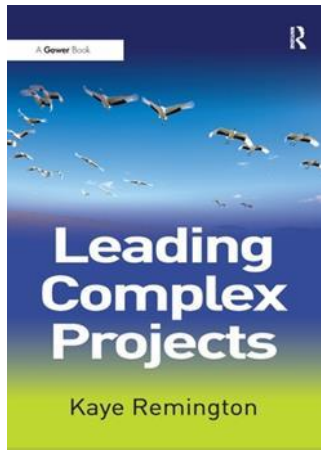# PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW

Book Title: [1]**Leading Complex Projects**

Author: **Kaye Remington**

Publisher: Gower

List Price: $59.95 (softcover) $160 (hardcover)

Format: Soft cover, 364 Pages

Publication Date: 2016

ISBN: 978-1-4094-1905-1

Reviewer: **Amalia Quintero**, PMP

Review Date: January 2023

Introduction

The book titled **Leading Complex Projects** discusses how to apply project management in big projects from different industry sectors in everyday life. The book engages the reader in the analysis of different features required during the whole delivery process of the project management. The book dives deep into leadership as a process, so that conflict can be analyzed, addressed, and resolved. The book explains relevant aspects to consider during the project´s life cycle, such as complexity, communication, teams, portfolio-program, challenges, culture, political skill, crises, governance, key roles, peace, resilience, and courage.

Overview of Book's Structure

• **Chapter 1.** In this chapter is analyzed the notion of comprehending complexity by contrasting four key points: importance of early recognition of complexity by all stakeholders, the difference between complex and complicated projects, indicators of project complexity, project specific factors contributing to project complexity. Complex projects are characterized by uncertainty, ambiguity and decreasing levels of trust. Despite these factors, many complex projects are successfully executed through the application of the various subjects of project management knowledge.

• **Chapter 2.** This chapter dives into complex communication networks, social networks, informal networks, communication styles, communications planning,

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communications risks. Communication is a very common word used in project management vocabulary and even can cause the project failure.

• **Chapter 3.** This chapter explains the relevance managing project teams through the comparison with a symphony orchestra. It´s necessary to get the right balance between the players and the instruments. The chapter also analyzes the personalities, behavioural styles, strengths, and weaknesses.

• **Chapter 4.** This chapter exposes portfolio and program thinking as an effective way to work with complexity, considering the variety, perspective, and flexibility needed.

• **Chapter 5.** This chapter gives detailed information about innovative thinking as an important key to managing complexity.

• **Chapter 6.** This chapter discusses the thinking process, in order to make complex decisions considering the uncertainty. It exposes the concept of the linear rationality.

• **Chapter 7.** This chapter explains how cultural differences and misunderstandings between teams contribute to project complexity. It´s necessary to consider the cultural boundaries, organizational cultures, project cultures, international projects, and generational culture.

• **Chapter 8.** This chapter is related to political influence, project leadership and successful leadership. Building political influence skills at all levels and dealing with negative political activity.

• **Chapter 9.** Focuses on crises. It exposes detailed information about systemic perspectives and crisis management.

• **Chapter 10.** Introduces the reader to the Governance field. Gives enough information about governance structures, governance in complex environments, and implementing governance.

• **Chapter 11.** Takes the reader through the concept of authority. The key points in this chapter are leadership roles and layers, linking roles to level and type of complexity, assigning key roles, authority to select and replace key personnel and accountability and assessment.

• **Chapter 12.** Discusses the partners for peace. The key points in this chapter are the case for partnering, mindsets that get in the way of partnering, procurement strategies for partnering and developing a partnering relationship.

• **Chapter 13.** Analyzes the humility concept. The key points in this chapter are a right estimate of oneself iconoclasm – the capability to break down barriers, psychologyst´s point of view and traits not associated with effective leadership.

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- **Chapter 14.** Summarizes the impression the leader made. The key points in this chapter are charisma, communication, resilience, determination, and courage.

Highlights

The ***Leading Complex Projects*** book provides a documented process for analyzing and managing complex projects in a variety of situations. It takes the reader through the reflexion about the different behaviors of the human being just in front of the responsibility to lead a project. The author shows numerous questions and results obtained about real scenarios which are involved with taking decision process, personal feelings, preferences, responsibilities, and much other aspects to consider depending on the type of project, its complexity and relevance level in a broad range of industry sectors.

Previous ideas in the mind of any project manager definitively can affect the chosen path for a specific project. Another important point is about the conflicts, and the formal and informal relationships with the team project and other stakeholders. It also discusses situations where known conflicts are strategically brought to the surface at specific stages of the project to achieve a greater outcome.

In addition, the book provides information about the confidence and the trust required to establish working relationships properly.

Highlights: What I liked!

The author explains best practices in a coherent and focused way. She shows the research done since 2005. The book is well referenced and uses all the citations needed according to the proper rules. It´s valuable for the professional knowledge and experience that is shared in the book from executive leaders. The book is written as a compilation of all the 70 interviews done.

The diagrams presented in the book are useful to understand the explanations in each chapter. This book helps the reader to understand objectively these issues and offers recommendations for project managers in addressing this topic.

Who might benefit from the Book?

This book is a quick read and a handy book of reference for those involved with complex projects in daily life. The tools provided can be utilized in both professional and personal life situations. It provides insights and experiences in laymen's terms to illustrate the points discussed by the author.

Conclusion

Summarizing, ***Leading Complex Projects*** is an original book that provides the reader with insights and tools for achieving project success and playing different roles in the team project. It centers on analyzing important features related with the art of being a

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project manager. It also provides details on how to analyze and approach leadership, communication abilities and capabilities.

Leaders are human beings too, so managing complex projects is kind of a challenge which depends on competencies, reserves of energy, enthusiasm, relationship skills, individual languages and more. Leaders have their own interests, but they also understand the importance of organizational needs. They constantly face leadership challenges, while considering the increasing complexities.

As a project manager, it is important to maximize and overcome leadership to achieve the project objectives. The ways in which people communicate and the relationships they forge constitute the behaviour and combined culture of any organization or project. Sense of integrity and strategies are shared to address the most difficult situations and keep the focus on the overall project goal. I found the book helpful.

About the Reviewer

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Amalia Quintero is a Project Management Professional (PMP) with extensive experience in education and project management. Industrial Engineer. Technological Innovation Specialist. Project Management Specialist. Master's degree in Project Management from Andres Bello Catholic University. Her career includes over 15 years working in different roles in project management and process engineering. Amalia has worked as a full-time Professor-Researcher in several universities, with face to face and online classes, subjects: Operations Research, Project Management, Economics, Research Methodology, Linear Algebra, Logic and all subjects in the mathematics field. Amalia is a member of the Project Management Institute, Dallas Chapter, having acquired her PMP certification in 2020.

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For more about this book, go to: https://www.routledge.com/Leading-Complex-Projects/Remington/p/book/9781409419051?_gl=1%2A19sok5r%2A_ga%2ANDI5NzI2Njk3LjE2NzUxODQ3MTE.%2A_ga_0HYE8YG0M6%2AMTY3NTE4NDcxMC4xLjEuMTY3NTE4NDc0NC4wLjAuMA..

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