



This document is part of a series that explain the newly released PMBOK 5th edition. These documents provide simple explanation and summary of the book. However they do not replace the necessity of reading the book

UNDERSTAND THE PMBOK GUIDE 5TH EDITION

*Amr Miqdadi, PMP
info@pmllead.net*

PMI, what is it?

PMI® (Project Management Institute) provides practitioners and organizations with management standards that describe good practices, globally recognized credentials that certify project management expertise, and resources for professional development, networking and community.

What is Project Management (PM)?

Project Management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities in order to meet needed project's requirements. This application of knowledge requires effective management of appropriate processes and procedures, which means that we need a process / processes to carry out a certain project. According to PMI, any project should be carried out by using 5 process groups.

PMBok Guide

In order to understand PMBOK and for a better studying approach, you need to understand how it is organized and formulated. According to PMI, “the Project Management Body of Knowledge (*PMBOK*®) Guide is a recognized standard for the project management profession; a standard is a formal document that describes established norms, methods, processes, and practices”. Through looking into the *PMBOK* Guide 5th edition, it is recognized that the book's content is organized under three main categories:

- 13 sections
- Five appendices
- Glossary

The first two sections focus on “*The Project Management Framework*” and provide an introduction to the key concepts in the project management field, while the **third section** covers “The Standards for Project Management ” and summarizes the process groups. The **sections from 4 to 13** of the *PMBOK* are considered as the main core of the book. These sections focus on the project management knowledge areas where each chapter explains in details one knowledge area.

For a successful understanding for the book, you have to read **the first two sections** carefully as you will learn what does the project management mean, what makes a project, and how do we establish; guide and close a project. It is worth noting that you may find the third section to be a bit confusing; however, you don't need to worry as the more you go ahead with the book, a clearer understanding you will get.

It is well known and as previously mentioned, each project consists of the following five main project process groups: Initiating, Planning, Executing, Monitoring and Controlling, and Closing

Initiating means kicking off the project and the start point. The second process is the **planning** where we (project managers) take our time in thinking and putting on papers how are we going to achieve our goal. Following planning, we start the implementation (**Executing**) that refers to implementing what we have planned, in parallel with implementation of the project, we need to be so careful and fully following up on the project to ensure that our project is on the right track, which is known as (**monitoring and controlling**). Finally, by the time the project achieved its objectives, it comes to an end where we **close** the project 😊

The forth to thirteenth sections of the guide; which are the heart of PMBOK and project management; focus on explaining how we are going to manage and execute our project in each process group. For example, we need to identify what we need to do in order to implement the initiation process group to carry out this process successfully. This identification is known to be **Knowledge Areas**, which consist of main 10 knowledge areas, and each of those areas includes a number of activities.

It is a bit confusing here as the *PMBOK* uses the term **processes** for both the *5 process groups (initiating, planning...)* and for the *activities that make each knowledge Area*. To that end and for a better and clearer understanding, it is recommended that you refer to the 5 process groups (initiating, planning...) as the five Project Management process groups, while refer to the knowledge areas activities as Processes. The 10 Knowledge Areas; which contain 47 processes and cover an important part of the project, are the main tools to implement the five process groups are. These ten areas are:

1. Project Integration Management
2. Project Scope Management
3. Project Time Management
4. Project Cost Management
5. Project Quality Management
6. Project Human Resource Management
7. Project Communications Management
8. Project Risk Management
9. Project Procurement Management
10. Project Stakeholder Management

The Project Life Cycle:

According to *PMBOK*, the Project life cycle is a collection of generally sequential (and sometimes overlapping) project phases, and it defines the beginning, the end, the activities and the deliverables of the project. As every project is unique, then every project has its own project life cycle. Sometimes it may consist of one phase or many phases that depend on the nature of the project.

What you have to understand that the 5 Project Management Processes Groups (Initiating, Planning, Executing, Monitoring and Controlling, and Closing) exist within every project phase. In simple; you initiate, plan, execute, control and monitor then close each phase.

Do not get confused, it is so simple: 5 main groups (initiating, planning, executing...) and 10 knowledge areas contains 47 processes. Each process can exist in one or more of the 5 main groups. The 47 processes need inputs that can be used by some tools to generate outputs.

Here is an example: let's say we want to close a project, this is our process group number1.

Here there are 2 knowledge areas should be included in (*The Project Integration Management and The Project Procurement Management*). From Project Integration Management, we have to use the close project or phase process (which is one of the 47 knowledge areas processes we talked about) and from the project procurement management, we need the close procurement process (which is another process of the 47 knowledge areas processes we talked about).

Each one of the 47 processes has its own input tools and techniques and output and it is normal that one of the outputs of one process becomes an input for another processes. **The inputs** are usually documents, information, procedures, policies, supporting detail, etc. **The tools & techniques** are the project management methodologies and systems, such as network diagramming, earned value analysis, estimating tools, etc. As a result of applying tools and techniques, an output is produced, in other words, **outputs** are deliverables or tangible results from each major process.

Do not forget that project management process groups are interactive and interrelated, which means you may need to revisit the planning process while executing process, or keep revisiting the monitoring and controlling during planning process.

Finally, each knowledge area process has its inputs; tools; techniques, and outputs. In other simple words, you have an input and you implement tool or technique on it towards producing an output. There are many outputs from one knowledge area that become an input for another knowledge area.

You need to understand the terms and the logic relationships between the inputs, outputs and tools & techniques. Memorizing them is not enough and will lead you nowhere.

*Refer to the PMBoK 5th Edition for more details. &
Please do not hesitate to contact me anytime if you have any questions, comments, and feedbacks.*

Success is yours,

*Prepared By: Amr Miqdadi, PMP
info@pmllead.net
<http://www.pmllead.net>*

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