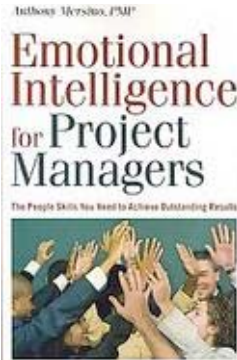


## PM World Today Book Review



**Book Title:** *Emotional Intelligence for Project Managers*

**Authors:** Anthony Mersino, PMP

**Publisher:** American Management Association, USA

**List Price:** US\$19.95 (soft bound)

**Publication Date:** 2007

**ISBN:** 0814474160

**Reviewer:** Annett Brown, MBA

**Review Date:** September 2007

---

### Introduction to the Book

Many project managers are hired or promoted primarily based on their technical backgrounds. All too often emotional intelligence (or soft skill sets) are considered merely "nice to have" qualities. The author refutes this approach and argues that the degree to which emotional intelligence is applied can be the determining factor between the success or failure of a project. The book does not represent a perusal of clinical research on motivation or any other aspects of the field of psychology. Rather, it provides hands-on advice and multiple tools and techniques for actively incorporating the concept of emotional intelligence into a project manager's busy work life. I felt that I would be a good candidate for reviewing this book since my educational background includes psychology, and besides the expectation of benefiting from the advice dispensed in the book, have held a profound interest in the field of motivation for many years.

The author draws from his experience gathered during 20 years of project management in the capacity of an employee of and consultant to large corporations as well as university professor and member of the National Speakers Association, the Project Management Institute, and the American Society for the Advancement of Project Management.

### Overview of Book's Structure

The book can be viewed as a PM adaptation of Daniel Goleman's popular books "*Emotional Intelligence: Why it Matters More than IQ*", "*Working with Emotional Intelligence*", "*The Emotionally Intelligent Workplace*" and "*Primary Leadership*" (the latter two books were co-authored). In addition, the authors make references to the **PMBOK® Guide** as well as the writings by psychologists Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer.

The book begins with a primer on emotional intelligence. It then lays out the Emotional Intelligence Framework for Project Management, which consists of a) self awareness, b) self-management, c) social awareness, d) relationship management, and e) team leadership. At the end of the book, the reader will find a host of appendixes containing a tally sheet, checklist, table and a matrix as well as recommendations for movies, magazines, journals, books, training courses, websites, and more.

### **Highlights: What I liked!**

I liked many aspects of this book. To name only a few:

- The book was intended for the busy PM, who may find only a few minutes a day to read a single chapter at a time. All chapters are conveniently prefaced with summaries of the previous chapters and the new learning objectives. In addition, the author makes generous use of repetitions, such as the SASHET Families of Emotions, or the Emotional Intelligence Model, which greatly supported my understanding and retention of concepts.
- The author speaks candidly about his own shortcomings and failures that he attributes to his initial dismissal of the importance of emotional intelligence. In showing humility, he not only provides vivid examples to illustrate his points, but also establishes credibility with the reader.
- The frequent use of quotations such as "You cannot make up for soft skills with hard work," or "Catch employees doing something right" greatly enhance the reading experience. I also noticed a smile on my face when I read about "stinking thinking" or "the open rant".
- I found the appendixes to be of great value. While it is unlikely that any PM will use all the tools offered, it is helpful to have several examples, including partially filled in sheets, available at a glance.

### **Shortfalls: What was missing!**

In the age of globalization, the probability that a given project is managed across borders is very high. I would have liked to have found more detailed information on emotional intelligence in the international realm. From personal experience, I know to phrase my communications to non-native speaking partners overseas differently than to individuals in the U.S., e.g., more formal salutations, use of last names, and avoidance of certain American expressions, etc. This type of cross-cultural sophistication ought to be an essential part of the global PM's tool kit.

### **Who might benefit from the Book**

While the book title clearly states that the book was written for project managers, I believe that the readership could easily be extended to anyone who is part of a taskforce, working group, panel or other team working toward specific deliverables.

It certainly would not hurt or confuse anyone else to read this book. The book's main value does not lie in announcing any ground-breaking, novel ideas, but in systematically describing and tying together many well-known small and large truths about effective human interactions and how they can be applied to project management. The book requires neither in-depth technical knowledge nor a background in psychology. Many readers will appreciate the review of soft skill knowledge acquired during undergraduate or graduate coursework.

## Conclusion

I found this book to be a well-structured, easy read that delivers results. Immediately after I started reading the book, I caught myself monitoring and categorizing my feelings in various situations throughout the day. Several times, I paused and rethought the way in which I was about to approach my team members, boss or assistant at work or my husband at home. True to its title, out of the many books dealing with the subject of emotional intelligence, this book is a worthy investment particularly for aspiring or current project management professionals.

Additional information about this book can be found at <http://www.amanet.org/books/catalog/0814474160.htm>.



**Annett Brown**  
*Contributing Book Reviewer*



**Annett Brown** was born and raised in Germany and has been living in the United States for nearly 11 years. She works at Covidien, formerly known as Tyco Healthcare, where she is in charge of international business development for pharmaceutical products in Europe and the Middle East. Despite the fact that her division is not projectized, her PM skills are a great asset, especially when considering that the launch of a pharmaceutical product in a foreign country usually requires long, complex registration procedures, involving a large number of professionals and sometimes clinical trials. Annett received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida. She then earned a Graduate Certificate in Project Management (2004) and her MBA (2005) both from the University of Texas at Dallas. She can be contacted at [Annett.Brown@Covidien.com](mailto:Annett.Brown@Covidien.com).