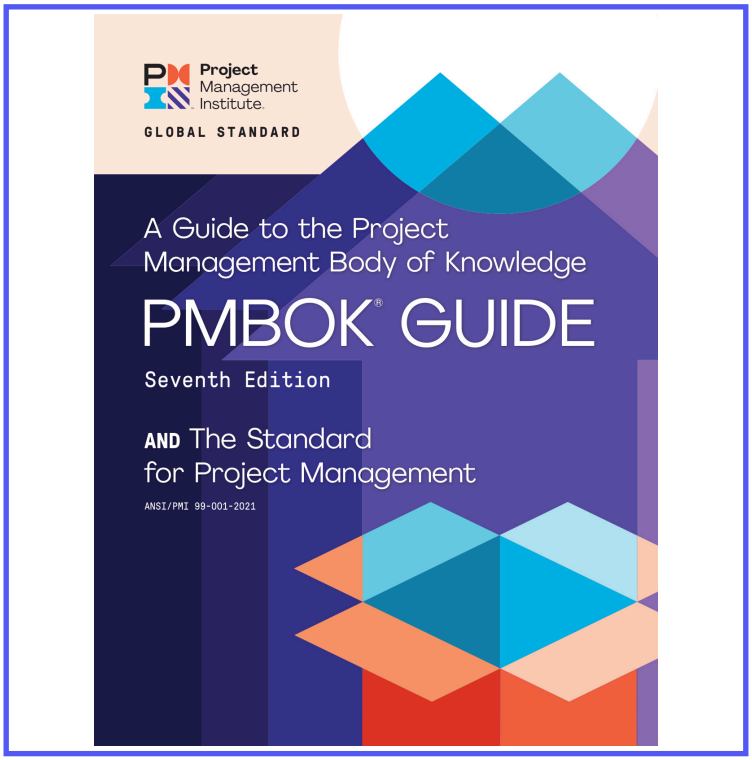


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Preface

Each time work begins on a new edition of *The Standard for Project Management* and the *PMBOK® Guide*, there is an opportunity to consider global perspectives on changes in project management and the approaches used for realizing benefits and value from project outputs. In the time between every edition, a world of change has occurred. Some organizations have ceased to exist, and new organizations have emerged. Older technologies have reached end of life while technologies offering completely new capabilities have evolved. People who continue in the workforce have advanced their thinking, skills, and capabilities as new entrants focus on quickly understanding their professional language, building their skills, developing their business acumen, and contributing to the objectives of their employers.

Even in the midst of such changes, though, there are fundamental concepts and constructs that remain in place. The understanding that collective thinking produces more holistic solutions than the thoughts of one individual continues. And the fact that organizations use projects as a vehicle for delivering a unique result or output endures.

CUSTOMER- AND END-USER-CENTERED DESIGN

While the Sixth Edition of the *PMBOK® Guide* was under development and throughout development of this Seventh Edition, PMI has actively engaged with a broad range of global stakeholders on their experiences with using *The Standard for Project Management* and the *PMBOK® Guide*. These engagements have included:

- Online surveys to representative samples of PMI stakeholders;
- Focus groups with PMO leaders, project managers, agile practitioners, project team members, and educators and trainers; and
- Interactive workshops with practitioners at various PMI events around the globe.

The feedback and inputs collectively emphasized four key points:

- Maintain and enhance the credibility and relevance of the *PMBOK® Guide*.
- Improve the readability and usefulness of the *PMBOK® Guide* while avoiding overstuffing it with new content.
- Sense stakeholder information and content needs and provide vetted supplemental content supporting practical application.
- Recognize that there is continued value for some stakeholders in the structure and content of previous editions so that any shifts enhance without negating that value.

SUSTAINING THE RELEVANCE OF THE *PMBOK® GUIDE*

Since its inception as the *Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK)* in 1987, *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide)* has evolved while recognizing that fundamental elements of project management endure. Its evolution has not just involved an increase in the page count, it has also involved significant and substantive changes in the nature of the content. A sampling of some of those key changes is reflected in the following table:

Evolution of Key Changes in the *PMBOK® Guide*

PMBOK® Guide Edition	Key Evolutionary Changes
1996	• Distinguished as "a guide to the body of knowledge," rather than the body of knowledge for project management. • Reflected the subset of the project management body of knowledge that is "generally accepted," meaning applicable to most projects most of the time with widespread consensus that practices have value and usefulness. • Defined project management as "the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities **in order to meet or exceed stakeholder needs and expectations** [emphasis added] from a project." • Specific decision to shift to a process-based standard driven by a desire to show interactions among Knowledge Areas; create a robust and flexible structure; and recognize that ISO and other standards organizations were establishing process-based standards.
Third (2004)	• First edition to incorporate the "ANSI Standard" logo on the cover. • First edition to formally designate *The Standard for Project Management of a Project* separate and distinct from the Project Management Framework and Body of Knowledge. • Included material "generally recognized as good practice on most projects most of the time." • Defined project management as "the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities **to meet the project requirements**."
Sixth (2017)	• First edition to make a distinct separation between the ANSI standard and the guide. • First time "agile" content is incorporated into the text, not just referenced in examples. • Expansion of Knowledge Area front material, including key concepts, trends and emerging practices, tailoring considerations, and considerations for agile/adaptive environments.

Like previous editions of *The Standard for Project Management* and the *PMBOK® Guide*, this edition recognizes that the project management landscape continues to evolve and adapt. Over the past 10 years alone, the advancement of software into all types of products, services, and solutions has grown exponentially. What software can enable continues to change as artificial intelligence, cloud-based capabilities, and new business models drive innovation and new ways of working. Transformed organizational models have yielded new project work and team structures, the need for a broad range of approaches to project and product delivery, and a stronger focus on outcomes rather than deliverables. Individual contributors can join project teams from anywhere in the world, serve in a broader array of roles, and enable new ways of thinking and working collaboratively. These changes and more have created this opportunity to reconsider perspectives to support the continued evolution of *The Standard for Project Management* and the *PMBOK® Guide*.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

Since 1987, *The Standard for Project Management* has represented a process-based standard. *The Standard for Project Management* included in the *PMBOK® Guide* aligned the project management discipline and function around a collection of business processes. Those business processes enabled consistent and predictable practices:

- That could be documented;
- Through which performance against the processes could be assessed; and
- Through which improvements to the process could be made to maximize efficiency and minimize threats.

While effective in supporting good practice, process-based standards are prescriptive by their very nature. With project management evolving more rapidly than ever before, the process-based orientation of past editions cannot be maintained in a manner conducive to reflecting the full value delivery landscape. Therefore, this edition shifts to a principles-based standard to support effective project management and to focus more on intended outcomes rather than deliverables.

A global community of practitioners from different industries and organizations, in different roles, and working on different types of projects have developed and/or provided feedback on drafts of the standard as it has evolved for this edition. In addition, the *PMBOK® Guide* – Seventh Edition coleaders and staff reviewed other bodies of knowledge and works focused on project management to identify principle concepts embedded in those texts. These combined efforts showed strong alignment and supported the validation that the guiding principles in this edition of the standard apply across the spectrum of project management.

To date, the global project management community has embraced the shift of this standard toward a set of principle statements. The principle statements capture and summarize generally accepted objectives for the practice of project management and its core functions. The principle statements provide broad parameters within which project teams can operate and offer many ways to remain aligned with the intent of the principles.

Using these principle statements, PMI can reflect effective management of projects across the full value delivery landscape: predictive to adaptive and everything in between. This principles-based approach is also consistent with the evolution of *The Standard for Program Management* (Third and Fourth Editions) and *The Standard for Portfolio Management* – Fourth Edition. *The Standard for Risk Management in Portfolios, Programs, and Projects* and *Benefits Realization Management: A Practice Guide* represent new standard products intentionally developed with a principles-based focus by global teams of subject matter experts.

Nothing in this edition of *The Standard for Project Management* or *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge* negates alignment with the process-based approach of past editions. Many organizations and practitioners continue to find that approach useful for guiding their project management capabilities, aligning their methodologies, and evaluating their project management capabilities. That approach remains relevant in the context of this new edition.

Another significant change with this edition of the *PMBOK® Guide* is a systems view of project management. This shift begins with a systems view of value delivery as part of *The Standard for Project Management* and continues with the presentation of the *PMBOK® Guide* content. A systems focus for value delivery changes the perspective from one of governing portfolios, programs, and projects to focusing on the value chain that links those and other business capabilities to advancing organizational strategy, value, and business objectives. In the context of project management, *The Standard for Project Management* and the *PMBOK® Guide* emphasize that projects do not simply produce outputs, but more importantly, enable those outputs to drive outcomes that ultimately deliver value to the organization and its stakeholders.

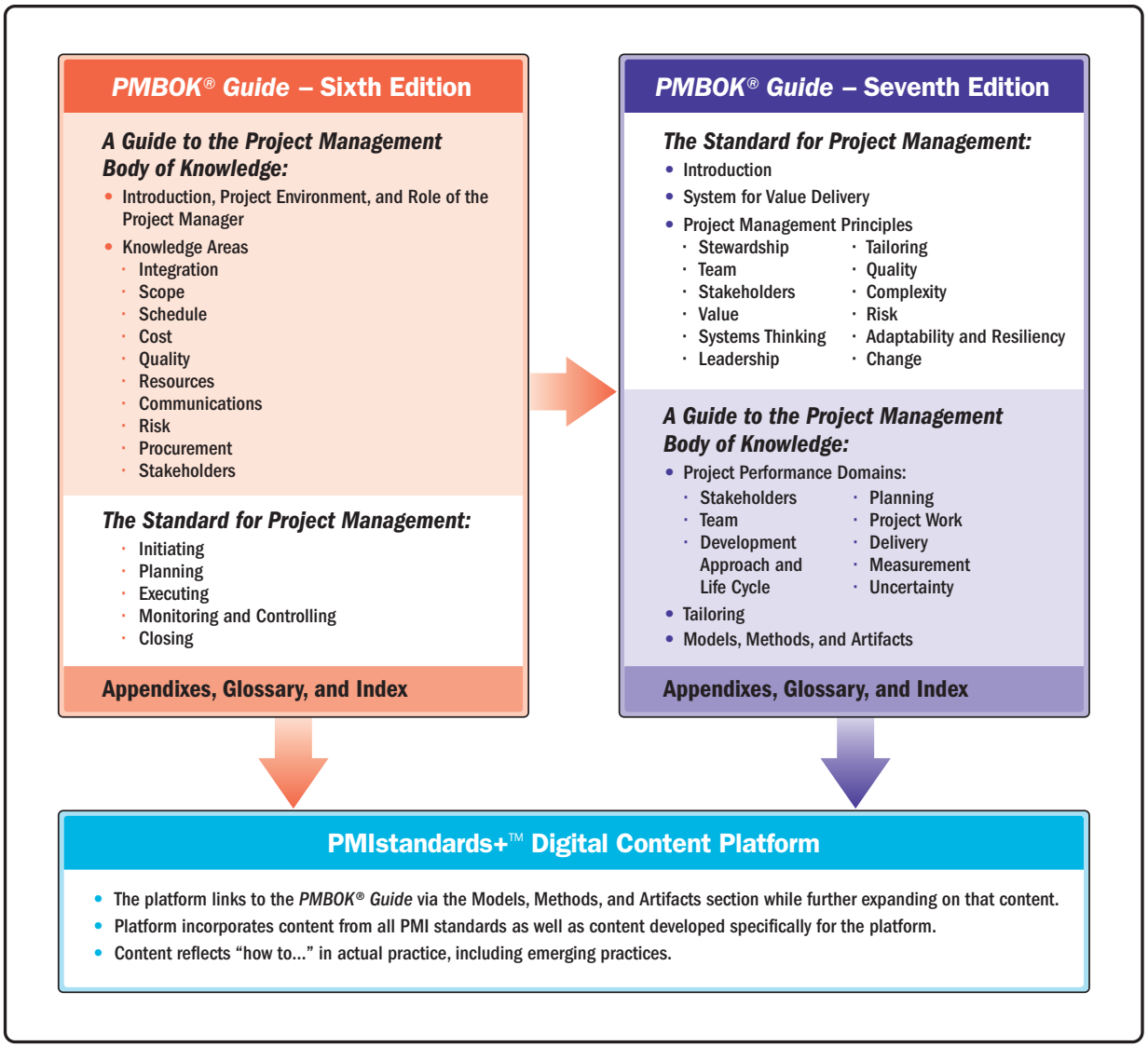
This systems view reflects a shift from the Knowledge Areas in past editions of the *PMBOK® Guide* to eight project performance domains. A performance domain is a group of related activities that are critical for the effective delivery of project outcomes. Collectively, the performance domains represent a project management system of interactive, interrelated, and interdependent management capabilities that work in unison to achieve desired project outcomes. As the performance domains interact and react to each other, change occurs. Project teams continuously review, discuss, adapt, and respond to such changes with the whole system in mind—not just the specific performance domain in which the change occurred. Aligned with the concept of a system for value delivery in *The Standard for Project Management*, teams evaluate effective performance in each performance domain through outcomes-focused measures, rather than through adherence to processes or the production of artifacts, plans, etc.

Previous editions of the *PMBOK® Guide* emphasized the importance of tailoring the project management approach to the unique characteristics of each project and its context. The Sixth Edition specifically incorporated considerations to help project teams think about how to tailor their approach to project management. That content was included in the front matter of each of the Knowledge Areas and provided considerations for all types of project environments. This edition further expands upon that work with a dedicated section on Tailoring in the *PMBOK® Guide*.

A new section on Models, Methods, and Artifacts provides a high-level grouping of models, methods, and artifacts that support project management. This section maintains linkages to tools, techniques, and outputs from previous editions that support project management without prescribing when, how, or which tools teams should use.

The final change reflects the most significant advancement in the *PMBOK® Guide's* history—the creation of PMIstandards+™, an interactive digital platform that incorporates current, emerging, and future practices, methods, artifacts, and other useful information. The digital content better reflects the dynamic nature of a body of knowledge. PMIstandards+ provides project practitioners and other stakeholders with access to a richer and broader range of information and resources that can more quickly accommodate advances and changes in project management. The content explains how specific practices, methods, or artifacts apply to projects based on industry segments, project types, or other characteristics. Starting with the inputs, tools and techniques, and outputs from the *PMBOK® Guide* – Sixth Edition, PMIstandards+ will continue to incorporate new resources that support continued evolution in project management. Going forward, users of *The Standard for Project Management* and the *PMBOK® Guide* can find information in PMIstandards+ that will supplement the information included in the printed publication.

The following figure illustrates the revision to *The Standard for Project Management* and migration from the Sixth to the Seventh Edition of the *PMBOK® Guide*, along with the connection to the PMIstandards+ digital platform.



Revision to *The Standard for Project Management* and Migration from the Sixth Edition to the Seventh Edition of the *PMBOK® Guide* and the PMIstandards+™ Digital Content Platform