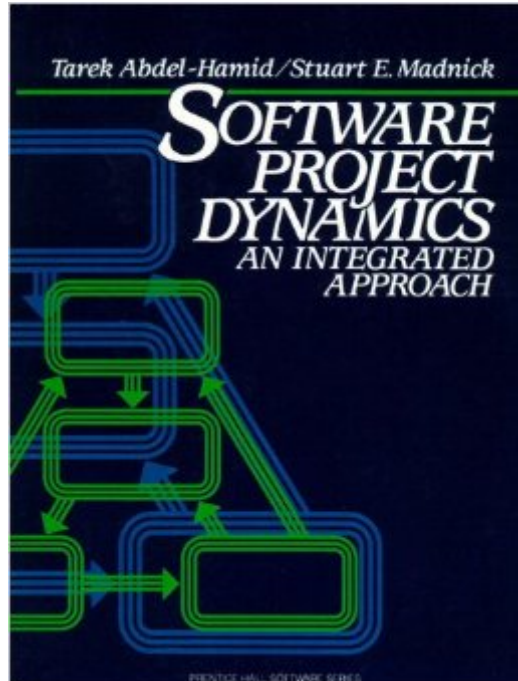


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Software Project Dynamics: An Integrated Approach



Synopsis

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This is not a book about project management per se, but a book about how to integrate project management processes into a large software development organization using analysis based on system dynamics. If you are not familiar with system dynamics, it's a methodology for studying and managing complex feedback systems using time graphs and causal loops, and more formal analytical methods such as simulation and exploring alternatives in a structured manner. This book uses those techniques to align project management processes to software development. The best way to determine if this book is right for you is to answer the following questions:- Is your core business software development?- Is your organization at approximately the same level as that described by SEI's CMM for level 3 or above?- Is there a commitment to implement an integrated process that is driven by the executive or board level and does this commitment have a strong sponsor? If the answer to at least two of the above questions is yes, then this book will be valuable. Also note that some knowledge of system dynamics is assumed. If you need to become familiar with this discipline I recommend "Business Dynamics: Systems Thinking and Modeling for a Complex World" by John D. Sterman. This book addresses system dynamics from public policy and strategy points of view, but will provide a thorough understanding of the subject. Those who will benefit most from this book are organizations that have found existing PM methodologies to not fully meet

objectives. For example, the U.S. standard based on the Project Management Institute's Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) is too generic for software development, and the U.K. standard called PRINCE2 is not as well suited for product-line and software vendor approaches to development. While the PMBOK and PRINCE2 contain processes and procedures that can be used, the system dynamics approach defined in this book gives a method for selecting, evaluating and integrating the processes and procedures borrowed from these two standards. Moreover, since the CMM and related models identify key process areas for project management, they do not prescribe how they are to be implemented. This book will provide the tools and techniques for tailoring the techniques to PM process areas. If your objective is to find a book that describes a complete project management maturity model you will be better served by "Strategic Planning for Project Management Using a Project Management Maturity Model" by Harold Kerzner; if you are looking for an off-the-shelf methodology to use with iterative processes such as the Rational Unified Process I recommend "Software Project Management: A Unified Framework" by Walker Royce. However, if you are seeking to develop and implement a best-in-class, tailored project management methodology that is seamlessly integrated into your software development processes this book will show you how to achieve that goal.

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