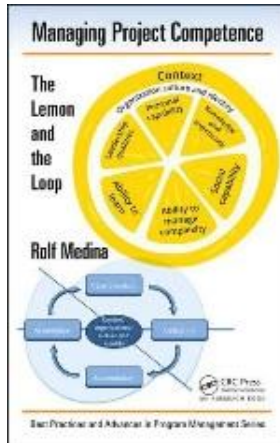


## PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Managing Project Competence: The Lemon and the Loop***

Author: **Rolf Medina**

Publisher: CBC Press/Taylor & Francis Group

List Price: \$94.95

Format: Hard cover, 170 pages

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ISBN: 978-1-4987-8438-2

Reviewer: **Muriel Hairston-Cooper**

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### Introduction

At initial glance, one may think that *Managing Project Competence* with its *The Lemon and the Loop* whimsical subhead may be a lighthearted read filled with relatable, easy to follow anecdotes about how project managers deal with their own competence and that of others. And while you may find a paragraph or two of laugh out loud, relatable moments, this book looks at the serious connection between competence and organizational success.

The book uses a combined project management and human resource lens to examine the different dimensions of competence, defines factors of what makes individuals competent, and provides examples through case studies of how organizations can thrive or fail in the development and utilization of shared use of competence. It is the author's belief that if companies are to be successful, and or remain as such they will need to recognize and give credence to the value of the relationship between employment satisfaction that grows from the links between competencies and business growth.

### Overview of Book's Structure

The book offers 151 pages of content, a three-page glossary, and 14 remaining pages of an extensive bibliography and index.

As a textbook, the six-chapter book presented many "arguments," disclaiming one subject matter expert for another. However, all do agree that the concept of competence based on knowledge and experience is vital to acknowledge and apply in today's rapidly changing knowledge environment. Competency and competence, both relegated as static dimensions within a framework of individual responsibilities are now being recognized as agile and can directly flow with the direction of the organization.

The author gives a thorough description of the Lemon and Loop framework as attested in the bibliography. While the chapters are adequate, a bullet style chapter summary may be more useful to quickly look and refresh previously read subheads.

## Highlights

The content of the book centers on the concepts of the “Lemon” and the “Loop.”

The Lemon focuses on individual competence and how this can intersect with organizational culture. The Lemon framework is based on knowledge and experience and shares how an individual can use this in different situations. It changes the concept of competence from being static to being agile and free-flowing.

The Loop provides a thorough description on how organizations can use the outcomes of the lemon to benefit organizational strategies and aha – the future careers of its workforce. As a team, the Lemon and the Loop provides a holistic strategy for business and career growth.

## Highlights: What I liked!

I enjoyed the case studies as they presented real life situations that could easily be followed and understood. While I found the early chapter descriptions of the Lemon and the Loop a bit wordy and long, the reader will see the connection upon reviewing the book’s case studies that provide a link and validity to the author’s earlier theories.

I also enjoyed and agreed with the rationale behind the Lemon’s six dimensions of competence and the inter-relationship it has on generating new competencies.

## Who might benefit from the Book

Human resource departments, diversity, inclusive and equity initiatives, and junior and senior level management would all benefit from the book as it provides a realistic and agile framework on bringing forth positive outcomes for both the employee and the employer.

I also believe new employees would benefit from this as the content can lead to thoughts of using and developing competencies into new experiences and growth opportunities.

## Conclusion

This book has the potential to be a game changer in the employment world. However, because it is written for project managers and uses specific terminology associated with the field, it is missing its appeal to a large swath of individuals.

For example, the author introduces the REPI (Reflection, Elaboration, Practicing/Participation, and Investigation) methodology, which can function as an excellent training or coaching tool for non-project managers. This concept is introduced in Chapter 4 and while there is an understandable progression of details in the book, this specific methodology would perhaps be better appreciated if described in a bit more detail earlier – to hold the interest of the non-project manager.

This book gently tries to break old views and introduce a new perspective that can be beneficial to both the worker and the organization. Because COVID has forever altered the workforce and organizations are struggling to redefine brand and market value, this may be excellent timing to introduce this new mindset to Human Resources and other departments that are the first encounters in the employment process.

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For more about this book, go to: (*URL for book's page on publisher's website*)

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## About the Reviewer



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**Muriel Hairston-Cooper** is the director of relationship development and stakeholder engagement at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation in Washington, DC. She is a servant-leader with demonstrated success in four distinct portfolio lines – strategic partnerships with an equity engagement focus, communications and public affairs, program and philanthropic development and cultivation, and conventions and special events.

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