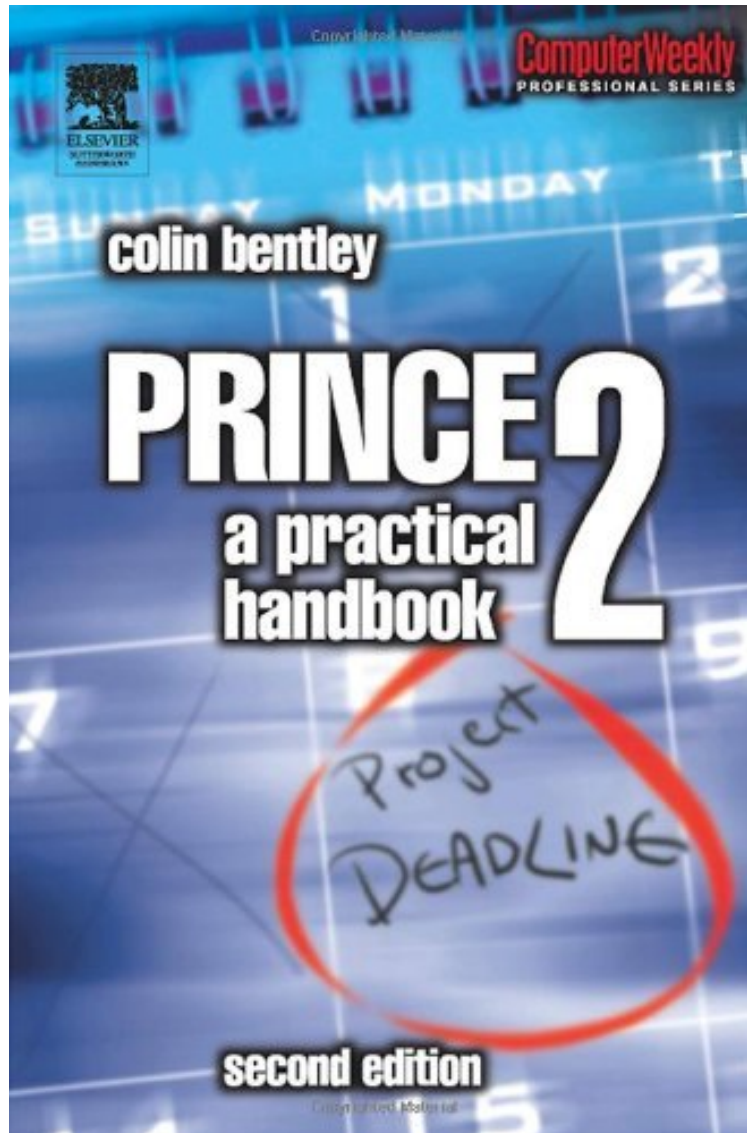


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## PRINCE2: A Practical Handbook, Second Edition (Computer Weekly Professional)

Colin Bentley

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Colin Bentley : PRINCE2: A Practical Handbook, Second Edition (Computer Weekly Professional) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised PRINCE2: A Practical Handbook, Second Edition (Computer Weekly Professional):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Not Worth the purchase priceBy David BrownThis is completely over priced. Your average reader will get more out of something like "Prince 2 for Dummies". I was verydisapointed that this book offered so little, When the title offered so much. A Waste total of Money26 of 27 people found the

following review helpful. Some excellent practices for PMPs and PMO organizations

By Mike Tarrani

This book's main value is to Project Management Professionals (PMPs) and readers who are seeking a viable program management office (PMO) model. The reason for this particular audience is because PRINCE 2 practitioners almost certainly have a copy of *Managing Successful Projects with PRINCE 2*, which is the official reference for that project management methodology and its certification requirements. PRINCE stands for PRojects IN a Controlled Environment and is Great Britain's counterpart to the U.S. project management body of knowledge (PMBOK) that is the standard reference for PMP certification and is also the American National Standard for project management.

Why PRINCE? It nicely augments the PMBOK in a number of ways, all of which are covered in this book. The book begins with an introduction that explains PRINCE version 2 and its benefits. The next chapter covers the differences between PRINCE version 1 and 2, and can be safely skipped by the potential audience I cited.

Chapter 3 is a complete description of each of the eight PRINCE processes, which are: SU - Start-Up the Project, IP - Initiate the Project, DP - Direct the Project, CS - Control the Stage, MP - Manage Product Delivery, SB - Manage Stage Boundaries, CP - Close the Project, PL - Planning. A few clarifications are in order here: During start-up (SU) the key players are identified and preliminary plans and briefs are developed; during initiation (IP) the initial planning is done and project controls and administration is developed and instituted. Also note the emphasis on breaking down the project into stages (CS and MP), and on deliverables (MP). These are key elements of the PRINCE 2 approach, but can easily be incorporated into the approach outlined in the PMBOK's nine process areas.

The real difference between PRINCE and the PMBOK, and the value of applying the PRINCE approach to organizing a PMO, is the organizational structure, which is covered in chapter 4. The project board and well defined roles and responsibilities required by PRINCE 2 are described in sufficient detail to use the information in this chapter as the basis for a PMO as well as for organizing a project in such a manner that ensures proper communications are established and all key stakeholders are active participants. This organizational structure will go a long way towards a proactive project management posture and will also assure quality. Chapter 5 covers planning, which is fairly generic. It does address the deliverables-based approach and PMPs will find some useful information here. PRINCE 2 practitioners will find nothing new. Chapter 6 addresses project controls with a focus on roles, responsibilities and organizational oversight. This material will be invaluable to anyone setting up a PMO or who wants to run a tight project. Another key difference between PRINCE 2 and the PMBOK is the emphasis that PRINCE places on developing a business case. Chapter 7 thoroughly covers this aspect and also provides forms that will prove useful.

The PRINCE 2 approach to managing risk is covered in Chapter 8, and is nearly identical to the PMBOK approach. The list of risk analysis questions provided at the end of this chapter is complete and worth a careful read. Quality methods embodied in PRINCE 2 and covered in Chapter 9 is significantly different from the PMBOK approach. It does not conflict with the PMBOK, and can be easily integrated into a project run in accordance with the PMBOK. I strongly recommend using the best practices from PRINCE 2, which include developing a project quality plan, stage quality plans and instituting quality reviews as set forth by the PRINCE 2 method. Chapters 11 and 12 cover configuration management and change control in a lot more detail than is given in the PMBOK. Both are essential ingredients of product quality and scope management, and this book gives a thorough and straightforward treatment of both areas.

The appendix is a collection of 25 artifacts (see table of contents for a full listing) that can be tailored to meet your specific requirements.

Overall this is a valuable book that was ostensibly written for PRINCE 2 practitioners, but I personally believe it is of equal value to PMPs or any project manager who wants to learn and apply best practices in project management.

21 of 23 people found the following review helpful.

UK's best kept secret

By Linda Zarate

I rushed out and bought this book after a friend sent me a Visio diagram of PRINCE 2 processes that someone had sent him. I was intrigued by the interrelationships among the PRINCE processes and the organizational structure of a PRINCE 2 project.

What I found between the pages was an eye-opening view of a project management methodology that has been used since the mid-1980s and is the UK national standard. What made this methodology so eye-opening, aside from the fact that I had never heard of it, is that projects are organized in such a manner that ensure that sponsors, business process owners and the project team are working in a consensual environment with clearly-defined lines of communications. In my experience, even on well run projects, this is rarely achieved, yet here is a mature, 15-year old methodology that appears to be in wide use outside of the United States that should be heavily borrowed from in the U.S.

As I read this book I found one best practice after another that definitely need to be incorporated into projects, especially IS/IT projects, which have an appallingly high failure rate. Among the practices documented in this book are: breaking projects into stages and phases (widely known, but unevenly practiced in my experience), basing milestones on deliverables (I've been on too many projects are based on schedules, resulting in 90% complete almost immediately and the remaining 10% takes ten times longer - basing progress on deliverables prevents that sort of sleigh-of-hand), and risk, configuration and change management processes that are totally integrated into the project (something else that's much talked about and abandoned early on, if attempted at all).

I personally found the writing style to be a bit obtuse, but I attribute that to the difference between American and British versions of English. Despite that, this book contains what I consider to be an effective approach to project management, and one that should be adopted on these shores because of the best practices that I cited above. I am reasonably sure that the PRINCE 2 methodology can be married to the U.S. standard, Project Management Body

of Knowledge, without affecting the integrity of the PMBOK. I strongly recommend that anyone serious about running a project in an effective, smooth manner read this book and incorporate as many practices as corporate politics will allow. I give it 5 stars and hope we have another British invasion.

PRINCE 2 is a flexible project management method, suitable for use on any type of project. It has been derived from professional Project Managers' experiences and refined over years of use in a wide variety of contexts. 'PRINCE 2: a practical handbook' demonstrates how using PRINCE 2 can provide a business-like start to a project, ensuring its viability and the effective use of resources before any large-scale expenditure is undertaken. It covers the main management concerns about a project such as initiation, controlling products, quality, risks, change and project closure, and concludes with descriptions of the normal management products of a project. Assessed as conformant with the concepts of PRINCE Version 2 by the PRINCE User Group Ltd Fully updated and revised to reflect the year 2001 changes to PRINCE 2 Relates PRINCE 2 to the practical issues of setting up and running a project