

Introduction

Initial scenario: why did we write this book?

Increasingly complex tasks, more dynamic markets, difficult economic circumstances, fast technological development, and changes in values within today's modern society make traditionally successful management concepts obsolete.

The following elements are vital for success in the current competitive situation:

- Quick reactions, adaptability
- Fast performance
- Holistic thinking
- Customer and quality-oriented thinking and acting

These requirements can be fulfilled by

- Distinctive customer and stakeholder orientation
- Flat, flexible organizational forms
- Goal-orientation and small organizational units (taking over responsibility through teamwork)
- Process-orientation instead of departmental thinking
- Takeover of responsibility by members of self-organizing teams
- High degree of quality orientation
- Living the concept of "learning organizations"

Modern project management is becoming increasingly important, since it is very well suited for fulfilling the requirements for today's companies mentioned previously.

In addition to the traditional aspects of project planning, our project management approach also comprises today's essential topics of teamwork, communication, and the organizational integration of projects in companies. Projects can be understood as temporary companies, since almost all enterprise management functions have to be performed in projects as well. The project management approach applied in the present book comprehensively covers the whole range of management functions required in projects.

Target group: who is this book designed for?

The target group for the present book includes

- People who are interested in a comprehensive understanding of project management
- Practitioners, such as project managers, project team members, and project sponsors of specific projects in various industries and companies, who expect tried and tested, easy-to-use tools for project execution
- Managers of project-oriented companies, project portfolio and program managers, heads of project management offices, as well as project sponsors of individual projects who think and work – beyond the individual project – in multi-project environments

These target groups actually have very different expectations of a book about project management. We tried to address these manifold interests by opening the book with a basics section. This section covers the general principles of project management, and provides the reader with a basis for understanding the implementation-

oriented practical parts, procedures and methods subsequently presented in the book. The bulk of the book is designed as a guideline for project managers, project teams, and their project sponsors. Therefore, it mainly contains short descriptions of different methods and approaches, including checklists, forms and templates, as well as tips for using these tools. These methods, approaches and tips originate from our comprehensive experience of consulting and managing projects and project-oriented companies.

We also considered that the reader may not have enough time to read the whole book in detail, but nevertheless would like to grasp the **key ideas** and **statements**, useful tips, and the essential tools. The key statements are marked with an exclamation mark or with a brief note on the side of the pages.

For quick recognition, we presented **tips**, **examples** and **tools** in clearly emphasized boxes or figures.

Important **terms** are highlighted in **bold**.

The present book mainly aims at establishing guidelines for practitioners and project managers.

Therefore, we refrained from including citations in the text. The list of references and bibliography at the end of the book contains the publications whose fundamental issues or approaches are included in the book.

Topic overview: what is included in the present book?

The declared objective of the present book is to present modern project management as a comprehensive management concept, which provides a guideline for executing individual projects, coordinating project portfolios, and leading project-oriented companies.

Additionally, we documented strongly **practice-oriented examples** of different project types.

Part I of the present book contains **basic principles**. This part systematically documents which approaches are indispensable components of modern project management. This part of the book is mainly designed for people who are interested in theoretical basics. Those readers who are mainly interested in specific guidelines for optimizing project execution can directly begin with **Part II**.

Part II of the present book describes the **management of individual projects**. The emphasis is on easy and practicable implementations of the described methods and approaches.

In contrast to most available publications, which are basically functionally structured, we structured this part of the book according to **project phases**. The purpose of this structure is to provide the reader with the opportunity to use the book as an accompanying working tool for the individual project, from the beginning of a project to its end. Although projects are unique and differ very much from one another, some **fundamental project management phases** surface in every project:

- Project start-up phase
- Project planning and execution phases
- Project coordination and change phases
- Project close-down phase

In order to facilitate orientation, we chose a consistent structure within the different project phases discussed:

1. Project environment (context)
2. Project management methods (tools)
3. Project organization units (regulations)
4. Project teamwork (people)

Part III of the present book is dedicated to the **management of project portfolios/programs**. A project portfolio is the total of all or certain projects of a company, which have to be mutually planned and coordinated in terms of efficient enterprise management. The methods and approaches of systematic project portfolio management in companies are among the most fast developing project management knowledge areas. Programs are those tasks and projects, which serve for the coordinated implementation of a company strategy.

Part IV describes the management of the “**project-oriented company**”. This is the type of organization in which projects have a higher priority, compared to traditional organizational forms. Projects are recognized as essential success factors in these companies. Project managers have appropriate competencies, and inter-disciplinary teamwork is part of the daily business.

NEW! Issues that broaden the previous edition of the book:

The latest edition of the present book takes into account the massive development of project management knowledge as a generally accepted **management discipline**, the establishment of the **professional “project manager” image** on the human resources market, and the broad **processes of standardization**. Therefore, the following issues have been included in the present book:

- Relation between strategy and project
- Essential processes in projects and portfolios
- Projects as business cases
- Relations between business management methods and projects
- Project procurement and contract design
- Behavioral skills of project managers
- Collaboration and teamwork in virtual teams
- Project management career paths
- “Project management light” approaches, such as the Stage-Gate/Quality Gate model and agile project management

Additionally, IPMA requirements (International Project Management Association) for professional project managers documented in the ICB were also included. Therefore, project managers who are preparing for a certification can use the present book as useful further reading. The ICB competence elements (International Competence Baseline) are clearly pointed out in the book when relevant.

Summary: what are the characteristics of this book?

The present book is based on the following key concepts:

1. **System-orientation:** projects are understood as comprehensive systems, which are integrated in their specific environments.

2. **Phase-orientation:** the structure of this book follows the basic structure of a project, concerning its management. This provides the reader with a practice-oriented guideline for performing projects.
3. **Project management-orientation:** we describe project management on all relevant management levels. In addition to the management of individual projects, we also introduce the management of project portfolios, programs, and project-oriented companies.
4. **Customer-orientation:** our project management approach primarily aims at identifying and satisfying customers' needs in projects. All structures involved aim to follow this principle.

Acknowledgements: the Team

The extensive experience this book is based on, apart from theoretical knowledge, comes from our long-term work managing and consulting projects and project-oriented companies. We ultimately owe these experiences to all those who have discussed the manifold aspects of project management with us, and with whom we have developed ideas for many years.

Only a productive cooperation with a committed team has made this book possible in its present quality and form. We would primarily like to thank our consultancy colleagues Monika Bauer-Weithaler, Anton Lorenz, Andreas Goldschmid, Inge Simetzberger, Erich Bauer, Gerald Grohmann, Hans Höbart, Karl Koch, Thomas Lindauer, and Petra Eichriedler for many ideas, valuable impulses, and for the joint development of individual project management aspects over many years.

The comprehensive view on project management is the result of many hours of joint work, lively discussions, and the exchange of a variety of professional experiences related to project management and project consultancy. This book was not written all at once, but in several cycles and loops. The present book is already the fifth, substantially revised edition. In particular, we thank Monika Bauer-Weithaler for her contributions on teamwork and communication, Hans Höbart for his contributions on contract design and claim management basics, and Anton Lorenz for his contributions concerning the topics of virtual teams and IT-support.

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