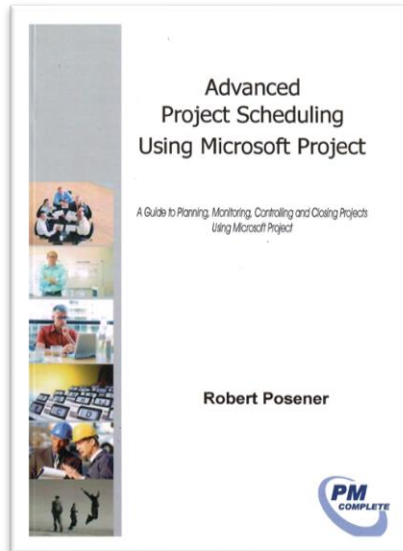


PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Advanced Project Scheduling Using Microsoft Project***¹

Author: **Robert Posener**

Publisher: PM Complete

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Reviewer: **Amalia Quintero, PMP**

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Introduction

The book titled ***Advanced Project Scheduling Using Microsoft Project*** discusses project time management best practice processes and scheduling procedures. It was written in 2008 and the author interrelates it with all other project management knowledge areas as demarcated by the Project Management Institute's (PMI) Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) through the analyses of different approaches to project time management on a variety of project, program and portfolio management situations using Microsoft Project. The book dives around Microsoft Office Project Standard 2007 and Microsoft Office Project Professional 2007.

Overview of Book's Structure

- **Why Use Microsoft Project.** This chapter explains the benefits of using Microsoft Project to manage specific project schedules. It gives details about the benefits of having standards and templates as: creating a well thought-out project scheduled, working more effectively as a team, making better decisions, anticipating and making changes, reporting as a By-Product, monitoring and controlling project progress, answering scheduling questions; and building a historical repository.
- **Standards and Templates.** This chapter explains the need for standards, templates and how to create them. Standards fall into the categories of: Usage of Microsoft project features, templates, and schedule content standards. The book describes the

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benefits for project managers, for project team members, for clients, for project sponsors and senior management and for the enterprise.

- **Microsoft Project Software Setup and Usage.** This chapter recommends creating a separate disk folder for each client and then separate sub folder for each project. In addition, the chapter explains about the specific project schedule file naming, the plotter usage and the printer usage.

- **Planning your project.** The chapter focuses on the relevance of planning projects well in advance of the start. It is well known that projects fail for a variety of reasons in different contexts, but especially a large proportion of failed projects is because of a lack of planning. The chapter dives into the sequencing activities process, the RASCI chart (responsible, accountable, support, consult, inform), the Gantt view and the Network view.

- **New Project Schedule Check List.** This chapter shows how to create a list for a new project schedule to remind of the sequence in which to enter data into Microsoft Project.

- **Project Schedule Debugging, Crashing and Power Techniques.** Describes a check list that can be used to assist in finding bugs, in the specific project schedule as well as bringing forward the project end date.

- **Project Schedule Analysis.** It is imperative analyse project schedules for logic, completeness and a professional approach, and looking for reasonableness too. There are software products and services that will analyze the project schedule and will provide recommendations on improvements that can be made.

- **Monitoring and controlling a project.** This chapter describes how to monitor and control the project with the specific project schedule.

- **Closing a Project.** This chapter describes how to close a project once it has been completed, considering the project closure review meeting and the closing project schedule.

- **Special Scheduling Situations.** The content of this chapter is related to: working back from a committed end date, zero cost departmental accounting, the project management activity itself, measuring the cost of project management, costing of overtime, effort-driven tasks versus duration-driven tasks, management of delays and accelerations, scheduling the delay, accelerations, front versus back versus just in time loading the project schedule, multitasking and critical chain scheduling.

- **Managing multiple phases within a Project.** This chapter exposes detailed information about large projects with multiple project life cycle phases. It contains topics such as: overall project data, overlap between phases, cascading phases, managing and updating project schedules, and null phases.

- **Recommended Microsoft Project feature usage.** The author recommends a list of ideas for manage project time efficiently using Microsoft Project features, such as: costing, resource levelling, standard tables, filters and views, task bar and colour representations, inter-summary task to task dependencies, lead and lag, WBS numbering, dragging task durations, start and finish dates and task calendars.
- **Not Managing your Project to Death.** This chapter explains all projects need to be managed by Microsoft Project, even small projects. It's really important to develop the project schedule because this will become in the work plan. Some useful advises in this chapter are: do not descompose tasks, evolve project schedule phase y phase (planning horizon), update actual achievements monthly and reporting to the manager.
- **Managing Project-Level Data.** This chapter lists the data about the project as a whole that is necessary to record in the specific project schedule, such as: title, subject, manager, company, category, keywords, comments and status date.
- **Managing Calendar Data.** This chapter indicates the 3 types of calendars in Microsoft Project: project specific maser calendar, project specific resource calendars and individual task calendars.
- **Managing Task Data.** Every project should have the following milestones: project started, and project ended, moreover it's important to consider the task sequence, project summary task, task fields, duration driven versus effort driven, milestones tasks, task user defined fields, keywords and organization breakdown structure (OBS) code.
- **Managing Resource Data.** This chapter lists all the resource data standards that should be documented in its "The Resource Pool Schedule Usage Guide". The classification can be: personnel labour, owned equipment, rented equipment, plant, materials, consumables. Tools, fixed costs, variable costs, and general expense distribution (overheads).
- **Managing Resource Assignment Data.** This chapter focuses on not to have multiple resources assigned to a single task due this reduces the ability to hold a single resource accountable for the task's completion. Never mix client resource assignments with any others and never mix subcontractor, vendor, or supplier resource assignments with any others.
- **Project Integration Management Impacts.** This chapter explains how project time management integrates with project integration management from a scheduling perspective in a number of ways.
- **Project Scope Management Impacts.** This chapter explains how project time management integrates with project scope management from a scheduling perspective in a number of ways.

- **Project Cost Management Impacts.** This chapter explains how project time management integrates with project cost management from a scheduling perspective in a number of ways.
- **Project Quality Management Impacts.** This chapter explains how project time management integrates with project quality management from a scheduling perspective in a number of ways.
- **Project Human Resource Management Impacts.** This chapter explains how project time management integrates with project human resource management from a scheduling perspective in a number of ways. These are described under “Managing Resource Data”.
- **Project Risk Management Impacts.** This chapter explains how project time management integrates with project risk management from a scheduling perspective in several ways.
- **Project Communications Management Impacts.** This chapter explains how project time management integrates with project communication management from a scheduling perspective in a number of ways.
- **Project Procurement Management Impacts.** This chapter explains how project time management integrates with project procurement management from a scheduling perspective in a number of ways.
- **Portfolio and Programme Management Impacts.** This chapter explains how project time management integrates with portfolio and programme management from a scheduling perspective in a number of ways.
- **Microsoft Project versus the PMBOK Terminology.** A table is used to compare the terms and their definition between Microsoft Project and the PMI PMBOK terminology.
- **Microsoft Project Restrictions.** This chapter presents a list of 20 things you can’t do with Microsoft Project, but at the time of the book they were been fixed in Microsoft Project version 2007.

Lastly, the author presents the glossary of abbreviations and acronyms, and some appendixes related with reasons for why people don’t produce good project schedules, common project schedule risks, proposal statement of work (SOW) and contract words, scheduling capability micro evaluation criteria, project schedule baseline review and approval request, project work product review and acceptance form, delay notification and post project review scheduling questions.

Highlights

The ***Advanced Project Scheduling Using Microsoft Project*** book provides a valuable guide to planning, monitoring, controlling and closing projects using Microsoft Project. It takes the reader through a detailed frame which considers all the issues needed to prepare an excellent project schedule. The author shows numerous examples, and many other aspects to consider using Microsoft Project, depending on the type of project, its complexity and relevance level in a broad range of industry sectors.

Highlights: What I liked!

The author states “scheduling is a core skill for project managers”. The book is well organized and has numerous tables and lists, and explains the best practices in a coherent and focused way. The diagrams presented in the book are useful to understand each explanation. It’s valuable the professional knowledge and experience that is shared in the book from the proper author’s experience. However, the path to success, as in all models must mature and evolve within an organization to achieve value and growth.

Who might benefit from the Book?

This book is a quick read and a handy guide or reference for those consultants and professional Project Managers, Schedulers and Controllers who use Microsoft Project. 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. The concepts discussed and examples provide insight into how to structure a project for success focusing on who, what and how it can be done. Providing golden nuggets of the pitfalls to avoid. This book highlights how project managers can better understand and create successful project schedules.

Conclusion

Summarizing, ***Advanced Project Scheduling Using Microsoft Project*** is an original book that provides the user with recommendations and tools for scheduling a project using Microsoft Project. It centers the user on analyzing deeply features and trying out different approaches to project time management.

The title and the introduction prepare the reader about how to learn how to prepare a project schedule. Essentially, taking the special sauce of Microsoft Project and project management mindset with success. I found the book helpful.

For more about this book, go to: <https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/4473970> or [https://www.google.com/books/edition/Advanced Project Scheduling Using Micros/WSafPQAACAAJ?hl=en](https://www.google.com/books/edition/Advanced+Project+Scheduling+Using+Micros/WSafPQAACAAJ?hl=en)

About the Reviewer



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Amalia Quintero is a Project Management Professional (PMP) with extensive experience in education, research and project management. Industrial Engineer, Technological Innovation Specialist and Project Management Specialist. Master's degree in project management. Her career includes over 15 years working in different roles in project management and process engineering. Previously, Amalia worked as a full-time Professor-Researcher in some Universities, Subjects: Time Planning and Control, Projects Evaluation, Project Management, Operations Research, Economics, Research Methodology, Linear Algebra, Logic and all subjects in the mathematics field and now is a Project Management trainer and consultant. Amalia is a member of the Project Management Institute, Dallas Chapter, having acquired her PMP certification in 2020.

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