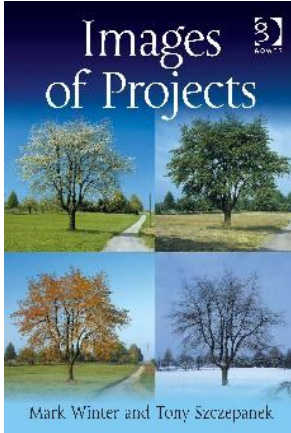


## PM World Today Book Review



**Book Title: PMP:** *Images of Projects*

**Authors:** Mark Winter and Tony Szczepanek

**Publisher:** Gower

**List Price:** Price: £40.00 or Online:£36.00

**Publication Date:** 2009

**ISBN:** 978-0-566-08716-5

**Reviewer:** Roger Atkinson

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Imagine, because that is what this book keeps asking us to do, imagine a new project management book which has an index that does not contain pointers to, for example: planning, control, estimating, leadership or governance and you know that it is going to be different from the more usual project management offerings. So different is this book that the first section is given over to explaining the meaning of the icons and how the body of the text is structured.

And this may be both a benefit and a problem. The benefit would be for those who are lucky enough to read it, these people will probably already be converts to early writers such as de Bono's *Six Thinking Hats* and Peter Checkland's *Systems Thinking, Systems Practice* ideas. The problem would be for those who could possibly benefit if they did read the book, but will give up because it is not designed to be a 'dip in' model that provides a quick reference, a recipe for success or best practice, thank goodness!

The seven core images it does introduce suggest a way to view projects in a framework not previously grouped together. There is no claim that these seven images are exhaustive but they do provide a significant view of up to date projects, with some still running. This book builds on other works that have proposed new ways of considering complex problems, in particular the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) funded *Rethinking Project Management* initiative. This book is a breath of fresh air in a world often populated with rigid structures, manual driven or one size fits all mentality.

Written by **Mark Winter** and **Tony Szczepanek** it should appeal to as wide a group of people as their many very good examples are taken from, but it won't, because some people would often appear to do almost anything, other than think. A theme is to promote practitioners to do 'more consciously' what they have done as routine, using the Images and Frameworks.

Three levels of consciousness could be considered as: when awake, normal thinking; or super consciousness, The Beatles Strawberry Fields was supposedly written in a state of super consciousness and as good as the music is we probably don't want to go there; the third level is sub-conscious i.e. when asleep. The reference to the Guy Claxton *Hare Brain, Tortoise Mind* could possibly have included ideas considered in that slower time. However, this book is simply suggesting the use of the normal conscious state and provides frameworks and ideas to help see things differently, without the need of moving to either a super or sub-conscious state.

Thinking about thinking was considered by Flew about thirty three ago and this book's approach almost moves the subject of PM into the area of Philosophy of Projects, or more simply, reasoning supported by images. So what? The book is suitable for practitioners (who it suggests are the main audience) but it also points to students and academics that could also benefit from reading it. My suggestion is to read the book and make up your own mind; it will certainly help you to think about projects and project management, and that has to be good.

*Images of Projects* ISBN: 978-0-566-08716-5 (288 pages) is published in hardback by Gower at Price: £40.00 or Online: £36.00. Gower may be contacted at <http://www.gowerpublishing.com>.

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