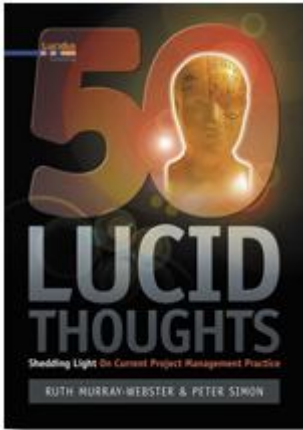


## PM WORLD TODAY BOOK REVIEW



**Book Title:** *50 Lucid Thoughts: Shedding Light on Current Project Management Practice*  
**Authors:** Ruth Murray-Webster & Peter Simon  
**Publisher:** Lucidus Consulting, UK  
**List Price:** £9.99  
**Publication Date:** 2008  
**ISBN:** 978-0-9560440-0-6  
**Reviewer:** David B. Olutusin  
**Review Date:** March 2009

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### Introduction to the Book

The book attempts to introduce the need for a thorough understanding of the project management doctrine, principles, practices and learning. It comes out as simplistic, yet definitive. Most project managers tend to misrepresent and or mis-apply project management terms in practice due to seemingly complex or commonly misunderstood terminologies. ***50 Lucid Thoughts*** compels one to take a second or repeated look at, or thought about, most items and language of the project management profession in a way that it drives home the point: Managing Change, certainly in terms of erudite thinking, using available tools and techniques.

### Overview of Book's Structure

The book being organized in five chapters made it an easy read, with an average of 10 thoughts per chapter. Chapters 3 & 4 have 9 "Thoughts", Chapter 5, 12 Thoughts, while Chapters 1 & 2 have 10 Thoughts each.

Also, the book uses language and wordings that are simplistic enough to stimulate interest, without distorting the learning objective. The thoughts are grouped in themes represented by each chapter. And there are no new terminologies that could complicate or mis-represent their applications or understanding.

**Highlights: What I liked!**

The book attempts to emphasize the need or understanding that projects are not programmes. Even though there usually is confusion based on magnitude. Whether small one-day projects or big, costly ventures like the Channel Tunnel spanning many years, a project will always have a specific scope or objective, whereas programmes in whatever shape or size manifest themselves as a collection of projects, including routine work, and are linked together by a common strategic objective.

It also discusses the need for project managers to go beyond the call of duty, or the language of project management, to adopting it as a skill set, and even to the point of an acquired reflex. The book provokes learning for the purpose of being a better project manager than merely passing exams or achieving certifications.

The authors expressed a thorough understanding of aspects of project and programme management that reveals hands-on experiential knowledge which is applicable to current practices. Although, some others might disagree with them on some aspects, the book reveals applications that are relevant in many cases, to some industries, or individual organizational situations on a case-by-case basis. This alone validates the authenticity of these Thoughts and their relevance to current practices.

**Shortfalls: What was Missing!**

There are few if any actual case studies offered to elucidate how these Thoughts apply specifically, or suggestions on how they could apply to specific situations.

**Who might benefit from the Book**

Everyone in the Project/Programme management discipline or practice whose works weaves through project and or programme management. Whether one is a plumber fixing a blocked sink or a space shuttle astronaut, whether one works as a janitor or project manager for sophisticated mission critical projects, programmes in defense organizations, or national government's budget office, and so on, the simplistic approach in presentation makes the concepts and points presented easy to comprehend.

Essentially, those who by the nature of their job, would have to coordinate, scope, plan, assign resources, procure, and implement a project, or programme as the case may be. People who would have to manage change primarily from the high level down to the various components or aspects of an entire project or

programme. These are people who have a lot of responsibility to deliver value to all stakeholders, in a change management capacity being mindful of their strategic objectives. These people have to be highly trained, seasoned professionals with appropriate skills or resources in their tool kits.

## Conclusion

The book provides an interesting read, while shedding light on many current project management practices. I liked the compactness, simple approach to the elucidation of the authors' Thoughts on some of the nagging questions, or misunderstandings, about aspects of project management, programme management, risk, resources, and procurement etc of the doctrine, practice and learning within the project management profession. The dynamism, uncertainty and unpredictability of business and technological environment make it imperative for project management practitioners to engage in a thorough immersion while developing depth, skill and understanding of what their jobs are as practitioners, more than as "Certified" professionals. The bottom line is to bring value to all stakeholders, while managing change. This was the main point of this interesting book.

For more information about the book, visit  
[http://www.lucidusconsulting.com/book\\_01.html](http://www.lucidusconsulting.com/book_01.html)

**About the Reviewer:*****David B. Olutusin, PMP***

**David Olutusin, PMP, CPG, P.Geol, FGAC** is an Independent Consultant providing sub-consulting services through Belloy Petroleum Consultants Limited, based in Calgary Canada. His current job is as a Wellsite Geologist, consulting for oil and gas companies operating in the Western Canada Sedimentary Basin. He oversees geological operations during oil and gas drilling, as the Geologist on location. Mr. Olutusin has experience in Clastics, Carbonates, Vertical, Horizontal, and Deviated wells. Others include Conventional oil, Heavy oil, Tight Gas, Shallow and Deep wells. Previous experience includes Groundwater development, Water borehole construction, Engineering geology, and Geophysical investigations. He is a Project Management Professional, **PMP**; Certified Petroleum Geologist, **CPG-AAPG**; and licensed to practice in Alberta, **P.Geol**, and Saskatchewan, **P.Geo**; and a Fellow of the Geological Association of Canada, **FGAC**. Mr. Olutusin holds a Graduate Certificate in Project Management from the University of Texas At Dallas (2008) and B.Sc. with honors in Geology from the University of Ibadan, Nigera (1993). **Email:** [daveolutusin@gmail.com](mailto:daveolutusin@gmail.com)