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Bridging the PM Competency Gap
Authors: Loredana Abramo and Rich Maltzman
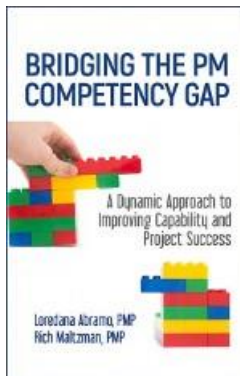Book Review   Reviewer: Joseph Stein, PMP

PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW

Book Title: ***Bridging The PM Competency Gap: A dynamic Approach to Improving Capability an Project Success***

Author: **Loredana Abramo, PMP & Rich Maltzan, PMP**

Publisher: J. Ross Publications

List Price: $37.95   Format: hard cover, 294 pages

Publication Date: July 2017   ISBN: 978-1-60427-140-9

Reviewer: **Joseph Stein, PMP**   Review Date: July 2018

Introduction

This book proposes options for PMO driven development plans to ensure project success by promoting personal and professional growth within the company's body of Project Managers. It's the PMO's role within an organization to establish tools, methods and aides for project model consistency, but tools alone can't guaranty success. The authors of this book promotes the concept that project success is a by-product of technical understanding of PM related tools and techniques, leadership and strategic management of goal alignment.

Project manager's level of competency is all too often equal to the challenges they encounter in their project environments, owing to lessons learned on the job. With the rise of project complexities, it's incumbent on the PMO to provide their PM team with the training and expertise to meet greater challenges. Since not all project managers convey the same traits and experience levels, the challenge is to recognize individuals own unique needs or "competency gap".

The writer clarifies many desirable PM competencies found useful to support organizational initiatives, build strong cohesive teams that communicate well and perform efficiently. The author recognizes the practical concerns that face all projects which if left unchecked can erode the effectiveness of the project delivery. The reader is introduced to a large verity of evaluation tools and techniques available to help PM's recognize their own operating methods and how to leverage PM tools available and increased awareness of human behavior to their best advantage.

Overview of Book's Structure

This book develops the concept of project management competencies and how to recognize, understand and overcome gaps in competency. The "gap" in project management competency impedes our ability to manage successful project implementations. This book describes analysis tools and models for PM talent and

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Page 1 of 4
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competency evaluation, and development training possibilities to tailor competency development programs to best fit the requirement of the audience.

This book examines PM competency factors that have a positive influence on project teams and satisfy stake-holder goals and objectives. A comprehensive review of widely regarding self-assessment tools and feedback techniques are reviewed for practical measures across the PM talent scale for leadership, technical and strategic traits. Baseline measurements are used to leverage strengths and augment weaker inclinations. The product of self-assessments tools lead to recognition of competency gaps. The authors interviewed 36 leading Project Management experts for their observation and advice of what competencies factors they find most importance and the warning signs and outcomes if missing.

Highlights

This book covers problematic areas of project management concerns and makes compelling arguments for the need to help the PM achieve maturing levels of competency. Assessment techniques are reviewed for their approaches to help identify levels of competency and provide insight for competency gap identification.

Competencies are the soft skills needed to meet the existing and new challenges that arise from a multi-faceted project team. Project teams are not just a mix of distinct technical skills, they may react, respond and are motivated differently in some cases due to generational differences. This book points out behaviors which baby boomers, generation-x and millennials differ in motivations and deterrents and suggests modifications in communication and engagement strategies.

A wide range of PM competencies covered in this book and in particular as these skills relate to the project management process.

PMI Talent Triangle (Defining PM Competency):

- Technical Project Management
  - skillsets including: requirements analysis, project planning, risk and scope Mgt.
- Leadership
  - Skillsets including: Conflict Mgt. Active listening, Motivating employees, Emotional Intelligence, Change Intelligence
- Strategic Business Management
  - Skillsets including: Strategic planning and alignment of multiple projects and cross-purpose integration, management of complexity

Highlights: What I liked!

This book exposes areas of potential gaps in PM expertise to help the reader consider new approaches and critical self-evaluation to identify potential areas for personal growth. The author describes many Project Management tools but goes further to elaborate how to leverage them in a practical and effective manner.

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Page 2 of 4
PM World Library – www.pmworldlibrary.net

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I particularly liked the social development topics, such as:

- Pitfalls of commonly used approaches and project management styles.
- Recognizing generational and social characteristics.
- Communication styles with respect to the age group generations.

I liked the author's compilation of competency struggles as told by leading experts in the PM arena. Read like a case study each expert describes a scenario that defines the warning signs that a gap in PM competency exists. The experts highlight critical success factors related to PM competencies. They leave us with parting thoughts about trending future competency concerns and needs.

Who might benefit from the Book?

Effective Project management relies heavily on the skillsets of the experience Project Managers. Therefore, the PMO and stakeholders benefit from investing in the assessment and grooming of their PM talent pool. In the absence of a PMO provided development regiment, each individual project manager can gain valuable insight from the tools and methods presented in this book to engage in their own self-directed development process.

Conclusion

Bridging the PM Competency Gap describes numerous strategic approaches for establishing a continuous learning environment to close the gap on project manager competencies. The book provides strategies and preparation for evaluating, and implementing PM competency development training programs within the organization.

For more about this book, go to: http://www.jrosspub.com/bridging-the-pm-competency-gap.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@pmworldjournal.net.

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Page 3 of 4
PM World Library – www.pmworldlibrary.net

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About the Reviewer

Joseph Stein, BS, PMP

Dallas TX, USA

Joseph Stein is a PMP Certified, IT Technical Manager with CVS who holds a Bachelor's degree in Business Management from Arizona State University. Mr. Stein has over 30 years in the technical field with expertise that includes UNIX System Administration, Oracle Database Administration, Programming and Computer application development over a wide range of industries including Manufacturing, Telecommunications and Health services. Mr. Stein has been PMP certified since 2016 and plays an active role in the project management process bridging enterprise information technologies.

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Page 4 of 4
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