

Book review

Project Management for Supplier Organizations: Harmonising the Project Owner to Supplier Relationship

Adrian Taggart. Gower Publishing, Surrey, UK, 2015, ISBN 978-1-4724-1109-9, £70.00, 302 pp.

It is crucial that stakeholders understand the true meaning of projects, why projects are (or should be) executed and how projects are best managed. These fundamental components help define the roles of project stakeholders in driving project success. Adrian Taggart, the author of this interesting book, carefully presents an exceptional understanding of issues related to projects, success and stakeholders.

First, it is fascinating how the book contextualises the meanings of both project and project management. As the author explains, all projects are unique and creative endeavours; however, not all creative processes qualify as projects! Efforts found to work successfully in a project environment will not work in a non-projectised environment. Another interesting insight provided by the author is in further drawing the line between projects and non-projects by defining the complex nature of project outcomes, and that these are driven by bespoke processes (and risks). In contrast, non-projects are recursive just as they are specific to the basic rules that pre-define them. This understanding regarding projects and non-projects is essential for every project management student, as well as for occupiers of knowledge spaces where the term 'project' applies – for example, construction, business, information technology and creative science.

Another strength of the book is in its handling of project owner organisations and their ideals of 'projectisation'. Although the reviewer missed the author's discussions on the complex nuances of organisational structures, the book remains focused in showing its strength: throughout, the author presents complex academic discourse on organisational structures

with very simple analogies that early-career professionals and students can digest. Readers will not struggle to understand the correlations between organisational structures and project evolution protocols.

The book also deals extensively with how best to manage projects. The author draws support from extant reports to elicit the role of collaborations between client organisations and supplier organisations in driving project success. Contract relationships in project development processes can be finite; however, projects often tend to perform better when primary stakeholders target values that help relationships to endure longer than the life of a contract. An overarching achievement of this book is in pushing extant theories on the challenges of traditional project management. In particular, the author carefully explains the significance of supplier organisations in incorporating among their relationship goals the need to continually elicit why owner organisations initiated the projects in the first place. The book also explains why strategic management of change is an invaluable asset to supplier organisations in this regard.

The book is attractive in many ways. From the cover design to the size and the print quality, this well-presented book will not look amiss on any good bookshelf. Foundational students can read it easily – of course, this reviewer could not betray his emotions in offering this book to his first-year construction management students, and he is happy that it has been well received. Higher-degree and early-career researchers will also find the book useful. More importantly, project management professionals in owner and supplier organisations have a lot to learn from this book – for example how to develop strategies to manage change and the real benefits of collaboration. This book is worth it: buy a copy, read and keep it. You will thank me!

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