Process Group Actions Review: Exercise and Checklists

Initiating Process Group

The following table lists the actions required to complete project initiating, from the time the project manager is assigned. In your Exercise Notebook, write down the number of each action. As you read this list, place a checkmark next to the actions you understand. If you don't understand an action or are uncertain what is done, write down the full description, then make sure you pay attention to those items as you read this book.

Remember that what needs to be done on a project varies based on the specific project, its life cycle, development approach, and the industry, so it may not be practical to do all these actions on every project.

The purpose of this list of actions is to help you identify gaps in your knowledge where your project management experience differs from PMI's approach. As you read through this list, keep in mind that these actions are not listed in any particular order. Try not to lose focus, just spend about ten minutes thinking about these activities.

	Actions Involved in Project Initiating
1	Sponsor(s) selects the project manager.
2	Sponsor(s) determines the authority of the project manager.
3	Collect historical information.
4	Divide large projects into phases. Use project governance rules and apply them to the project.
5	Identify stakeholders, and determine their influence, expectations, and impact. Document that information in a stakeholder register.
6	Determine high-level requirements, constraints, assumptions, and risks.
7	Turn high-level stakeholder needs, wants, and expectations into requirements.
8	Make sure the business case and the analysis supporting the need for the project are documented and understood.
9	Use the benefits management plan to understand the benefits the project is expected to deliver to the business.
10	Ensure the high-level product scope is documented with as much detail as is practical.
11	Understand how the project supports the organization's strategic objectives.
12	Collect and use any relevant, existing agreements (including contracts) that might be generating the project or that will be required during the project.
13	Determine success criteria and measurable project and product objectives.
14	Facilitate the resolution of conflicting objectives.
15	Become familiar with the company culture and structure as they relate to the project.
16	Find existing processes, standards, and compliance requirements that affect the project.
17	Understand how the organization does business (business knowledge) and what governance, procedures, and policies are already in place to use on the project.
18	Do planning on a high-level basis.
19	Perform high-level estimating for the project schedule and budget.
20	Use the high-level planning and estimating data to determine whether the project objectives can be achieved within the given constraints and whether the expected benefits can be realized.
21	Determine what form the project charter will take, including its level of detail.
22	Coordinate project initiating efforts with stakeholders, including the customer.
23	Work with the customer and others to determine high-level acceptance criteria and clarify what is and what is not in the project.
24	Determine the initial project organization.
25	Identify any inherent or required milestones on the project.
26	Finalize the project charter.
27	Obtain formal approval of the project charter.
28	Define the exit criteria for the project (when and why the project or phase should be closed).
29	Involve subject matter experts in developing the project charter and identifying stakeholders.
30	Develop project documents such as the risk register, the stakeholder register, and the assumption log, including data on identified risks and stakeholders.
31	Use stakeholder mapping to analyze data on identified stakeholders to understand their power, interest, and influence.

Planning Process Group

The table below lists the actions required to complete project planning. Review this list and try to identify any gaps in your knowledge compared to PMI's approach, keeping in mind that these actions are not listed in any particular order. In your Exercise Notebook, write down the number of each action. As you read this list, place a checkmark next to the actions you understand. If you don't understand an action or are uncertain what is done, write down the full description, then make sure you pay attention to those items as you read this book. Try not to lose focus, just spend about 15 minutes thinking about the activities on this list.

	Actions Involved in Project Planning
1	Determine how you will plan the planning, executing, and monitoring and controlling efforts for stakeholders, requirements, scope, schedule, cost, quality, resources, communications, risk, procurement, changes, and configuration, and put that information into the beginnings of management plans.
2	Refine the high-level requirements from project initiating so they are more specific and detailed, and look for additional requirements, being sure to consider any internal or external analysis, reports, or regulations; analyze and prioritize requirements.
3	Expand on the assumptions identified in project initiating, looking for new assumptions and documenting the details of the assumptions.
4	Refine the high-level constraints (such as resources, schedule, and cost) from project initiating so they are more specific and detailed.
5	Create a description of the project deliverables, the work required to complete those deliverables, and their acceptance criteria (project scope statement).
6	Use the project scope statement to gain approval of the "final" scope from stakeholders before further planning is done.
7	Assess what may need to be purchased on the project. Identify any pieces of work that may be outside the organization's abilities to complete, and determine if new equipment or technology is needed to perform the project work.
8	Select the procurement strategy for each contract. Create a draft of the procurement documents for necessary contracts, including bid documents, procurement statements of work, source selection criteria, and contract provisions.
9	Determine what subject matter experts you will need on the project team to help with project planning.
10	Break down the deliverables into smaller, more manageable pieces (WBS).
11	Create descriptions of each work package in a WBS dictionary so the work can be understood and produced without gold plating.
12	Break down the work packages from the WBS into lists of activities to produce them.
13	Sequence activities and determine predecessors and successors in the network diagram.
14	Estimate resource requirements (such as staff, facilities, equipment, and materials).
15	Meet with managers to gain resource commitments.
16	Decide what level of accuracy is needed for estimates.
17	Use historical data to support estimating time and cost.
18	Involve experts or those who will work on activities to estimate time and cost.
19	Determine how long the project will take without compressing the schedule (determine critical path).
20	Develop a schedule model, evaluate it against the schedule constraint in the project charter, and use schedule compression techniques to reconcile the two to come up with a final schedule for the project management plan.
21	Develop a preliminary budget and compare it to the budget constraint in the project charter. Then, develop options to reconcile the two to come up with the final budget for the project management plan.
22	Determine quality policies, practices, and standards, and then determine metrics to measure quality performance.
23	Determine processes to fulfill quality requirements and conform to organizational standards and policies.
24	Determine how you will improve the processes in use on the project.

	Actions Involved in Project Planning
25	Create a system for recognizing and rewarding the efforts of project team members to help keep them motivated and engaged in project efforts.
26	Plan for acquisition, team building, training, assessment, and release of team members. Plan for physical resources requirements, including acquisition and logistics.
27	Clearly determine all roles and responsibilities so team members and stakeholders know their roles on the project and what work they will need to do.
28	Work with the project team to develop a team charter defining their commitments and interactions with each other, including ground rules for meetings, conflict resolution processes, etc.
29	Determine what information you need from other projects and what information you will share with the organization and other projects.
30	Plan what will be communicated on the project, to whom, by whom, when, and how.
31	Plan how to involve stakeholders and manage their expectations during the project.
32	Complete detailed risk identification, subjectively analyze risks (qualitative risk analysis), perform quantitative risk analysis as necessary, and do risk response planning.
33	Iterations—go back and update project plans and documents as necessary to work toward a project management plan that is bought into, approved, realistic, and formal.
34	Finalize the procurement statement of work and other bid documents for each contract.
35	Look for potential positive and negative interactions with other projects that could affect the project.
36	Determine the processes that will be used to request, approve, and manage changes on the project.
37	Develop the configuration management plan, outlining naming conventions and processes for document versioning, storage, and retrieval.
38	Plan ways to measure project performance, including determining the measurements to be used, when they will be taken, and how the results will be evaluated.
39	Determine what meetings, reports, and other activities you will use to control the project to the project management plan.
40	Finalize the "execute" and "monitor and control" aspects of all management plans. Document closing requirements and actions.
41	Develop the final project management plan, project documents, and performance measurement baseline by performing schedule network analysis, looking for options, and confirming that project objectives can be met.
42	Gain formal approval of the project management plan from the sponsor, team, and managers of resources.
43	Hold a kickoff meeting with key stakeholders, team members, managers of team members, and the customer to make sure everyone is on the same page and gain buy-in.
44	Throughout the project, return to the planning processes to do rolling wave planning (progressive elaboration or iteration) as more information becomes available. Results will likely require change requests and updates to the project management plan and project documents.

Executing Process Group

The table below lists the actions required to complete project executing. Review this list and try to identify any gaps in your knowledge compared to PMI's approach, bearing in mind that these actions are not listed in any particular order. In your Exercise Notebook, write down the number of each action. As you read this list, place a checkmark next to the actions you understand. If you don't understand an action or are uncertain what is done, write down the full description, then make sure you pay attention to those items as you read this book. Try not to lose focus, just spend about 15 minutes thinking about the activities on this list.

	Actions Involved in Project Executing
1	Communicate your expectations for stakeholders and the project, and manage the involvement and needs of all stakeholders throughout the project to ensure everyone has a common understanding of the work.
2	Implement the most up-to-date version of the project management plan, including revisions made as a result of control activities.
3	Complete work packages.
4	Collect, document, and share lessons learned.
5	Establish and manage communication channels.
6	Evaluate how effectively the team members function as a team.
7	Implement approved changes, including corrective actions, preventive actions, and defect repair.
8	Confirm that practices and procedures are being followed and are still appropriate for the project.
9	Produce and distribute reports on project performance.
10	Hold team-building activities.
11	Use the team charter for guidance on team interactions. Follow ground rules at team meetings.
12	Obtain needed training for team members.
13	Exchange information about the project according to the plan, and solicit feedback to ensure communication needs are being met.
14	Remove roadblocks.
15	Achieve work results that meet requirements.
16	Meet with managers to reconfirm resource commitments.
17	Keep managers apprised of when their resources will be needed on the project.
18	Commit, manage, and release physical and team resources in accordance with the project management plan.
19	Guide, assist, communicate, lead, negotiate, facilitate, and coach.
20	Use your technical knowledge.
21	Hold meetings to identify and address issues, assess risks, and keep the project work moving forward.
22	Manage stakeholder engagement and expectations, increase project support, and prevent possible problems.
23	Focus on preventing problems rather than just dealing with them as they arise.
24	Make sure all team members have the skills, information, and equipment needed to complete their work.
25	Look for exceptions to the approved project management plan in team members' performance, rather than checking up on every person's work.
26	Recommend changes to be evaluated in the Perform Integrated Change Control process.
27	Follow organizational policies, processes, and procedures.
28	Increase the effectiveness of processes.
29	Make updates to the project management plan and project documents to reflect current information about the project.

	Actions Involved in Project Executing
30	Create recommendations for the performing organization to increase its effectiveness.
31	Ensure continued agreement from the stakeholders to the project management plan.
32	Keep everyone focused on completing the project to the project charter and project management plan.
33	Keep the project's business case and benefits management plan in mind while managing the project, especially when problems occur.
34	Solve problems.
35	Determine where project changes are coming from and what you can do to eliminate the root cause of the need for change.
36	Determine final team members and other resources, and bring them onto the project as needed.
37	Recognize and reward the team and individuals for their work and performance on the project.
38	Gather initial measurements and details about activities of project work (work performance data).
39	Implement approved process improvements.
40	Use an issue log to record project issues and details about their resolution, including who is responsible for resolving each issue and the expected timeline.
41	Obtain seller responses to bid documents.
42	Review proposals, bids, and quotes; negotiate contract terms with prospective sellers; and manage the evaluation and selection of sellers.
43	Manage the integration of sellers' work and deliverables into the overall work and deliverables of the project; manage any seller-related conflicts or challenges.
44	Expend and manage project funds.
45	Facilitate conflict resolution using conflict resolution techniques.
46	Assess individual team member performance.
47	Update human resource records of team members to reflect new skills acquired while working on the project.
48	Carry out contingency plans in response to risk triggers.

Monitoring and Controlling Process Group

The table below lists the actions required to complete project monitoring and controlling. Review this list and try to identify any gaps in your knowledge compared to PMI's approach, keeping in mind that these actions are not listed in any particular order. In your Exercise Notebook, write down the number of each action. As you read this list, place a checkmark next to the actions you understand. If you don't understand an action or are uncertain what is done, write down the full description, then make sure you pay attention to those items as you read this book. Try not to lose focus, just spend about 15 minutes thinking about the activities on this list.

	Actions Involved in Project Monitoring and Controlling
1	Measure project performance according to the planned measures in the management plans.
2	Measure against the performance measurement baseline.
3	Analyze and evaluate work performance data.
4	Determine variances.
5	Use your judgment to determine what variances are important and if they warrant recommending a change or corrective action.
6	Recommend changes, including defect repair and preventive and corrective actions. Do not just wait for others to recommend them.
7	Make or obtain a decision in integrated change control about whether changes should be approved, rejected, or deferred.
8	Track and evaluate naming conventions, version control processes, the storage and retrieval system (configuration management), and the use of the PMIS. This ensures everyone knows which version of the project or product documentation is the latest version.
9	Control scope, schedule, and cost to their baselines.
10	Perform procurement inspections and reviews of seller performance to the contract.
11	Refine control limits as needed.
12	Identify the root causes of problems with the help of techniques such as process analysis (for example, Lean, Kanban, and Six Sigma).
13	Obtain formal acceptance of interim deliverables from the customer.
14	Identify the need for replanning.
15	Replan and make updates to the project management plan and project documents to reflect approved changes and updates to the project.
16	Evaluate stakeholder relationships and involvement to determine if they require improvement.
17	Manage the schedule and cost reserves.
18	Recalculate how much the project will cost and how long it will take, and create forecasts.
19	Obtain additional funding if needed.
20	Prepare work performance reports from the analyzed data and measurements.
21	Hold periodic quality inspections.
22	Make decisions to accept or reject completed deliverables.
23	Evaluate the effectiveness of implemented corrective actions.
24	Assess the effectiveness of project control systems.
25	Spend time trying to improve quality.
26	Determine if project controls need to be updated.
27	Identify and analyze trends.
28	Evaluate the effectiveness of risk responses in a risk review.
29	Look for newly arising risks.

	Actions Involved in Project Monitoring and Controlling
30	Reanalyze identified risks.
31	Use milestones as a project control tool.
32	Observe and analyze.
33	Use variance reports to help correct small problems before they become serious.
34	Calculate estimate to complete.
35	Use and interpret earned value calculations.
36	Use quality control tools such as inspections, histograms, performance reviews, and cause-and-effect diagrams.
37	Influence any factors that could result in the project's change control and configuration management measures being bypassed.
38	Control changes.
39	Control to make sure that only approved changes are implemented.
40	Work with the change control board.
41	Evaluate stakeholder satisfaction.
42	Control procurements through actions such as reviewing, approving, and paying invoices, administering claims, and performing inspections and audits.
43	Validate defect repair.
44	Determine where project changes are coming from and what you can do to eliminate the root cause of the need for change.
45	Consider the project's business case and the organization's strategic objectives when analyzing change requests.
46	Use active listening, inquiry, and data gathering to confirm that communications and stakeholder engagement efforts are effective and working as planned. Make or recommend needed adjustments.
47	Evaluate the use, cost, and other aspects of physical resources. Make appropriate changes and adjustments.
48	Close procurements after final deliverables are accepted.
49	Update the risk report to keep key stakeholders informed about the status of overall project risk and the highest-ranked individual risks.

Closing Process Group

The table below lists the actions required to complete project closing. Review this list and try to identify any gaps in your knowledge compared to PMI's approach, keeping in mind that these actions are not listed in any particular order. In your Exercise Notebook, write down the number of each action. As you read this list, place a checkmark next to the actions you understand. If you don't understand an action or are uncertain what is done, write down the full description, then make sure you pay attention to those items as you read this book. Try not to lose focus, just spend about 5 minutes thinking about the activities on this list.

	Actions Involved in Project Closing
1	Confirm that all project requirements have been met.
2	Verify and document that the project or project phase meets completion or exit criteria set in place during project planning.
3	Obtain formal (legal) sign-off and final acceptance of the product of the project from the customer.
4	If any issues prevent final acceptance by the customer, negotiate a settlement or other resolution.
5	If the project was terminated before completion, document the reasons for termination and the status of the project and deliverables.
6	Make final payments, and complete cost records.
7	Gather final lessons learned and share with the organization.
8	Update project records.
9	Ensure all the project management processes are complete.
10	Update corporate processes, procedures, and templates based on lessons learned.
11	Complete project (or phase) closure.
12	Analyze and document the success and effectiveness of the project.
13	Create and distribute a final report of project (or phase) performance.
14	Index and archive project records.
15	Evaluate customer satisfaction regarding the project and the deliverables.
16	Hand off the completed project deliverables to the appropriate stakeholders (the customer, operations and maintenance, etc.).
17	Confirm all contracts have been formally closed; update and archive records.
18	Celebrate!