

Primers in Project Management: An integrated glossary of project management terms & definitions

Version 13.D

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Purpose

This glossary is intended to provide rigorous definitions of the terms and concepts used in both the ProjectOutcomes product set and John Smyrk's courses at the Australian National University. This is work in progress—and so will undergo regular extension, enhancement and revision. (For example, the terms from many topics are not yet included—nor have all of the underlined hyperlinks been activated).

The definitions given here are those that are used in the theoretical foundations that underpin ProjectOutcomes and the author's University courses. Readers who are interested in a comprehensive catalogue of the alternative meanings ascribed to these (and other terms used in the project management discipline) are referred to <http://maxwideman.com/pmglossary/>

Changes relative to Version 1.A

In this version, a number of typographical errors have been corrected, some ambiguous or loose material has been tidied up, and the list of terms from Project Governance has been extended.

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Examples & case study illustrations

Examples and illustrations for selected terms are provided in the second column below. The *examples* have no particular context, but the *illustrations* are drawn from the following hypothetical case study.

A firm—Interstate Concrete Operations (ICO) has undertaken a Procurement Improvement Initiative—entitled Project BuyRite. This exercise has been triggered by the results of benchmarking that has revealed significant problems in current purchasing practice. Amongst other things to emerge from the study:

- The Company has a reputation amongst major suppliers of being a very poor payer—with 50% of all invoices still outstanding after 90 days. This has two effects: reliable suppliers are pricing their offers to ICO at a premium and ICO is unable to take advantage of early-payment rebates.
- Uncoordinated purchasing policies in different business units over many years has resulted in orders being placed each year with over 2500 different suppliers across the country.
- Procurement processes have “grown like topsy”—largely the result of adapting local practice when new companies were acquired during a period of aggressive growth in the 1980s. These processes are inconsistent, undocumented, inefficient and slow—forcing ICO to maintain unacceptably large inventories to deal with frequent outages. This is a significant contributor to the Company’s very high working capital. In addition, the costs of procurement put ICO towards the bottom of the benchmarking ladder—the result of large, decentralised purchasing offices
- The newly appointed Head of National Procurement, Dennis Bloodnok proposed Project BuyRite shortly after he took up his position. He has, as a result, been commissioned by the CEO (Henry Crun) to fix the problem. Henry will hold Dennis accountable for achieving the project’s target outcomes. Dennis has contracted an outsider Minnie Bannister as the Manager of Project BuyRite. Minnie has, in turn, engaged an experienced project Administrator—Gladys Ellington—to assist with significant above-the-line work.

Preliminary discussions with Operations, Finance and Minnie Bannister has allowed some initial ideas to be assembled on the shape of the project. Candidate objectives identified at this stage include: reduce operating costs, reduce supplier settlement times and shorten supplier lead times by reengineering the Company’s procurement processes. Primary outputs will include: new procurement processes, a new organisational model (for the Procurement/purchasing department), new vendor contracts and new application systems.

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Term	Definition	Discussion	Examples & illustrations
Above-the-line AtL	Related to the planning, monitoring and management of a <u>project</u> .	Above-the-line is an <i>adjectival expression</i> . It is used to qualify both outputs and activities. “Above-the-line”, as a project management concept, should not be confused with the same term used in marketing. Refer also <u>below-the-line</u> .	“ <i>Present the business case</i> ” is an above-the-line process. <i>The business case</i> itself is an above-the-line output.
Accepted (project) practice	A collection of procedures that are accepted by the project management profession (especially the PMI) as meeting certain criteria—and hence are accepted for use in the management of projects.		The PMBoK includes a significant catalogue of accepted (project management) practice.
Acquisition plan	A comprehensive model of the outlays on external products and services that are demanded by the project’s WBS.	Refer also <u>resource plan</u> and <u>HR plan</u> .	
Activity	A formalised <u>process</u> that is made up of <u>tasks</u> . Also used loosely to mean any “block of work”.	In the stylised three-level WBS, processes at the second level are called <i>activities</i> . A collection of related activities constitutes a <i>phase</i> . By convention, an activity is expressed as an English <i>imperative</i> . An imperative takes the form of a command or an instruction. See also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>phase</u>. • <u>task</u>. 	This is an appropriately-worded activity (because it is stated as <i>imperatives</i> (commands): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Arrange meetings with major existing suppliers” These are unacceptable forms of wording for activities (because they are nouns): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Minutes of meeting with supplier” • “Results of process evaluation.”

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Ad hoc tasks	Small blocks of work that require no formal planning or monitoring.	The optimal way of handling ad hoc tasks is to “make them up as you go along”—correcting errors by simply redoing the work involved.	Normally one would not plan the work involved in <i>correcting the draft of a set of minutes from a meeting</i> .
Alterant	An <u>output</u> from a <u>process</u> in which an <u>attribute</u> of an existing <u>artifact</u> is altered.	Refer also <u>deliverable</u> .	A <i>revised version of a (preliminary) list of preferred vendors</i> is an alterant. (As distinct from <i>the initial version of such a list</i> —which would be an alterant).
Appraisal (of a project)	<i>Ex ante</i> <u>assessment</u> of a project—carried out <i>before</i> a <u>project</u> is approved. <u>Appraisal</u> is based on <u>benefit-cost-risk analysis</u> , which is a formalised model of the project’s predicted worth.	The decisions to fund and approve are informed by the appraisal contained in the business case. Any decision to abandon or continue a <i>project in progress</i> will be based on a revised appraisal. Refer also <u>evaluation</u> .	Before committing to Project BuyRite, Henry Crun will want to see details of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the benefits to flow from improved procurement processes. • The costs of reengineering those processes. • The risks involved.
Artifact	Something that has a direct physical representation—with measurable physical attributes.	Artifacts are <i>produced</i> from a <i>process</i>	Amongst the (many) artifacts that will be recognised in the outputs from Project BuyRite are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A flowchart. • A document. • An organisational model. • A computer screen.

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Assessment (of a project)	A <u>process</u> to measure the <u>worth</u> of a <u>project</u> .	Takes two forms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Appraisal</u>—on which approval to proceed with the project is based. • <u>Evaluation</u>—on which the quality of the decision to proceed is gauged. 	
AtL	See <u>above-the-line</u> .		
Attribute	A defined/measurable characteristic of any <u>entity</u> recognised within the <u>MFBP framework</u> .	The word <i>attribute</i> is used here in a sense very similar to that adopted in data modelling.	<i>A date for realisation</i> of the Procurement Improvement Project's target cost reduction is an attribute of that that <i>target outcome</i> . <i>The count of suppliers</i> appearing in the list of preferred vendors is an attribute of that list.
Baseline document	A document used to approve, monitor and close a <u>project</u> .	A baseline document is a comprehensive <i>model</i> of a project. The two major baseline documents are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The business case</u>. • <u>The project plan</u>. 	
Below-the-line BtL	Related to the <u>outputs</u> identified in the project's <u>scoping statement</u> .	"Below-the-line" is an adjectival expression. It used to qualify both outputs and work. Refer also <u>above-the-line</u> .	<i>Assessing optional designs for the new procurement process</i> is a below-the-line activity. <i>The list of preferred interstate transport contractors</i> is a below-the-line output.

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Beneficiary	A (project) beneficiary is a <u>stakeholder</u> who receives a <u>flow of value</u> arising from achievement of <u>target outcomes</u> .	The beneficiaries from a project can only be identified when target outcomes have been defined—because the only flows of value that are recognised in the analysis of a project are those attached to target outcomes.	The company (ICO) itself is a beneficiary—experiencing a flow of value from the reduced operating costs.
Benefit	A flow of value arising directly from achievement of a <u>target outcome</u> .	Target outcomes are best expressed directly in terms of benefits. A target outcome/benefit must be measurable—but the unit of measure need not be “dollars”. To be claimed as a benefit in the appraisal of a project, an outcome must be <u>targeted</u> .	The <i>lowered operating costs</i> are a benefit from the project—flowing to the company itself. The achievement of <i>reduced supplier settlement times</i> implies a benefit to vendors—in the form of reduced working capital.
Benefit-cost-risk analysis	A rigorous technique for analysing competing <u>projects</u> <i>ex ante</i> —and thus informing decisions about funding and approving.	When applied <i>ex post</i> , the technique becomes simply <i>benefit-cost</i> analysis—and is used to gauge the quality of the original decision to proceed.	
BtL	See <u>below-the-line</u> .		
Budget	The total notional value of resources <i>approved</i> for the project.	The budget covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved real outlays on purchased resources from outside the funding entity. • The opportunity cost of all approved internal resources. 	

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Business case	A <u>baseline document</u> that provides all the information required to make a reliable decision about funding a project.	A business case should not contain information that is not relevant to a funding decision.	
Business environment	The environment within which the work of business is undertaken.	<p>The business environment is made up of a number of interacting elements including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A regulatory framework. • An organisational model. • Cultural norms. • Practices. • Processes. • Roles and accountabilities. 	
Business owner	<p>The <i>operational</i> entity accountable for the ongoing utilisation of a project's outputs after the project is declared closed. The business owner is the operational equivalent of a project owner.</p> <p>Business owner is not a project role—but a business owner is obviously a candidate to play the part of Project Owner</p>	<p>Business ownership is a (core) role in the operational environment of a business—it does not exist as a distinct role in the project environment.</p> <p>The eventual business owner could well be (and often is) the best candidate for Project owner.</p> <p>Refer also to two related defined terms in the ITO model</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Project owner</u>. • <u>Project customer</u> 	

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Business process	A regularised, significant operational “block of work” for which a model exists—drawn from a long history of repetition.		Amongst the (any) processes which ICO executes in the course of doing business are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quote customers. • Procure supplies. • Manufacture concrete. • Deliver concrete.
Champion	See <u>Promoter</u> .		
Constraint	An established boundary on a parameter of a project.	Constraints are set as hard or soft: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A hard constraint is one that must not be violated under any conditions. • A soft constraint is one that, if violated, incurs some sort of penalty for a stakeholder. 	Constraints are usually set for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Timeframe</u>. • <u>Cost (outlays/resources)</u>. In addition, from the perspective of the project funder and owner, <i>fulfilment of project scope is a constraint on achievement of the project’s target outcomes</i> .
Cost (s)	The value of resources demanded by the project’s <u>WBS</u> .	Costs are of two kinds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Outlays</u> of cash—to acquire products/services from outside the <u>sponsoring entity</u>. • The opportunity cost of labour allocated to the project from within the funding entity. 	

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Cost infeasible (project)	<p>A project for which an <i>optimal resource plan</i> indicates a demand for more resources than those approved in the budget.</p> <p>The difference between the <u>budget</u> and the costs of the resource plan is a gauge of the <i>level of (cost) infeasibility</i>.</p>	<p>Cost infeasibility must be resolved before a project can be approved.</p> <p>Refer also <u>infeasible project</u>.</p>	<p>If Henry Crun has indicated a budget of \$50M for the exercise—but Minnie Bannister's initial estimate is \$60M—then the project is infeasible and must not be approved until the infeasibility is resolved.</p>
Closure	<p>A process of judging the project across a number of selected performance areas—with a view to improving the organisation's performance on future initiatives.</p>	<p>Closure is distinct from evaluation (which is concerned with gauging the project's worth).</p> <p>Closure is not to be confused with <i>post-implementation review</i> which is a formal technique to determine if an IS/IT output is fit-for-purpose.</p>	
Customer	<p>See <u>Project customer</u>.</p>		
Customer map	<p>A tool used to analyse the appropriateness of a project's <u>scoping statement</u>.</p>	<p>The customer map takes the form of a table in which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rows are associated with outputs. • The Columns are associated with target outcomes. • Cell entries indicate the project's customers who utilise the linked outputs to generate the linked outcomes. 	

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Deadline	An arbitrarily set date for an event in the <u>project's workplan</u> .	Not to be confused with <u>milestone</u> .	Dennis has indicated to Minnie that he would like the Procurement problems all sorted out within nine months. If that date is simply a desire—and not the result of verifiable analysis—it is a <i>deadline</i> . That doesn't mean it is not important—nor does it mean it is not achievable—but until it is supported with reliable analysis it cannot be used as a project parameter.
Defining (a project's) outputs	A project's <u>outputs</u> are <i>defined</i> when two conditions have been met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All the <u>outputs</u> from the project have been identified and catalogued. • Critical <u>fit-for-purpose features</u> have been <i>set</i> for each. 	In practice, the cataloguing of a project's outputs might require a <u>PBS</u> —rather than a <i>simple list</i> . Refer also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>setting (project) scope</u>. • <u>scope</u> 	
Deliver	To transfer an output from the <u>project environment</u> to the <u>operational environment</u> —completely ready for utilisation.	The accountability of the project manager is discharged on delivery. On a matter of terminology <i>outputs are delivered</i> —but <i>outcomes are realised</i> .	
Deliverable	A newly created <u>output</u> from a <u>process</u> (that did not exist before the process was <u>executed</u>).	Refer also <u>alterant</u> .	A <i>preliminary list of preferred vendors</i> is a deliverable.

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Descope (a project)	To reduce the scope of a project.	A project can be descoped in either/both of two ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove outputs from the scoping statement. Remove (or weaken) fitness-for-purpose features for selected outputs. 	
Disbeneficiary	See <u>Impactee</u> .		
Disbenefit	A loss of <u>value</u> by a <u>stakeholder</u> that is attributable to the <u>project</u> . A disbenefit is the negative of a <u>benefit</u> .	The stakeholder experiencing the loss of value is called a <u>Disbeneficiary</u> or <u>Impactee</u> .	<i>The reduced volume of business from ICO suffered by those established suppliers who don't make it onto the preferred vendor list represents a disbenefit to them.</i>
Duration	The time taken to <u>execute</u> a <u>process</u> —in particular any subset of a <u>WBS</u> --including: a <u>task</u> , an <u>activity</u> or a <u>phase</u> .	In process analysis terms, <i>duration</i> is the same thing as <i>Process elapsed time</i> (PET). Elapsed time and labour are <i>closely related</i> —but <i>separately defined</i> concepts	The unit of measurement for duration is typically days, weeks or months. The unit of measurement for labour is typically person-days, person-weeks or person-months.
Environment, business	See <u>business environment</u> .		
Environment, operational	See <u>operational environment</u> .		
Environment, project	See <u>project environment</u> .		

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Evaluation	<i>Ex post</i> assessment of a project—carried out after a project is executed. Evaluation is based on benefit-cost analysis, which is a formalised analysis of the project's actual worth.	Used to gauge the appropriateness of the original decision to approve the project. Refer also <u>appraisal</u> , <u>closure</u> .	
Event	An identifiable instant of time.	Events can be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Internal</u>—associated with the end of a task in the WBS. • <u>External</u>—associated with development that lie outside the project's workplan. Selected events are designated as <u>milestones</u> .	In Project BuyRite: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>completion of the drafting of a new supplier contract</i> is an internal event. • The <i>enactment of changes to GST legislation</i> is an external event in Project BuyRite.
Execution	Undertaking a process.	When the work involved in them is complete, we say that processes, projects and the elements of a WBS have been <i>executed</i> .	
External event	See <u>event</u> .		

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Fitness-for-purpose	Suitability for <u>utilisation</u> by a <u>project customer</u> .	Fitness-for-purpose is a <i>binary</i> concept related only to a project's <i>outputs</i> . Outputs are either fit-for-purpose or they are not. The term has two senses: 1. <i>Ex ante</i> —where fit-for-purpose of an output is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expressed in terms of a (technical) specification. • decided by testing that the output meets its specification. 2. <i>Ex post</i> —where fit-for-purpose is decided by testing the “correctness” of the adopted specification.	
Fitness-for-purpose feature	A characteristic of an output that makes it suitable for <u>utilisation</u> .	A critical property of an output from a project. The set of fit-for-purpose features of an output provide the foundation for its eventual specification.	A requirement that the new procurement process <i>is not to include the issue of invoices from suppliers</i> is an example of a fit-for-purpose feature (of the new process).
Flow of value	The stream of benefits (or <u>disbenefits</u>) that a <u>stakeholder</u> experiences—arising the <u>project</u> .	Flows of value can be either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive—giving rise to a <i>gain in value</i> (benefit); or, • Negative—giving rise to a <i>loss of value</i> (disbenefit). 	The <i>reduced procurement costs</i> arising from Project BuyRite represent a flow of value to ICO. The <i>faster payments</i> for deliveries represents a flow of value for ICO's vendors.

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Fortuitous outcomes	Outcomes that are not targeted in a project's scoping statement. Fortuitous outcomes can play no part in the ex ante appraisal of a project.	<p>Fortuitous outcomes are (erroneously) accepted in some project methodologies as <i>benefits</i>.</p> <p>Outcomes are either:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Targeted—and hence claimed as benefits (for which an owner is made accountable); or, 2. Treated as fortuitous (for which no-one is made accountable), but which cannot be claimed (ex ante) as benefits. 	
Funder	A stakeholder who provides funds and/or approves the allocation of labour to the project.	A project can have multiple funders.	To avoid confusion with the concept of who <i>owns</i> the money, we define the funder as the person who has the authority to make the final decision about accepting the business case. In this case Henry Crun (as CEO) has assumed that role.
Gain of value	See <u>flow of value</u> .		

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Generic stakeholder classes	<p>There are ten generic classes of <u>stakeholding</u> that an entity can have in a project (the word “project” is understood to be a qualifier in each case):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Beneficiary</u>. • <u>Customer</u>. • <u>Funder</u> • <u>Impactee (disbeneficiary)</u>. • <u>Influencer</u>. • <u>Manager</u>. • <u>Owner</u>. • <u>Promoter (champion)</u>. • <u>Sponsoring entity</u> • <u>Supplier/team member</u>. 	<p>Refer also to the entries for each class of stakeholder.</p> <p>The overarching principle that guides approval of any discretionary stakeholding is that of avoiding conflict of interest.</p> <p>Project manager and project owner cannot be held by a single individual (except in trivially small projects).</p>	<p>Individuals or entities can have more than one stakeholding in a project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICO and preferred vendors are <i>project beneficiaries</i>. • The staff of the Procurement/purchasing department and vendors are <i>project customers</i>. (They are obviously not ICO’s customers). • Henry Crun has made himself the funder. • Henry has made Dennis the project owner. • Dennis has appointed Minnie as the project manager. • ICO is the sponsoring entity.
Hierarchical decomposition	<p>The recursive process of describing a concept by breaking it into smaller concepts.</p>	<p>Two important models of a project obtained from hierarchical decomposition are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Work Breakdown Structure (<i>WBS</i>) • The Product (Outputs) Breakdown Structure (<i>PBS</i>). 	
HR plan	<p>A comprehensive model of the internal labour demanded from the sponsoring entity by the project’s WBS.</p>	<p>Refer also <u>acquisition plan</u> and <u>resource plan</u>.</p>	

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Impactee	A (project) impactee is a <u>stakeholder</u> who experiences a <u>loss of value</u> as a consequence of the project being undertaken—regardless of whether or not it achieves its <u>target outcomes</u> .	The interests of impactees are acknowledged and managed as a critical element of a project for either of two reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From an equity point-of-view, negative project outcomes should be managed. This can also be viewed as an issue of altruism. • From a risk point-of-view, an impactee can become a serious threat to success. 	Those established suppliers who don't make it onto the preferred vendor list are <i>impactees</i> of Project BuyRite—because they will suffer a reduced volume of business from ICO.
Infeasible (project)	A project for which <u>parameters</u> have been set that are <i>internally inconsistent</i> . There is no <u>program of work</u> that would allow the <u>parameters</u> to be achieved—and so the project <i>cannot succeed</i> . <u>Infeasibility</u> is revealed in either/both of two constraints: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Costs/outlays/resources</u>. • <u>Timeframe</u>. 	Refer also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>cost infeasible (project)</u>. • <u>time infeasible (project)</u>. 	
Influencer	A (project) influencer is a <u>stakeholder</u> who, by virtue of his/her role, standing or influence is able to carry a significant body of opinion about the <u>project</u> .	Influencers are important targets of the project's communications plan because their views determine the views of a large number of stakeholders.	
Initiation	A (generic) <u>stage</u> of a <u>project</u> directed at assembly of baseline documentation.		

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Term	Definition	Discussion	Examples & illustrations
Input	An economic resource that is consumed during the execution of a process.	In projects we are concerned with just <i>two</i> broad inputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour. • Purchased resources. 	
Input Process Output (model) IPO	A (long established) model that seeks to explain the relationships amongst: <u>inputs</u> , a <u>process</u> and <u>outputs</u> . The IPO model says nothing about <u>outcomes</u> .	The conventional view of a project corresponds to an IPO model of that project.	
Input Transform Outcome (model) ITO	A model developed by John Smyrk in the late 80s that seeks to explain the relationships between outputs and outcomes.	The ITO model extends the IPO model by incorporating a mechanism called <i>utilisation</i> .	
Internal event	See <u>event</u> .		
IPO	See <u>Input Process Output</u> .		
Issue	A matter of general concern for the project (other than a risk) that requires resolution.		The definitions of issues and risks don't lend themselves particularly well to abstract discussion—examples tend to be more useful: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The project manager leaves” is an example of a risk (or, more precisely, a threat). • “Fred Nurke has switched his rostered days off from Friday to Monday” is an example of an issue.

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Term	Definition	Discussion	Examples & illustrations
ITO	See <u>Input Transform Outcome</u> .		
Issues management	The broad meaning: A (clerical) procedure for identifying, analysing, tracking and resolving issues.	The narrow meaning: The work of resolving an issue.	
Issues life-cycle	The particular sequence of states through which an issue passes between being identified and resolved.	<p>The states that an issue can assume in its life-cycle are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be assessed: no program to resolve the issue has yet been established. • Active: is currently being addressed through an agreed program of resolution, and has been assigned to someone to look after. • Inactive: a program for resolution has been agreed, but, for some reason, is not currently being actioned. • Open: Is either Active or Inactive. • Parked: has consciously been abandoned as not requiring any further attention. • Resolved: has been completely addressed and requires no further action. 	

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Term	Definition	Discussion	Examples & illustrations
Issues Register	A tool for cataloguing issues and documenting their management.		
Justification	A term used in some conventional approaches to project management that is not recognised in MFBP.	<p>In many cases, the process of justification is fundamentally flawed—in that it involves fabrication of a list of beneficial results that may emerge fortuitously from the project—but that are not targeted as success criteria.</p> <p>The problem arises from a confusion in much of the literature between two related (but distinct) expressions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a <i>decision to proceed</i> can (and must) be justified • a <i>project itself</i> can never (in any meaningful way) be justified. 	
Loss of value	See <u>flow of value</u> .		
Methodology	<p>This term is used in two distinct ways in the project management literature:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To indicate a recognised process (a method). For example there are established methodologies for undertaking social surveys. • To indicate an entire framework of tools, techniques and templates for managing projects. For example, PRINCE2 is a project management methodology. 		

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Term	Definition	Discussion	Examples & illustrations
MFBP	"Management Frameworks for Business Projects"—a course at the ANU in project management offered by the School of Management, Marketing & International Business.		
MFBP framework	The entire construct of definitions, theoretical concepts, models, tools and techniques that underpins MFBP.	The MFBP framework has been assembled from a range of disciplines and sources—using the ITO model as a foundation. The MFBP doesn't provide a project management methodology—but a set of analytical tools.	
Milestone	An <u>event</u> that has been adopted for use in tracking a project's progress.	Milestones are derived <i>analytically</i> from the project's workplan and are not to be confused with <i>deadlines</i> (which are set arbitrarily).	
Objective	The end effects that are sought (from the project). Objectives are tied into target outcomes.	Refer also to <u>statement of objective</u> .	
Operational environment	That part of the <u>business environment</u> within which regular (non-project) business activity is conducted.	The two major classes of non-project work are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ad hoc tasks. • Transactions. 	
Outcome	An indirect <i>result</i> attributable to an identifiable <i>process</i> or mechanism that takes the form of some measurable change in a state of the world.	Outcomes are of three kinds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desirable. • Undesirable. • Fortuitous. 	

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Term	Definition	Discussion	Examples & illustrations
Outlay (s)	Expenditure of cash on external products/services demanded by the project's <u>WBS</u> .		
Output	A direct <i>result</i> from the work of a <i>process</i> that takes the form of a new <i>artifact</i> —or a change to an existing <i>artifact</i> .	<p>Outputs are always tangible artifacts (“things”). They are of two kinds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliverables. • Alterants. <p>This classification is not a dichotomy. Given a large enough number of changes, an alterant becomes indistinguishable from a deliverable. The distinction is used to highlight a common confusion between outputs and outcomes.</p>	<p>Primary outputs from Project BuyRite will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new procurement processes • a new organisational model (for the Procurement/purchasing department) • new vendor contracts • new application systems (IS) • new technical infrastructure (IT).
Outputs Breakdown Structure PBS	A hierarchical model of a project's outputs. A synonym for <i>Product Breakdown Structure</i> .	The acronym “OBS” is not used in the MFBP framework for <i>Outputs Breakdown Structure</i> —because of its established use in the project management literature to mean <i>Organisational Breakdown Structure</i> . Instead, we use the acronym PBS for <i>Product Breakdown Structure</i> .	
Owner	See <u>project owner</u>		

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Term	Definition	Discussion	Examples & illustrations
Parameter	<p>An attribute of a project that can be set or derived from other parameters. The parameters of a project include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Target outcomes/benefits.</u> • <u>Scope.</u> • <u>Risk exposure.</u> • <u>Timeframe.</u> • <u>Cost (outlays/resources).</u> 	<p>Amongst these <i>five</i> parameters there are <i>subset-constrained degrees of freedom</i>. This means that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are only <i>certain allowable subsets</i> of the parameters for which values can be set arbitrarily. 2. Once values have been set for these, then the remaining parameters are of <i>two</i> kinds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those for which there is a constrained range of values that can be set. • Those for which the values are then implied. 	<p>For example once the project has been scoped (so that target outcomes and outputs are internally consistent), then there are only certain combinations of values that are allowable for the other three parameters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Risk exposure.</u> • <u>Timeframe.</u> <p><u>Cost (outlays/resources).</u></p>
PBS	See <u>Product breakdown Structure.</u>		

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Term	Definition	Discussion	Examples & illustrations
Prioritise	To decide on the order in which independent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Outputs</u> will be produced. • <u>Tasks</u> will be executed. 	In some conventional approaches to project management, the term is also used to suggest (incorrectly) that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some <i>outputs</i> are optional—and that alternative scoping statements can be assembled for the project by adopting an arbitrary cut in a prioritised list of outputs. • Some <i>work</i> is optional—and that alternative WBSs can be assembled for a scoped project by adopting an arbitrary cut in a prioritised list of tasks. The theoretical principles of MFBP allow us to show that both these suggestions lead to projects <i>that cannot yield target outcomes</i> . We can confidently conclude therefore that <i>neither of the above propositions is meaningful</i> .	ICO may well make a decision about the order in which purchased supplies are to be analysed and reengineered—and reflect that decision in a list of priorities. It would make no sense, however, to grade the outputs from Project ButRite with a priority list—because all outputs have to be produced (they wouldn't be in scope if that were not true.
Priority	See <u>prioritise</u> .		
Probity advisor	A specialist independent advisor appointed by the SC to ensure that the commercial arrangements between the project team and the outside world are proper, correct, fair—and being conducted in accordance with accepted procurement practice.	There is a large body of knowledge and accepted practice concerning the role of the probity advisor.	

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Term	Definition	Discussion	Examples & illustrations
Procedure	A formalised <u>process</u> of any kind.	Typically a formalised process becomes a procedure when it is recognised within some organisational context.	
Process	A human-directed “block of work” that is undertaken towards achievement of a desired <u>outcome</u> through production of one or more <u>outputs</u> .	All elements of a project’s WBS (tasks, activities and phases) are <i>processes</i> . All subsets of a WBS are <i>processes</i> . <i>Procedures</i> and <i>practices</i> are also examples of processes.	
Produce (v)	To assemble an <u>output</u>		
<u>Product</u>	A <u>synonym for output</u> .		
Product Breakdown Structure PBS	See <u>Outputs Breakdown Structure</u> .		
Program of work	See <u>workplan</u> .		
Project	A <i>process</i> where execution is guided using a <u>project management framework</u> .		

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Term	Definition	Discussion	Examples & illustrations
Project counsellor	<p>A specialist independent adviser appointed by the SC to ensure that specific aspects of the project meet agreed standards.</p> <p>There are three forms of project counsellor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project assurance adviser. • Probity adviser. • Quality adviser 	<p>Counsellors are only appointed on large or sensitive projects—where there are significant governance, management, procurement or quality issues.</p>	
Project assurance counsellor PAC	<p>A specialist independent adviser appointed by the SC to ensure that the project is being conducted in accordance with accepted practice.</p>	<p>The PAC is not an auditor—and so is free to work consultatively with the PM and other key players.</p> <p>The PAC must not face a conflict of interest in filling that role.</p>	
Project customer	<p>An entity who <i>consciously utilises</i> one or more <u>outputs</u> from a project—and in so doing, generates <u>target outcomes</u>.</p>	<p>A project customer is defined differently to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>organisation's customer</i>. • The project's <i>beneficiaries</i>. • The project's <i>funder</i>. <p>(A project customer may or may not be any of these).</p> <p>A project can have multiple customers.</p>	

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Term	Definition	Discussion	Examples & illustrations
Project environment	That part of the business environment within which projects are scoped, executed and closed	The business environment can be viewed as having to parts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project environment. • The operational environment. Refer also to <u>business environment</u> and <u>operational environment</u> .	
Project governance model PGM	A formal organisational model that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies all the stakeholders who will play a part in the project. • Establishes the relationships and links amongst those stakeholders. • Defines the roles of those stakeholders. The PGM is normally presented as an annotated organisational diagram—incorporating the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Steering Committee. • Reference groups and advisers • Project counsellors. • The project manager. • The project team. 	A project governance model is separate from an organisational governance model—and, as a result, many of those involved in the project face a matrix management structure. A PGM is linked into all the participating organisations through the line reporting arrangements of the individuals who will play a part in the project.	

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Term	Definition	Discussion	Examples & illustrations
Project management framework	A set of integrated, cohesive and related tools, procedures and techniques that can be used to guide the execution of a <u>process</u> .	Such a framework is useful in the management of processes that are <i>large</i> and <i>novel</i> .	
Project manager PM	The person held accountable by the <u>project owner(s)</u> for the delivery of the project's <u>outputs</u> and for meeting the project's <u>constraints</u> .	A project can have only <i>one</i> over-arching project manager. The project manager is the project owner's <i>supplier</i> . A PM can be contracted.	Minnie is Dennis' supplier (of all the outputs that are included in the project's scoping statement).
Project owner PO	The person(s) held accountable by the <u>funder(s)</u> of the <u>project</u> for the realisation of <u>target outcomes</u> . The owner acts on behalf of the funder (s) throughout the project—seeking to ensure that their interests are being served.	A project can have <i>multiple</i> owners. The one entity can be both the funder and owner. The project owner is the project manager's <i>client</i> . A PO must be from within the <u>sponsoring entity</u> .	Dennis is Minnie's client (to whom she will deliver all the outputs that are included in the project's scoping statement).
Project plan	A <u>baseline document</u> that provides all the information required to make a reliable decision about approving a start to work on a <u>project</u> .	The project plan becomes the project's reference model—on which the management of the process is based.	
Project supplier	See <u>supplier</u> .	Suppliers can be internal or external.	

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Term	Definition	Discussion	Examples & illustrations
Promoter	The person or entity who drives the <u>project</u> through <u>initiation</u> to approval.	The Promoter will usually become the Project owner.	Head of National Procurement, Dennis Bloodnock is the promoter of Project BuyRite
Rationale	A statement explaining why this particular <u>project</u> is being proposed at this particular time.		Henry is convinced that if this project is not undertaken immediately, the Company's growth ambitions in Asia will be seriously handicapped.
Quality counsellor	A specialist independent adviser appointed by the SC to ensure that selected outputs are fit-for-purpose—by meeting an agreed specification.	The quality adviser will normally certify and output—thus allowing the SC to take delivery..	
Realise (a target outcome)	To successfully generate a target outcome	Outcomes are <i>realised</i> —while outputs are <i>delivered</i> .	
Reference group Ref/Gp	A reference group is a formally constituted forum of key stakeholders—charged with filling a defined role in the project.	Ref/Gps report into the project (in the organisational sense) through either the PM or the SC. Ref/Gps have highly specific ToRs—and so may have a very short tenure.	

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Term	Definition	Discussion	Examples & illustrations
Resolving (an infeasibility)	Taking actions to reduce the level of infeasibility to zero. The available actions depend on both the type and severity of the infeasibility.	<p>There are, in general, four sorts of action available to resolve an infeasibility:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If the project is <i>time infeasible</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descope. • Add resources. • Allow deadlines to slip. • Increase the project's risk exposure. 2. If the project is <i>cost infeasible</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descope. • Extend the timeframe. • Increase the budget. • Increase the project's risk exposure. <p>Refer also <u>time-infeasible</u> and <u>cost-infeasible</u> projects.</p>	
Resources	See <u>inputs</u> .		
Resource plan	A component of a <u>project plan</u> —indicating the full scope of <u>resources</u> that will be demanded by the project's <u>WBS</u> .	<p>There are two parts to a resource plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An <i>acquisition plan</i>. • An <i>HR plan</i> <p>The <i>cost of a project</i> is equal to value of the resource plan.</p> <p>The <i>project budget</i> must be set equal to the cost of the project</p>	

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Result	An effect attributable to the execution of a <u>process</u> .	“Results” is a collective label for two (otherwise distinct) elements of the ITO model: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Outcomes</u>. • <u>Outputs</u>. 	
Scope	A definitive statement about a project's boundaries.	Principle: <i>A project is scoped if and only if its outputs are defined.</i> A project's <i>scope</i> can be determined only if its <i>target outcomes</i> have been established. Refer also <u>setting project scope</u> .	
Scoping statement	A scoping statement for a project has three elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A <u>statement of objective</u>. • A list of <u>target outcomes</u>. • A list of <u>outputs</u> with critical <u>fitness-for-purpose</u> characteristics identified for each. 		
Setting (project) scope	The process of developing a scoping statement for a project..	Refer also <u>defining (project) outputs</u> .	
Sponsor	See <u>Sponsoring entity</u> .		
Sponsoring entity	The organisational unit (s) appointed by the <u>funder</u> to assemble the project's <u>baseline documents</u> —and/or from which the <u>owner</u> will be appointed to oversee the <u>project</u> .	<i>Different</i> sponsoring entities can be appointed for <u>initiation</u> and <u>execution/outcome realisation</u> .	

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Term	Definition	Discussion	Examples & illustrations
Stage	One of a series of <i>sequentially-related</i> projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where the <u>rationale</u> is to be found in the <i>final</i> stage. • In which each has its own <u>outcomes</u> and <u>work</u> • Where approval depends on the achievement of the <u>target outcomes</u> of the preceding stage. 		For example: a <i>feasibility study</i> will produce a report—on which a <i>decision to proceed with later stages</i> will be based.
Stakeholder	An individual or entity who is either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • potentially impacted by the project; or, • who has a potential impact on the project. 	Anyone with <i>an interest</i> in the project is, by definition, a stakeholder in it. The set of all stakeholders is broken up into an exhaustive collection of generic classes—related to the nature of their interest. A stakeholder can be a member of more than one class. Refer also <u>stakeholding</u> , <u>generic stakeholder classes</u> .	
Stakeholder classes	See <u>generic stakeholder classes</u> .		
Stakeholding	The stakeholding of a stakeholder in a project is defined by the list of two-way impacts between stakeholder and project.	Refer also <u>stakeholder</u> .	

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Steering committee SC	The body that is formally charged with supporting the <u>project owner</u> in discharging his/her accountabilities. The SC is made up of a small group of powerful supporters of the project.	<p>A minimal SC is made up of one person—the project owner.</p> <p>SC members can come from outside the <u>sponsoring entity</u>.</p> <p>Only the SC can approve changes to the <u>project plan</u>—especially the <u>scoping statement</u>.</p> <p>Anyone opposed to the project is disqualified from SC membership because of the resulting conflict of interest.</p> <p>The SC operates above-the-line—it is not involved in the production of project outputs.</p> <p>The funder will usually treat the SC as <i>collectively responsible</i> for the project's success.</p>	

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Statement of objective	A formal statement about the purpose of the project.	<p>This statement has a number of properties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is short—so that it can be used as a <i>slogan</i> by project stakeholders. • It begins with the word “<i>To ...</i>” • It is expressed in outcome terms—possibly qualified with a reference to the primary output. • It is high-level and general in style. <p>Of the five criteria for statements of objective described in the “SMART” characteristics of pop-management-theory, we require only that they be outcomes oriented.</p> <p>A statement of objective is supported with a set of <i>defined target outcomes</i></p>	
Supplier	A “contracted” entity who provides component-based <u>inputs</u> or non-salaried <u>labour</u> to the <u>project manager</u> .	Suppliers can be internal or external.	

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Term	Definition	Discussion	Examples & illustrations
Target outcomes	Desired measurable <i>end-effects</i> —that take the form of a <u>flow of value</u> to a <u>stakeholder</u> .	<p>A target outcome is <i>defined</i> when values have been set for the following <i>parameters</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name • Description • Measure • Method of measurement or source of data • Target level • Target date for realisation • Owner (who will be held accountable for realisation). 	
Task	A primitive <u>process</u> representing the lowest level of work recognised in a WBS. Also used loosely to mean a “block of work”.	<p>In the stylised three-level WBS, processes at the third (lowest) level are called tasks. A collection of related <i>tasks</i> constitutes an <i>activity</i>.</p> <p>See also <u>phase</u>.</p> <p>See also <u>activity</u>.</p>	
Team member	An individual who is assigned to the team to provide labour-based inputs to the project.		
Terms of reference ToRs	A specification of the role to be played in a project by a reference group.		

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Primers in Project Management: An integrated glossary of project terms & definitions. John R. Smyrk: www.smscience.com

Term	Definition	Discussion	Examples & illustrations
The line	A notional boundary that separates the <u>work</u> (and hence the <u>outputs</u>) of a <u>project</u> into two disjoint subsets: <u>above-the-line</u> and <u>below-the-line</u> .	The line forces a <i>dichotomy</i> onto the set of all tasks and outputs associated with a project. Tasks and outputs are either above-the-line or below-the-line—but they cannot be both. This concept of the line in <i>project management</i> is not to be confused with a similar term used in <i>marketing</i> to classify advertising media.	
Time infeasible (project)	A project for which an optimal <u>timeframe</u> implied by its <u>workplan</u> exceeds the <u>timeframe</u> agreed-to by the <u>owner/funder</u> . In such a situation, <u>deadlines</u> fall earlier than the <u>milestones</u> derived from an optimal workplan. The difference between a deadline and the corresponding milestone is a <i>gauge of the level of infeasibility of the project</i> .		
Timeframe	The overall duration of a project. There are two views of duration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <u>project manager's</u>—measured from approval through to delivery of all outputs. • The <u>funder's/owner's</u>—measured from approval through to realisation of <u>target outcomes</u>. 		

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Term	Definition	Discussion	Examples & illustrations
Transaction (s)	The execution of a <u>business process</u> .		
Undesirable outcomes	End-effects from a project that cause a <u>loss of value</u> to a <u>stakeholder</u> .		
User	An term from IS/IT that is not recognised in the ITO model.	A corresponding defined term in the ITO model is <i>project customer</i> .	
Utilisation	The employment of an <i>output</i> by a project's <i>customer(s)</i> that can cause <i>target outcomes</i> to emerge as a by-product.		
Value	See <u>flow of value</u> .		
Worth (of a project)	An overall gauge of a project's desirability that takes into account trade-offs amongst various assessment criteria.	Worth represents a judgement by the funder about the net value of the project. See also <u>assessment</u> .	
Risk	A scenario in which the worth of a project changes. A risk is made up of three (sequential) elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>A triggering event</u>. • <u>A chain of consequences</u>. • <u>A final impact</u>. 	A risk can cause the <i>worth</i> of a project to increase or decrease—but the focus of <u>risk management</u> tends to be on those risks that are associated with a decrease in the worth of a project.	
Threat	A triggering event that will lead to a decrease in <u>the worth of a project</u> .		
Opportunity	A triggering event that will lead to an increase in <u>the worth of a project</u> .		

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Term	Definition	Discussion	Examples & illustrations
Triggering event	An event that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lies outside the <u>domain of control</u> of the project <u>funder</u>. • Is <u>stochastic</u>—it may or may not occur. • Is a cause of an <u>impact</u>. • 		

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