

- » Recognizing the role and purpose of the Project Management Institute
- » Discovering the project management team competencies
- » Exploring the project management framework

Chapter **1**

Welcome to Your PMP Certification Journey

Congratulations on taking the first step in your PMP journey! This chapter is your welcome mat to the world of project management — what I like to call “Planet PMI.” Here, you’ll gain insight into the global standard of project management certification and find out what makes the PMP credential so highly regarded. You’ll take a closer look at the organization behind it all — the Project Management Institute (PMI) — and unpack the essential skills and competencies every project manager needs to excel, as outlined in the project management team competencies. To help you hit the ground running, I also introduce some foundational terminology to familiarize you with the language of project management.

Let’s dive in!

PMP: Recognizing the Global Standard

When it comes to project management certification, the Project Management Professional (PMP) credential says, “Mamma, I made it!” with regard to project management excellence.

The journey toward PMP certification is not an easy one, as it requires a substantial amount of project leadership experience. However, it's precisely the challenges and dedication required that make achieving this certification such a remarkable feat. As a trainer, being part of the PMP certification process fills me with immense pride. Witnessing individuals invest countless hours honing their skills and demonstrating their expertise is a testament to their unwavering determination.

This chapter sheds light on the rationale behind these requirements and their significance in maintaining the integrity and value of the PMP certification.

Introducing the Project Management Institute

Behind the PMP credential is the Project Management Institute (PMI). PMI is the leading global professional association for project management, with over 730,000 PMI members worldwide (and this number continues to increase), offering four core certifications (CAPM, PMP, PgMP, and PfMP), eight specialized certifications that recognize knowledge and competency, and more than 1,600,000 PMP certification holders worldwide. The PMP certification recognizes project managers who have proven they have the skills to manage projects successfully. The PMP certification was introduced by PMI in 1984, and since then, the PMP certification has become the gold standard for project management professionals worldwide.

So there.

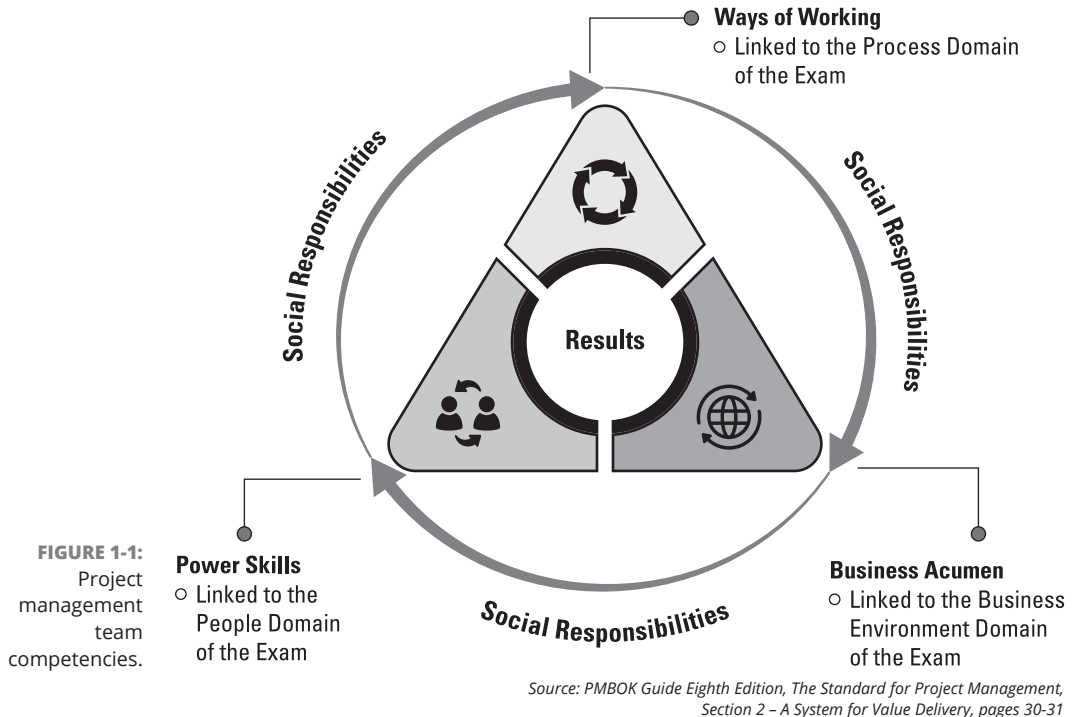
PMI has established stringent requirements for candidates to uphold the credibility and value of the PMP certification. These requirements are designed to ensure that individuals who hold the PMP credential possess a verified level of knowledge, experience, and competence. By maintaining consistent standards, the PMP certification becomes a reliable indicator of a project manager's capabilities across industries and geographical boundaries.

Excelling with Project Management Team Competencies

Another essential aspect of preparing for the PMP journey is understanding the competencies that a project management team should possess to successfully achieve project outcomes. These skills are not just about the key competencies of

skilled project managers; they also reflect the key domains of the PMP Exam: People, Process, and Business Environment.

The Project Management Team Competencies framework represents the ideal set of skills that project professionals must develop and sharpen to be successful and work smarter in today's evolving world of project management. Each element of the framework reflects the skills project professionals should possess to be successful in their projects. For an illustration of the framework, see Figure 1-1.



TIP

If you are familiar with PMI frameworks, you may be wondering if this is the same thing as the PMI Talent Triangle. That connection is valid. The PMI Talent Triangle still exists and remains the basis for maintaining your PMP credential through professional development, which I cover in Chapter 3. The expanded set of competencies that is mentioned in the current edition of the *PMBOK Guide*, highlighting social responsibility and results, signals that PMP aspirants should be prepared for exam questions grounded on this broader competency framework.

For further insight, the following sections examine each element of the framework and describe how they're demonstrated in practice.

Power skills

Power skills pertain to interpersonal skills, collaborative leadership, communication, an innovative mindset, for-purpose orientation, and empathy. Power skills in practice include the following:

- » Clearly communicating the goals and expectations of the project
- » Clearly and effectively communicating between team members, stakeholders, and clients
- » Delegating tasks effectively, providing feedback, and motivating team members to work toward the project's goals

Ways of working

Ways of working focus on project managers applying different ways to manage their projects, whether they are predictive, agile, design thinking, or other new practices still to be developed. Ways of working in practice include the following:

- » Knowing the right tools and techniques to use, given the project context and environment
- » Structuring a project team with the right skills to execute to the project plan

Business acumen

Business acumen provides an understanding of the macro- and micro-influences across an organization or industry in order to make effective decisions while understanding how the project aligns with the big picture of broader organizational strategy and global trends. Business acumen in practice involves the following:

- » Understanding the business, the industry, and how projects align specifically with the organization's strategic objectives
- » Understanding the organization's strategic objectives, market positioning, and financial goals
- » Understanding the organization's culture, structure, and processes to develop change management strategies that are effective and sustainable

Social responsibilities

Social responsibility recognizes that project managers influence more than schedules and scope. Our decisions affect people, teams, and organizations long after the work is done. This competency is about doing the right thing — acting with integrity, respecting context, and continuing to grow as professionals. In real life, social responsibility shows up when project teams:

- » Weigh business objectives alongside the impact on people, not after the fact
- » Hold the ethical line even when cutting corners would be faster or less visible
- » Navigate cultural, social, and organizational differences with awareness and respect
- » Invest in the profession by mentoring others, sharing lessons learned, and staying curious

Results

Results is about execution, turning plans and strategy into work that delivers value. It requires sharp problem-solving, a clear view of how organizations operate, and the judgment to keep things moving. Results are evident when project managers:

- » Diagnose problems using structured approaches like root cause analysis
- » Secure the authority, support, and buy-in needed to operate within organizational rules
- » Navigate enterprise politics with influence, negotiation, and common sense
- » Deliver what was promised without damaging trust, credibility, or relationships

It's important to note that this framework outlines the competencies of the project management team and not solely the project manager. The project management team comprises the project manager and may include additional individuals assigned to guide the project. Refer to Chapter 12 for more details about the project management team.

Understanding the ABCs of PMI

Getting comfortable with PMI vocabulary is one of the most important things you can do to prepare for the exam. Many PMP aspirants have found that their biggest hang-up in preparing for the exam is knowing and using PMP vocabulary such as the following: *acceptance criteria*, *servant leadership*, *T-shaped*, and more. What do they mean? Don't worry, you'll learn about these terms as you continue reading.

And if discovering new terminology is not overwhelming enough, the exam is notorious for including abbreviations — lots and lots of abbreviations. Do any of the following make sense to you: EVA, EMV, OPM, ETC, EAC, BAC, CPM, VBS? Are you still with me? I'm not saying all of this to scare you away from your pursuit of passing the PMP Exam. I promise! Consider yourself warned and now well prepared with the right PMI mindset. I promise, you will be saying under your breath during your preparation, "Crystal warned me about this."



TIP

Lucky for you, Chapter 23 contains a list of the common abbreviations on the exam. You're welcome. You can also refer to the index for additional reference to the terms. You're guaranteed to find the term someplace in the book with its corresponding definition.

In addition, PMI members can access a comprehensive list of the PMI lexicon on their website: www.pmi.org/standards/lexicon. PMI membership has its benefits!