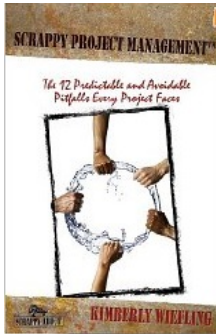


"Scrappy Project Management"
by Kimberly Wiefling

Publisher:	A Happy About series
Date of Publication:	2007
Number of pages:	154
Book Club rating:	3.4
Reviewed by:	Bruce Falcon

Plot Summary:



Projects are MESSY! From the minute the project begins, all manner of changes, surprises and disasters befall them. Unfortunately most of these are PREDICTABLE and AVOIDABLE.

Tact and diplomacy can only get you so far in the wild and wacky world of project work. A combination of outrageous creativity, sheer bravado and nerves of steel will serve you far better than any fancy-schmancy Microsoft Project Gantt chart!

'Scrappy Project Management' is about what REALLY happens in the project environment, how to survive it, and how to make sure that your team avoids the predictable and avoidable pitfalls that every project faces.

Book Club Meeting Discussion:

Below are some of the discussion points collected throughout the meeting.

- One book club member entered into this book thinking there would be more tools and techniques to aid the reader in the daily operations of project management. The examples were helpful but nothing new to the club members and their experiences. Commonsense approaches which would benefit a novice PM. The accomplished PM's attending this meeting were expecting more.

- Another book club member commented favorably that this book was an easy read but added that the later chapters regurgitated what was expressed in the early chapters.
- The tone was confrontational at times which served to capture the reader's attention prompting further reading. Sadly, the tone and terse approach faded quickly as later chapters failed to enlighten those of us who are more seasoned professionals.

Personal Comments:

I've been building a library of books and other tools for my own use, and the title of this book caught my eye when first presented. The notion of having a user's guide to more "real world" project work would be much appreciated.

PMs would identify with the model Project Manager the author poses in the opening pages of this book. It's a testament to the power and empowerment of Project Managers (PM), whom the author clearly feels are the greatest contributors to their companies.

Right off the bat, the preface takes aim at the PMBOK® as too clean and perfect as a model for "real" project management. You don't train people on imperfect models. You use case studies and managed experiences for training exercises. Project Managers need to be good at the essential theories and best practices and core systems of project management before they are encouraged to do anything "scrappy" to a project of their own.

There's a lot of "rah-rah" jingo-ism to empower project managers, but few of the tenets expressed in the book are much more than PMBOK® standards. Wiefling just puts some "scrappy" personal touches to the descriptions. Listening to the Customer, Clarify Goals at the outset, and Mitigate Risks are hardly scrappy.

This book will surely appeal to any PM out there who feels that they make an outsized contribution to their company. A truly scrappy approach may alienate the novice project manager among their stakeholders and corporate audiences.

Overall, if tempered with a dose of healthy caution, this book may be useful to novice PMs, but the reality is that a scrappy approach is a lot easier to get away with for a Project Manager who already has earned respect for their past successes. I would caution new PMs to earn the respect of their teams and peers before being too scrappy in organizations that might not always appreciate the power and passions of project managers.