

# PRINCE2 Walkthrough and Roadmap



Dave Litten - CasaBlanca Publishing Corp

## Congratulations!

## YOU Have taken the first step toward a PRINCE2 EXAM PASS!

My Roadmap Walkthrough is a key diagram that I normally develop for the delegates on the first morning of my PRINCE2 training seminars. As you will see from the attached diagram, it is just a picture taken from one such training session.

As you can see, I draw it on 4 pieces of flipchart paper, and develop the diagram over a one hour period. I make no pretence that it is a work of art as my handwriting and drawing skills would not win any prizes!

But that is not the point. This important diagram, show the interaction between the seven PRINCE2 Processes in a typical project, and as such teaches you how the PRINCE2 Method is applied.

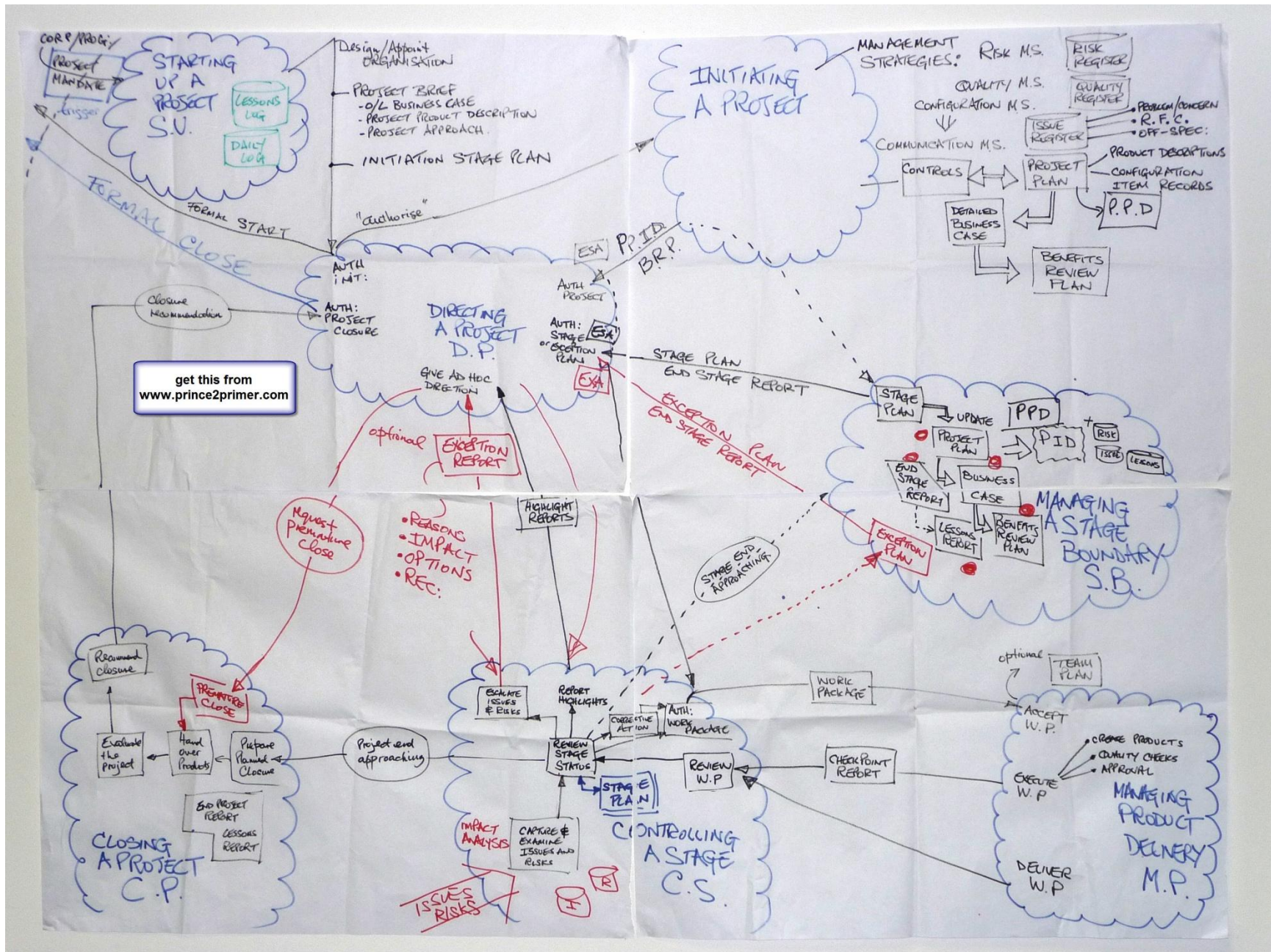
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**Good Luck on your path to your PRINCE2 exam pass...**

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I suggest you print out this document and keep the roadmap diagram separate so that you can refer to it constantly as I guide you through it. If you print it in colour, you will note that I have reserved the red colour for when I describe the PRINCE2 management by exception approach. As is usual, I will start at the top left-hand corner of the diagram with the 'trigger' for any PRINCE2 project – the Project Mandate...read on...

A project can be standalone or part of a programme, in which case a project may be triggered from either those within a programme, here called programme management, or by appropriate senior management within an organization, here called corporate management.



A PRINCE2 project is therefore triggered by either of the above by issuing a Project Mandate. This document should contain as a minimum, the name of the prospective project board executive and the reasons for the need of the project. As such it may only be and verbal instruction or possibly an e-mail. At the other extreme it could be the final report from a feasibility study. Whichever, it must contain sufficient information provided by an appropriate authority level, in order to trigger the first PRINCE2 process.

The first process is called Starting Up a Project and uses the initials SU. This occurs pre-project, and is used as a solid foundation prior to the first stage in a PRINCE2 project. Developing detailed plans can consume a lot of resource, and since many projects should not even be started in the first place, it makes sense for SU to be used as a 'filter' – both to prevent poorly conceived projects from starting in the first place, and to establish an understanding of the goals and objectives of the project. In particular, to ensure that there are good business reasons to proceed with the project.



One of the first activities is to appoint the Executive of the Project Board and the Project Manager; the Executive will now design and appoint the remaining roles within the Project Board including who will fill the Senior User and Senior Supplier roles, and how Project Assurance is to be handled. The project manager will design and appoint any other supporting roles that will be needed such as project support, configuration management and the optional Team Manager role.

There are two main management products that are an output from this process, the Project Brief and

a plan for the Initiation Stage.

The Project Brief contains the outline Business Case with sufficient information to justify carrying out the initiation stage, creating the Project Product Description which includes aspects such as the customer's quality expectations and acceptance criteria for the end product of the project.

The Project Brief also contains the Project Approach management document. This lays out the approach used by the project to deliver the end product, for example, basing the design on an existing product or developing an entirely new design, or whether or not resources used for the project will be provided internally or by the use of third parties.

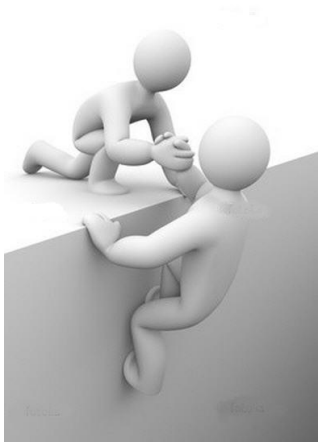
The Project Brief can be seen as a refinement of the Project Mandate, and in a similar way the Project Brief will be refined further within the initiation stage to become the Project Initiation Documentation (PID).

One important principle of PRINCE2 is that of manage by exception. The purpose of this is to set tolerance levels at the directing, managing, and delivering management levels within a project. Tolerance is defined as limit within which a particular level may manage without the need to escalate to the next level above.

There are six objectives against which tolerances may be set: time, cost, quality, scope, risk, and benefits. If any of these tolerances are forecast to be exceeded, then an Exception Plan must be raised which if approved would replace the existing plan that would have no longer completed within tolerance.

Corporate or Programme management have the authority to set project level tolerances, the Project Board have authority to set stage level tolerances, and optionally, the Project Manager may set tolerances around a particular Work Package.

One of the PRINCE2 principles is learning from experience. For this reason the Lessons Log is created and filled with any lessons that can be learned from appropriate individuals and previous similar projects. The project manager would be expected to proactively collect such data. The Lessons Log will be updated and used throughout the project, in particular as a source of information to create the optional Lessons Report at the end of each stage, and the



Lessons Report that is created as part of the Closing a Project process. In this way, lessons can be passed on to future similar projects.

The Daily Log is also created by the project manager, and is used as a 'diary' by the project manager for the remainder of the project. But here in SU, it is also used to capture any risks and issues that need to be managed prior to the formal start of the project.



To proceed any further, the newly formed project board will need to make a decision whether or not it is worth investing in the creation of the PID. In particular how much work effort and resources are needed in the initiation stage. In this way, poorly conceived projects can be nipped in the bud before any further effort is wasted upon them. By the same token, the information contained within the Project Brief and the initiation Stage Plan will give the project board sufficient information to make an informed choice.

The Starting Up a Project process culminates with the project manager requesting that the project board consider authorizing the initiation stage. This uses the first activity 'authorizing initiation' within the directing a project (DP) process. The project board may decide not to proceed any further. However let's assume that in this instance they agree based on the evidence above to invest in the initiation stage, then this will become the formal start of the project, and corporate/programme management will be informed that the project is initiated.

The initiating a project process is used within the initiation management stage and the main deliverable here is the PID itself. The activities within this process echo the contents of the project initiation documentation. It makes sense to first determine the various strategies needed within the project before detailed planning takes place.



The Risk Management Strategy document is created and the Risk Register is set up to capture and manage any risks throughout the project. Any risks which exist already on the Daily Log would now be transferred to the Risk Register. The Risk Management Strategy defines HOW resource will be managed throughout the project.

The Quality Management Strategy document is created and the Quality Register is set up. This register will typically be empty at this point, as this will contain the planned dates of all quality management activities for the creation of the specialist products, and such dates will not be known until the second Stage Plan is created.



This second stage is always the first delivery stage, so-called because this is the first stage (and possibly also the final stage for small simple projects) where specialist products are to be created. The word specialist products refers to the type of project, for example if the project end product is a new office building, then the specialist products would be for example, the building frame itself, roof and walls, water and electricity services to be implemented, heating and lighting products, office equipment and so on. These should not be confused with the PRINCE2 management products such as the Project Brief, Project Initiation Documentation, reports, and so on.

So you can see that the Quality Register will have the actual dates of the quality checking activities entered during a typical delivery stage.

It is worth mentioning that PRINCE2 does not consider a specialist product as complete, until it has had an independent quality check and an appropriate authorization. As part of the PRINCE2 product based planning technique, a product description for each specialist product is written as part of planning for a particular delivery stage. This Product Description will contain the method and the appropriate measurements required for the product to have ensure the pass its quality check.



The Configuration Management Strategy document is created and the Issue Register is set up. In PRINCE2, an issue can be advice of a new risk, a problem or concern, or a change. There are two types of changes: a request for change which typically comes from the customer and it is a request for a change to what was originally agreed. The second type of change is called an off-specification; typically this would come from the supply side and covers some aspect of the project that although agreed, cannot now be met.

Configuration management may be thought of as version control and as such is closely aligned with how change control (mentioned above) is to be implemented. Typically configuration management will be supplied by the project support role.

The final strategy is the Communication Management Strategy, and is created last because the first three strategies will have communication needs and these can be included at this point. As you can see, all four of the strategies are HOW-TO documents.

The Project Plan can now be created in parallel with setting up the various controls there will be needed throughout the project. Typically these controls focus on those needed at project board level for example end stage assessment timing, and the frequency of their regular Highlight Reports, while at project manager level for example, the formality or otherwise of issuing Work Packages and the frequency of the regular Checkpoint Reports.



Highlight Reports cover progress within the management stage, and Checkpoint Reports cover the progress of specialist product creation within a Work Package.

As with all plans, the Project Plan is a document, and will use the PRINCE2 product-based planning technique.

Traditional project planning would start with the brainstorming of the various activities. But one of the principles of PRINCE2 is product focus. What this means is that the product based planning technique starts with the identification of products, initially at the highest level within a project, by creating the Project Product Description, but then going on to create a Product Breakdown Structure which is a hierarchical diagram of the

products within a given project.

The next step would be to create Product Descriptions for all appropriate lower level products, including their quality criteria. The final product based planning step is to create a Product flow Diagram, which shows the sequence of creation of the products.

In case you are confused, an activity would normally be described with a noun and verb such as 'create report', whereas a product would be described with a noun or outcome for example 'specification document'.

Within PRINCE2, the next steps cover traditional planning techniques, first identifying the activities needed to create each product, then estimating such activities, creating the schedule or sequence of such activities (usually shown as a network diagram or Gantt Chart view). Then going on to identify risks, their associated response activities, and finally adding the narrative of the plan document.





Because of this, new Product Descriptions along with their quality criteria will be created along with a Configuration Item Record (CIR) for each product. This record forms part of the data and the status for each product held within configuration management.

Also at this point the Project Product Description may now needs to be further refined, for example, as better data is understood for the acceptance criteria of the project end product.

The detailed Business Case can now be developed as it will use timescale and cost information derived from the Project Plan. This detailed Business Case will be used throughout the project in particular at the end of each management stage where it is updated and used as a basis to proceed or otherwise by the project board.

A new management product is now created based upon some information contained within the business case, and it is called the Benefits Review Plan. As the name suggests, this contains a description of each future benefit, its timing, measurement, and the resources required to carry this out. The Benefits Review Plan is kept separate from the Project Initiation Documentation as it will be used after the project has finished to continue and track the remaining benefits until their eventual realization.



All of the above can now be assembled and forms the Project Initiation Documentation. The project manager will now request that the project board authorize the project. They will use this named activity within the Directing a Project process (DP), and this will always be the first end stage assessment within any PRINCE2 project (as the initiation stage is always the first management stage in a PRINCE2 project).

However, there is a parallel activity that also needs to take place if this project is to proceed any further, and that is to prepare a Stage Plan for the next stage. The Managing a Stage Boundary (SB) process is used for this purpose, and will use the product based planning technique. As this is the end of the initiation stage then the End Stage Report will also need to be created along with an optional Lessons Report.

Authorizing the PID will occur within the Authorize the Project activity and authorizing the next Stage Plan will occur at the Authorize a Stage or Exception Plan activity. Both of these are activities within the Directing a Project process, and will normally take place at the same meeting which is the end stage assessment.

At this end stage assessment, as is typical, the project board has the option to approve the next Stage Plan, prematurely close the project, or request that the project manager reworks some aspect of the documentation.

Assuming all is well, the Project Board will set stage tolerance for the next stage, advise the project manager of the frequency and detail to be included in the regular Highlight Reports and approve the next Stage Plan. This will now trigger the project manager to give out the first Work Package within this newly approved stage.

It is highly likely that the number and detail of Work Packages within a stage and any associated Team Plans have already been thought through during the planning of the relevant stage. But whether they have or not, the PRINCE2 method defines that the specialist team should not start work on any product creation until a Work Package containing such work has been authorized by the project manager and accepted by either the team manager or the team members themselves.



The Team Manager role may optionally be given to an appropriate individual within the specialist team (if the specialist team is a third party, then it may well be that their project manager takes on the role of Team Manager – but remember, there can only be one Project Manager). The team manager may optionally produce a Team Plan which would show that one or many Work Packages can be delivered within the constraints laid down.

Every Work Package must contain at least one Product Description. The project manager may optionally set tolerances at the work package level.

Once the Work Package has been agreed and accepted then work can start on the creation of the specialist products contained within the Work Package. At any given point during a stage there may be one or several Work Packages, possibly given to different teams, being worked on at the same time. Alternatively Work Packages may be given out one after another. This is clearly a very flexible system and the manner and formality will depend on the nature of the specialist work within the stage.

Probably 90% of the project budget is spent within the Managing Product Delivery (MP) process, since this is where the specialist products are created. The 'execute a work package' activity is where the specialist products are created and their quality checks carried out, followed by their approval by the appropriate authority or individual.

The team manager or the team themselves will produce regular Checkpoint Reports providing information on the status and future forecast of the creation of specialist products. These are sent to the project manager, and may be in the form of a report or a meeting. The project manager will use the activity of Review Work Package Status to determine the progress or otherwise of the creation and the approval of these specialist products.

Since the Stage Plan has been approved by the Project Board, then the project manager must look at progress within the stage itself. If the project manager determines that the stage is forecast to remain within tolerance bounds, then he or she may take some form of corrective action to minimize any such deviations within tolerance. This may entail giving out new or modified Work Packages to the specialist team.

In addition to this the project manager will need to review the stage status and use the activity of report highlights, which will generate a Highlight Report to be given to the project board so that they understand the current status and forecast future of progress within the stage. The project manager will update the Stage Plan with actual progress, and modifying future actions to ensure that the stage plan is forecast to complete within tolerance.



As each Work Package is completed, then the team manager or the specialist team themselves needs to inform the project manager that the Work Package is indeed complete. The project manager, as part of the activity review work package status will need to agree that all the products have been completed, met their quality criteria, and have been approved by the appropriate authority.

This may trigger the authorization of a new/revised Work Package, or that the stage end is approaching, in which case the project manager would use the Managing a Stage Boundary (SB) process to prepare for an end stage assessment.

If at any time during the stage, either issues or risks should arise, then the project manager should use the activity of capture and examine issues and risks to carry out an impact analysis of these on both the stage and project. The appropriate Issue or Risk Register should be updated with such information.

If the project manager determines that some corrective action can be taken via the issue of new or modified Work Packages to resolve the situation then such actions would need to be taken. If after impact analysis and the review of this within the status of the stage or the project would show that forecast of tolerances would be exceeded, then the project manager must create an Exception Report and bring this to the attention of the project board. If a Work Package is forecast to exceed tolerance levels, the Team Manager would raise this as an issue to bring it to the attention of the project manager.



Using the activity escalate issues and risks, the project manager would bring this Exception Report to the attention of the project board. Put simply this Exception Report should contain information on the reasons for this forecast of exceeding tolerances, the impact in terms of the appropriate tolerance, and a set of options, which if implemented would return the stage of project within tolerance bounds, and a recommendation of which option should be chosen, and why it is the best option.

This is sent to the project board who now need to make a decision on what to do next. One option they have is to prematurely close the project, in which case the project manager would use the Closing a Project (CP) process to carry this out. For the moment we shall assume that they prefer another option, either recommended by the project manager, or one which they have determined. This would trigger the project manager to use the Managing a Stage

Boundary (SB) process.

The project board would request the preparation of an Exception Plan using the Managing a Stage Boundary process.

At this point it would be helpful to state that the Managing a Stage Boundary process has only TWO uses.

The first is to prepare for an end stage assessment (ESA) by creating the next Stage Plan.

The second is to prepare for an exception assessment (EXA). In the former the objective is to approve or otherwise, the next Stage Plan, and in the latter it is to approve or otherwise the Exception Plan.



Whichever of the above, this process would follow the following steps and activities:

1. Create either a next Stage Plan or an Exception Plan
2. Update the Project Plan to show actual progress and if necessary, a modified future forecast
3. As part of updating the Project Plan and the next Stage Plan/Exception Plan, it may be necessary to update some aspects of the PID (possibly in terms of the strategies, the plan, and the controls, or the Business Case and related Benefits Review Plan.
4. As a result of the above, new or modified Product Descriptions will need to be created, new or modified risks and issues entered on to the appropriate registers including any lessons that have been learned during the stage.
5. The Benefits Review Plan needs to be updated to reflect any products that may have already being released into the operational (business as usual – BAU) areas.
6. The project manager will produce an End Stage Report and if appropriate create a Lessons Report.

All of the above will be brought before the project board at either an end stage assessment or an exception assessment.

The project board will need to make a decision to either approve the next Stage Plan, or approve the Exception Plan, or request more information, or to order a premature close of the project.

For each delivery stage these four processes will continue in the same manner as described above. The Managing a Stage Boundary process will be used either to prepare a next Stage Plan or an Exception Plan and is brought before the project board using the Directing a Project process to either approve or otherwise the next Stage Plan or an Exception Plan.



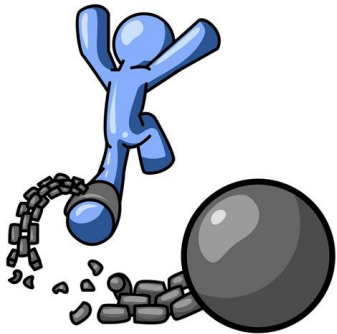
Once this has been authorized, the project manager will give out the work contained within that Stage Plan and the specialist team will create the specialist products via each Work Package. When the last Work Package has been completed (each specialist product has been approved), then this will trigger the project manager to acknowledge that the project end is approaching.

A very important point needs to be made here. If the project, within any management stage,

needs to be brought to a premature close, then the closing a project process (CP) is used. Let us suppose that a given project has three delivery stages after the initiation stage. In the final delivery stage, work packages containing information on the specialist products to be created will be issued and managed as described above.

However, once the final specialist product within the final work package has been approved, then the project manager will trigger the closing a project (CP) processes to shut the project down in a controlled manner. A final management stage is not used to merely to use the Closing a Project process. In summary, the final stage of a project will use the Controlling a Stage, Managing Product Delivery, and Closing a Project processes.

Assuming a natural close to the project, then the prepare planned closure activity will be used. The project manager would request a product status account to ensure that all products within the project would have been approved and that the project acceptance criteria have been met. The Project Plan should be updated with the 'actuals' of this final stage.



The projects products must now be handed over to the operational and maintenance environment, where they will be used to ultimately realise the benefits contained as stated within the Business Case. The project manager would updates relevant configuration item records to show that such products have the status of 'operational', any acceptance records should be created or obtained, and the Benefits Review Plan updated to reflect any products that have already realized benefits and to include any post project activities for such benefits that have yet to be realized.

The re-evaluate the project activity will create the end of project report to capture actual progress and aspects such as project performance metrics, and will include the Lessons Report based upon the information contained within the Lessons Log.

In the case of premature close, then the reasons for this should be entered and updated on the Issue Register, and if necessary any additional work may be needed to buy the complete unfinished products or to make them safe. Once the project manager has determined that the project should and can be closed, then a recommendation of such should be raised to the project board in the form of a closure recommendation.



The final activity in any project, is the authorized project closure within the Directing a Project process. The project board would need to review original and updated versions of the PID, review and approve the End Project Report, confirm any follow-on actions or loose ends, verify that the projects products have been handed over in an appropriate manner, ensure that the Business Case remains viable, advise that the project can now be closed, and advise those supplier resources that these can now be withdrawn.

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Okay, so now you can see how the processes work with each other...

You can see that the Starting Up a Project, Initiating a Project, and Closing a Project are usually used once per project.

You will have noted that at the completion of the Starting Up a Project process, the Directing a Project Process is continually used until the final close of the project.

It will not have escaped your attention that the Managing a Stage Boundary process is EITHER used at the end of a management stage to prepare for an End Stage Assessment (ESA), OR it is used if needed when Tolerance is forecast to be exceeded AND Corporate/Programme Management or the Project Board request an Exception Plan – in which case the SB process is used to create an Exception Report and prepare for an Exception Assessment (EXA).

The controlling a Stage and Managing Product Delivery processes are used continually during an individual management stage.

Okay.

So what about the 7 PRINCE2 Themes? Good question. You see, Themes are used continually throughout a PRINCE2 project. Whereas the PRINCE2 processes describe a structured sequence, the Themes represent project management best practice in seven key areas. And put simply, they are applied as 'How-To' approaches in each of the processes.

I do not intent to go through each of them here as they are described in my free downloadable PRINCE2 Step-By-Step Guide, but an example of how some of them might be used in the first, Starting Up a Project process:

The outline Business Case is created and used to justify investment in the initiation stage

The PRINCE2 Organization is designed and implemented

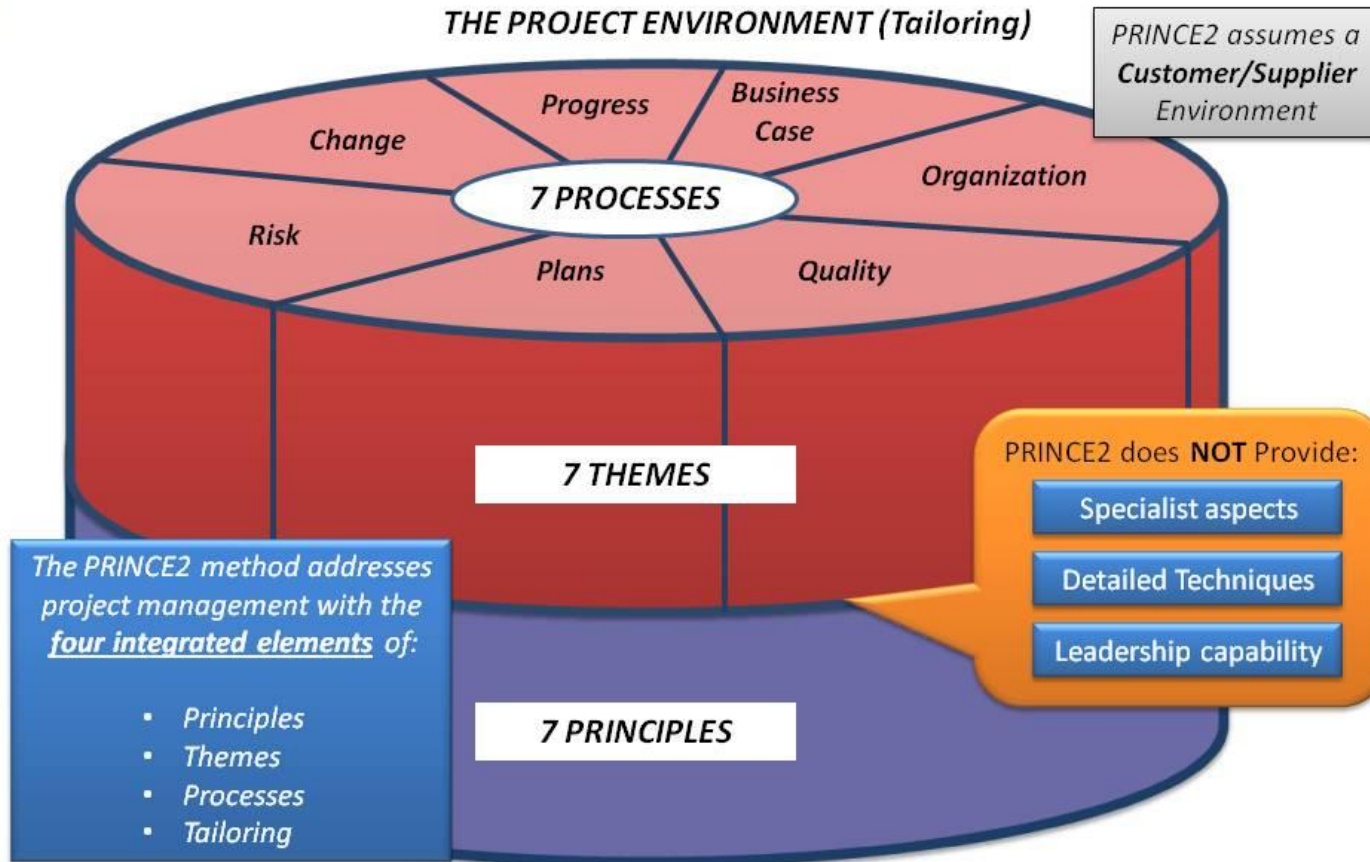
The Customer's Quality Expectations and Acceptance Criteria are initially created as part of the Project Product Description

A Plan for the Initiation Stage is created





## The Structure of PRINCE2



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Any known risks are captured and managed within the Daily Log – they are also used to make a decision as to whether to proceed to the Initiation Stage or not.

The Daily Log is used to capture and manage any issues which include changes

The Project Manager and the Executive/Project Board work informally to ensure pre-project progress is under control.

As you can see from the above, I have included all 7 of the PRINCE2 Themes – and I could give a similar example in each of the remaining PRINCE2 processes...so let's try and

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summarize this in a few diagrams:- This shows how the 7 PRINCE2 Principles are the bedrock, upon which the 7 processes are used as described and the 7 themes are applied as appropriate for each process.

And here we can see a summary of the 7 processes and themes...



## PRINCE2 Structure

### PROCESSES

Show the **chronological** flow of the project

- Starting up a Project (SU)
- Initiating a Project (IP)
- Directing a Project (DP)
- Controlling a Stage (CS)

- Managing Product Delivery (MP)
- Managing a Stage Boundary (SB)
- Closing a Project (CP)

### THEMES

Used **continually** throughout the project, must be applied – tailored up or down

- Risk
- Business Case
- Change

- Progress
- Plans
- Organization
- Quality

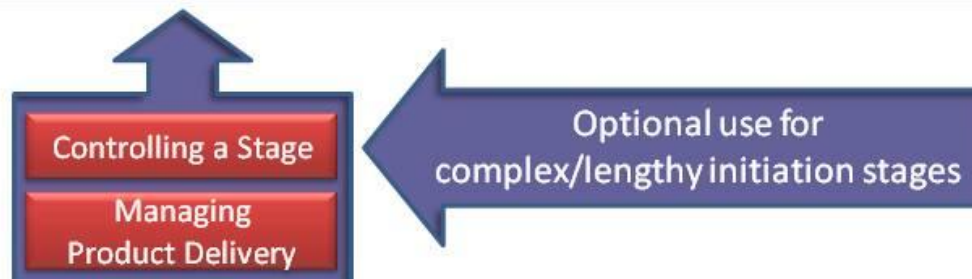
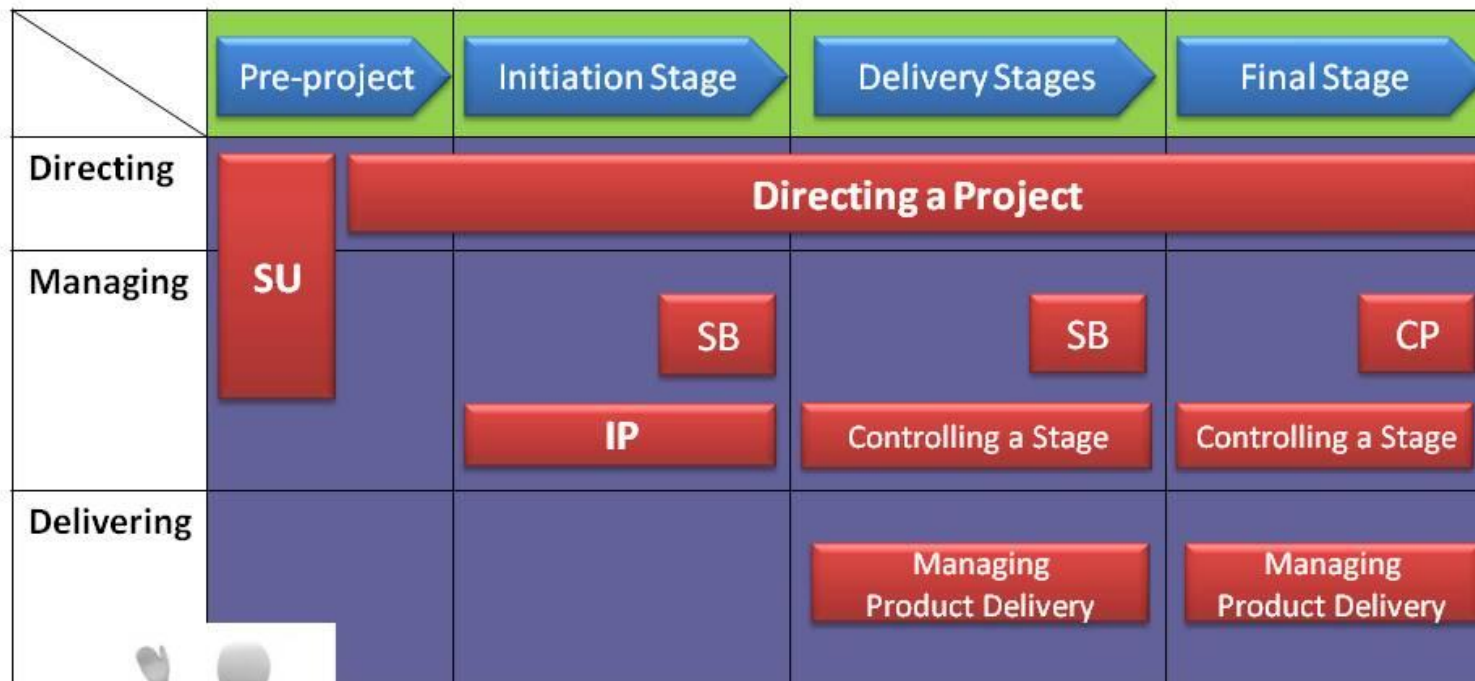


- Purpose
- Theme defined
- PRINCE2 approach
- Responsibilities

Followed by the 7 processes overlaid by an example 3-stage PRINCE2 Project (remember, the minimum is the Initiation stage plus one delivery stage – but depending upon the size, importance, complexity and risk, a project may have one initiation stage and many delivery stages...



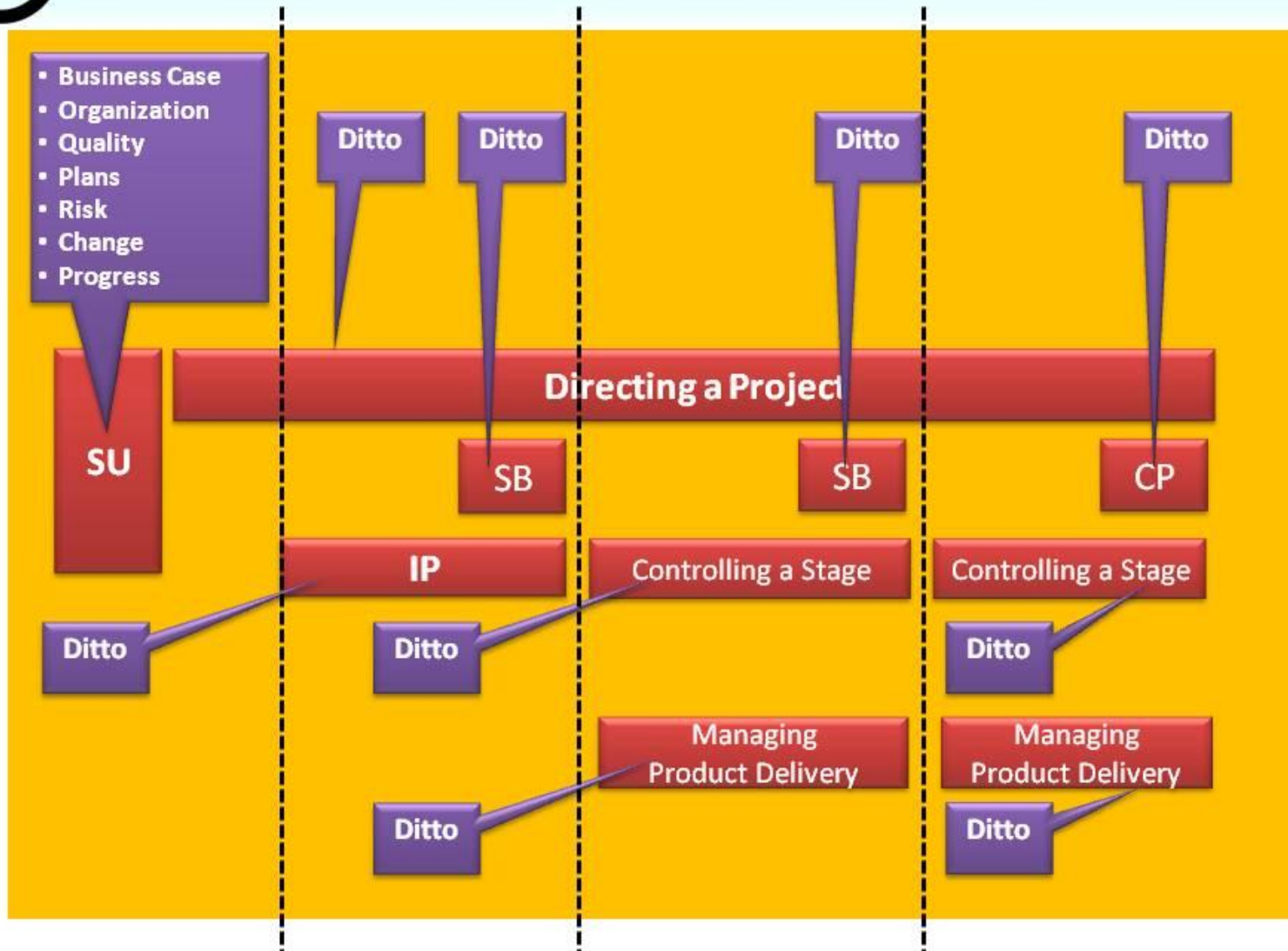
## The PRINCE2 Process Timeline



And to remind you, the 7 PRINCE2 Themes are applied as needed to the 7 PRINCE2 Processes:



### The PRINCE2 Process Timeline





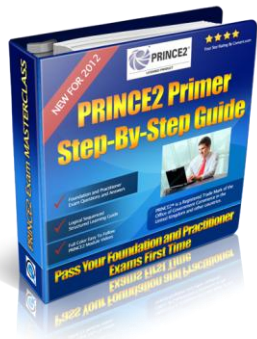
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It is NOW important that you create a study plan to absorb the high-level information by investing in my PRINCE2 Step-By-Step Guide. It has been designed by me to be easy to read and absorb by you:

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Kind Regards



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