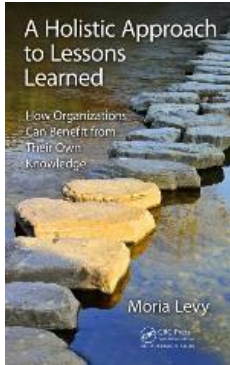


PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***A Holistic Approach to Lessons Learned: How Organizations Can Benefit from Their Own Knowledge***

Author: **Moria Levy**

Publisher: CRC Press – Taylor & Francis Group - Auerbach

List Price: \$59.95

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Reviewer: **Manjeeta Sitaula, PMP** Review Date: October 2018

Introduction

This book provides invaluable information on incorporating & implementing lessons learned which is often overlooked in many organizations due to various reasons. The author, Moria Levy emphasizes that, for our lessons to yield better operations and improved performance, the knowledge must be transformed into action. Lessons learned must be accessible and embedded in the organization so that it is hard to repeat mistakes.

Overview of Book's Structure

The content of the book is divided into five parts with various chapters within each part and subheadings within the chapters. The five parts flow seamlessly into the other.

- Part I starts with the 'need, importance and types of knowledge/information that can be used as lessons';
- Part II discusses the 'what, who and how to debrief and the debriefing techniques';
- Part III elaborates on 'how to manage the knowledge that has been created';
- Part IV focuses on requesting prior knowledge before implementing any new actions;
- Part V discusses implementation of the life-cycle model of lessons and summarizes debriefing techniques.

Highlights

The first half of the book discusses sources of new knowledge namely debriefing, quality-based processes and experience. Debriefing is described as a natural process, however, in organizations there can be resistance to implement it due to fear of exposing failures/mistakes and possible blame game. The author reviews debriefing

techniques such as Action After Review (AAR) and Multi Case Learning (MCL) and also notes that the organization can develop their own processes that yield constructive results by focusing on the future and lessons that can be learned. Quality based processes such as Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA), Gemba walks and quality audits help to develop the sources of knowledge and provide recommendations for improvements. Experience is another source of new knowledge which is gained through work or everyday life actions.

The second half of the book describes ways to manage and transfer this created knowledge. Knowledge can be transferred into action, assigned as a project, or preserved as a written work procedure for future reference. Further, the lessons could be saved in a knowledgebase – a database containing knowledge that is easily accessible when needed. Trainings, templates and forms are other tools that help to get the knowledge closer to the employee.

Highlights: What I liked!

Personally, I have experienced instances of inefficiencies at a workplace due to lack of transfer and implementation of knowledge. What I liked about this book is that it has outlined several simple yet effective tools and techniques to develop and store knowledge. The book itself serves as a knowledgebase and each page is filled with practical and useful information.

Who might benefit from the Book?

- Any organization that is looking to improve its efficiency and operations by learning from its historical actions, both successful and unsuccessful.
- Project managers who want to deliver successful projects and improve processes.
- Anyone, no matter their role within an organization, will benefit from this book since lessons learned and knowledge is universal and applicable for any positions at their own unique levels.

Conclusion

Knowledge and lessons learned, if utilized properly; is a sword that can cut through the veils of repetitive mistakes and lead to heights of success for an organization. Developing and managing lessons however, is not given as much importance due to various reasons. The author beautifully describes the importance of such knowledge and discusses techniques to develop, manage and implement lessons from the past towards advancement of the organization.

For more about this book, go to: <https://www.crcpress.com/A-Holistic-Approach-to-Lessons-Learned-How-Organizations-Can-Benefit-from/Levy/p/book/9781138564763>

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. 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.

About the Reviewer



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Manjeeta Sitaula is a Civil Engineer by profession and has been certified as a PMP since 2013.