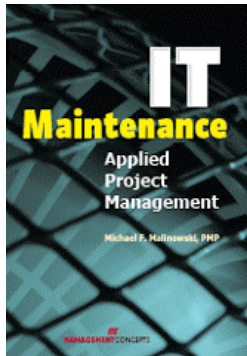


## PM World Today Book Review



**Book Title:** *IT Maintenance: Applied Project Management*

**Author:** Michael F. Malinowski

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[http://www.managementconcepts.com/publications/project\\_management/](http://www.managementconcepts.com/publications/project_management/)

[pjpubs.asp](http://www.managementconcepts.com/publications/project_management/pjpubs.asp)

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### Introduction to the Book

As software systems maintenance increases in size and complexity, so does the need to predict and control scope, schedule, and costs. This book focuses on the business of system maintenance. It wedes the key concepts of project management (geared towards delivering a product or service) and applies it to an area that delivers a service and which Project Management has not traditionally been applied to – Maintenance. Basic project Management has never applied to maintenance and this book attempts to do just that. *IT Maintenance: Applied Project Management* is a practical reference source and a valuable resource that provides a step-by-step guide that redesigns and presents project management best practices to better and add more value to how IT system maintenance is managed. The book performs this task by re-evaluating the incentives needed to increase the value and quality of system maintenance. This book enables project practitioners understand and apply modified project management best practices and details how to perform consistently, improve reporting status and metrics, build greater customer satisfaction, streamline team operations, and decrease the stress level of staff and the manager's ongoing workload..

*IT Maintenance: Applied Project Management* frames project management best practices to make them more applicable and relevant to how IT system maintenance is managed. The book makes a perfect accompanying guide to PMBOK because like PMBOK, it is structured by process groups and makes referencing easier. The book provides a best practices checklist by posing a series of questions designed and intended to promote successful completion of projects. It is a valuable tool for assessing critical elements of IT projects. These guidelines are intended to assist IT project members in evaluating initiated IT projects, as well as in preparing for project presentations

*IT Maintenance: Applied Project Management* provides critical information about handling IT maintenance. This is a practical guide, not beset by theoretical arguments, that defines standardized processes for the entire IT maintenance organization and applies proven techniques to lower maintenance costs.

## Overview of Book's Structure

Just like the PMBOK guide whose tools and techniques can be extended to cover all project scenarios, this book is structured in a similar format. The book can be used as a guide tool to improve how IT maintenance is managed. The book is structured to help you plan and run IT maintenance as a project with clearer benchmarks, and better control. *IT Maintenance: Applied Project Management* provides structured stage-by-stage information on how to handle maintenance for IT projects through driving standardized processes. For Project Management Professionals and those familiar with PMI tested best practices in project management, they will find this book easy to follow and will easily recognize the key concepts covered as extensions of the best practices they are already familiar with.

What structurally distinguishes this book from others is that the book can be used as a practical guide and not merely a subject review, and it provides a clear insight into each distinct and intrinsic area of applied project management. As the role of a Project manager in the IT Industry devolves and extends to IT maintenance, understanding how to manage this key area of business is becoming increasingly critical in leading major change initiatives within the IT industry. This book fills that void by providing those in the profession with a practical tool and necessary techniques to operate and manage this area effectively. The book clarifies this vital role by presenting a practical guide tool and best practices, and explains practical applications of those practices. The various functions of the IT Maintenance process are divided into 22 chapters and within each chapter, the book presents individual activities to ensure that each area is targeted precisely and covered comprehensively with tables, models, and an implications analysis. Project Managers and IT stakeholders alike will benefit from the topical focus, easy-to-understand guidance, and the practical tools included.

## Highlights: What I liked!

The Book provides a best practices checklist for Information Technology projects by clearly defining Roles and Responsibilities of the different team members and addressing the key questions of whether all key stakeholders have been clearly identified, Whether the roles and responsibilities of all parties have been clearly defined, and whether the executive management have sufficient expertise and authority for contract oversight and budget control.

The analysis on User Involvement also provides an insightful coverage on identifying the needs of end users and incorporating them into the project objectives, identifying all existing resources (infrastructure, time, staff, funding) and incorporating them into the project development plan and identifying and developing a clear method for two-way communication in the project between end users with technical expertise and project management and executive leadership

Malinowski also evaluates the Realistic Expectations of Technology through an analysis of vendor relationships and addressing whether vendors have provided a clear statement of requirements that addresses end user needs and project objectives and whether the components of the project based on established or proven technologies.

The analysis on Proper Planning discusses in length the division of IT projects into manageable stages of development and implementation guided by a continually-updated project plan and also tackles the important question of whether the project has a clear method for regularly distributing updated planning documents to stakeholders

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

While Malinowski covers all key areas of IT Maintenance with detailed analysis, Project managers from non-IT backgrounds might have to augment the analysis in this book with their experiences from their own specific areas of interest. That said, this book was primarily geared towards the IT Professional even though its lessons can be applied across the board. The analysis and tools provided in this book are very refreshing and despite the IT leaning framework of the analysis, all Project managers, including those from non-IT backgrounds, are bound to benefit from this book.

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

Malinowski's book provides a detailed framework for improving IT maintenance, however, professionals in non-IT industries will still find this book useful because each component covered can stand on its own and can be immediately applied to any project background. The book also doesn't require a complete sweeping change but can instead be implemented through one or two changes that can create immediate and incremental success to any project. Project Professionals from IT and non-IT backgrounds, Software Engineers, and Technical Programmers will find this book useful. What I benefited most from this book was gaining a complete understanding of the entire process of IT maintenance from a Project perspective.

All cadres of readers from Managers managing IT System maintenance teams, to Project Managers and IT Professionals would find this book engaging and find that it offers, at the very least, a detailed and practical guide for handling IT maintenance. For those keen to understand the overall role of Project Managers in the IT Maintenance process, through the initiation, planning, executing, controlling, and assessing processes, this book definitely provides that. Readers will take away from this book a tangible and detailed process of managing IT Maintenance.

### **Conclusion**

Knowing when and what project management tools to engage when managing maintenance applications is a crucial aspect to achieving higher value to the exercise/task. Understanding how to drive standardized processes for the entire IT Maintenance organization, applying

proven techniques to lower maintenance costs, and implementing continuous improvements is vital to a successful maintenance management and improvement. And this is where this book can be of most value to the project manager and the IT Professional in the trenches: by providing insight and guidance on how to accomplish this important step.

*IT Maintenance: Applied Project Management* aptly describes this process in detail and in a language that resonates across corporate classes. The authors provide a comprehensive approach to IT Maintenance - one that addresses not only the Project management perspective, but one that also factors in, the project, cultural and organizational dimensions. I recommend this book for anyone interested in improving their current maintenance operations, decreasing their ongoing workload or delivering a product or process that can be easier to maintain. What Malinowski provided in this book is a guide by which the organizations can benchmark their maintenance expectations and both qualify and quantify IT project maintenance requirements and delivery in an enterprise context. After reading and assimilating the analysis in this book, any project manager will have the skills and understand the basics necessary to establish and manage a maintenance team.

#### About the Reviewer:



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**Hussein Mzee** is an Executive MBA Graduate in Project Management from the University of Texas at Dallas. He has wide consulting experience with major IT and telecommunication companies both in Japan and the US including Lehman Brothers, IBM-Japan, Fuji Xerox, Fujitsu-AMD, Hitachi, and DHL. He is currently employed by Perot Systems and is based in the company's global headquarters in Plano, Texas. He can be contacted at [Hussein.Mzee@ps.net](mailto:Hussein.Mzee@ps.net).