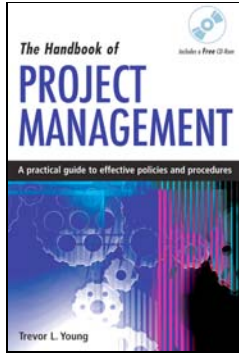


## PMF Book Review



**Book Title:** *The Handbook of Project Management Revised 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*

**Authors:** Trevor L. Young

**Publisher:** Kogan Page Limited (USA)

**List Price:** \$US 55.00

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**Reviewer:** Andrea Nicholas

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### Introduction to the Book

Trevor L. Young, a project practitioner with over thirty years experience, has offered a second edition to "The Handbook of Project Management" (first published in 1996) with his 2007 publication. Though the author aspires the book to be a "pocket guide", at 281 pages the book is an excellent desk reference. Broad in its reach and filled with practical information, the book provides an excellent overview of project and program management any project professional, irrespective of experience and/or knowledge level, will find valuable.

### Overview of Book's Structure

Similar to his previous edition, the author has bifurcated the book's structure: the first part addressing the project and program environment and the second part addressing project and program management techniques. Those who have read both editions will notice that this edition includes multiple enhancements to part two.

The author wisely devotes one quarter of the book to part one, the environment. It covers useful definitions, organizational structures, and roles and responsibilities. Part two's content is primarily framed by the author's proposed project lifecycle, which consists of: defining, planning, launching, executing and closing. Part two also includes sections on start up, using a computer and common project problems, though the last two chapters would be better suited for an appendix.

The final element of the book is found in the back: the easy-to-navigate CD. Stored on the CD is a host of functional templates, presentations, process notes and tools,

which further support the author's professed philosophies, tactics and best practices.

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

The author tackles an often overlooked subject, sub-projects. More project management authors and practitioners could take a queue from Mr. Young's sensible decision to give the topic merit. He supplies the reader with pointers on sub-project identification, management and role in the success or failure of projects.

Sage advice stemming from years of experience is peppered throughout the book. The author prudently advises the use of the Project Steering Committee throughout the lifecycle. Having that senior level investment and ongoing dialogue is absolutely essential to the success of a project or program and the author drives this point home multiple times and in a number of ways.

More good advice from the author is found in the Planning chapter, in particular his advocacy of carefully assessing a project or program's relevancy and financial impact/reward. The author describes in detail the techniques for assessing the relevancy and the sequence of events a management team must step through to conduct proper due diligence. Lastly, the author transmits a clear message to the reader that project and program professionals must lead by example. Readers come away with an understanding that successful projects are effectively managed through the use of superior communication, influencing and interpersonal skills.

Finally, the CD is a rich collection of solid information and tools and is worth the purchase price alone.

### **Shortfalls: What was Missing!**

The project phases outlined in the book closely align with the UK government's PRINCE2 (Projects IN Controlled Environment) methodology. Given that worldwide PMI® membership is nearing 250,000, most readers would benefit from a brief overview of the PRINCE2 framework in the book's introduction.

To avoid confusion amongst information technology readers, "Disaster Recovery" projects should be referred to as "Project Recovery" or "Project Rescue" efforts instead.

While project and program management was well vetted, providing more detail on portfolio management would have added valuable substance in illuminating the symbiosis which exists between the three branches.

## Conclusion

Mr. Young offers up a structured, robust, practical, relevant and prescriptive handbook on the subjects of project and program management anyone in business would benefit from reading. Project professionals will find the realistic examples, checklists, questions, templates, and process flow diagrams germane in providing direction for the effective management of projects and programs. Finally, for those preparing to sit for a PMI® certification exam, Mr. Young's superb how-to guide nicely augments the non-prescriptive PMBOK®.

### About the Reviewer:



**Andrea Nicholas**



**Andrea Nicholas** has over 14 years of experience leading project, process, quality, portfolio and program management initiatives and teams. She has launched and/or managed 3 Project Management Offices, developed and deployed models for organizational and client delivery maturity, held senior level positions for Fortune 500 companies and is currently a principal at Nicholas Consulting in Dallas, Texas. In addition to earning an MBA from University of Dallas and a graduate certificate in Project Management from University of Texas Dallas, she holds a PMP® certification from the Project Management Institute and is a Lean Six Sigma Green Belt. Ms. Nicholas can be contacted at [nicholasconsulting@sbcglobal.net](mailto:nicholasconsulting@sbcglobal.net).