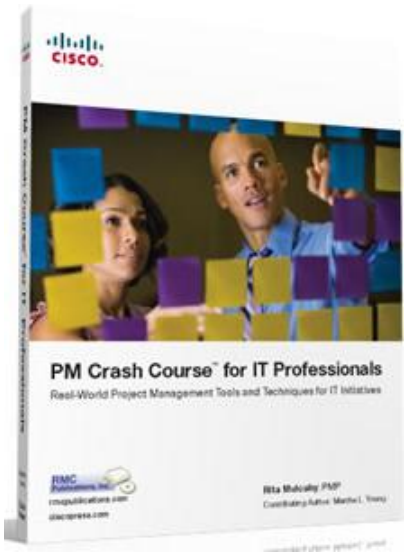
PM Crash Course™ for IT Professionals by Rita Mulcahy

Detailed Table of Contents

PM Crash Course™ for IT Professionals by Rita Mulcahy and Cisco Press is designed to be read quickly and easily cover-to-cover, beginning with an overview of IT project management and an all-important "How to Use This Book" chapter. It is also useful as a desk reference to keep handy throughout a project life cycle.

This revolutionary Course in a Book® covers the basics of project management, including planning, scheduling, budgeting, and more. It also moves beyond the basics to cover a number of real-world project management tools and techniques for IT initiatives—like defining IT project charters and requirements, breaking down IT roadmaps into manageable pieces, capturing and using historical data, identifying and managing stakeholders, defining IT project scope, and more. The authors provide indispensable practical checklists, templates, and exercises to reinforce your learning of these concepts. The book includes dozens of tricks, insights, and contributions from real project managers sharing what has made a difference for them when managing real-world projects.



Chapter Listing with Descriptions

Chapter 1: Before You Read This Book—This chapter serves as an introduction to the world of IT project management.

Chapter 2: How to Use This Book—This chapter explains the numerous features within each chapter to make your learning more fun, interesting, and relevant to the real world.

Chapter 3: Understanding the Project Management Process—This chapter identifies and defines the project management processes, the project life cycle, and the dynamic role of a project management plan. The chapter discusses how to identify key project constraints and explains how IT-centric processes complement project management methodologies.

Chapter 4 : The Project Charter—This chapter defines the project charter and discusses the measurable metrics used to determine the success of a project.

Chapter 5: Incrementalization: Breaking the Work into Projects—Key concepts in this chapter include understanding the definition of a project, and identifying the differences between project, program, and portfolio management. It illustrates the value of breaking work into projects that can be planned, managed, and controlled.

Chapter 6: Gaining, Creating, and Using Historical Data—In this chapter you will learn the value of using historical information from past projects to take advantage of successes and avoid repeating the mistakes of others. You will also identify what type of project data is most beneficial to capture for the benefit of future projects. The practice of documenting historical information helps to continuously improve project process efficiencies.

Chapter 7: Identifying and Managing Stakeholders—Understanding who the stakeholders are on your project as well as what and how to communicate with them keeps everyone focused and is key to preventing problems throughout the project.

Chapter 8: Finalizing Project Objectives: The Project Scope Statement—This chapter outlines the difference between product and project scope and explains the business value of the project scope statement.

Chapter 9: Preventing Scope Creep: The Work Breakdown Structure and WBS Dictionary—This chapter is all about the hierarchical way to break a project into smaller, more manageable components or work packages as a major precursor to budgeting, scheduling, communicating, allocating responsibility, and controlling the project.

Chapter 10: Real-World Estimating—In this chapter, you identify the challenges in accurately estimating time or cost, and learn numerous techniques to improve estimating.

Chapter 11: Real-World Scheduling—This chapter describes how to create a realistic project schedule and teaches you how to read and understand a project management network diagram so you can define the critical path and use it to adjust the project to meet the required delivery date.

Chapter 12: Communications Management—This chapter describes how and why to develop an effective project communications management plan. It also covers the best ways to communicate specific types of information.

Chapter 13: Preventing Problems: Identifying and Managing Risk—This chapter defines risk management and explains the sequential and iterative process of risk management to increase opportunities as well as decrease threats.

Chapter 14: Saving the Failed or Failing IT Project—This chapter identifies the characteristics of a failing project and shows you the steps to take to save a failing project or to revive a failed project.

Chapter 15: Measuring Success Post-Project—In this chapter you learn how to measure the effectiveness and business impact of the project, and to understand the value end-of-project reports might provide across multiple departments in a company.

Chapter 16: Next Steps—In this chapter you are provided with a survey tool for assessing your project management skills. This chapter also provides encouragement and suggestions on how to improve your IT project management expertise and effectiveness.

Appendix A: Business Process Improvement Standards—This appendix provides a high-level discussion of Six Sigma, ITIL, and Kaizen.

Appendix B: Project Management Software Considerations—This appendix presents a list of features to consider when choosing project management software.

Appendix C: Real-World IT Interviews—In this appendix, you will find reflections from representatives of various-sized organizations regarding their experiences with the application of project management in the real world.