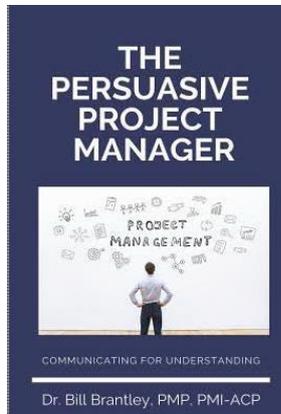

PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***The Persuasive Project Manager:***

Communicating for understanding

Author: **Dr. Bill Brantley**

Publisher: Bill Brantley

List Price: \$5.99

Format: Soft cover, 87 pages

Publication Date: 2019

ISBN: 978-1-79572-849-2

Reviewer: **Valentina Rada, MBA, PMP, PMI-ACP**

Review Date: September 2019

Introduction

One of the most vital elements of project management is communication. In average a project manager spends, or should, spend 90% of the time communicating. The author of *The Persuasive Project Manager* book, Dr. Bill Brantley, a project management practitioner, is outlining the understanding as the key part of the communication. We all communicate, but how much our message is truly understood by our team members, stakeholders.

Overall communication is influenced by multiple factors, such as online technologies that add to the communication barriers, the number of people in the teams that increases communication channels and culture. A project manager should know how to leverage project management communication strategies to be a persuasive project manager.

Overview of Book's Structure

The Persuasive Project Manager emphasizes how to overcome communication challenges. It's about understanding instead of just offering information, persuading through logical arguments and emotional impact.

The book is structured key eight areas that help a project manager how to master persuasive communication: 1) *Communication is more than information transfer*. Understanding is about know-what, know-how and know-why; 2) *Ethos, Pathos and Logos*. Aristotle's triad is the foundation of being persuasive following your credibility, emotions and logic; 3) *Emergent communication model*. We build meaning from our communication before, during and after communication occurs; 4) *Information transfer model*. It's important for project managers to have effective ways of transmitting and

receiving project information; 5) *Emotional vs cultural intelligence*. Understanding cultural differences helps project managers to be better communicators; 6) *Cognitive biases*. Cognitive biases can lead to organizational failure by harming project teams and are erroneous ways to receive and process information; 7) *Effective communication with remote team members and stakeholders*. That's important to build trust with remote team members; 8) *Emergent communication model*. Emergent communication model is the foundation of the three leadership models: situational, servant and coaching.

Highlights

The author, Dr. Bill Brantley, refers back to ancient Aristotle's persuasive triad of ethos, logos, pathos that is still relevant to today's communication principles. Ethos and pathos help you gain your audience attention and engagement with your message, but it is your logos that persuade your audience. Ethos is about your credibility, pathos about your emotions, logos shows your logic.

Ethos is tight on good Emotional Intelligence (EQ) and Cultural Intelligence (CQ). Being aware of your feelings and other people's feelings help enhance our connection to others and make us more credible. Project managers with high EQ/ CQ can use pathos more effectively and make logos portion of their communication more effective. A good balance of ethos, pathos and logos make the project manager more persuasive.

Communication relates to the project management leadership style. Nowadays we're shifting from the command-and-control to develop-and-support leadership style like servant, situational and coaching style. The common component of all the three styles is good communication by creating good understanding between the leader and the team members.

Highlights: What I liked!

Although the book focuses on a multitude of communication and leadership concepts, two areas captured my attention. It's about how we misleadingly use cognitive biases and the many reasons virtual communication is harder than we think.

Per Dr. Bill Brantley, cognitive biases differ from logical fallacies. Logical fallacies occur when we make mistakes in reasoning. Cognitive biases usually happen in the way we use System 1 heuristic (rules of thumb) as we react to world. System 1 thinking is mostly unconscious and immediate while System 2 is conscious and requires much mental energy. A problem with cognitive biases is that the cognitive bias short-circuits understanding by creating the illusion of understanding.

Five reasons of why virtual communication is harder are related to lack of feedback, empathy, control, emotion and connection. These five reasons are heavily based on the emotional aspects of communication and can be missed through virtual communication.

Who might benefit from the Book?

The Persuasive Project Manager would be beneficial for any of the below:

Project managers regardless of their level of seniority might benefit learning how to communicate through understanding not only just giving information.

Project management consultants could use the book as a guide on the seminars and/ or classes they facilitate.

Project sponsors and other executives could find useful tips on project managers' areas of focus related to persuasion.

Conclusion

An important first step of being a persuasive project manager starts with you. While you're working on yourself, determine what you want to achieve in your communication, ensure you have a strategic goal outlined and be prepared with necessary information to share. Being a proficient communicator takes time and practice.

The book outlines a different perspective of project management communication and it's a useful guide for how to better handle everyday communication challenges. It was a pleasure reading through the real life communication experiences of the author. There is a fine bridge in the book between project management academic research and real-life experiences where the author delivers with personal stories around communication researches, such as: The Shannon-Weaver Model of Communication (Information Transfer), The Luhmann Model of Communication (Emergence).

For more about this book, go to: <https://billbrantley.com/books/>
[Or find it on Amazon here.](#)

Editor's note: This book review was the result of a partnership between the publisher, PM World and the [PMI Alamo Chapter](#). Authors and publishers provide the books to PM World; books are delivered to the PMI Alamo 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 Alamo 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.com.

About the Reviewer

Valentina Rada



Texas, USA



Valentina Rada's professional experience includes twenty years of experience in market research, retail and restaurant industries as research analyst and project manager. She is a Project Management Professional and an Agile Certified Practitioner. She has a Master in Business Administration from the University of the Incarnate Word. She is currently a Senior Project Manager for the City of San Antonio in Texas.

Valentina can be reached at valirada@hotmail.com or www.linkedin.com/in/valentina-rada