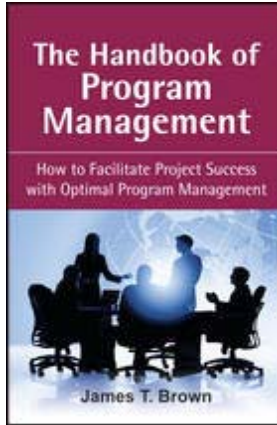


PM World Today Book Review



Book Title: *The Handbook of Program Management*

Author: James T Brown

Publisher: McGraw Hill

List Price: US\$ 49.95 hardcover

Publication Date: 2008

ISBN: 139780071494724

Reviewer: Randy Gannoe

Review Date: May 2008

Introduction to the Book

This book reflects the current state of program management. In his forward, Dr. Brown states that his book will provide "a framework of structured, organized common sense". He observes that it requires "leadership and integrity to repeatedly execute successfully. You can accomplish this either old school or new school style.

He then goes on to provide examples of project characteristics that indicate if there are problems within an organizations program environment. With solutions to provide optimal success

Overview of Book's Structure

I can easily see myself using this as a reference for many years to come. When I find myself trying to figure out how to handle one of the many of situations the author describes in his book. It's a very basic hard nosed book that explains how to manage both small and large programs.

Highlights: What I liked!

The chapter on attributes of an effective Program Manager was really helpful to me. I was in the process of selecting a member to my program staff. When I read the simple to understand attributes it really helped me to focus in on the qualities I needed to fill that position.

The chapter that covered stakeholder management was another excellent chapter on helping the Program and Project Managers to understand what stakeholders expect of them. Additionally, he covers the types of stakeholders that you can run into. He also suggested simple yet effective methods to work cohesively with them.

For example, he talks about the “meddling stakeholder” which all Program and Project Managers run into. Here he guides you through why they might be “meddling”, for reasons such as they recently got burned by on a prior project or there is distrust within the organization. In these situations he recommends involving them in many tasks and details. They want to “meddle”..... great. Jump in the mud; roll up your sleeves and help. Otherwise step back!

Shortfalls: What was missing!

His use of a Maslow type pyramid for how to get out of chaos might have been better outlined. I felt that a process map might have been a better way to layout how to get out of chaos.

Who might benefit from the book.

Government officials/ programs would benefit from this book. Since, I moved back into the defense sector. I can see how program management plays a key role in government contracts and agencies.

Conclusion

This book is well written and will be used as a reference for many seasons to come. I feel like Dr Brown hit a homerun when he said “Many of the problems you are trying to fix are entrenched in culture, process and tradition.” How many of us go to new business only to hear “We ain’t never done it that way around here before!” Change is something we must embrace to survive and grow.

About the Reviewer:



Randy Gannoe



Randy Gannoe has over 15 years experience in Logistic/Supply Chain/Transportation Program Management. He has lead numerous start-up projects for several fortune 500 companies.

Including the USAF, Ryder and ATCLE. He is currently employed at ELBIT Systems of America as the Logistics and Supply Chain Administrator. He has an MBA from the University of Texas at Dallas. Mr. Gannoe is also a consultant for Gerson Lehman Group, Inc. He can be contacted at rgannoe@sbcglobal.net