



Project Reviews, Assurance and Governance

Graham Oakes

October 2008
288 pages
978-0-566-08807-0

244 x 172 mm
Hardback
£65.00



Projects are hard. By definition, projects are about non-routine activities. Many of them are large and complex; they may involve many people, often from different backgrounds and increasingly with different languages and cultures. Amongst all of this, it is easy to get lost, to overlook important trends or to misunderstand each other. So projects fail.

Graham Oakes' Project Reviews, Assurance and Governance is about learning from your mistakes and understanding what's really going on with your projects. In order for reviews and assurance to provide you with this information and learning, you need to perform them effectively and that is the purpose of this book.

The core of the book is built around a number of models of project review processes and governance, all derived from practice and interspersed with case studies drawn from practitioners, project management literature and from practices in other industry. The result is the blend of the conceptual and the practical needed to make your project assurance process sympathetic, relevant and rigorous for your organization and the range of projects and programmes which you undertake.

Contents

Part I Introduction: Case study: earthquakes in the project portfolio; Project success, project failure; Project reviews; Case study: formal gateways in the public sector. Part II Project Review Process: The review process; Case study: lessons from problems in the past; Review parameters; Case study: post-project reviews and retrospectives; Reviews and organizational learning; Case study: weeding the project portfolio; The importance of evidence; Case study: assuring fixed price implementations; Logistics matter; Case study: programme reviews in a merged environment. Part III Reviews and Governance; Triggering effective action; Case study: software review and inspection techniques; Gaps and overlaps in governance; Case study: review techniques in the education sector. Part IV Running an Assurance Team: Organizational issues; Case study: assuring quality in a global application portfolio; Team issues; Case study: completion bonds in the film industry; Conclusion; Bibliography; Index.

About the Author

Graham Oakes helps people untangle complex technology, relationships, processes and governance. As an independent consultant, he helps organizations such as Sony Computer Entertainment, The Open University, the Council of Europe and the Port of Dover to define strategy, initiate projects and hence run those projects effectively. Prior to going independent, he was Director of Technology at Sapient Limited, where he ran the project review process for the UK Business Unit. Before that he was Head of Project Management for Psygnosis Ltd (a subsidiary of Sony), where he ran Independent Project Assurance teams working across the UK, Europe and the USA.

Graham writes a regular column for EvaluationCentre.com (now part of the National Computer Centre), and occasional articles for publications such as the Financial Times, Free Software Magazine and Project magazine. He was a medallist in the British Computer Society IT Consultancy of the Year Awards for 2007.

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