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Managing the Urgent and Unexpected: Twelve Project Cases and a Commentary (Advances in Project Management)

By Stephen Wearne, Keith White-Hunt



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Sometimes unanticipated threats or opportunities create a situation in which work is required unexpectedly. On these occasions, such urgent and unexpected work demands an instant start, in contrast to the often lengthy processes of investigation, evaluation, development, selection and planning normal in businesses and public services before the start of a project. Managing the Urgent and Unexpected explores what is different managerially if work is unexpected, its implementation is urgent and an immediate start it is required. The authors draw on twelve cases ranging from the launch of the Freeview television system in the United Kingdom to the sifting and removal of the New York World Trade Center pile of debris following the 9/11 terrorist attack. They summarise how the response to each of these events was managed, demonstrate that opportunities may sometimes be created in the face of adversity and suggest how normal organizations can prepare to manage abnormal demands. Urgent and unexpected projects have to be rare in business or government to be economically and socially tolerable. And yet organizations can and should be prepared for the unexpected. The lessons offered here will help private and public organizations plan how to authorize and support future urgent work to take advantage of immediate new business opportunities or to protect or restore systems and services.



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Review

'The book reviews 12 real-life urgent and unexpected projects, how they were started and managed, and the lessons that can be learnt from these... It is suitable for lecturers and students of management; managers/project managers; and those involved in disaster-recovery, business continuity planning or incident management in both public and private sectors.' BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT 'If you want to manage uncertainty and complexity, read this book. If you want to acquire tools and techniques to ensure organizational stability and excellence, read this book.' Human Resource Management International Digest 'I would recommend this book to other project managers ... It is an inspirational book offering unique insights to unique situations.' Lin Johnson, PE, PMP, CQMret, PMI Portland Chapter Director of Quality

About the Author

Stephen Wearne, PhD, is Senior Research Fellow, Project Management Research and Resources Group, University of Manchester. Stephen worked previously in the engineering and project management of large water power and nuclear power projects in the UK, South America and Japan. He is an Emeritus Professor of Technological Management, University of Bradford; Founder Chairman of the UK Engineering Project Management Forum. His awards include: Brennan Medal, Institution of Chemical Engineers; Garth Watson Medal, Institution of Civil Engineers; Sir Monty Finniston award, UK Association for Project Management. Keith White-Hunt, DSc, is Deputy President of a new university in the UAE. Keith has held senior management positions in business and academia in the UK, USA and Asia-Pacific region, as well as elsewhere in the Arab Gulf. He also has CEO, COO and Board experience with numerous companies and as a senior member of national and international government and NGO advisory groups. Keith is a Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute and a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Marketing.

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