

Picasso on a Schedule: The Art and Science of Managing IT

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When IT management is examined through the lenses of technology, business, and art, great things can be produced. So claim Stephen Wiggins and Kenneth Abernethy in *Picasso on a Schedule: The Art and Science of Managing IT*.

Picasso on a Schedule examines the IT management industry and provides a wealth of good advice for those in the field. The authors begin by connecting IT management to artistry. They provide those field workers with inspiration and ideas for seeing the meaning behind their efforts. Next, they point out that evolution through small, incremental, purposeful changes is ultimately more effective than massive overhauls to a system or business.

Wiggins and Abernethy provide a model for big-picture thinking in IT management, contextualizing the practices within a coherent effective system model. They then emphasize the importance of customer care and, finally, the authors provide practical business strategies for an IT management firm.

The writing style is clear and accessible, with language that lacks dry, specialized jargon. Instead, the duo rely on crisp writing and clear logic that makes the book an easy, enjoyable read.

The progression of the chapters, beginning with the discussion of IT management as art and ending with the topic of business techniques, creates a compelling argument. The authors acknowledge, firstly, the importance of the IT manager's work by stating, "The underlying reality is that software and its development embodies both art and engineering." This connects them with their readers and provides them with a receptive audience.

Wiggins and Abernethy address both the artistic and professional concerns of the IT management fields as well as the practical business strategies that must be employed if an IT management company is to succeed. This approach allows the book to cover a wide spectrum of issues, leaving little untouched.

Wiggins, the CIO of Blue Cross Blue Shield, and Abernethy, a professor of computer science, bring a great deal of practical and theoretical experience to their book. This provides them with a rich understanding of the concerns of an IT management firm.

An indispensable resource for anyone working in IT management, *Picasso on a Schedule* is also an interesting book for those in other fields of business and technology. The book's abundant visuals and charts make the material even more accessible and the clean layout and logical progression make it appropriate for even the most inexperienced in the field.

EMILY ADAMS (June 1, 2012)

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