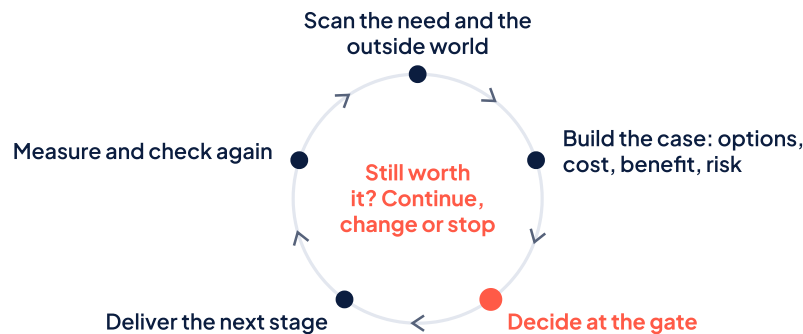


The living business case

Justify a project with options, costs, benefits and risks, and keep the case valid.



Our own cycle, after ICB4 (IPMA's Individual Competence Baseline) 4.3.1.3 and APM (Association for Project Management) BoK 8 (APM's Body of Knowledge) §2.4.3. It runs until the benefits are measured.

WHAT IT IS

A **business case** states the need, compares options, including doing the minimum, on cost, benefit and risk, and recommends one. The **sponsor** owns it; the project manager often writes it. Check it at every gate and after any big change, inside or outside the organisation; then continue, change course or stop. Only what is **still to come** counts: money already spent is gone.

HOW IT WORKS

- 01 Scan outside forces (PESTLE): political, economic and social; technological, legal, environmental.
- 02 Compare the options, including doing the minimum.
- 03 Name the owner, the assumptions and the gates.
- 04 At each gate, weigh cost still to come against benefits still to come.

MID-LEVEL · WORKED EXAMPLE

Apply it well

The situation: A city wants resident parking permits online, at a cost of about €640,000 over eight months.

The project manager drafts three options with the sponsor: do the minimum (online payment only), full online permits, or wait for a city-wide portal. Full online wins: €640k against savings of €140k in year 1 and €250k a year for 3 more, €890k in all.

In the exam: Name the owner, the options you compared, the gates, and one decision based on what was still to come, not on what was spent.

SENIOR · WORKED EXAMPLE

Design and lead it

The situation: A city is joining 14 online services under one login over 30 months for about €13.5 million, with funds released at gates and a council election in month 20.

At each gate, the project manager tests the case with the board: benefits per service, cost still to come, outside changes. The last release waits for the council election, so she shows what could stop safely there.

In the exam: Show the case as the board's decision tool: who may stop or re-scope, what each gate tests, and how outside changes reach it.

WHERE IT SITS

IPMA · ICB4	PMI · PMBOK® GUIDE 8 · PMP® EXAM	APM · BOK 8 · PMQ EXAM
4.3.1.3: the business or organisational justification, kept valid	Guide pp. 115–116: a business document. Exam outline: Process task 3; Business Environment task 8	BoK §2.4 Business cases, a living document. PMQ (APM's Project Management Qualification) objective 4 (tools such as PESTLE)

Sources: IPMA ICB4 (2015); PMI, PMBOK® Guide, 8th ed.; PMI, PMP® Examination Content Outline (2026); APM Body of Knowledge, 8th ed.; APM, PMQ handbook (v6, 2026); Aguilar, Scanning the Business Environment (1967)

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