of the month and becomes a reference tool to be used over and over.

Who might benefit from the Book?

The subject matter within the pages of this book is not just about defining Portfolio Management as the name might suggest. The subject matter is about applying and utilizing the tools, tactics and strategies to ensure the success of Portfolio Managers and managers that are looking for a proven way to successfully control and manage their numerous large scale projects.

Although managers at all level could learn from this book, I believe, this books is aimed and should be required reading for mid-level and senior managers. These people are in the best position to need and start using the concepts and ideas outlined in the book. They will continue to reference this book for the rest of their life. As their portfolios grow and become more complex so will the knowledge and details that they glean from this book.

Conclusion

As I stated in the introduction, this is more than just a book that a manager would sort of read and put on the shelf. This is a real world guide that you will read and reference numerous times throughout your life. It provides real world proven tools, tactics and strategies to allow managers to successfully organize their projects into a portfolio. Once there it provides the proven tools and processes to successfully progress and enhance their portfolios.

If you walk away with nothing else, the chapters on modified Earned Value Management (mEVM) gives you a solid performance measurement tool for any sized portfolio. You quickly see what parts of your portfolio are successful or not. This allows you to quickly research and adjust, correcting possible issues before you get too far down the wrong path. This book does not just define the concepts. It tells you how successful Portfolio Managers are working today.

For more about this book, go to: <http://www.jrosspub.com/business/project-program-management/breakthrough-project-portfolio-management.html>

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.

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David Kressin, PMP is a senior program manager in the retail and wholesale logistics industry specializing in improving warehouse strategic and tactical operations, labor and systems efficiencies. I have worked for over 35 years managing resource efficiency improvements and logistics, transportation, warehouse management software implementations in the retail and wholesale warehousing environments. My concentration is in the high volume grocery, food and drug industries. I have successfully planned, implemented, and managed several strategic projects to improve warehouse and logistics efficiencies around the world. For the past 20 years I have been working as an independent consultant.

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