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Expert Panel Discussion

2026 ECO & Exam Changes

Relevant exam changes – Study Group Expert Panel



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Introduction

PMBok Guide 8th edition Changes

PMBok Guide 8th edition connects mindset, principles, domains, and delivery cadence into a system designed for project value generation.

Bridging 6th and 7th edition

- 40 Processes reintegrated
- Process Groups come back as Focus Areas
- Performance domains reorganized + Governance

Streamlined principles

- 6 unified principles less overlapping

Appendix importance

- AI, PMO, procurement
- Business environment & growing acumen relevance

Value focus & tailoring

- Value and project outcomes are now centralized objectives
- Tailoring to needs becomes paramount

PMBOK 7TH VS PMBOK 8 EDITION – COMPARATIVE SUMMARY

1. Structural Differences	
PMBOK 7	PMBOK 8
Principles + Performance Domains	Principles + Domains + Return of Processes
2. Governance	
Conceptual	Strong governance, clearer decision structures
3. Value Delivery	
Emerging concept	Central focus (benefits, outcomes, value streams)
4. Hybrid Delivery	
Optional	Default expectation
5. Technology & Data	
Minimal	AI, analytics, automation, digital governance
6. Conclusion	
The 8th edition restores practical structure while keeping adaptability, making it more suitable for PMO and portfolio governance.	

Image: WELLINGTON LUIZ GABOARDI, https://www.linkedin.com/posts/wgaboardi_pmi-pmbok7-pmbok8-activity-7395196338910674944-UTHo

Overview

ECO Changes 2026

Paradigm shift to integrated practicality

- Business Environment 8%→26%
- Less tasks, but cross-domain and Governance, included
- Scenario based questions, new case study section

New formats

- Enhanced matching graphical & Point+Click tasks (CBT* only)
- Graphic based questions

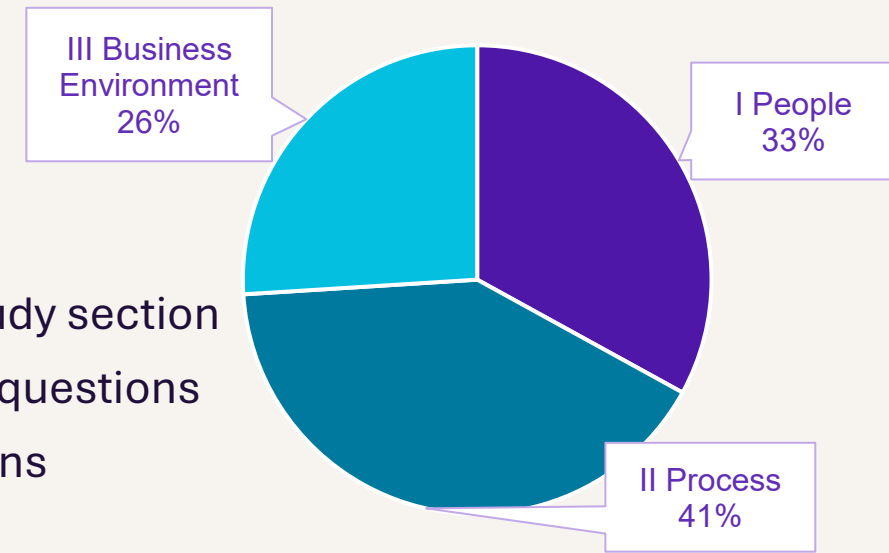
Job task analysis (JTA) results

- Aimed at professional practice expectations
- Identified AI, sustainability, PMO, Governance business integration needs

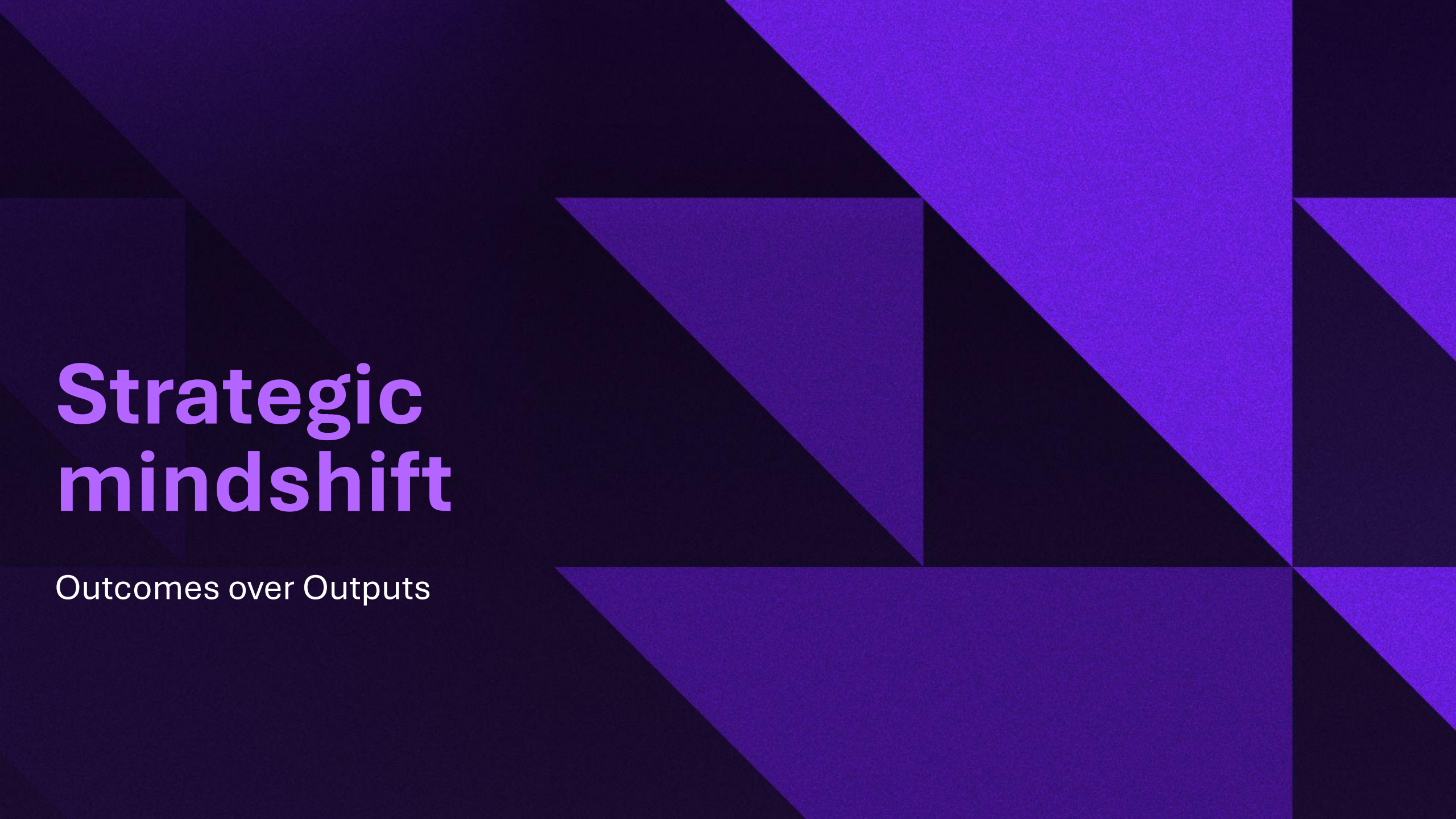
Exam length and duration

- +10m break after case-study section
- 240m, 170 + 10 unscored questions
- No return to former sections possible

ECO Proportion (questions in domain)



* **CBT** - In-person, Computer Based Testing



Strategic mindshift

Outcomes over Outputs

Strategic mindshift

Hybrid value generation

Key focus (topics)

- **Principle-Driven Governance:** Replacing prescriptive process compliance with streamlined principles to guide tactical decision-making
- **Cross-Methodological Synthesis:** delivery systems that embed volatile, iterative development pipelines within rigid, predictive contract and milestone frameworks

ECO domain II example tasks

- Help ensure value-based delivery
- Plan and manage (finance, schedule, procurement)
- Evaluate project status

Core Changes

- **Hybrid shift:** Hybrid/adaptive approach is considered 60%, whilst predictive drops to 40%
- **Prescriptive De-escalation:** focus to behavioral and operational principles, breaking ITTO silos

Exam challenges

- Avoiding Methodical Wiplash to choose either adaptive/predictive approach
- Mastering the boundaries of authority within predictive, agile and enterprise

Rationale mindshift

Business Value & Principles over Processes

Rationale mindshift

Value proposition

Key focus (topics)

- Principles as PM pillars
- **Business Value** and **Tailoring** strongly anchored, demotes Iron Triangle to secondary measure
- **Multi-Variable trend extrapolation**: identify value realization thresholds in noisy metric streams

ECO domain I example tasks

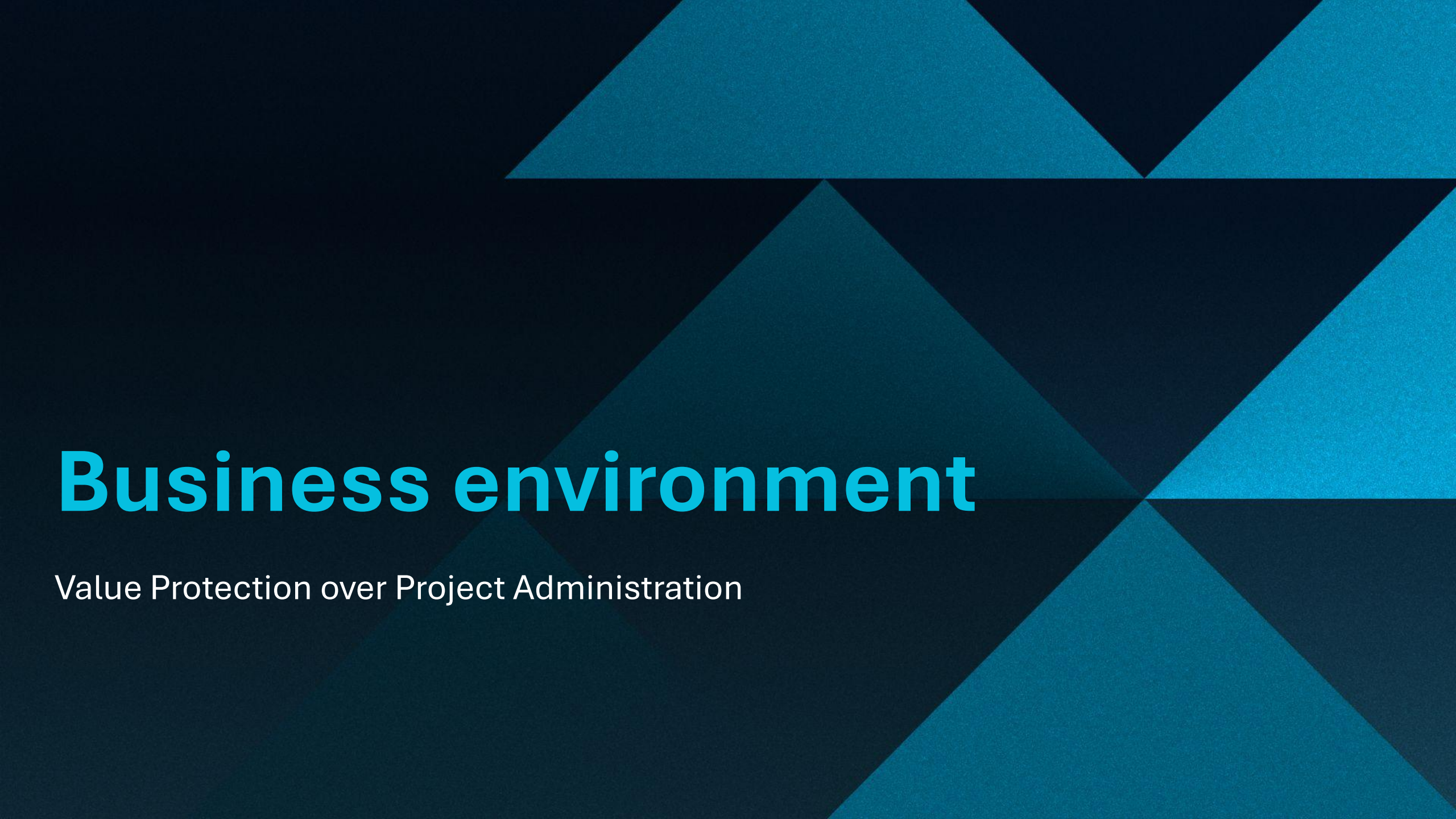
- Develop a common vision
- Help ensure knowledge transfer
- Lead the project team

Core Changes

- **Tailoring**: transition from optional to governance requirement
- **Case-Study questions**: principles adaptation
- **Data Analysis**: Interpretation of charts, cumulative S-curves, burn-down/burn-up

Exam challenges

- Ensuring value realization over completion of triple constraints
- Cognitive load by need to extract complex variance signals



Business environment

Value Protection over Project Administration

Business environment

Enterprise perimeter

Key focus (topics)

- **Corporate Governance:** Realigning delivery thresholds to enterprise portfolio, sustainability/ESG mandates
- **Cross Framework synchronization:** Mapping project-delivery to enterprise governance*
- **Information Security:** Adding Compliance & risks for operational gating (NIST, ISO 27001)**

ECO domain III example tasks

- Define and establish project governance
- Manage and control changes
- Plan and manage risk

Core Changes

- Realignment from 8% to 26%
- Topics across Governance, risk management, sustainability, PMO, AI, cross-framework integration

Exam challenges

- **Isolation Bias:** Tailoring becomes paramount
- Maintain compliance requirements while governance poses a friction
- Avoid bureaucratic processes, which paralyze hybrid/adaptive approaches

* ISACA, *COBIT 2019 Framework: Governance and Management Objectives*

** National Institute of Standards and Technology, *NIST SP 800-37 Rev. 2: Risk Management Framework for Information Systems and Organizations* / ISO/IEC 27001:2022

“ Today’s project management practitioners work in a variety of project environments [...].
Accordingly, the PMP certification reflects this and incorporates approaches across the value delivery spectrum.

Project Management Institute. *ECO 8th Edition - PMP Examination Content Outline 2026*. p5

Thanks!

Appendix

Case Study and Exam content examples

Graphical representation questions

This type of question requires the candidate to refer to, and interpret visual information, such as charts, graphs, diagrams, or images, then answer questions based on the information provided. (Available on all modalities)

Requirements Traceability Matrix (RTM)
Excerpt from Project Plan

Edit Format
100%

11
B
I
U
A
Table
Text
Image
Link
Unlink
Hyperlink
Percentage
1/2
Undo

C9

	A	B
1	Requirement ID	Requirement Description
2	RQ001	Salesforce Service Cloud (SFSC) out-of-the-box functionality for B2B customer service immediate issues with BSC staff using SFSC instead of emails.
3	RQ002	Accelerate email deflection, reducing the number of emails requiring CSA intervention
4	RQ003	Improve email resolution speed, ensuring timely customer responses
5	RQ004	Advanced analytics including BI and solution usage visibility
6	RQ005	AI automated case classification, best reply generation, and case summarization
7	RQ006	CSAT surveys after each case and automated escalation
8		
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12		
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14		
15		

The high staff turnover at the Business Solutions Center (BSC) has caused significant frustration among B2B customers, primarily due to the loss of historical information stored in Outlook emails. To mitigate this issue, the BSC is adopting Salesforce Service Cloud (SFSC) to enhance the visibility and management of customer queries, along with offering other capabilities. The project is expected to deliver \$10 million annually according to the annual planning exercise, but the business case presented only demonstrated \$4 million in benefits. Consequently, the business sponsor needed to address concerns from the Business Transformation Office (BTO) and engage with the agile practitioner for clarification.

Which specific requirements within the Salesforce Service Cloud implementation contribute the MOST to the \$4 million in reduced benefit?

☐ A. RQ001

☐ B. RQ002

☐ C. RQ003

☐ D. RQ004

☐ E. RQ005

☐ F. RQ006

Example of a Graphic-Based Question on the Certification Exam

Image: Project Management Institute. *ECO 8th Edition - PMP Examination Content Outline 2026*. 2026.

New Case Study Questions

Scenario Example – AI generated

*The candidate is presented with a detailed scenario or situation, which may include graphs or charts to provide additional context. This could be a description of a business, a project, a decision-making process, or a combination of any. After reviewing the scenario or situation, and any accompanying visuals, the candidate will answer a series of questions based on all the information provided. **(Available on all modalities)***

You are the Senior Project Manager leading "Project EOS," a high-visibility initiative to implement an AI-driven predictive supply-chain optimization engine for a global logistics enterprise. The delivery framework is hybrid: the core software components utilize Scrum, while the hardware retrofitting and facility readiness follow a predictive path.

The project operates under strict organizational governance requiring alignment with the company's newly published 2026 Net-Zero Sustainability Mandate. Mid-way through Execution, an automated predictive risk dashboard flags an algorithmic bias issue that increases carbon footprint estimations by 14% across third-party shipping routes. Concurrently, the product operations team expresses concern that the current governance structures are bottlenecking sprint velocities.

Case Study Questions

Example Question 1

Based on the scenario provided, what should the project manager do first to address the 14% variance in estimated carbon footprint outcomes?

- A.** Issue an immediate change request to pivot the development team from the current sprint backlog to algorithmic optimization.
- B.** Evaluate the algorithmic bias against the organizational compliance metrics and the benefits realization plan before engaging the Change Control Board (CCB).
- C.** Escalate the environmental variance directly to the corporate sustainability sponsor and request an exception baseline.
- D.** Direct the Scrum Master to log the issue in the product backlog for prioritization during the next release planning session.

Case Study Questions

Example Question 2

To address the operations team's concern regarding governance bottlenecks impacting sprint velocities without compromising compliance, which tailoring strategy should the project manager implement?

- A.** Transition the entire project to a pure Agile delivery model to bypass predictive governance reporting cycles.
- B.** Introduce an AI-enabled automated compliance verification gate within the CI/CD pipeline to streamline governance tracking.
- C.** Advise the Scrum Master to suspend sprint reviews until the predictive phase milestones are formally achieved.
- D.** Instruct the team to prioritize delivery speed over documentation, addressing compliance gaps during project closure.

Case Study Questions

Example Question 3

During a joint architectural review designed to solve the algorithmic bias, a heated conflict arises between the Chief Data Scientist (predictive advisor) and the Agile Team Lead regarding technical ownership of the optimization code. How should the project manager resolve this conflict?

- A.** Assign the decision-making authority entirely to the Chief Data Scientist based on their seniority in the organizational hierarchy.
- B.** Facilitate a private collaboration session between both leads to map out shared accountability using a modified, agile-friendly responsibility assignment matrix (RAM).
- C.** Request the PMO Director to intervene and redefine the boundaries of the hybrid delivery framework.
- D.** Separate the two leads and instruct them to submit independent technical proposals to the project manager for final unilateral selection.

Case Study Answers

Example Questions' correct answers & ratio

Question 1: B; **Focus:** Compliance & Sustainability

Aligns with the Business Environment focus on sustainability and benefits compliance. Standard PMI psychometrics dictate "Analyze First, Then Act." Jumping straight to a change request (A) or backlog tampering (D) without assessing structural organizational impact violates governance. Escalating immediately (C) passes the buck.

Question 2: B; **Focus:** Hybrid Governance & AI Integration

Tests the candidate's ability to leverage modern delivery tools (AI automation) to solve process friction while maintaining mandatory hybrid governance frameworks. Option A ignores the physical infrastructure constraints; C adds more bottlenecks; D violates fundamental compliance tenets.

Question 3: B; **Focus:** Stakeholder Alignment & Conflict

True to the People domain, this tests collaboration and servant leadership over dictatorial approaches. Facilitating a collaborative, structured environment (B) maps to standard conflict resolution principles (Win-Win/Collaborate), tailored here for a hybrid (RAM/Agile) interface.

CBT* Only Questions

Matching, Point & Click

Matching: Asks candidates to pair items from different lists. It consists of columns of information. The task is to drag items from the first column to the middle, corresponding to the information in the third column. The example below shows a Matching question before (right) and after (left) the candidate has answered.

Match the role with its corresponding job description.

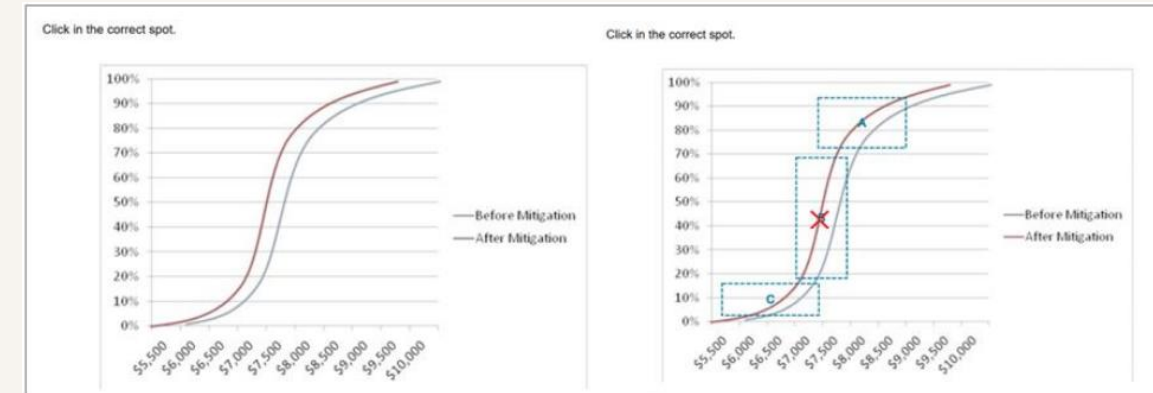
Role		Description
Portfolio manager		Offers project input because they are affected by the activity or outcome of a project
Project manager		Focuses on providing management oversight for a business unit
Functional manager		Manages or coordinates management staff and program and project staff that may have reporting responsibilities
Stakeholder		Leads the team and is responsible for achieving project objectives

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Example of Matching on the Certification Exam

Point and Click: The item is in the form of an image with hidden hotspot areas. The candidate must identify the correct areas by clicking on the correct locations on the image. The image on the left is an example of what the candidate would see. The image on the right represents the areas where the candidate can select to respond



Example of Point and Click on the Certification Exam

* CBT - In-person, Computer Based Testing

CBT* Only Questions

Enhanced Matching, Pull-Down List

Enhanced matching questions can include images or diagrams to help clarify the items being matched. In the example below, the candidate would drag one of the boxes on the right to a specific location on the chart. Might include additional elements like drag-and-drop functionality, allowing users to move items around to make matches.

Pull-down List: The correct answer must be selected from a drop-down list as shown below.



The plan includes the activities, estimated durations and dependencies.

Select...

Select...

Requirements Management Plan

Cost Management Plan

Scope Management Plan

Schedule Management Plan

Change Management Plan

Quality Management Plan

Example of a Pull-down List on the Certification Exam

* CBT - In-person, Computer Based Testing

Images: Project Management Institute. ECO 8th Edition - PMP Examination Content Outline 2026. 2026.