# A Guide to the PROJECT MANAGEMENT BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

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# Part 1

# A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge

## (*PMBOK® GUIDE*)

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The information contained in this part is not an American National Standard (ANS) and has not been processed in accordance with ANSI's requirements for an ANS. As such, the information in this part may contain material that has not been subjected to public review or a consensus process. In addition, it does not contain requirements necessary for conformance to an ANS standard.

# 1

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

Project management is not new. It has been in use for hundreds of years. Examples of project outcomes include:

- Pyramids of Giza,
- Olympic games,
- Great Wall of China,
- Taj Mahal,
- Publication of a children's book,
- Panama Canal,
- Development of commercial jet airplanes,
- Polio vaccine,
- Human beings landing on the moon,
- Commercial software applications,
- Portable devices to use the global positioning system (GPS), and
- Placement of the International Space Station into Earth's orbit.

The outcomes of these projects were the result of leaders and managers applying project management practices, principles, processes, tools, and techniques to their work. The managers of these projects used a set of key skills and applied knowledge to satisfy their customers and other people involved in and affected by the project. By the mid-20th century, project managers began the work of seeking recognition for project management as a profession. One aspect of this work involved obtaining agreement on the content of the body of knowledge (BOK) called project management. This BOK became known as the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK). The Project Management Institute (PMI) produced a baseline of charts and glossaries for the PMBOK. Project managers soon realized that no single book could contain the entire PMBOK. Therefore, PMI developed and published *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide).*

PMI defines the project management body of knowledge (PMBOK) as a term that describes the knowledge within the profession of project management. The project management body of knowledge includes proven traditional practices that are widely applied as well as innovative practices that are emerging in the profession.

The body of knowledge (BOK) includes both published and unpublished materials. This body of knowledge is constantly evolving. This *PMBOK® Guide* identifies a subset of the project management body of knowledge that is generally recognized as good practice.

- *Generally recognized* means the knowledge and practices described are applicable to most projects most of the time, and there is consensus about their value and usefulness.
- *Good practice* means there is general agreement that the application of the knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project management processes can enhance the chance of success over many projects in delivering the expected business values and results.

The project manager works with the project team and other stakeholders to determine and use the appropriate generally recognized good practices for each project. Determining the appropriate combination of processes, inputs, tools, techniques, outputs and life cycle phases to manage a project is referred to as "tailoring" the application of the knowledge described in this guide.

This *PMBOK® Guide* is different from a methodology. A methodology is a system of practices, techniques, procedures, and rules used by those who work in a discipline. This *PMBOK® Guide* is a foundation upon which organizations can build methodologies, policies, procedures, rules, tools and techniques, and life cycle phases needed to practice project management.

### 1.1.1 THE STANDARD FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT

This guide is based on *The Standard for Project Management* [1]. A standard is a document established by an authority, custom, or general consent as a model or example. As an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standard, *The Standard for Project Management* was developed using a process based on the concepts of consensus, openness, due process, and balance. *The Standard for Project Management* is a foundational reference for PMI's project management professional development programs and the practice of project management. Because project management needs to be tailored to fit the needs of the project, the standard and the guide are both based on *descriptive* practices, rather than *prescriptive* practices. Therefore, the standard identifies the processes that are considered good practices on most projects, most of the time. The standard also identifies the inputs and outputs that are usually associated with those processes. The standard does not require that any particular process or practice be performed. *The Standard for Project Management* is included as Part II of *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide).*

The *PMBOK® Guide* provides more detail about key concepts, emerging trends, considerations for tailoring the project management processes, and information on how tools and techniques are applied to projects. Project managers may use one or more methodologies to implement the project management processes outlined in the standard.

The scope of this guide is limited to the discipline of project management, rather than the full spectrum of portfolios, programs, and projects. Portfolios and programs will be addressed only to the degree they interact with projects. PMI publishes two other standards that address the management of portfolios and programs:

- *The Standard for Portfolio Management* [2], and
- *The Standard for Program Management* [3].

### 1.1.2 COMMON VOCABULARY

A common vocabulary is an essential element of a professional discipline. *The PMI Lexicon of Project Management Terms* [4] provides the foundational professional vocabulary that can be consistently used by organizations, portfolio, program, and project managers and other project stakeholders. The *Lexicon* will continue to evolve over time. The glossary to this guide includes the vocabulary in the *Lexicon* along with additional definitions. There may be other industry-specific terms used in projects that are defined by that industry's literature.

### 1.1.3 CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

PMI publishes the *Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct* [5] to instill confidence in the project management profession and to help an individual in making wise decisions, particularly when faced with difficult situations where the individual may be asked to compromise his or her integrity or values. The values that the global project management community defined as most important were responsibility, respect, fairness, and honesty. The *Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct* affirms these four values as its foundation.

The *Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct* includes both aspirational standards and mandatory standards. The aspirational standards describe the conduct that practitioners, who are also PMI members, certification holders, or volunteers, strive to uphold. Although adherence to the aspirational standards is not easily measured, conduct in accordance with these is an expectation for those who consider themselves to be professionals—it is not optional. The mandatory standards establish firm requirements and, in some cases, limit or prohibit practitioner behavior. Practitioners who are also PMI members, certification holders, or volunteers and who do not conduct themselves in accordance with these standards will be subject to disciplinary procedures before PMI's Ethics Review Committee.

## 1.2 FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS

This section describes foundational elements necessary for working in and understanding the discipline of project management.

### 1.2.1 PROJECTS

A project is a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result.

- **Unique product, service, or result.** Projects are undertaken to fulfill objectives by producing deliverables. An objective is defined as an outcome toward which work is to be directed, a strategic position to be attained, a purpose to be achieved, a result to be obtained, a product to be produced, or a service to be performed. A deliverable is defined as any unique and verifiable product, result, or capability to perform a service that is required to be produced to complete a process, phase, or project. Deliverables may be tangible or intangible.

  Fulfillment of project objectives may produce one or more of the following deliverables:

  - A unique product that can be either a component of another item, an enhancement or correction to an item, or a new end item in itself (e.g., the correction of a defect in an end item);
  - A unique service or a capability to perform a service (e.g., a business function that supports production or distribution);
  - A unique result, such as an outcome or document (e.g., a research project that develops knowledge that can be used to determine whether a trend exists or a new process will benefit society); and
  - A unique combination of one or more products, services, or results (e.g., a software application, its associated documentation, and help desk services).

  Repetitive elements may be present in some project deliverables and activities. This repetition does not change the fundamental and unique characteristics of the project work. For example, office buildings can be constructed with the same or similar materials and by the same or different teams. However, each building project remains unique in key characteristics (e.g., location, design, environment, situation, people involved).

  Projects are undertaken at all organizational levels. A project can involve a single individual or a group. A project can involve a single organizational unit or multiple organizational units from multiple organizations.