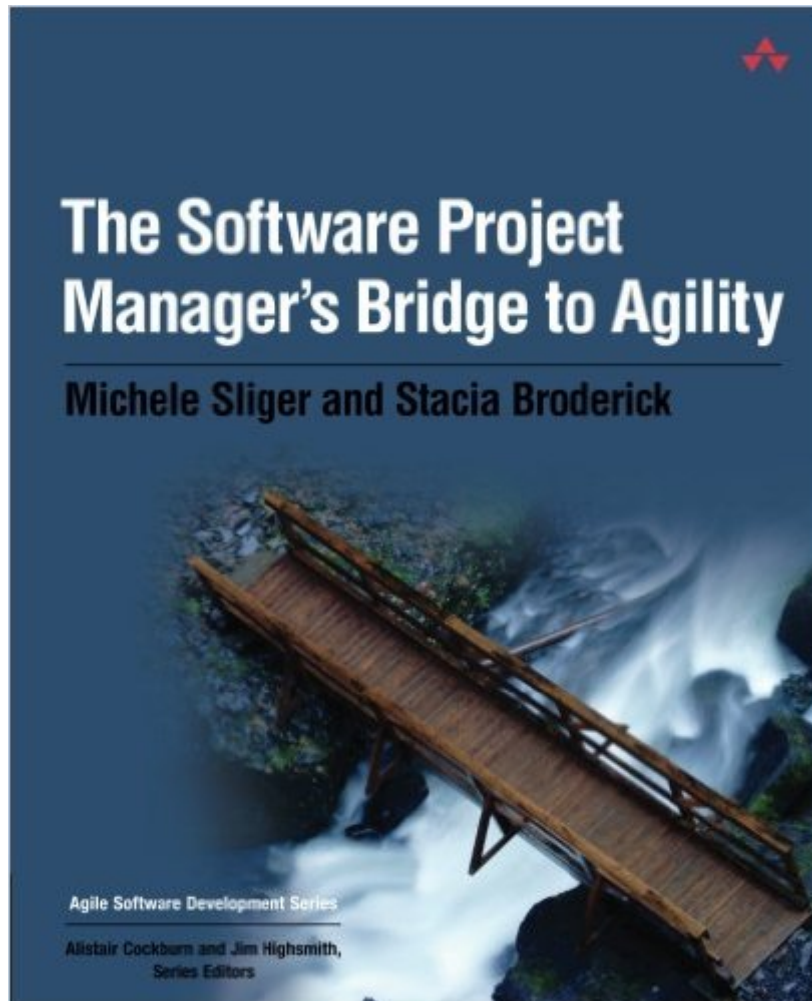


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The Software Project Manager's Bridge To Agility



Synopsis

When software development teams move to agile methods, experienced project managers often struggle—doubtful about the new approach and uncertain about their new roles and responsibilities. In this book, two long-time certified Project Management Professionals (PMPs) and Scrum trainers have built a bridge to this dynamic new paradigm. They show experienced project managers how to successfully transition to agile by refocusing on facilitation and collaboration, not “command and control.” The authors begin by explaining how agile works: how it differs from traditional “plan-driven” methodologies, the benefits it promises, and the real-world results it delivers.

Next, they systematically map the Project Management Institute’s classic, methodology-independent techniques and terminology to agile practices. They cover both process and project lifecycles and carefully address vital issues ranging from scope and time to cost management and stakeholder communication. Finally, drawing on their own extensive personal experience, they put a human face on your personal transition to agile—covering the emotional challenges, personal values, and key leadership traits you’ll need to succeed. Coverage includes

- Relating the PMBOKR Guide ideals to agile practices: similarities, overlaps, and differences
- Understanding the role and value of agile techniques such as iteration/release planning and retrospectives
- Using agile techniques to systematically and continually reduce risk
- Implementing quality assurance (QA) where it belongs: in analysis, design, defect prevention, and continuous improvement
- Learning to trust your teams and listen for their discoveries
- Procuring, purchasing, and contracting for software in agile, collaborative environments
- Avoiding the common mistakes software teams make in transitioning to agile
- Coordinating with project management offices and non-agile teams
- “Selling” agile within your teams and throughout your organization

For every project manager who wants to become more agile.

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Customer Reviews

Finally a book in the agile series that acknowledges agile and PMI are compatible. As a PMP and CSM, one of my long time frustrations has been too many agile authors create a stereotype of an overly bureaucrat waterfall process being managed by a dictator project manager. That may be a great way to sell their books, but their rejection of sound project management principles has been a disservice to the industry--the classic mistake of throwing out the baby with the bathwater. As the title states, Sliger and Broderick sets out to bridge this divide and does a super job showing how agile management practices fit into the project management body of knowledge (PMBOK). They reinforce this message with extensive quotes from the PMBOK that explicitly address incremental and iterative development. I especially like their chapter summaries which compare and contrast project manager approaches to specific practices under a plan-driven and an agile project. One of their key messages is that project managers should allow the team to focus on the current iteration, allowing the project managers to focus on removing impediments to future work. This is sound advice no matter what development framework you are using. Sliger and Broderick discussion on how agile is being extended to product and release planning and how it's adapting to interfacing

with PMOs and non-agile teams is also very relevant. While agile purists reject such notions, these are issues that my clients are facing today. Sliger and Broderick succinctly summarize the current thinking on agile product and release planning and provide sound advice on adapting agile to meet these real-world needs. One shortcoming in the book is that the authors imply that agile is the silver-bullet that should always be used. I wished they would have acknowledge that while agile methods are appropriate in many situations; plan-driven methods are the appropriate choice for other situations. (See *Balancing Agility and Discipline: A Guide for the Perplexed* by Barry Boehm and Richard Turner) I highly recommend this book and will be adding to our seminars reference lists. It is especially useful to experienced project managers. As the product description (see above) states they often struggle while transitioning to agile. However, I don't think they are doubtful about the approach, but instead are confused by the hype they encounter. It will also be useful to agilest who starting to see through the hype in other books. Sliger and Broderick have cut through the hype and reinforce the point that effective project management principles still apply.

When I saw this book, I knew I had to read it, though I was very skeptical about it. Mapping the PMBOK practices to agile practices, is that the right thing to do? Why would you want to do that? What are the authors trying to prove? The first chapter already helped me forward and removed some of my skepticism. This book is really what it says it is. It's a bridge for the traditional PMI project manager to understand what the difference is between traditional projects and agile projects and it's written in the language of a traditional project manager, the language of PMBOK. From that perspective, I've come to see this as an smart and important book that hopefully, will help lots of trainer project managers to understand what agile development is trying to do and why. The book start with an introduction by Stacia, who describes her experience moving from a traditional environment to an agile environment and the difficulty she faced of changing the way of working she was used to. An excellent introduction that sets the tone of the rest of the book. The rest of the book consists of 3 parts (plus some appendixes). The first part is the "standard introduction" part in which Agile development gets introduced, in which the first mapping of Agile development to the PMBOK is made and ends with a chapter on a generic agile lifecycle model, which is a guideline for the rest of the book. The second part is the main part of the book and is structured around the different chapters of the PMBOK. This part actually maps to the PMBOK even on sub-chapter level, done quite well. Within each of the PMBOK chapters, the authors explain the problems the PMBOK tries to solve and how Agile practices solve the same problems, but in a different way. It summarizes this in every chapter with a comparison between traditional practices and Agile practices. All the chapters

seem to cover all the major agile project management practices. It starts with integration management and discussing how all things integrate together and how changes are managed. From there it moves to scope control and explains the differences between traditional WBS task breakdowns and working in a more feature-based way. Time management is next, covering the different planning cycles in the generic agile lifecycle framework (they introduced in Chapter 3). Next is cost management, and quality management. Chapter 9 covers human resource management and was a really nice chapter in which the authors describe well the difference between traditional project resourcing and trying to work with fixed teams that can actually learn new skills when needed. By this time, I felt the major topics had been covered, but there still needed to be communications management and Risk Management to make the mapping of the PMBOK complete. Here I felt the authors started repeating things that were covered earlier, but that's the risk when copying a fixed structure. The last chapter in the PMBOK mapping is procurement management and this chapter was a disappointment to me. The authors are of opinion that there is not much difference in this area, while personally I would not agree with that. Anyways. The third part covers "the rest" with the main chapter probably be 13 which discusses about the changes in responsibilities between a traditional project manager and an "agile project manager". It describes in fairly much detail the changes in behavior and even tries to cover how to get past this difficult change and why people would want to go through the change (what's in it for them). Also chapter 15 answers one important question: What to do with the PMO. The authors suggest transforming it into an agile supporting organization which they still call "Agile PMO". Chapter 16 (Selling benefits of Agile) and Chapter 17 (Common Mistakes) are useful chapters for people who are driving the change. It helps them answer some of the common questions and deal with some of the resistance. These chapters conclude the book. In many areas, I'm still skeptical and do not always agree with the authors. I don't know if it's a good idea to change people's and organizations' role and still keep the old name, like "agile project manager" and "agile PMO". Scrum has solved this by simply calling it different: when the behavior is different then also call it different. Hence the ScrumMaster. Also, the authors strongly stick to the "project thinking" and seem to assume that that's a good way of managing work. Same with contracts, the authors don't seem to think there will be much change in that area. The book has not convinced me the PMBOK is a good idea either, instead just confirmed my earlier criticism. All that said. Realistically, I understand that much of these aspects will not change or not quickly. So, this book introduces new concepts in a familiar language. I do think this will be needed and the authors done a great (perhaps the best possible) job in explaining agile concepts in traditional terms without losing its meaning. This was the purpose of the book and it certainly

succeeded in that. For project managers looking at agile development, this book is an absolute must. For agilists, the book is still a good and useful read! (also to understand traditional thinking) Great work!

This excellent book is targeted directly at Project Management Professionals (PMPs) but will be extremely beneficial to any project manager who is interested in agile development. After three short chapters that introduce the general principles and activities of an agile software development project, the authors attack the meat of their subject. Each of the nine chapters of part two corresponds directly to one of the PMI's project management knowledge areas. Sliger and Broderick, each an experienced PMP, cover the changed responsibilities of the project manager transitioning to agile. A highlight of each chapter is the small table with columns for "I used to do this" and "Now I do this" that succinctly summarizes the often profound differences between traditional and agile project management. This book is necessary reading for any project manager making the change to agile as well as for any ScrumMaster or agile coach working on a large projects. The book takes a giant stride toward dispelling the myth that the only role for project managers is to buy pizza and soda and get out of the way.

Excellent book for anyone who knows the PMBOK and wants to learn about Agile Project Management! It is also excellent to augment studying for the PMI-ACP. As a teacher and consultant in project management and agile, I recommend it to my students and clients.

I am learning a lot from this book. Got my PMP, but don't yet know about agile and the various "flavors" thereof. This book - even though not the newest -- is clear and concise and helping me learn a lot.

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