Project Management Fundamentals:
Key Concepts and Methodology
(2nd Edition, 2011) by Gregory T. Haugan, PhD, PMP. Published by Management Concepts, Inc. (380 pages, paperback, $42 at amazon.com)

Reviewed By: James R. Brady, PhD, MPA, MEd.

Goals and Target Audiences: Some of the book's ads and its preface suggest that it is primarily for new managers of small to medium size projects. However, Dr. Haugan indicates at various points that the material should also be relevant for more experienced project managers and various project types and sizes. The longest section of the book provides a good updated summary of the "standard" PMI$_®$-blessed methodology for managing projects. Dr. Haugan also draws on his 40+ years of experience to provide lots of practical details on how to manage different types of projects.

Some readers may get the feeling that the book provides more detail than they ever wanted to know about certain areas of PM. However, they can still benefit by mining Dr. Haugan's material to produce their own guides or checklists for managing a variety of projects and/or contracts. In this second edition of his book, Dr. Haugan also ventures beyond the "traditional" PM methodology to introduce a "new" approach that he labels "Agile Project Management."

Organization of the Book
Part 1 provides a brief overview of the book. In the author's words: "The core of this book is the application of a basic project management process or methodology that consists of a number of steps performed in sequence. Some of these steps require more than one iteration to incorporate unforeseen changes, and several have sub-processes with their own defined steps as well." (Page 4)

The opening commentary suggests that the PMI was the major force behind re-defining and improving the PM profession and standards of practice (starting in the 1980's?). PMI has certainly built up a large membership and lucrative business over time. However, I don't recall that it was a great source of professional innovation in PM education or practice when I completed its PMP certification rituals. However, the quality of PMI's work has apparently improved since then.

Dr. Haugan presents a good overview of the current "standard" PM practices and enhances these with other ideas from his own research and experience. He notes three more project success constraints have been added to the traditional "triple threat" of scope, schedule, and cost. The new combination of six interrelated constraints includes: (1) scope, (2) schedule, (3) cost, (4) quality, (5) resources, and (6) risk.

The project manager must continuously keep on top of all six of these interlinked factors in order to achieve project success. As Dr. Haugan observes: "Project management is a discipline that requires control and hard work. There are no magic panaceas or snazzy project management schemes that do all the work for you. The methodology presented here is basic, and following it will significantly reduce the possibility of project failure." (Page 11).

Part 2 "Project Management Methodology" is the longest part of the book (147 pages) and presents the current "standard" methods of the PM field. Dr. Haugan provides many specific examples of applications and issues from both the private and public sectors. He divides the PM process into five Stages: A. Initiating, B. Planning, C. Executing, D. Controlling, and E. Closeout. (Editor's Note: OMG, another unenlightened "process groups as phases or stages" advocate! Don't let Duncan see this!)

Each Stage has Steps and Sub-steps. For example, the "Closeout" Stage involves only one Step: "Complete the Project" and 5 Sub-steps: 5.1 Prepare a closeout plan and schedule, 5.2 Get customer agreement and Notify the team, 5.3 Archive Project Data, 5.4 Prepare a Lessons Learned Document, and 5.5 Bill the Customer. His treatment of this final stage of the PM process ("Closeout") is much briefer than, say, the "Planning" stage (which covers researching and preparing such plan components as the work breakdown schedule, resource plan, logic network, and performance measures). The book also has lots of useful diagrams, flowcharts, forms, action lists, etc. (FYI: Some of these visuals do not reproduce very well on the Amazon Kindle version of the book.)

In Part 3 "Applying The Methodology", Dr. Haugan presents eight sample scenarios to illustrate how Project Managers need to be flexible in finding the right match between a particular type of project and the different stakeholders involved. The scenarios include using a project approach to: (1) handle inhouse technology improvements, (2) contract out certain organizational functions, (3) compete for a contract being funded by another organization, or (4) develop a new product or service for the organization.

Part 4 covers some of the broader "Environmental and Facilitating Elements" which may impact on a project (e.g., management support, organizational structures, human and financial resources, technologies, and communication systems).

Part 5 adds a new category which Dr. Haugan labels: "Agile Project Management." He sees this mode as being more appropriate for projects where the end goal or product is less certain, so a more experimental or iterative approach is needed. Implementation time frames are thus shorter and the project uses performance feedback to make more frequent adjustments in goals, schedules, resource allocations, implementing actions. etc.

Dr. Haugan points out that a major difference between the two PM modes is the Project Manager's role: "Traditional teams are built and managed by the Project Manager, who also determines what, how, and when project work will occur. Agile project teams are self-organized and the team members themselves determine what, how and when the work will begin. All team

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Dr. Haugan suggests that "Agile PM" developed out of recent advances in the technology and communications areas. However, many of the international economic development projects that I worked on often used "agile" approaches. Dr. Haugan also introduces the interesting topic of "Mature Project Management," but this is relegated to an Appendix written by Dr. Ginger Levin. It discusses ways in which a company might become more effective and competitive by strengthening linkages between its project management approaches and its other business strategies and operations.

General Assessment: This is a well-organized and detailed update on the standard approach to Project Management. It also suggests new approaches to help keep the PM profession from getting bogged down by an overly orthodox approach to PM. The book is not exciting reading, but it does provide lots of practical stuff for planning and managing a variety of projects and/or contracts.

Editor's Note: Thanks Dr. Brady! Readers, if you would like to make a comment about this review, please contact us!

Overall Rating: 4.5 (out of 5):　✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔　James R. Brady, PhD, MPA, MEd.