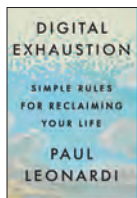




# NEW BOOKS, RECOMMENDED FAVOURITES AND PODCASTS TO KEEP YOU ENTERTAINED

**EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT  
MANAGING YOUR DIGITAL LIFE, AND HOW TO  
MEASURE THE IMMEASURABLE IN PROJECTS**

## Digital Exhaustion: Simple rules for reclaiming your life Paul Leonardi (Ebury Edge)



Do you ever feel like your brain is running 10 tabs at once and none of them are loading properly? *Digital Exhaustion* is a refreshingly practical guide to surviving (and

thriving) in our hyper-connected world. Paul Leonardi offers eight simple, science-backed rules to help you reclaim your time, attention and sanity. It's all about working smarter, not harder. Leonardi doesn't push radical lifestyle changes. He's realistic, offering strategies that fit into busy workdays.

He argues that digital exhaustion isn't caused by how long we're online, but by how we interact with our digital tools, which can lead to mental clutter and emotional fatigue. One of the most relatable concepts is 'context switching', which is the mental strain of jumping between tasks, tools and conversations. I often find myself bouncing between

spreadsheets, meetings and emails, struggling to concentrate. Leonardi reminds us that constant context switching and the need to infer meaning from limited digital cues both contribute to digital exhaustion, reinforcing the urgency of needing to protect our focus – not just for productivity, but also for our emotional wellbeing.

Leonardi champions deep work: focused, uninterrupted time for strategic thinking and problem-solving. The pressure to be 'always on' fuels anxiety and burnout, a topic also discussed on APM Podcast's episode 'Managing Stress and Avoiding Burnout'. Deep work doesn't just happen; it requires intentional choices, like using the right tool for the task, decluttering your digital workspace and turning off notifications, because not every ping is an emergency!

One of the most actionable takeaways is the idea of batching and boundaries. Leonardi suggests setting specific times to check messages and emails to reduce context switching and stress. This shift improves focus, but

requires commitment, even when faster responses are expected.

Leonardi's book provides practical steps to support emotional wellbeing. "We should aim for a... nuanced understanding of our own needs and limitations... recognising when our tools are serving us and when they're simply adding to the noise," he writes. If you're a project manager or team leader, or if you are overwhelmed by your inbox, *Digital Exhaustion* is worth a read. Pair it with APM Podcast for added insight. It's a toolkit for working smarter and building resilience in a tech-heavy world.

Review by **Rochelle Sampson-Clarke**, Business Intelligence Project Manager at NHS South, Central and West



## How to Measure Anything in Project Management Douglas W Hubbard, Alexander Budzier and Andreas Leed (Wiley)



In projects, there are a few tools that really matter: risk management, critical path analysis, earned value analysis. None of these need to be precise, but they must provide good enough information to start a discussion or to lead to a decision being made. This book goes further, exposing bad practices (particularly in risk management) and suggesting improvements in how we should use these and other tools to model projects – initially to decide if they should even proceed, and then to assess and correct performance.

Three important conclusions from the authors' research are: using quantitative models based on historic data leads to better estimates; human experts are overconfident and inconsistent, but can be trained to improve; the claimed benefits of some tools do not stand up to

scrutiny. This book promotes data-driven decision-making to remove the 'gut feel' approach of many project leaders.

The book destroys the myth that some things are impossible to measure. It defines a measurement as "a quantitatively expressed reduction of uncertainty based on observation". It points out that precision is not only unimportant, but that striving for it may indicate a lack of understanding of the purpose of measurement. The book explains the thought process required to design a suitable way of measuring the things that are important to the project manager – from the tangible (measurement of progress) to the seemingly intangible aspects, such as the impact of innovation or cultural change. It also introduces new calculations that can be built into existing management techniques such as earned value management and argues that "everything that has any relevance at all... must have observable consequences".

The authors refer to tools (almost all Excel spreadsheets), available on the book's website, that enable you to put some of the measurements into practice. This review did not look at these in detail, but they will help in understanding and using the techniques described.

Project managers are referenced throughout the book as a target for these thoughts, but this book has important things to say to project sponsors and those who make decisions about whether a project should proceed and how it should be run. There are useful discussions about what metrics work and improvements that should be made, and I would also recommend this book to those who consider themselves to be thought leaders in the project management and project controls fields.

**Review by Paul Kidston, lead author of the APM book *Project Controls in the 21st Century***



### **My bedside books**

**Gordon MacKay, Project Management Capability Lead, Sellafield**

#### **The Courage to Connect**

**Nicky Wille**

The ability to secure engagement from and between diverse stakeholders and subject matter experts across organisational cultures is increasingly reflected in project delivery success and failure. Nicky Wille's direct experience informs her well-grounded practical advice on steps to constructively establish mutual respect and rapport as signal precursors to establishing delegated ownership.

#### **Count-On-Able**

**Jeff Cohen**

The description affirms, "Accountability is outdated. It's often punitive or assigns blame." In project delivery, effective leadership demands competence

and maturity in fostering and realising the emergent benefits, effectively securing stakeholder engagement and ownership. Jeff Cohen's experience and insights will resonate for those seeking focused and congruent commitment across the team, with clear steps and supplementary materials provided.

#### **The Matter With Things**

**Iain McGilchrist**

The author, using his peer-reviewed findings, vividly illuminates how both hemispheres of our brain provide existentially different modes of attention, apprehension and comprehension. The resulting informed escape from reductionist thinking empowers a paradigm shift in understanding for effective navigation through increasing complexities in project delivery.

#### **We're all ears – podcasts to listen to**

##### **APM Podcast – The future of nuclear energy in the UK**

Nigel Cann, Joint Managing Director of Sizewell C, Carol Tansley, Vice President of Projects at X-energy, and Stuart McLaren, Head of Nuclear and Energy Sector Director at WSP, discuss the future of nuclear energy projects in the UK, including new technology, industry-wide collaboration and the huge demand for project professionals. What does it take to ensure success in projects like these? Why does the UK need a cohesive nuclear strategy, and what does it take to lead projects like these? A must-listen as the UK enters new era of nuclear projects.

##### **The Bottom Line**

In the definitive business podcast from the BBC, Evan Davis is joined by bosses, entrepreneurs and industry experts to tackle a big issue, challenge or question every week – from artificial intelligence to managing millennials. A recent episode looks at introverts and whether quiet voices can conquer the corporate world, asking: do you ever feel the world is stacked in favour of the extrovert people – the most gregarious, the most outwardly confident, the perhaps sometimes sharp-elbowed, the loudest? What can natural introverts do to try to level the playing field and create a positive impression? Complement your listen with APM Podcast's episode 'Introverts in Project Management Speak Out', where three project professionals share their personal stories.