

PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***The Essentials of Managing Risk for Projects and Programmes***

Author: **John Bartlett**

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Reviewer: **Jen Duenhoelter**

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Introduction

Risk is obvious to everyone. Politicians, businessmen, educators, media, and health professionals highlight risk every day. It inundates our life. Much less is said about the process we use to understand and respond to risk.

Overview of Book's Structure

The book flows in a logical order of chapters covering identification of risk, logging it fully, the appropriate response once risk is known, and tools for analysis so that risk can be managed before it becomes an issue. Those tools help provide project and program managers risk avoidance strategies that help them deal with uncertainty.

Highlights

Bartlett highlights the path between risks, issues and necessary change and emphasizes the cost impact when we do not effectively deal with risk when it is first identified. This increased cost is a key motivation to deploy appropriate tools and techniques necessary to effectively manage risk so that we can avoid the later expense of remediation.

The leading chapters describe the initial mechanism for identifying and reporting new risks and the corresponding identification of cause. Project teams, including my own, sometimes have difficulty in expressing risk so that others can fully comprehend what is at stake. The goal is to have Risk Registers that fully outline cause, the event (i.e. the risk), and the impact. For it to have any value, they should have more than just the statement of the event. Expressing risk is fundamental to identifying it. Bartlett directs the reader to focus areas and on drivers of risk also known as potential trigger points for risk. One technique fully outlined in the chapter was how to execute risk identification workshops.

Responding to risk with an appropriate action plan and strategy was highlighted as one of the most important aspects of Risk Management. The risk assessment layer deals with the likelihood of occurrence, its impact to the project and the cost of its impact. Adding these details to the risk register allows for reporting that enable appropriate control of the actions to deal with the risk.

Once you have the right data, analysis and reporting of that data enable views that drive decision making. Bartlett provides great examples on how to use Risk Concept Mapping, Cause and Effect Diagramming, Influence Diagrams / Decision Trees, Risk Radar Charts, and a number of charts that show data easily so that the team can clarify where patterns emerge.

The author finishes with administration of risk by outlining risk role assignments.

Highlights: What I liked!

The book gives real life examples on how to incorporate daily activity in capturing, analyzing and responding to risk instead of once a quarter look back on what has happened. Bartlett reinforces the idea that Risk Management is not a stand-alone task. It should instead be integral to all project processes. After reading this book, I have introduced additional data elements to my teams Risk Register process so that we are now able to leverage Risk Ribbon reporting to identify patterns.

Who might benefit from the Book?

Program Managers that are working to improve the level of rigor in their program.

Conclusion

To conclude, The Essentials of Managing Risk for Projects and Programmes reinforces that Risk Management doesn't need new theories or techniques in order to be effective. This book provides practical examples on how to make any Risk Management program successful.

For more about this book, go to: <https://www.routledge.com/The-Essentials-of-Managing-Risk-for-Projects-and-Programmes-3rd-Edition/Bartlett/p/book/9781315267999>

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