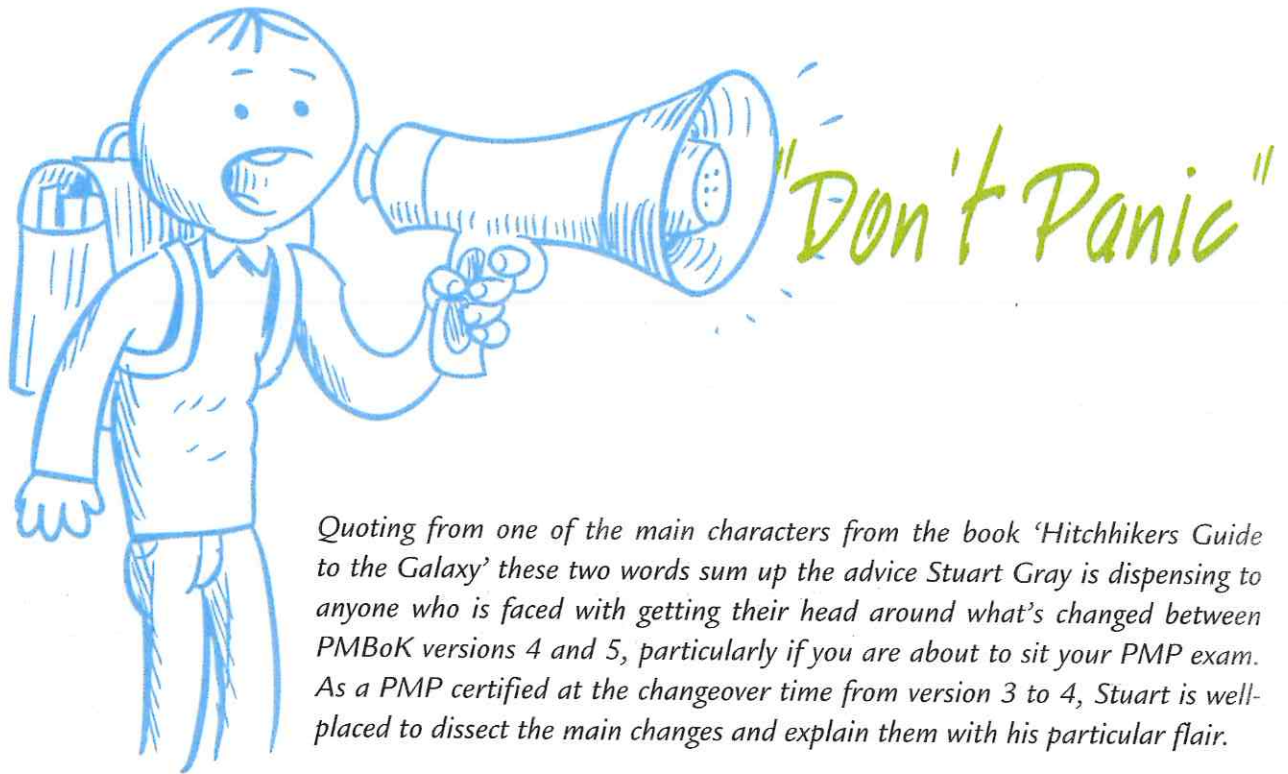# PMBoK™ 5/4 Global Standard.

By Stuart Gray (PMP, RMP)

"Don't Panic"

Quoting from one of the main characters from the book 'Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy' these two words sum up the advice Stuart Gray is dispensing to anyone who is faced with getting their head around what's changed between PMBoK versions 4 and 5, particularly if you are about to sit your PMP exam. As a PMP certified at the changeover time from version 3 to 4, Stuart is well-placed to dissect the main changes and explain them with his particular flair.

I have been through PMBoK 5 comprehensively but not forensically and I have been through the PMBoK 4 again to reference PMBoK 5 and do not encourage you to do so unless really interested or maybe you don't have a day job. As many people doing some kind of investigation to the changes have said, there is a very strong parallel between the old and the new standards.

PMBoK 5 boasts 120 pages more than its predecessor. How much of this is a real concern? Let us break it down without stressing. One of the possible contributing factors is there is some duplication of diagrams for easier reference as well as many of the diagrams and tables are larger, which increases the number of pages.

'No pain no gain' comes to mind and it is the same issue for project management. From a value aspect you are getting more, so more information and a better standard, results in better value for money if you apply this point of view. (The eternal optimist)

In my quest I have been through the book chapter by chapter and have highlighted some points to provide an objective and short evaluation through my eyes.

Chapter 1: Introduction. The first thing I noticed is that the introduction is still nice and short and introduces some aspects not mentioned in the PMBoK 4. Examples of this are relationships between Project Management, Operations Management and Organizational Strategy and Business Value. These additions to the introduction are short and highlight areas that were not detailed before but are pretty valuable from an introduction overview. So far so good.

Chapter 2: Organizational Influences and Project Life Cycle This section has a change in title wording in which I personally prefer in the PMBoK 4: Project Life Cycle and Organization has some changes in the order of addressing the topics but this is really just rearranging content (with a little extra meat).

Chapter 3: Project Management Processes (without the words processes for a project), has the same basic structure with professional diagrams with the very important page which is now page 61, which has the table, "Project Management Process Group and Knowledge Area Mapping" (Used to be plural and previously on page 43

for those older PMPs who remember). Now there are 10 Knowledge Areas: Project Stakeholder Management is added, with the other minor changes in the groups there are now 29 mapping areas with content comparing to the 26 in PMBoK 4. I won't do the section by section comparison with respect to the table as the focus is not a history lesson but rather to reiterate that the major change is the inclusion of the "Project Stakeholder Management" section 13 (which is anything but unlucky).

Something to note is that a large section from PMBoK 4, in this chapter, has been moved to Annexure A1. That is the section that contains the inputs and outputs for the various process groups. Now for those who go through cover to cover by the time you get to this section you may tend to only glance over the section but I encourage you to cover it in a summary approach first. You will gain a more complete overview of the processes. If you have this more complete and in the back of your mind when you get to the 10 knowledge areas you have a better reference to the process groups as well as inputs and outputs. In addition each of the sections now also has a

"key benefit" detailed which provides a very handy perspective of the processes value to the project. I did notice there are some repeats of diagrams from chapter 3 which saves you paging back and forth.

Chapter 4: Project Integration Management has no major changes just some different naming conventions, but is pretty similar to the PMBoK 4 standard.

Chapter 5: Project Scope Management: Plan Scope Management has some changes and for example, Verify Scope has been changed to Validate Scope. (Now that's not too bad you see the "Don't Panic" works). No major areas of concern here.

Chapter 6: Project Time Management starts with Plan Schedule Management which is an addition. Section 6 has some very good example diagrams for critical path critical chain and resource levelling as well as the Project Schedule presentations are better presented.

Chapter 7: Project Cost Management has improvements to the "Cost Baseline Expenditure and Funding" figure and other diagrams in this section have been improved. There is now a very nice "Earned Value Calculations Summary Table" at the end of chapter 7.

Chapter 8: Project Quality Management has some additions with for example the SIPOC Model and some of the control chart examples have been removed and some diagrams have been combined in a handy storyboard. There are some changes regarding tools and techniques included in the Control Quality and Perform Quality Control section.

Chapter 9: Project Human Resources Management does not have too much re changes and is still a very important section. As a side comment this section contains key issues in people management in a project so don't cut corners in this section. An example of a change is re-naming Plan Human Resources Management from Develop Human Resources.

Chapter 10: Project Communications Management. The sections relating to stakeholder management have

been moved to the new stakeholder management section and this chapter only has three sections now. This section does refer quite a bit to the Stakeholders section 13 for obvious reasons regarding communications and stakeholders.

Chapter 11: Project Risk Management has some of the diagrams inserted twice to explain clearly and obviously there are new diagrams. The Probability and Impact Matrix has some additional definition with respect to high to low risk as an indicator. The information on project document updates in section 11.5 Plan Risk Responses references more comprehensively the documents that need to be updated in the "Project Document Updates" section. For those who studied PMBoK 4, I suggest going through the complete Risk Section carefully as there are some valuable additions and changes that at face value appear to be minor but for practical purposes regarding the section of risk would be important.

Chapter 12: Project Procurement Management is very similar in content except some sections have been moved around for better positioning and explanation e.g. Types of contracts.

Chapter 13 the new section: "Project Stakeholder Management" is there for everyone to now absorb and apply accordingly. Yes even for you PMBoK 4 and 3 and so on, even the Veterans and Grand Masters, guys this chapter has a lot of value and you do and will need to know it.

Annex X1 has detail of all the changes from the PMI aspect and would not be of value for new PMPs unless possibly they have to deal with older school project managers and would need to indicate these changes from a knowledge aspect.

Appendix X3 Interpersonal Skills relating to Project Human Resources Management is also in the new in PMBoK 5 and should be covered in conjunction with chapter 9.

Looking at the glossary there are many additional entries for example in the Q and S definitions but this is valuable as you do not have to seek so much in other references when assessing meanings and explanations that were not previously included.

A Summary (That is always important) For those ready to write their PMP but not having studied the PMBoK 4 and being in the transition phase, at face value it does not appear to be significant. Referring back to the Inputs, Outputs and Tools and Techniques and how much of PMBoK you have committed to pure memory, I would have a little concern. I would also do the obvious and comprehensively cover the new section (Chapter 13) and how it interacts on other sections. While it is clear in summary the challenge is in the detail. Don't forget however you don't need 100% to pass. For certified PMPs, it's just another day in the profession - things change and you can refer to the standard when you need to.

In closing, I would focus on three sections with respect to changes, and that is the Scope Section, Communications and the Stakeholder Analysis section. As an experienced PMP you may have to change gears a bit to incorporate the changes depending on where your project is regarding lifecycle and if you need to make the changes (your project should still succeed on the old standard). For the new project managers, it is just starting and by adopting the approach of applying the standard plus a bit of "No Pain No Gain" I am sure you will persevere and be successful.

Stuart Gray