

PMF Book Review



Book Title: Results without Authority - Controlling a Project When the Team Doesn't Report To You

Author: Tom Kendrick

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Reviewer: James Page, PMP

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Introduction to the Book:

Results Without Authority – Controlling A Project When the Team Doesn't Report To You is a very informative guidebook to program and project management professionals. His purpose in writing this book is to present a roadmap for project success. Project control without authority is perhaps the greatest challenge to project management. Process, influence, and measurement are defined into proven techniques for controlling a project in a variety of situations while managing diverse teams.

Tom Kendrick is a program manager most recently with Hewlett-Packard Company. He has written several other project management books, conducts project management classes, and presents at conferences and universities on program management, project risk and related topics.

In my role as a Program Manager for the Chickasaw Nation, a Native American tribal government, the challenges and situations articulated in this book were right on target. Mentorship and coaching project managers thorough our hierarchy and politics in my organization require using these skills to achieve the desired sponsor results. Project managers too often lose control of a project by allowing project processes to be poorly defined, staffed, and funded. *Results without Authority* will provide our project managers with vital tools to avoid or correct issues which plague projects. This book is essential for combating inevitable problem situations by demonstrating process, influence, and measurement techniques for aligning project activities and goals with those of the sponsor, team, and stakeholders. This book is a solid blueprint for project success.

Overview

Results Without Authority is divided into two parts. Each part covers 4 chapters in the book. The first four chapters deal with the three critical elements of project

control: process, influence, and measurement. The first chapter provides summary introductions into these three elements. Chapters Two through Five explains each element in more detail and defines how to apply these elements.

The book's second part deals with applying these elements for control during a project life cycle. The *Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge* (PMBOK Guide) leads the reader to assume a project manager will have complete control over every phase of a project: initiating, planning, executing, controlling, and closing. *Results Without Authority's* Chapters 6 through 9 maps to these PMBOK topics and provide essential guidance on how to manage your project without the formal power assumed by PMBOK.

Highlights:

- **This book was a very realistic approach to project control.** Project managers too often forget the Sponsor is the person directly responsible and "in charge" of a project. The ultimate "control" rests with the Sponsor. The Project Manager is merely a conduit of the Sponsor's control during a project. Sponsors who are not fully committed to a project are sometimes unwilling to provide support at critical project events. It is mandatory the project manager exercise the influence techniques illustrated in this book to gain appropriate support whether it comes from a sponsor or the project team.
- **PMBOK is both challenged and supported by the book's theme.** The author provides excellent details in four chapters on how to apply project processes, influence and metrics during the PMBOK five project phases. The first challenge to PMBOK openly declares the majority of project managers do not have "authoritarian" control over their projects hence the premise of this book. The second challenge is when the author debunks Earned Value Management in the metrics section. The third PMBOK challenge is the most subtle in respect, "controlling" a project should not be a PMBOK phase rather an activity.

Shortfalls:

Chapter 3 is titled *Control through Influence*. It could have a better beginning with a segment on bases of power: Personal or Organization. This section would have briefly broken down power into six categories: Referent, Expert, Information, Coercive, Reward, and Legitimate. Definitions, examinations, and examples of these categories would then become the principles support vice the author's choice to push a more condensed version into *Operating Styles*. It is merely my preference to address power both personal and organizational prior to discussing leadership which must deal with these power structures. Chapter 3 can easily be expanded in the future.

Who might benefit from the Book

Project managers, project team members, sponsors, and stakeholders will gain insight into the judicious use of project processes, influence, and metrics to ensure project success. Project managers especially beginning project managers and coordinators should **study** this book to understand the nature of managing a project and team without authority. The examples used by the author are gems of wisdom alone make this book a worthwhile investment.

Conclusion

A review is a great opportunity to thoroughly examine the informational contents of the book, the author's writing expertise, and whether the author's goal was achieved. The answer is an outstanding Yes to all three issues. As a project manager and leader of project managers, my project experience is closely identified to the author's experiences and revelations concerning project control. *Results Without Authority* will become a required reading for our project managers and project teams. This book should be purchased and kept as a reference by anyone who seeks to improve their project management skills exponentially from studying this invaluable manual.

Short Bio of Reviewer:



James Page



James Page is the Information Technology Program Manager for the Chickasaw Nation. This Native American government spans 14 counties in southern Oklahoma with significant markets in entertainment, gaming, consulting, construction, and gourmet chocolates. His initial staff upon joining this organization was one project coordinator. Today he directs project managers in 5 divisions and has opened the Chickasaw Nation's first Project Management Office. Four Chickasaw Nation project managers have achieved PMO certifications in the past years. He is an ardent follower of John Zachman's Enterprise Architecture concepts and processes. These processes made a significantly positive and profitable impact for the Chickasaw Nation. His career as a project management professional spans 35 years for the Department of Defense, International Paper, and a consultant before returning to Southeastern Oklahoma to retire and work the family ranch. His current position in the Chickasaw Nation is service repaid for their life long support of him and his family. Mr. Page can be contacted James.Page@chickasaw.net.

