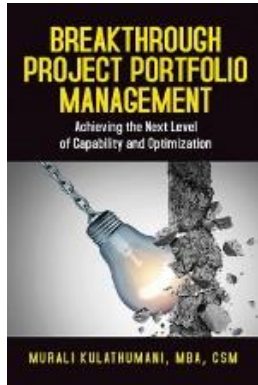


PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



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

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

Publisher: J. Ross Publishing

List Price: \$59.95 Format: Hard cover, 339 pages

Publication Date: 2017 ISBN: 9781604271492

Reviewer: **Maryanne Coelln**

Review Date: March 2018

Introduction

This easy to read book provides a complete approach to project portfolio management. A key differentiator from other books is Mr. Kulathumani's explanation of how to create a project portfolio using a simplified form of earned value management which can be adapted to changing situations. He introduces the portfolio management concept in the initial chapters, explains how to measure success in subsequent material, followed by implementing the concepts, then concludes with portfolio governance.

Overview of Book's Structure

The book is divided into four sections: Key Components of a Portfolio Process, mEVM (modified Earned Value Management), Implementation Strategies for the Real World, and The Support Systems that Decide Success.

These sections flow very logically from one to the next. The chapters have numerous sub-topics in each, allowing the reader to stop and reflect on each new thought before reading on to the next section. Each chapter contains a summary of what was presented.

Highlights

Mr. Kulathumani's conversational explanation of the topics in this book engage the reader. From his detailed review of the intake process of projects and his recommendations on the optimal portfolio planning approach, the reader has an immediate sense of where portfolio planning fits into the strategic focus of the organization. His details and examples describe the approach to take on this journey to create and manage a portfolio of projects that's in alignment with the strategic vision of an organization.

His approach to modifying earned value calculations was new to me. Intuitively we all realize that we need to select projects and programs in our portfolio that will provide the greatest benefit – value – to meet the organizational goals. Money, time and resources are always constrained. He presents the concept and approach of mEVM, a technique that allows portfolios to make data-based *objective* decisions. mEVM can be considered a light footprint variant of EVM that provides most of the benefits of the traditional EVM technique at only a fraction of the cost/effort. He has a fully developed model for evaluating projects using this mEVM method, as well as rolling it out to the enterprise.

Part III of his book begins with dialog on Common Portfolio Problems and Solutions that all leaders of a PMO will recognize and have likely experienced several of them. Moving on to the selection and implementation of a tool to help with portfolio management is the next logical step in the process. Portfolio governance follows, with excellent pointers on how to approach new projects entering into the project backlog. The book ends with a perspective of the role of the CIO, and then how portfolio management benefits the business transformation of executing strategically valuable projects.

Highlights: What I liked!

The entire book was very logical, easy to read, and his concepts were well explained and easy to follow. I found numerous new ways to think about how I could approach implementing some of his ideas at our company, as well as affirming the progress we've made to date.

Who might benefit from the Book?

This is a great book for anyone who is wondering, "How do I get started on portfolio management?" This book addresses the complete process from conceptualizing what needs to be undertaken, ideas on strategy and approach, and measuring success.

For those who have already created a portfolio management process and feel challenged, he has numerous ideas and suggestions to try.

Conclusion

A truly useful book with true depth and insight into portfolio management. This book will be something that you will refer to again and again as you build the portfolio methodology in your own company.

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

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Maryanne Coelln, PMP, is Director of Project Delivery for the American Airlines Federal Credit Union. Maryanne has a B.S.C. degree in Marketing from Santa Clara University, California and earned her PMP in 2003. She has over 15 years of experience in leading technical project teams and is focused on developing practical methodologies. She has been an active member in the PMI Dallas Chapter for many years. Maryanne can be contacted at Maryanne.Coelln@aacreditunion.org.