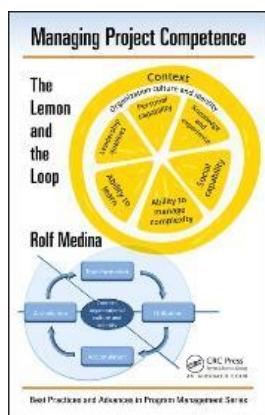


PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Managing Project Competence: The Lemon and the Loop***

Author: **Rolf Medina**

Publisher: CRC / Auerbach Publications

List Price: \$89.95 Format: Hard cover, 170 pages

Publication Date: January 2018 ISBN: 978-1-4987-8438-2

Reviewer: **Mechelle Davidson, PMP**

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Introduction

Managing Project Competence provides an in-depth look at competence and its many facets. Competence is something that is often misunderstood, and the author is extremely thorough and deliberate in his definition and description of the different types of competence. To illustrate his point, the author uses case studies, which provide real-life examples of the impact of various aspects of competence on organizations.

Using visuals such as graphs, charts, and pictures, the author paints a picture in the reader's head to solidify the concept of competence in all its forms. The book revolves around 2 main ideas: the competence lemon, which describes competence from a personal or internal perspective; and the loop, which depicts learning and competence within the context of the project and the organization at large.

Overview of Book's Structure

One of most beneficial areas of this book is the way it is structured. Although it is a good (and fast) read from front to back, the author has skillfully organized the book so that specific sections within a chapter provide self-contained concepts. If the reader needs to understand a particular concept or group of concepts, the book allows the reader to do so. It is possible to read one chapter or a section within a chapter to understand the premise without reading the entire book.

Organized into 6 chapters, the book is further divided into sections within each chapter for the concepts that the author presents. It is reminiscent of a text book, which makes it extremely easy to locate and review passages that readers find particularly useful. Additionally, the main points of the book are highlighted with graphics and charts, further allowing readers to understand, remember, and refer back to impactful passages.

Highlights

Managing Project Competence tackles lofty concepts, and it does so in easy-to-understand language with real-life examples. The visuals help the reader understand the key ideas posited by the author. By describing the dimensions of individual competence and how organizations manage competence, the author demonstrates the practical ways that competence can be measured and managed. The author researched the theories of several industry experts to support his hypotheses, which lends additional credibility to the book.

Using the analogy of a lemon and lemon wedges, the author delivers a memorable explanation of personal competence. The concept of the loop takes individual competence and translates that into improved performance for project teams and organizations.

Highlights: What I liked!

I enjoyed learning about the competence lemon. The author created the 6 dimensions of competence and used a common, easily-recognizable, and whimsical item – the lemon – to help readers understand and remember the concepts. Especially helpful to me was the explanation of REPI and the “wedges” of competence that complement each mode (Reflection, Elaboration, Participation/Practice, Investigation).

The lay-out of the book was another of my favorite aspects. As I need to recall certain details, I can easily find the concept I’m looking for by reviewing a specific section of a chapter. The fact that the book has such a granular structure at the concept level makes it extremely helpful as a quick reference guide.

Who might benefit from the Book?

Managing Project Competence is a useful guide for anyone within a project management office (PMO) who is seeking to understand the correlation between individual competence and learning within the project framework and the organization in general. Although the language is best-suited for those familiar with project management methodologies, this book contains concepts that can benefit any organization. It has applications for Human Resources or Talent Management organizations that want a deeper understanding of learning, motivation, and competence.

Conclusion

In conclusion, *Managing Project Competence* is a good read for anyone who wants an awareness of individual competence and how organizations (and project teams) can leverage competence to improve performance. Ideas about competence and learning are coupled with practical tools that can be used for coaching and training. The book can be read cover-to-cover to provide a thorough explanation, or short

segments of the book can be used just as effectively to deliver quick-hits for improving competence and organizational performance.

For more about this book, go to: <https://www.crcpress.com/Managing-Project-Competence/Medina/p/book/9781498784382>

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Mechelle Davidson is a Program Manager in Vistra Energy's delivery office. She has worked for Vistra Energy and its retail arm, TXU Energy, for 10 years in both a project and people management capacity. With responsibility for implementing complex projects and programs, Mechelle's current role has led her to the agile methodology, where she has developed a distinctive technique for blending traditional waterfall tasks with the scrum framework. A certified project management professional (PMP), scrum master (CSM), and six sigma black belt (CSSBB), Mechelle is passionate about project management and finds opportunities to use these skills both in and out of the workplace. Mechelle's professional background includes project management, process improvement, learning & development, and consulting.

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