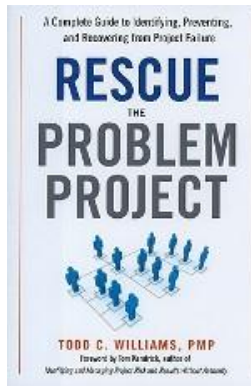


PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Rescue the Problem Project***

Author: **Todd C. Williams, PMP**

Publisher: AMACOM

List Price: \$32.95 Format: Hardcover

Publication Date: 2011 ISBN: 978-0-8144-1682-2

Reviewer: **Angela Willhoite, PMP**

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Introduction

Rescue the Problem Project, by Todd C. Williams, PMP, is a step-by-step analysis of what goes wrong on projects, why these problems occur, and how to fix (and even prevent) these problems. It provides real world, relatable examples that draw the reader in and make this an exciting read.

Overview of Book's Structure

This book is divided into six main parts:

- Part I: Understanding the Process and Realizing a Problem Exists
- Part II: Auditing the Project: Understanding the Issues
- Part III: Analyzing the Data: Planning for Project Recovery
- Part IV: Negotiating a Solution: Proposing Workable Solutions
- Part V: Executing the New Plan: Implementing the Solutions
- Part VI: Doing It Right the First Time: Avoiding Problems That Lead to Red Projects

Every chapter further breaks down each of these topics and provides detailed analysis, case studies, and summaries for the reader. This book is exceptionally well-organized, written almost as a timeline from step zero (realization) to recovery (implementation).

Highlights

Just as though the reader were stepping through solving a problem project, the real excitement occurs in Parts I and II as the reader realizes that a problem exists and begins to understand the issues. Identifying the root cause of the problem is critical, and the author stresses this point throughout.

As the book mentions, management’s realization that a problem exists is step zero in the process. Recovery cannot begin until this step occurs. How does management realize that a problem exists? This could happen in a number of ways, including the customer becoming aware of the situation and demanding action.

From there the book launches into a clear identification and in-depth discussion of key issues that can occur on a project, including but not limited to scope creep, vague contracts or charters, high volumes of changes, poorly defined processes, and various technology impacts. Each chapter dives into not only what a key issue may be but what could cause that key issue to occur. These chapters are perhaps the most useful for anyone seeking to learn more about why projects may fail.

Once the source problems are identified, the book’s action occurs in Parts III, IV, and V, where the recovery is planned, proposed, and executed. The book offers helpful details on how to identify solutions and also how to present the solutions to stakeholders and achieve buy-in. The book states that for successful negotiation, the recovery manager needs to understand each stakeholder’s view on the importance of the project’s components, the consequence of failure for removing a component, and the stakeholders’ wish list. Knowing this will help the recovery manager find beneficial solutions for everyone.

Before the book ends, the reader has the opportunity to “do it right the first time.” After reading in-depth about “what not to do,” it was refreshing to see everything placed in a positive framework about how to set up a project for success.

Highlights: What I liked!

In addition to having interesting and useful content, this book is very well-written and well-organized. Case studies throughout the book help break up the text and provide tangible examples, and occasional tables help illustrate some of the text. The overall flow of the content is easy to follow, and the text throughout is engaging and enjoyable to read.

Who Might Benefit from the Book?

While this book targets recovery managers and project managers, its content would be beneficial to anyone who works on projects or even to anyone who is part of any kind of team. This book is a fantastic “what not to do” (and subsequently, “what to do instead”) when working with others to achieve a goal.

Conclusion

Every project manager needs a copy of *Rescue the Problem Project*. Everyone can use this to prevent their projects from becoming “the problem project” and to set up their projects and their teams for success.

For more about this book, go to:

<https://www.harpercollinsleadership.com/9780814416822/rescue-the-problem-project/>.

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About the Reviewer



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Angela Willhoite, PMP, is a Content Specialist, Technical Writer, and Project Manager. She has worked on technical writing projects since 2003 and has coordinated and managed projects from 2012 through 2021. Angela earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in English (along with a Technical Writing Certification) in 2003 and earned her Project Management Professional (PMP) certification in 2017 and renewed it in 2021.