

BPTrends Book Review

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Continuous Improvement Made Easy Artie Mahal September 04, 2018



Artie Mahal worked for years at the head of process improvement at Mars. Then, after retiring, he worked quite a while longer as a consultant and a teacher. He was a great teacher, because he combines enthusiasm and experience. When Artie tells you of his experiences, you feel as though you are really there facing and overcoming the challenge. Finally, after years of consulting, Mr. Mahal has settled into a third career, writing books that present his experience to readers. He wrote *How Work Gets Done*, an overview of how one analyzes business process problems, and now he has published a new book, [After Action Review](#). [After Action Review](#) is a short book, 79 pages, but it is valuable and talks about a topic that is too often neglected. It talks about how one conducts a review of a project, discussing what went right and what could be improved on the next project.

Mr. Mahal is a master facilitator, and this book is written from the perspective of a facilitator who is responsible for assembling a process team and conducting an after action review. It discusses strategies for conducting meetings, reviews tools that can be used to help tease out information and insights, and ways to summarize results. It also includes lesson plans and formats for planning the meetings.

All this is rendered concrete by several case studies that Mr. Mahal works through to provide examples of the use of various techniques and the value of After Action Reviews.

This is, as I said, a short book. It is focused on a single activity and provides information on how to perform that activity efficiently and effectively. If you have a business process team, someone in it should read this book and then adopt After Action Reviews as a part of your practice.



Paul Harmon

Executive Editor and Founder, Business Process Trends In addition to his role as Executive Editor and Founder of Business Process Trends, Paul Harmon is Chief Consultant and Founder of Enterprise Alignment, a professional services company providing educational and consulting services to managers interested in understanding and implementing business process change. Paul is a noted consultant, author and analyst concerned with applying new technologies to real-world business problems. He is the author of *Business Process Change: A Manager's Guide to Improving, Redesigning, and Automating Processes* (2003). He has previously co-authored *Developing E-business Systems and Architectures*(2001), *Understanding UML* (1998), and *Intelligent Software Systems Development* (1993). Mr. Harmon has served as a senior consultant and head of Cutter Consortium's Distributed Architecture practice. Between 1985 and 2000 Mr. Harmon wrote Cutter newsletters, including *Expert Systems Strategies*, *CASE Strategies*, and *Component Development Strategies*. Paul has worked on major process redesign projects with Bank of America, Wells Fargo, Security Pacific, Prudential, and Citibank, among others. He is a member of ISPI and a Certified Performance Technologist. Paul is a widely respected keynote speaker and has developed and delivered workshops and seminars on a wide variety of topics to conferences and major corporations throughout the world. Paul can be reached at pharmon@bptrends.com