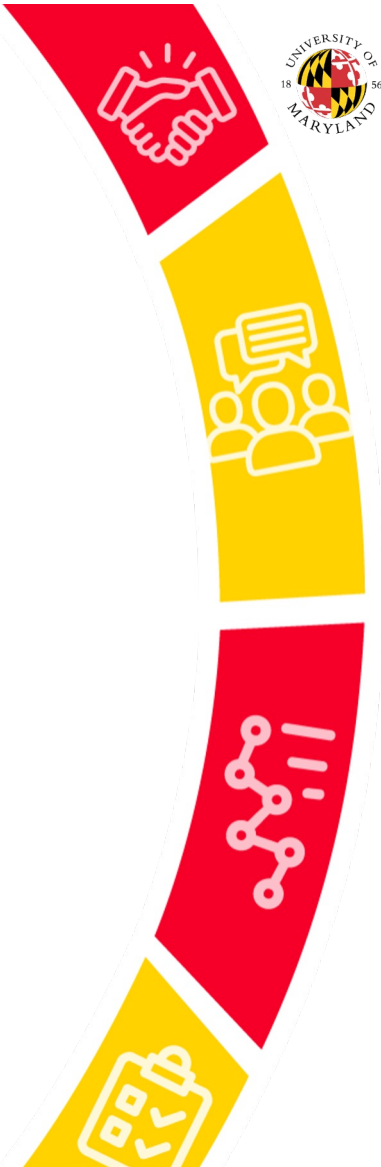




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UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
2026 PROJECT MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM

A decorative curved banner on the left side of the slide, composed of five segments in red and yellow. The segments contain white icons: a handshake, a group of people with speech bubbles, a network diagram, a bar chart, and a clipboard with a checklist.

Decoding the PMBOK® Guide 8th Edition: What's New, What's Gone, and What's Next

Crystal Richards, PMP, PMI-ACP, CSM

Project Management Consultant, Educator, and Author

PMSYMPOSIUM.UMD.EDU

A pair of black-rimmed glasses is resting on a stack of books. A red bookmark is visible in the top book. The background is a blurred stack of books. The text "WHAT WE'LL TALK ABOUT" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font.

WHAT WE'LL TALK ABOUT

Session Agenda



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Four stops on today's walk through the PMBOK® Guide 8th Edition.

1

What's changed

Updated definitions, principles, and structure.

2

What's gone

Process Groups as we knew them.

3

What's new

Focus Areas, Performance Domains, and 40 evolved processes.

4

What's next

Implications for the exam and the profession.

Learning Objectives



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By the end of this session, you will be able to:

01

Identify

the major shifts in the PMBOK® Guide 8th Edition.

02

Anticipate

how these updates may influence professional expectations.

03

Adjust

study or training strategies to align with PMI's direction.

04

Adapt

PDUs and practice areas to stay relevant under the 8th Edition framework.

Know it. Predict it. Plan for it. Act on it.

The PMBOK® Guide...



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Globally recognized standard for project management professionals.



Provides a systematic approach to managing projects.



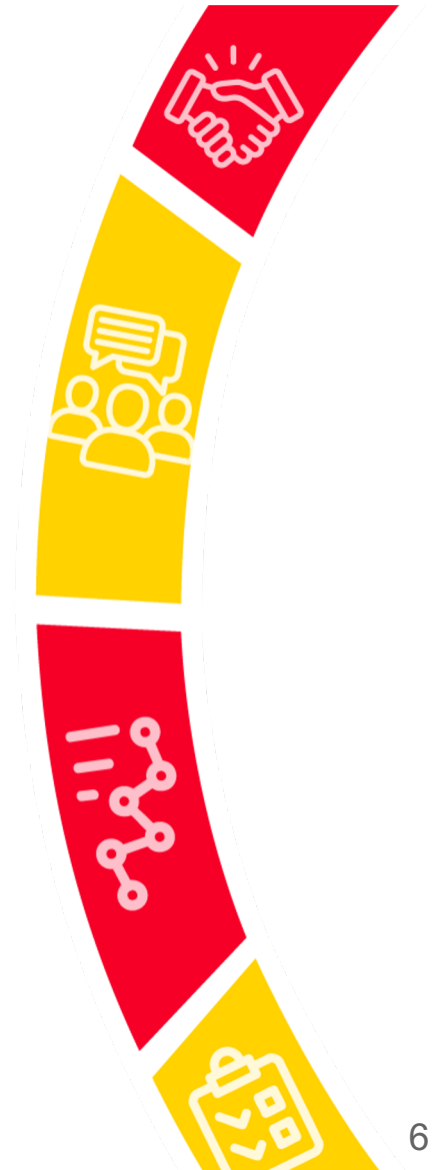
Provides a common language and a structured methodology for project management.



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What Changed?



From Process Groups to Focus Areas



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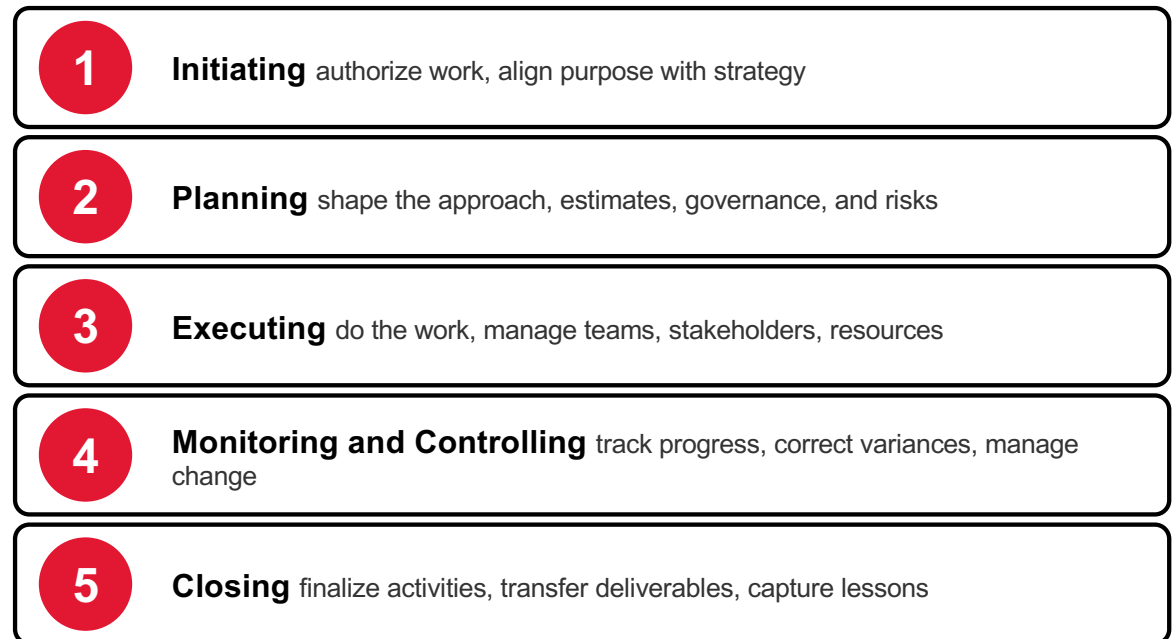
PMBOK 6 Process Groups



reimagined



PMBOK 8 Focus Areas



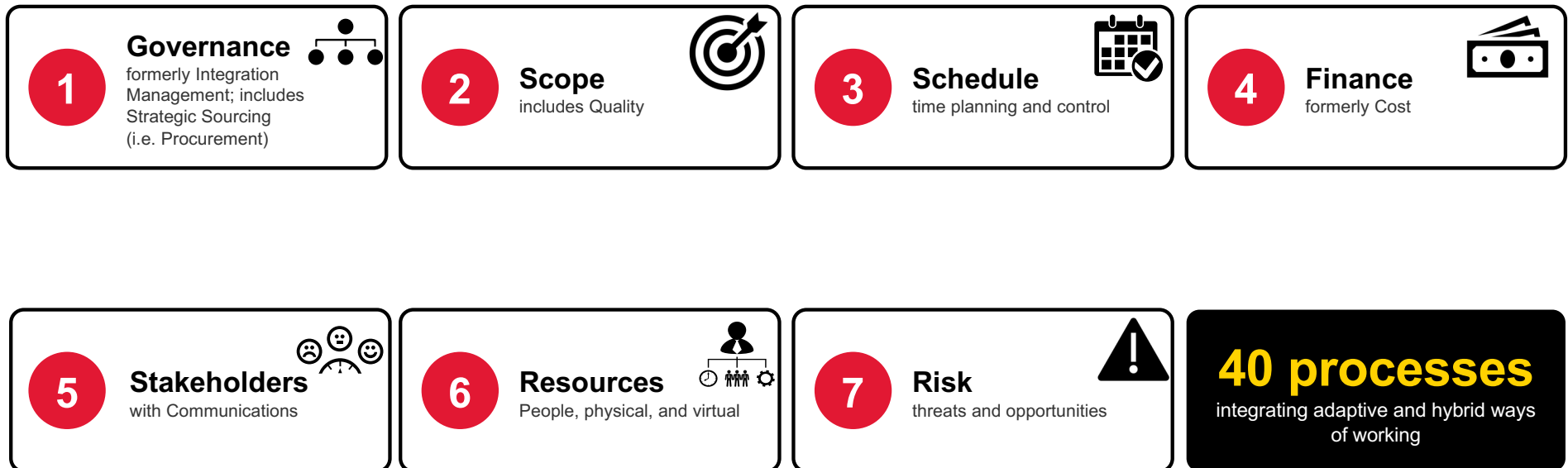
Same names. New mindset. Focus Areas flex across predictive, agile, and hybrid delivery.

7 PM Performance Domains



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The beloved Knowledge Areas are back, with a new name

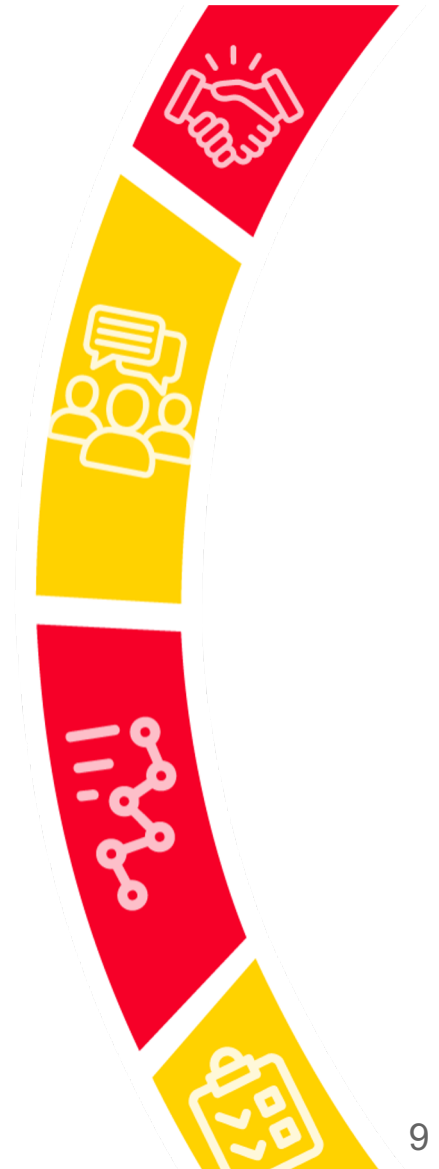




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What's Gone?



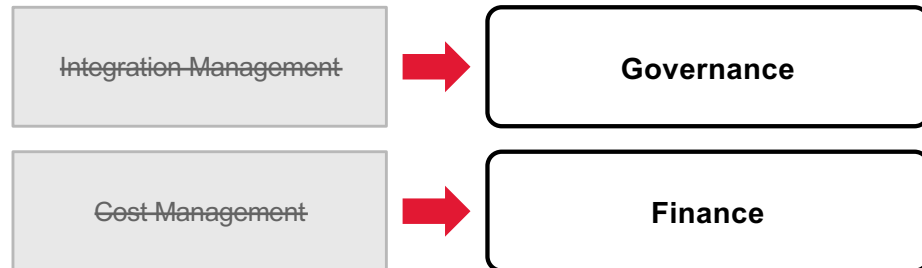
What's Gone?



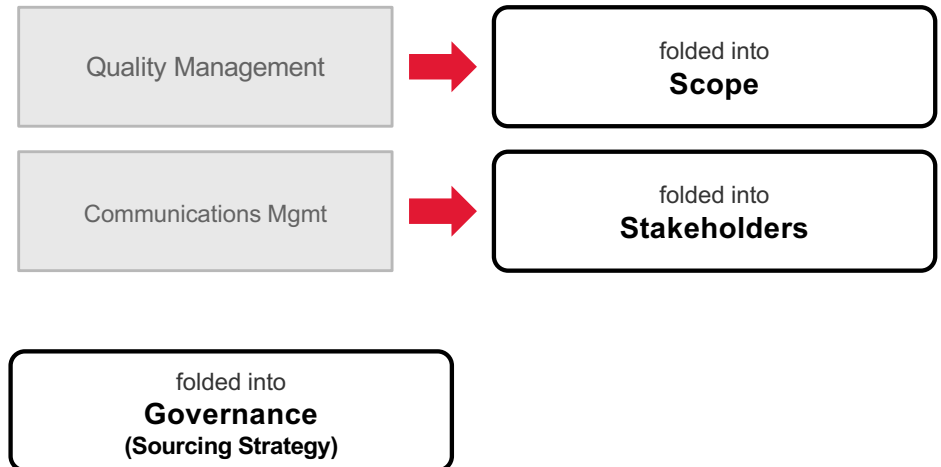
From **49** to **40** processes

The drop shows up in three places: Schedule, Quality, and Procurement

RENAMED



ABSORBED



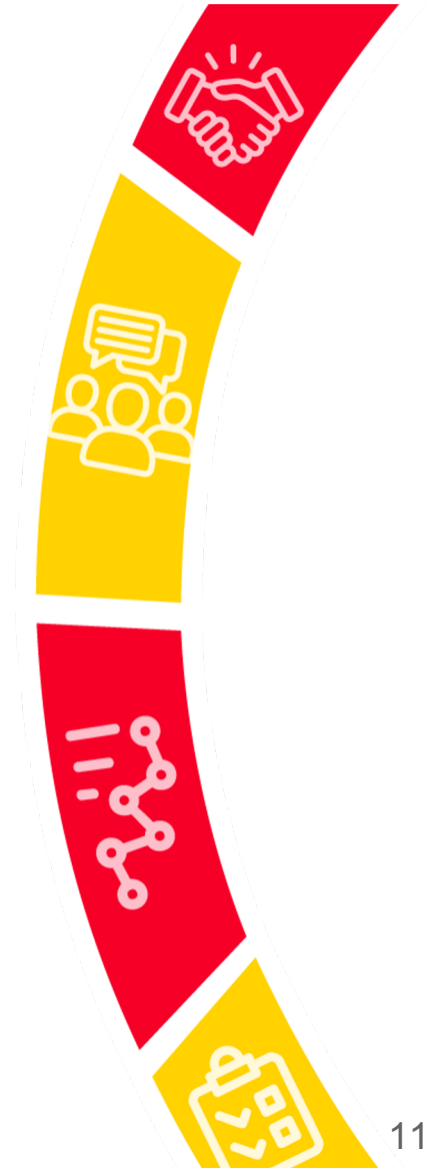
Nothing truly disappeared. It was renamed, absorbed, or tucked into an appendix.



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What's New?



What's New?



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416

pages in the 8th Edition

+160

more than 7th Edition

-340

fewer than 6th Edition

WHAT'S INSIDE

Updated foundations

Refreshed definitions of core terms, aligned to global practice and accessible language

AI and sustainability

New coverage reflecting how modern teams actually deliver work

Agile and hybrid, woven in

Adaptive and hybrid approaches are integrated throughout, not siloed

The PM Mindset. Whoa.

A new lens on how project managers think, decide, and lead

Definitions and Principles



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PRINCIPLE (noun)

A fundamental norm, truth, or value that **guides** the PM and project team.

Mindset

and behavior

Principles guide behavior on projects

Outcomes

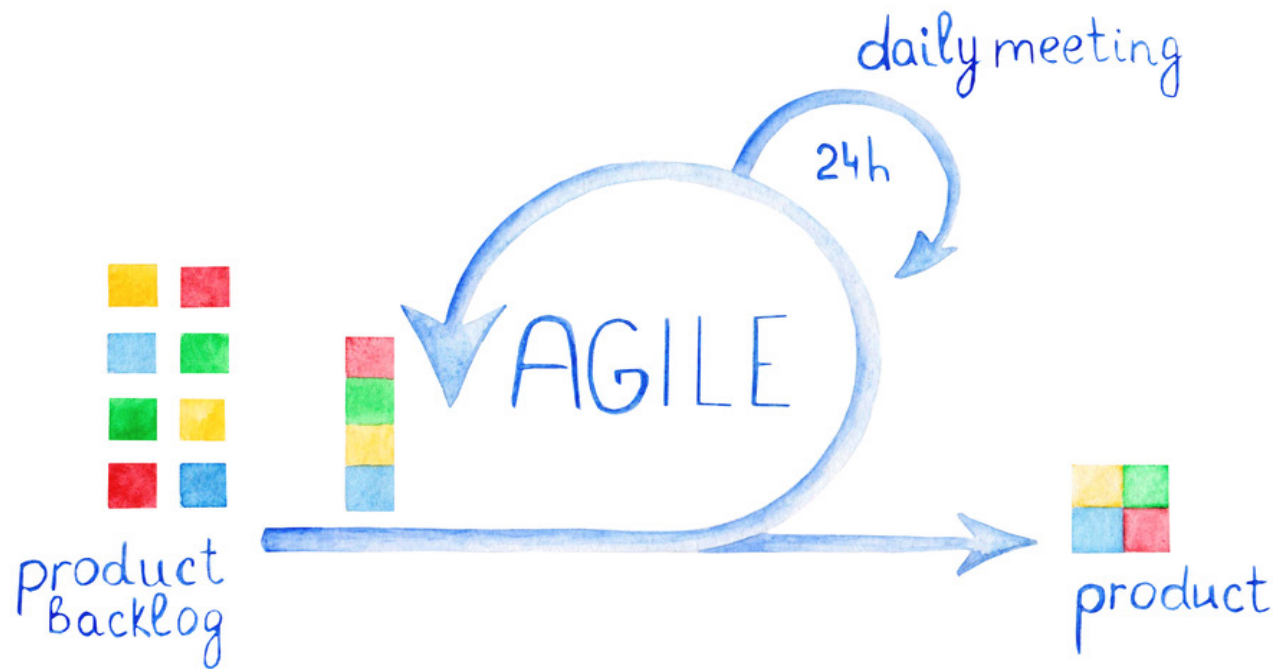
over approach

The Guide emphasizes on **delivering results**, no matter which method the team uses.

Integration of agile / hybrid approaches



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PM Mindset...Whoa!



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MINDSET & BEHAVIORS

Reflects how a project manager approaches work.

PRINCIPLES

Turn the mindset into guidance for action.

PERFORMANCE DOMAINS

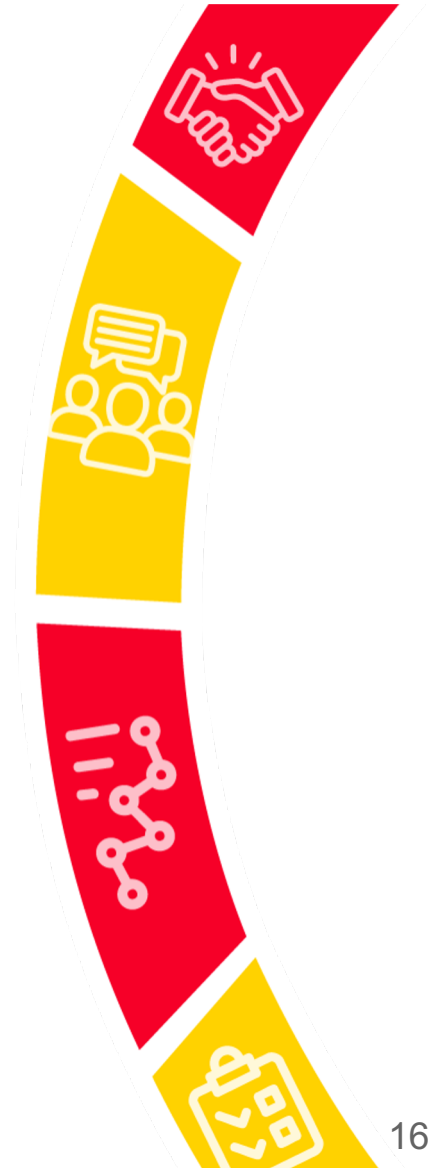
Show where the mindset and principles are applied in practice.



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What Came Back?



ITTOs Are Back!



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Inputs, Tools, Techniques, and Outputs return in the 8th Edition, aligned to the 40 processes across all seven Performance Domains.



Familiar inputs and outputs. New tools and techniques that reflect how teams work today.

Why it matters: The 7th Edition pulled back from process-level detail. The 8th Edition brings it back, aligned to the 40 evolved processes across all seven Performance Domains, so practitioners can see how work flows from inputs to outputs without losing the principles-based foundation.

New Tools and Techniques Terms



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A lot is new. Grouped so it's easier to see what belongs where.

AI and automation

AI, Machine Learning, NLP
Augmented reality (AR)
Predictive analytics
Process automations (RPA)
Genetic algorithms

Communication and collaboration

Active listening
Communication competence
Daily coordination meeting
Customer talks and tests
Brainstorming techniques
Six Thinking Hats, Design thinking

Schedule and critical path

Critical path method (Day 1)
Critical path drag, drag cost
Critical chain method, CCPM
Theory of Constraints
Branch and bound

Learning and estimation

After-action reviews (AARs)
In-progress postmortems
Multipoint estimating
COCOMO (Constructive Cost Model)

People and risk

Green human resource management
Resource-based view
Contingent response strategies
for opportunities, not just threats

Visual artifacts

Project canvas
Project dashboard
Value breakdown structure

You don't need to master all them. Know what each cluster is for so you can reach for the right tool.

The Process Map is Back!!



PROJECT MANAGEMENT FOCUS AREAS					
Performance Domains	Initiating Focus Area	Planning Focus Area	Execution Focus Area	Monitoring + Controlling Focus Area	Closing Focus Area
Governance	Initiate Project or Phase	- Develop and Align Project Plan - Plan Building Strategy	- Develop Project Location - Develop Quality Assurance - Develop Project Knowledge	- Monitor and Control Project Performance - Administer and Implement Changes	Close Project or Phase
Scope		- Plan Scope Management - Collect and Analyze Requirements - Define Scope - Develop Scope - Validate		- Monitor and Control Scope - Validate Scope	
Schedule		- Plan Schedule Management - Develop Schedule		Monitor and Control Schedule	
Finance		- Plan Financial Management - Estimate Costs - Develop Budget		Monitor and Control Financials	
Stakeholders	Identify Stakeholders	- Plan Stakeholder Engagement - Plan Communications Management	- Manage Stakeholder Engagement - Manage Communications	- Monitor Stakeholder Engagement - Monitor Communications	
Resources		- Plan Resource Management - Estimate Resources	- Acquire Resources - Lead the Team	Monitor and Control Resource Usage	
Risks		- Plan Risk Management - Identify Risks - Perform Risk Analysis - Plan Risk Responses	Implement Risk Responses		Monitor Risks

Provides structured, actionable guidance that many practitioners felt was missing in the 7th Edition

Tailoring



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Adapt the work to **the project context.**

01

Guidance carries forward

The 8th Edition preserves the tailoring guidance from the 7th Edition.

02

Domain-level guidance

Tailoring considerations are added to **each** Performance Domain.

03

Teams make it theirs

Adapt processes, tools, and techniques to fit the **project context.**

Teams are encouraged to adapt processes, tools, and techniques to fit their project context

Critical Path Method...and Critical Chain



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- Critical Path Method explanation
 - Critical path drag
- Critical Chain



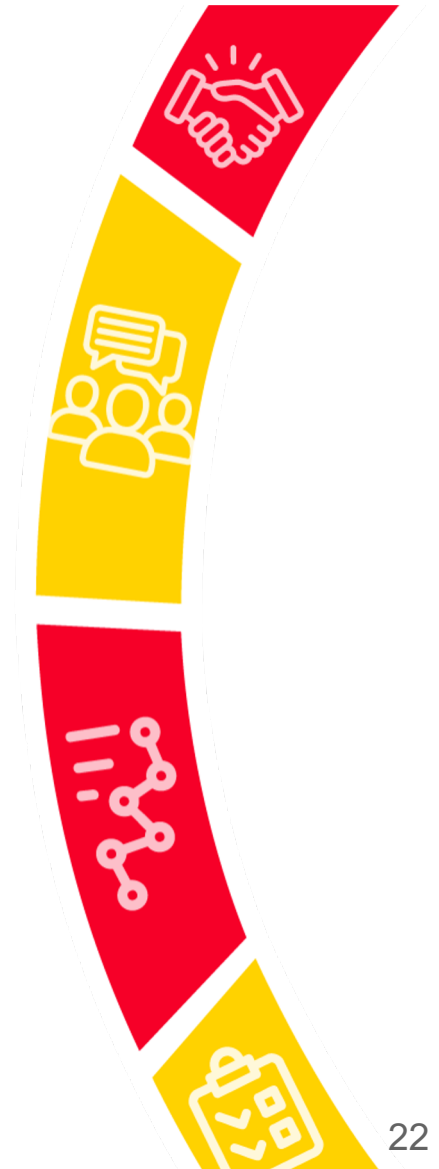


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What's Next?

For the profession
For the exam



What's Next for the profession?



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Refreshed vocabulary

Shared language that matches how teams work, across industries and methods.

Real-world integration

Examples and practical guidance reflect the projects practitioners manage today.

Sustainability and AI

New expectations for how projects address environmental impact and the rise of AI.

Hybrid is the norm

Hybrid delivery is recognized as a first-class approach, not a compromise.

Staff wellbeing, front and center

The profession is taking the whole person seriously. Workload, stress, sustainability of people, not just projects.

What's Next for the exam?



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WHAT TO EXPECT

Refreshed vocabulary. New terms, new framing.

40 processes. Fewer than 49, embedded in the domains.

Hybrid and adaptive. Integrated, not siloed.

Lean into the PM Mindset. Whoa.

THE EXAM SPLIT

33%

41%

26%

People leadership, team, communication

Process the work of managing the project

Business Environment strategy, compliance, value; risk

Three out of four questions are People or Process.

HOW DO YOU READ THE PMBOK® GUIDE?



Cover to cover? Possibly



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SHOULD YOU READ IT COVER TO COVER?

Not Really.

Think of it as a **reference guide**, not a novel.

What does the PMBOK® Guide say about...?

HOW TO ACTUALLY READ IT

1

Read in small chunks.

A section at a time. Sit with it before moving on.

2

Connect it to your work.

Where do you already demonstrate this principle or domain?

3

Reflect on what's next.

What could be improved on your projects based on what you read?

For credential holders



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YOU EARN PDUs!

PMI wants you to be up to date on the latest practices and methods.

2026 Project Management Symposium

A few of my favorite things



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What I am genuinely glad to see in the 8th Edition.



Process orientation is back

Pure principles-based felt too free-flowing. I like having structure to lean on.



It is actually readable

Clearer writing, better flow. You can sit with a section without needing to re-read it three times.



Real-world examples

Looove these. They make the concepts stick in a way theory alone never does.



Agile Practice Guide, woven in

Agile thinking is now part of the conversation, not a separate book on the shelf.



The PM Mindset. Whoa.

If I had to pick one favorite, this is it. The Guide is finally saying what separates a good PM from a great one, and it is not a process.

The mic is all yours...or the Q&A



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A large, stylized yellow hand icon with fingers spread, positioned behind the text.

General Questions or Comments?

2026 Project Management Symposium



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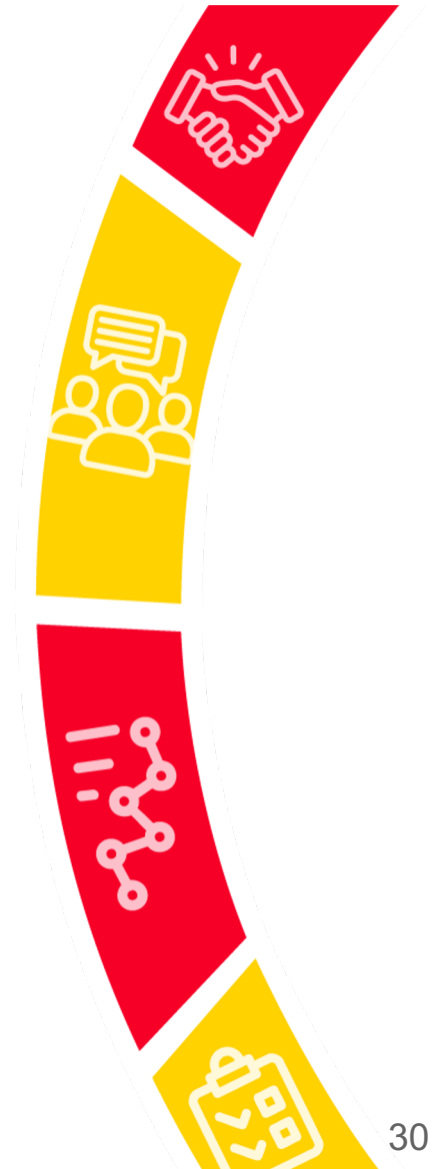
Questions & Evaluation

Evaluate Session:



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References



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