PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW
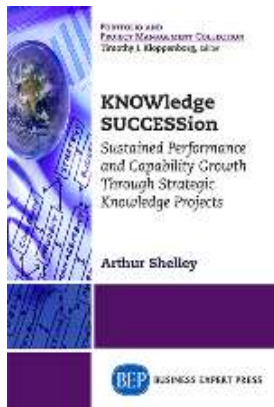
Book Title: *KNOWledge SUCCESSion: Sustained Performance and Capability Growth Through Strategic Knowledge Projects*

Author: **Arthur Shelley**

Publisher: Business Expert Press

List Price: $34.95   Format: Soft cover; 216 pages

Publication Date: 2016   ISBN: 9781631571589

Reviewer: **Darryl John**

Review Date: July 2017

Introduction

KNOWledge SUCCESSion explores why on how leaders need to utilize projects to become catalyst for organizations to sustain success by having team members apply knowledge. Dr. Shelley provides several examples of how interactions and communications among team members are more critical to organizations than processes.

 The key is for leaders to stimulate the learning environment by staying engaged with the teams. This helps team members connect the dots with the day to day tactics of the project and the long term priorities of the organization.

Consider *KNOWledge SUCCESSion* a guide for executives, mid-level leaders, project managers and first line leaders on how internal walls must be torn down in order for the organization to succeed in an ever changing business environment. Leaders from various industries in the fast paced global world can benefit from applying KWOWledge SUCCESSion.

Overview of Book's Structure

In order to gain synergies across projects on how to sustain long term success, Dr. Shelley makes a key point that the actual projects deliverables are not the key to organization success. But, it is the learnings amongst the organizational team members that will move organizations forward in this fast paced competitive world. Each of the twelve chapters starts with an executive summary and concludes with an "Apply this learning in practice" summary. Case studies from various industries are highlighted throughout the book. This provides leaders with a real life application that ties KNOWledge SUCCESSion foundation to the world of the practitioner.

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Highlights

KNOWledge SUCCESSion is a new business term. Early on, Dr. Shelley does a great job of defining it, explaining it, defining its benefits, outcomes, and challenges. Having a project based organization sets the stage for KNOWledge SUCCESSion framework. This contributes to long term sustainability.

Leaders must drive KNOWledge SUCCESSion because employees are rewarded and held accountable for day to day tactics. Leaders need to transform the organization into a long term strategic environment of building trusting relationships.

According to Dr. Shelley, this learning is triggered by leaders asking the right questions and fostering the right environment. Having the right culture relates to behaviors. This means team members can share knowledge and learn from each other. This translates to continual learning which translates to continual improvement which translates to continual deliver which translates to success.

Team members learn how to apply knowledge by innovating. This becomes a competitive advantage for the organization.

Communication is a key to learning. Team members must speak the same "business talk" in order to be effective. Communication has to be deliberate and candid. For instance, if the project is using an agile methodology, it is valuable for team members to understand the methodology and practice it. A communication plan may be needed to set expectations. This minimizes misunderstandings.

Knowledge learning requires identifying and building a community of network for further learning. This fosters an inspired vision and business insight.

Leaders demonstrate they value collaboration and action over consensus, while focusing on team-driven solutions. This is transparent in everyday transactions, and it demonstrates flexibility. Team members have fun while working hard. In turn, team members have the ability to cultivate effective working relationships.

This is a win for leaders as team members intentionally seek opportunities to expand skills and knowledge. They share best practices with others. More importantly, they see the value in building up the team. Team members want to do what is best for the team versus what is best for themselves. Strategically, this translates into what is best for the organization.

Continuously identify ways to improve and increase efficiency becomes part of the organizational culture. Sharing learnings, experiences, and knowledge becomes the new norm. Proactively continuing to grow, develop, advance, and expand knowledge also become part of the organizational culture.

The biggest challenge for leaders seems to be moving people to look at things differently instead of holding on to the way they have always done things. When transforming an organization, leaders need to understand that empowering

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employees is a step towards sustained success. Team members must always look for a better/more simplified way. They must be open minded and think outside of current experiences. Do not accept "it's always been done that way before" as a reason to do something.

In turn, team members have to feel empowered to fail. From those failures come learnings from experience. This in turn is a great strategic approach to ensure long term organizational success.

Highlights: What I Liked!

KNOWledge SUCCESSion directly correlates with a key Agile Manifesto "Individuals and interactions over processes and tools". The project deliverables are valued; but, the synergies from the knowledge transfer and learnings of individuals and their interactions are valued more. The knowledge from the experiences translates into real world organizational sustained success.

Another enjoyable aspect of the book is the real life case studies. There is incredible transparency and clarity of the company's focus. Organizational leaders deliberately want their people doing their best work. This gives employees plenty of opportunity to flourish.

Finally, Dr. Shelly really drives home the deliberate focus on people. This is a must for leaders to transform the organization into success.

Who might benefit from the Book?

Leaders would benefit from this publication. Particularly those that are responsible for change management, and moving the organization forward in a fast paced uncertain environment that faces disruptors from various industries.

This book provides a practical framework for leaders to understand that KNOWledge SUCCESSion presents a cultural change for most organizations; but, it is a key to future sustainability and success.

Conclusion

Change in a fast paced environment is inevitable. The intensity of disruptors requires organizations to reinvent themselves for success.

KNOWledge SUCCESSion is an easy to read practical book that leaders from various industries can relate to as they face fast paced competition from many companies. The book is structured in an easy to read format and ties back to learnings from PMBOK and the Agile Manifesto … people over processes.
For leaders to set the culture for sustainability, change must occur. Key employee behavioral traits are as follows:

- Mindset to strive for continual improvement

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- Continual thirst to learn and apply more
- Consider failure as a valuable learning experience
- Ability to see the big picture
- Acknowledge different perspectives

Now more than ever, leaders must focus on creating an environment that demands an employee thirst for knowledge and application. They must prioritize people over tooling. This is needed to change the organizational culture and to stay ahead of frequent changes to any industry. It is imperative that leaders encourage team members to apply learnings to foster long term organizational success.

For more about this book, go to: http://www.businessexpertpress.com/books/knowledge-succession-sustained-capability-growth-through-strategic-projects/

Editor's note: This book review was the result of a partnership between the publisher, PM World and the PMI Dallas Chapter. Authors and publishers provide the books to PM World; books are delivered to the PMI Dallas Chapter, where they are offered free to PMI members to review; book reviews are published in the PM World Journal and PM World Library. PMI Dallas Chapter members can keep the books as well as claim PDUs for PMP recertification when their reviews are published. Chapter members are generally mid-career professionals, the audience for most project management books. If you are an author or publisher of a project management-related book, and would like the book reviewed through this program, please contact editor@pmworldjournal.net.

About the Reviewer

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