

## PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW<sup>1</sup>



Book Title: **Taming the Risk Hurricane: Preparing for Major Business Disruption**

Author: **Dr. David Hillson, The Risk Doctor**

Publisher: Berrett-Koehler, Oakland, CA, USA

List Price: \$29.95

Publication Date: September 2022

ISBN: 978-1-523000-500

Reviewer: **Dr. Ruth Murray-Webster**

Review Date: September 2022

---

Taking risk in order to achieve objectives is a natural human function. In hindsight, we may sometimes reflect on what we could have done differently, but acting with as much foresight as possible, we weigh options and decide accordingly. It all gets more complicated when we try to decide what risks to take in groups, and particularly in organisations that are susceptible to disruption from customers, regulators, suppliers, staff or wider political, economic, sociological, technological factors. Multiple people with multiple perceptions are involved. Emotions from excitement to fear can be high. Perceived wisdom is that process and governance help to create some order and a common language, and they do, but it's not enough. Improving the way organisational value is created and protected through risk management needs better conversations about risk, and when it comes to triggering conversation there is nothing as powerful as a good analogy.

David Hillson's latest book uses the hurricane (typhoon or cyclone in other parts of the world) as an analogy for extreme risk exposure that causes major disruption in business, which he christens the Risk Hurricane. As David explains, hurricanes are caused by predictable factors but are characterized by sustained unpredictability and severe impact once they occur. David patiently and thoroughly applies the hurricane analogy to help the reader to understand the preconditions for potentially game-changing extreme risk

---

<sup>1</sup> How to cite this review: Murray-Webster, R. (2022). Taming the Risk Hurricane, book review, *PM World Journal*, Vol. XI, Issue X, October.

exposure, and to how to deal with the many aspects of managing that risk from prediction to preparedness to post-event recovery.

If you are a business leader, concerned about your organisation's readiness to deal with major disruption, this book will stimulate your thinking and lead you through the things to consider in a logical yet entertaining way. If you are a risk advisor and you want to engage decision-makers in a new way, this book provides lots of ideas of how to communicate in new ways. And if you just want to hear the latest thoughts of The Risk Doctor on the importance of understanding and managing risk, this book is for you.

As someone who has spent years thinking about risk management and helping others to do it well, I am grateful to David for helping me think of new ways to gain attention to old challenges. For example, using the insight that 'in the eye of the storm where things are calm, it is possible to be clear-minded, but also complacent' provides an opportunity to challenge behaviours when faced with the uncertain effects of climate change, the erosion of social cohesion, a debt crisis, or geo-economic confrontation.

I'm confident you will find your own favourites in this concise, logical and entertaining text.

---

For more about this book, go to: <https://bkconnection.com/books/title/Taming-the-Risk-Hurricane>

*Editor's note: The PMWJ publishes reviews of books related, either directly or indirectly, to the management of programs and projects. If you have read a good PM-related book recently and would like to publish a book review in the PM World Journal, please contact [editor@peworldjournal.com](mailto:editor@peworldjournal.com).*

*Book reviews can result in the creation of new knowledge based on the reviewer's experience, perspective and comments. Authors of book reviews can also claim PDUs for PMP recertification from the Project Management Institute, or Professional Development Units from APM in the UK. For clarification, contact [editor@peworldjournal.com](mailto:editor@peworldjournal.com).*

## About the Reviewer



### **Dr. Ruth Murray-Webster**

United Kingdom



**Dr Ruth Murray-Webster** is Director: Potentiality UK and former Director of the Change Portfolio for Associated British Ports Ltd. Ruth has 35+ years of experience in a series of roles to enable organisations in many sectors to deliver change objectives, including as Director of the Risk in the Boardroom practice for KPMG LLP in the UK and 10 years as a Director of Lucidus Consulting Ltd.

Along this journey, Ruth researched organisational change from the perspective of the recipients of change for an Executive Doctorate at Cranfield School of Management. She has also taken a keen interest in risk management along the way, co-authoring four books on the people aspects of risk management with David Hillson (*Understanding and Managing Risk Attitude*, 2007; *Managing Group Risk Attitude*, 2008; *A Short Guide to Risk Appetite*, 2012), and with Penny Pullan (*A Short Guide to Facilitating Risk Management*, 2011).

Ruth was awarded an Honorary Fellowship of the Association for Project Management in 2013 for her services to risk and change.

Dr Ruth Murray-Webster can be contacted at [ruthmurraywebster@gmail.com](mailto:ruthmurraywebster@gmail.com)