PM World Journal (ISSN: 2330-4480)
Vol. XIII, Issue IV – April 2024
www.pmworldjournal.com

Managing Business Projects: The Essentials
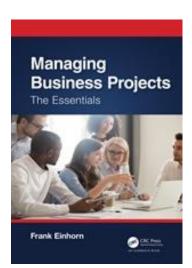Authors: Frank Einhorn
Book Review   Reviewer: Alexis Ledesma

PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW[1]

Book Title: *Managing Business Projects: The Essentials*

Author: **Frank Einhorn**

Publisher: CRC Press; Taylor & Francis Group; An Auerbach Book

List Price: $69.95   Format: Softcover, 488 pages

Publication Date: 2023   ISBN: 9781032276021

Reviewer: **Alexis Ledesma, PMP**

Review Date: 02/09/2024

Introduction

Project management is a methodology that offers a set of defined actions to be followed by a person/team and the required formal documentation that is created, maintained, and delivered throughout the project lifetime. The objectives, goals, cost, size, schedule, and other factors vary from project to project; therefore, one specific approach/methodology does not fit all projects. Traditional project management books and trainings tend to focus on construction and engineering projects, with very defined steps and outcomes; however, with business projects more unknown and change are present. *Managing Business Projects* focuses on small to medium sized business projects under $20 million, covering the essentials that pertain to almost all business projects.

The content covers the project lifecycle (formal start of project to closeout), and the various key players involved. It is intended to feel very informal and conversational. The author encourages the reader to compare the material and suggestions from the book to what they do and what they believe works best for their project, in the hope that the readers knowledge, understanding, and overall comfort with business project management grows and improves.

Overview of Book's Structure

The book is broken down into 4 parts (37 chapters), each part starts with an introduction, which is very helpful for the reader to understand what they are about to read and if that part is where they need to be. It is important to note that each chapter

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[1] How to cite this work: Ledesma, A. (2024). Managing Business Projects: The Essentials, book review, *PM World Journal*, Vol. XIII, Issue IV, April.

starts with the objectives for that chapter! As a reader, I really like this detail because it helps me prepare my mind for the material I am about to ingest.

- Part 1. Overview (4 chapters)
    - o Lays the foundation for understanding general business project management and what is essential from the project manager, and other key players.

- Part 2. Core Elements (14 chapters)
    - o Emphasizes in detail the essentials that need to be done rigorously and methodically throughout most business projects.

- Part 3. Special Topics (14 chapters)
    - o Discusses the unique concepts and principles that may not be seen or used in most or all business projects but may be necessary or crucial in certain circumstances.

- Part 4. Wrap-Up and Learning Materials (5 chapters)
    - o Is the final bow of the book! It takes the reader through a summary of the exhaustive material that was covered throughout the book. Several of the final chapters also provide the reader with the opportunity to test their gained knowledge by providing supplemental learning/study material.

Highlights

Managing Business Projects is a 488-page book, and it does a phenomenal job at covering a large number of different topics! It does so in a casual and simple manner that does not aim at confusing or putting down the reader.

Although lengthy, the reader does not need to read the book from cover to cover but can pick it up and read certain sections/topics and obtain a clear understanding for that particular item.

Having just earned my PMP certification inf June of 2023, I really liked how the book was very useful supplemental material to keep the PMP content fresh and be able to compare what I had previously learned and currently do in my day-to-day tasks. This book does not provide a crosswalk from section to section to the PMBOK, but I was able to easily identify the common topics and material for comparison and analysis!

Highlights: What I liked!

What I liked most about the book was how easy it was to follow. The author does an amazing job at keeping the tone of the book casual and conversational. This allows readers of various educational/experience backgrounds and cultures to be able to ingest the topics, even the more difficult ones, much easier and apply them to their particular scenarios. Great examples of this can be seen throughout the book, but

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particularly in Chapters *12: Progress and Cost Tracking* and *21: Project Selection: Financial and Non-Financial Criteria.*

I have experience matrixed environments in almost every project I have been a part of. I remember the first one and how confusing it was to grasp the concept and execute in a non-convoluted manner! Therefore, I was so excited to see and read *Section 29.3 The Matrix Environment* and let me tell you it did not disappoint! The reason is two fold, the fact that it was a topic of conversation and that it was not overcomplicated but simply defined and the solutions that were offered to the reader for how to improve a matrix environment.

Who might benefit from the Book?

One of the things I liked most about this textbook was the honesty and realistic approach the author used in writing the book! This is even true for the concept of who might benefit from this book. The author sets the stage and expectations of who this book is intended for:

"*Besides project managers and sponsors, this book is intended for people who are working in business or government, at any level, or for MBA students.*" – Introduction

"*It is not aimed at undergraduate students, although many would benefit from the contents.*" -Introduction

"*The book is intended for people who are working in business at whatever level or for MBA students; it is not aimed at undergraduate students, although many would benefit from the contents.*" – Section 1.3 How this Book is Different page., 4

"*This book is not intended as a primer for certification examinations because the content is far to broad.*" -Section 1.6 Structure of the Book page., 8

After having read the book, I agree with the set expectations laid out by the author. Anyone with knowledge of or interest in business projects will benefit and learn from reading parts or the entire book. However, those that are already involved in business projects and/or MBA students would have the best foundation for being able to take the presented concepts, reflect on them, and use them to improve their skills and projects.

Conclusion

In summary, I would like to thank the author for his ability to take complex concepts and break them down into an easily digestible book with great examples and anecdotes!

After reading this book, I am interested in learning more about project and contract negotiations and enhancing my skills in this area!

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I would definitely recommend this book to friends and colleagues and will be placing it next to my PMBOK on my bookshelf for future reference.

For more about this book, go to: https://www.routledge.com/Managing-Business-Projects-The-Essentials/Einhorn/p/book/9781032276021

About the Reviewer

Alexis Ledesma, PMP

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Alexis Ledesma lives in Plano, Texas with her husband of 10 years, and two daughters (6 years old and 2 years old). She has been in the project management field since June of 2013 when she started as a junior security analyst with Systems Made Simple in Virginia. Since then, she has taken on different roles including Director of Quality and Management and Chief of Staff. Alexis enjoys learning more about project management and keeping up to date with the updates within the community. Alexis earned her PMP in June of 2023!

When not working, she enjoys spending time with her family, watching her oldest daughter compete in gymnastics, and walking her two dogs Rhino (west highland white terrier) and Miel (Honey) (retriever mix). Alexis's favorite pass time is bowling in a Saturday night league at Plano Super Bowl.

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Editor's note: This book review was the result of a partnership between the PM World Journal and the PMI Dallas Chapter. Authors and publishers provide books to the PM World Journal Editor; books are delivered to the PMI Dallas Chapter where they are offered free to PMI members who agree to provide a review within 45 days; book reviews are published in the PM World Journal and PM World Library. Reviewers can normally claim PDU's for PMP recertification upon publication of their book reviews.

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