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Lead Successful Projects
Author: Antonio Nieto-Rodriguez
Book Review   Reviewer: Masood Said, PMP

PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW

Book Title: ***Lead Successful Projects***

Author: **Antonio Nieto-Rodriguez**

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Publication Date: 2019   ISBN: 978-0-241-39547-9

Reviewer: **Masood Said PMP**

Review Date: January 2020

Introduction

This book is about how to manage projects for success. The book discusses how to establish goals and develop a realistic plan for the execution of projects, how to monitor the project work along the way to stay within the project schedule and the project budget. The book also explains how to define the purpose of the project, how to define its goals, how to develop a realistic plan, monitor and control the work, report the progress, control the budget, identify and manage risks throughout the life of the project.

The book is filled with many examples based on the author's experience in handling Industrial projects. It is practical guide that will help the readers in leading projects to a successful conclusion.

Overview of Book's Structure

The book consists of 15 chapters which are spread over 149 pages. Conclusion, End notes, Abbreviations and Index are at the end of the book on pages 150 to 164.

Chapter by Chapter review

Chapter 1 – The emergence of projects – In this chapter the author sets the tone of project management and discusses the general reasons why projects are undertaken and the role of stakeholders and sponsors in initiating projects. The author also lists the '10 principles of project success' which are discussed in details in chapters 4 to chapter 13.

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Chapter 2 – What are projects? – In this chapter the author discusses how to define project and the difference between projects and operation. The author also outline 'things to be considered before taking up a project' and the cost related to 'Project Management'.

Chapter 3 – Reinventing project management – In this chapter the author describes lessons learnt from 7 projects that were considered as failures due to various reasons. The author also outlines reasons for project failures with some remedial actions. This is a very informative chapter as the project described are real and from different diversified areas.

Chapter 4 – Principle #1: Everything starts with ideation – In this chapter the author outlines the importance of using the correct criteria for project selection and the business value the project would generate. The author gives examples of two projects which did not produce the benefit that they were required to generate and were considered failures.

Chapter 5 – #2: A Clear purpose informs and inspires – In this chapter the author emphasizes the importance of developing a business case of projects with specific objectives and goals giving example of a successful project which was able to achieve its objectives and goals. Methods of determining objectives and goals are also described in this chapter.

Chapter 6 – Principle #3: The sponsor is both advocate and accountable – This chapter is about project governance and role of sponsor in steering the project to success. The author describes in detail the role of the sponsor in monitoring the project and the adverse consequence in case the sponsor is unable to monitor the project to the required degree.

Chapter 7 – Principle #4: Customer needs drive the solution – This chapter is about the importance of customers with regard to the success of projects. The author cites examples of IT projects where customers' needs were not taken into account resulting in project failure. The author discusses various methods for managing customers' needs for project success.

Chapter 8 – Principle #5: Realistic planning involves both ambition and pragmatism – This chapter is about project planning. The author emphasizes that both time and cost plans should be accurate for the project to be successful. The author has cited a number of examples that show the negative implications of inaccurate budget and schedule deadlines.

Chapter 9 – Principle #6: The perfect is the enemy of the good – This chapter is about managing the quality requirements of projects. The author emphasizes the need for validating quality and taking the customer's need into consideration when managing quality.

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Chapter 10 – Principle #7: Well-managed uncertainty – This chapter is about how to handle uncertainties in projects using risk management. The author cites example of projects that managed uncertainties proactively to end projects successfully.

Chapter 11 – Principle #8: Stakeholder involvement is required and continual – This chapter is about the importance of stakeholders' engagement for the project success. The author discusses various techniques used to identify, engage and manage the stakeholder's engagement using various tools and techniques citing examples and case studies.

Chapter 12 – Principle #9: A high-performing team and culture are indicators of the health and reliance of a project – This chapter is about how to keep the project team motivated by using different methods and techniques and developing a system to measure motivation level of the teams for the project to succeed.

Chapter 13 – Principle #10: Project-driven organizations built capability to deliver change – This chapter is about keeping the project aligned with the company business and strategic requirements. This requires the organization to manage the portfolio in a manner that it takes into consideration the company strategic requirements and ensures that the planned business value from project is generated as required.

Chapter 14 – From Project manager to Project Leader – In this chapter the author outlines the competencies and skills that are required by a Project Leader, how to acquire these skills and keep them updated. The author also emphasizes the importance of the role of Project Leader for the success of projects

Chapter 15 – Start thriving with your projects – This chapter details how to integrate all the 10 principles described in the earlier chapters (1-13). The author also details how these 10 principles can help in project success and how the corporate management can gain by implementing these 10 principles.

Highlights

The main highlight of the book is that it has many examples and case studies which explain all the concepts in a very simple manner with explanations that can be understood easily. The examples given in the book are real and can be understood easily. The 10 principles described in the book are informative and give provide guidance on how to manage projects to a successful conclusion.

Highlights: What I liked!

What I liked about this book is the simplicity; it has been written with easy to understand examples. The author discusses actual issues faced in execution of projects and gives examples of how to solve these issues. The narrative of the book is easy to understand and the solutions suggested are very practical to implement.

The second aspect of the book that I liked was the inclusion of case studies and examples. These case studies give a very practical view of the problems faced by project organizations with suggested solutions.

Who might benefit from the Book?

This book will be very beneficial to any organization that is working on projects. It will give them a very good understanding of issues and problems faced in managing projects and the suggested solutions for the issues.

The case studies given in the book provide a very good understanding of issues faced by project organizations and the suggested solutions can be very beneficial to such organizations.
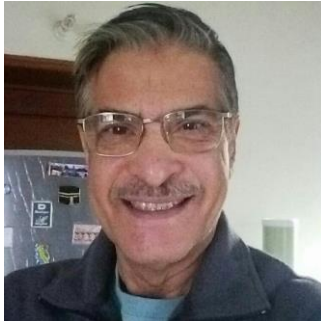
Conclusion

Overall the book "Lead Successful Project" is a very informative book to read. It is written in a simple language and is easy to understand. It has case studies and example of projects that have been included to highlight issues and problems in management of projects.

This method of using case studies and examples is indeed a very good way of creating an understanding of the subject.

For more about this book, go to: https://www.penguin.co.uk/books/313/313694/lead-successful-projects/9780241395479.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. 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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About the Reviewer

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Engr. Masood Said, PMP, PMI-RMP, PMI-ACP, BS.C (Mech. Engr.; MS-IT; EMBA-HR Mngt.) is a Mechanical Engineer with over 35 years of Project Management Experience. He has worked in Pakistan and the Middle East on various Oil and Gas projects. He has been a member of PMI since 2002. Presently he is a trainer for PMP®; PMI-RMP®; PMI-ACP® certification courses. He also advises companies on optimization and improvement in processes. Based in Lahore, Pakistan, he also travels to Dallas, TX frequently and is a member of PMI Dallas Chapter.

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