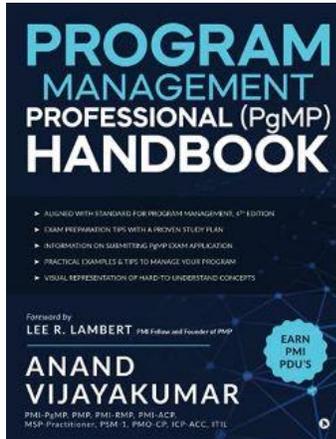

PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Program Management Professional (PgMP) Handbook***

Author: **Anand Vijayakumar**

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Introduction

The central purpose of this book is to understand the program management performance domains as per the Standard for Program Management by PMI. Overcome commonly faced challenges as a program manager, and successfully deliver benefits and business value. Support your organization's pursuit of strategic objectives and goals through effective program management. Understand the PgMP exam syllabus and submit the PgMP Application as well as prepare for the PgMP exam.

Fundamentally, Program Management is Project Management “on steroids” with more complexity and significant need for comprehensive communication

Overview of Book's Structure

- Chapter 1 – Introduction and Basics
- Chapter 2 – The Basics
- Chapter 3 – Program Stakeholder Engagement
- Chapter 4 – Program Strategy Alignment
- Chapter 5 – Program Benefits Management
- Chapter 6 – Program Governance
- Chapter 7 – Program Lifecycle Management
- Chapter 8 – Program Integration Management

- Chapter 9 – Program Activities
- Chapter 10 - Preparation and Exam Taking Tips
- Chapter 11 - Author's PgMP Exam Experience

Highlights

Chapter 1 emphasizes on gives details on Why Become PgMP Certified, PgMP Eligibility Criteria, Application Process and PMI's Audit Process. The book uses pictorial representations and program life-cycle based references as much as possible along with both exam & real like tips under the title of "W-o-W" short for Words of Wisdom: to facilitate easier understanding and application of the concepts, as well as pointers to remember for the exam.

Understanding the 6 key Performance Domains which include the following:

1. Strategic Program Management
2. Benefits Management
3. Stakeholder Engagement
4. Program Governance
5. Program Lifecycle and
6. PMI code of Ethics & Professional Conduct.

Author recommends pursuing PMP credential before pursuing PgMP as it will help to understand the PMI's structured project management methodology and prepare you for the next journey which will be program management. Also emphasizes that as a program manager, one needs to fully understand the role of a project manager and how they will manage their projects.

Chapter 2 mentions basic concepts of project, program and portfolio management and relationship between them. A portfolio will consist of one or more programs and or projects and operations. A program will consist of one or more projects and or sub programs/subsidiary programs. The author explains the difference between Projects and Operations(A function will continue for a long time and may not have a definitive end in the near future), Project Life Cycle and Process Groups and Project Management Knowledge Areas.

Below are Program Lifecycle Management Phases. Author also explains the program activities across various life-cycle phases.

1. Program Definition Phase
 - Program Formulation
 - Program Planning
2. Program Delivery Phase
 - Component Authorization & Planning
 - Component Oversight & Integration
 - Component transition & Closure
3. Program Closure Phase
 - Program Closure

In the next five chapters the author explains Program Managements performance domains, their major activities, documents created in those performance domains, mapping the domains to program lifecycle and points to remember along with chapter summary.

Chapter 3 discusses how a program manager is expected to keep his/her stakeholders engaged and push-forth toward a successful program outcome. The focus is on maximizing the positive impact while keeping the impact of negative stakeholders to the absolute minimum. Stakeholders may be grouped into various groups like - Negative, Unaware, Neutral, Supportive, Leader and many more.

Below are Stakeholder engagement domain elements.

1. Stakeholder Identification
2. Stakeholder Analysis
3. Stakeholder Engagement Planning
4. Stakeholder Engagement and
5. Stakeholder Communications

Stakeholder Analysis is NOT a one-time activity. During the course of the program a program manager may need to revisit this activity multiple times, either due to new stakeholders or because the role/position of a particular stakeholder has changed over the course of the program. The author mentions that one of the most influential stakeholders is the Program Manager along with the Program Steering Committee, Program Sponsor, PgMO, Project Managers and Subsidiary Program Managers.

Chapter 4 emphasizes that program strategy alignment performance domain identifies program outputs and outcomes to provide the benefits that are aligned with the

organization's strategic goals and objectives. As a program manager one needs to support organization vision and mission.

Below are Program Strategy Alignment domain elements.

1. Program Business Case
2. Program Charter
3. Program Roadmap
4. Program Environmental Assessments and
5. Program Risk Management Strategy

SWOT and PESTEL are the two most important environmental analysis techniques. PESTLE (Political Economic Social Technological Economic Legal) analysis is used to analyze the external environment from many different angles, and to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the situation. The three main documents created in this performance domain are the program business case, the program charter and the program roadmap. As the program progresses, the program environment may change and as a result, these documents may need revision.

Chapter 5 discusses that this performance domain defines, creates, maximizes and delivers the benefits intended by the program. It is probably the most important focus area from a program sponsor and steering committee perspective, as they have initiated this program. The way the program manager manages the program, will have a direct bearing on how much benefits the organization actually realizes or how well the benefits are realized. Per its definition, a benefit refers to the gains and/or assets or business value realized by the organization and other stakeholders as a direct result of the outcomes delivered by the program. A program could result in two types of benefits which are incremental benefits and Cumulative benefits. Some benefits are easily quantifiable and measurable like financial benefits (20% increase in Sales).

Author emphasized that transitioning the benefit and making sure it can be sustained operationally is just as important as identifying the benefit and making sure the program team works together with component teams to deliver that benefit. Without this transition and sustainment, your benefit is almost as good as not being created at all. Below are Program Benefits Management domain elements.

1. Benefits Identification
2. Benefits Analysis & Planning

3. Benefits Delivery
4. Benefits Transition and
5. Benefits Sustainment

Typical governance participants are Program management team, Organizations PMO, Steering committee, Program Sponsor and Subsidiary Program Managers.

Chapter 6 discusses that Program governance is a set of processes, procedures, guidelines rules and policies, defined at a higher level, to guide and control the program management and, to help the program manager to deliver the program benefits as planned and expected. Without governance structures in place properly, the program is going to have a very tough time carrying out their day to day responsibilities. The key governance functions are decision making, oversight, control and integration.

Below are the 3 key elements of the Program Governance Domain.

1. Governance Practices
2. Governance Roles
3. Governance Design & Implementation

Chapter 7 mentions that the program lifecycle management performance domain, manages the program activities that take the program from inception/definition to closure. It is the logical progress from start to finish, outlining the major stages or phases it goes through, in pursuit of the planned benefits that are to be delivered. While the lifecycle looks like a sequential progression from one phase to another, sometimes a program manager may need to revisit the planning phase (which includes communication management plan, risk management plan, schedule management plan etc.,) based on changes to the organizational (or portfolio) strategy or direction.

Program delivery phase will typically take the longest time in terms of duration and a program can only enter closure phase when all of its components that contributed to the benefit delivery, are successfully closed.

Chapter 8 discusses that program integration management is a core activity that occurs across the entire program life cycle. The activity related to integration management enables the program manager to look at the program as one unit and, this is what senior management usually wants. Program integration activities include program infrastructure

development, program delivery management and program performance monitoring and controlling.

Chapter 9 discusses that all of the work performed by the program team for the purpose of overall program management are collectively called program activities and although these activities are quite similar to those that you would be very familiar with from a project management perspective, the content, scope and complexity are very different. Below are some of the program documents which will be created during the various lifecycle stages of the program.

1. Program Management Plan
2. Program Risk Register and Issue Log
3. Program Master Schedule
4. Program Benefit Register
5. Program WBS

Chapter 10 mentions a study plan with approximate duration in weeks one has to spend in order to ace PgMP certification, execute the study plan, types of exam questions and tips for taking the PgMP exam at the exam center. The author emphasized on answering all questions from PMI's perspective and *Not* what one would do at work which will increase the chances of success tremendously.

Chapter 11 discusses the author's experience on the PgMP exam and exam questions.

Highlights: What I liked!

The chapters in the book cover the basics of project/program/portfolio management, Program Management performance domains, program activities and preparation and exam tips to earn PgMP credential.

Who might benefit from the Book?

This book is for someone aspiring to earn the Program Management Professional (PgMP) credential, anyone anticipating becoming a Program Manager and program managers who are preparing to overcome commonly faced challenges and successfully deliver benefits and business value.

Conclusion

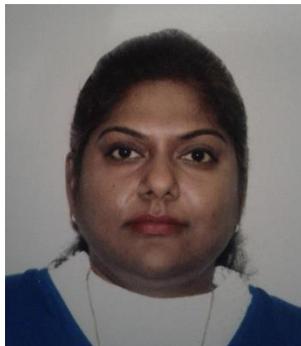
I found this book to be very well organized and with comprehensive treatment of the topic of Program Management. I highly recommend this read to anyone anticipating becoming a Program Manager or anyone seeking to successfully pass the PMI PgMP exam.

For more about this book, go to: <https://notionpress.com/read/program-management-professional-pgmp-handbook>

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.

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