

P3O® Sample Papers

The Official P3O Accreditor Sample Examination Papers

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The Practitioner Examination

PX11

Scenario Booklet

This is a 2½ hour objective test examination. This booklet contains the scenario upon which this exam paper is based. All questions are contained within the *Question Booklet*.

Additional information is provided within this *Scenario Booklet* for a number of questions. Where reference should be made to additional information, this is clearly stated within the question to which it is relevant. All information provided within a question must only be applied to that question.

Each of the 4 questions is worth 20 marks, giving a maximum of 80 marks in the paper. The pass mark is 50% (40 marks). Within each question the syllabus area to which the question refers is clearly stated. The exam is to be taken with the support of the P3O Guide only, i.e. no material other than the *Question Booklet*, the *Scenario Booklet*, the *Answer Booklet* and the P3O Guide is to be used.

Candidate Number:

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Scenario

(Note: The companies and people within the Scenario are fictional.)

BUYITALL

Buyitall is a national retailer of clothes and general household items and it owns 385 shops throughout the country. The headquarters (HQ) is in Northtown. Over the past year revenue from sales and overall profitability have been falling because Buyitall has been losing customers to competitors such as Cutprice and Sellmore. Buyitall previously attempted a rationalization exercise to reduce operating costs. Unfortunately, the benefits were never realized because the changes were inappropriate, poorly managed and resulted in a fragmented culture. A recent article in Retail World magazine noted that shops are laid out inconsistently and that staff morale is low. Disappointing trading results have meant that staff bonuses were not paid this year. As a result, Buyitall is losing some of its best staff, including some of its key managers - those best placed to make sure that the business is successful in the future. The accelerating rate of staff turnover has resulted in increased recruitment and training costs.

Governance

The Buyitall Corporate Board is located in the Northtown HQ and consists of the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Financial Officer and all the directors of the company. Each director has one or more divisional managers reporting to them, and each of the 385 shop managers is responsible for the management of their own particular shop (**see Figure 1**). Strategic decisions are referred to the Corporate Board. Core services such as Human Resources (HR) and Finance are provided by centralized divisions, and resources are deployed from these as and when they are needed to meet business needs. Buyitall does not currently use the advice given in the P3O Guide. The company has historically relied on the expertise of its contractors and suppliers, sometimes buying in PPM expertise to manage its projects and programmes. This led to problems when the managers of change initiatives applied PPM practices either inconsistently or not at all.

The Rescue Package

The Chief Executive Officer has decided to bring together several of Buyitall's key programmes and projects into the Rescue Package. The objectives of the Rescue Package are to make Buyitall a market leader in sales, and to increase Buyitall's profitability by 50% over the next five years.

Scenario continues on the next page

Scenario continued

The Rescue Package consists of the following programmes:

- **The Training Programme**

To re-design Buyitall's training services in order to increase the number of staff taking up training to develop their product knowledge and so improve customer service.

All internal training is currently carried out in two training centres: one in Southtown and one in the HQ in Northtown. The Training Programme will sell the Southtown Training Centre to part-fund other programmes within the Rescue Package, and will also arrange for external suppliers to supply training.

This programme is dependent on the Retail Rationalization Programme.

- **The Retail Rationalization Programme**

To carry out a comprehensive review of all 385 retail shops and make recommendations for closure of the lowest performing shops. Closing shops and laying off or redeploying staff.

- **The Shop Modernization Programme**

To provide a common standard shop design and improve energy efficiency across all shops. Maximizing the benefits of new technology to improve in-shop security arrangements.

This programme is heavily dependent on the Retail Rationalization Programme.

- **The Online Programme**

To provide a comprehensive web-based retail capability. Customers will be able to shop online for home delivery.

- **The Information Technology (IT) Refresh Programme**

To update Buyitall's ageing IT infrastructure. Ensuring the growth of the capability required to meet the anticipated additional demand for the network when the Online Programme is implemented.

Scenario continues on the next page

Scenario continued

P3M3® Maturity Assessment

A P3M3 Maturity Assessment has been undertaken to identify any gaps or weaknesses in Buyitall's current PPM processes. The assessment found that Buyitall's portfolio and programme/project management was at maturity level 1 overall. Extracts from the review report are given in Tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1: Extract from the portfolio management findings

P3M3 Area	Maturity level	Comment
Management Control	2	There is some prioritization of change initiatives, but there is no organization-wide knowledge of them
Organizational Governance	1	The information reaching the Corporate Board is not sufficient to enable strategic decisions to be made with any confidence
Resource Management	1	Finding enough people with the right skills to deliver current initiatives is always difficult

Table 2: Extract from the programme and project findings

P3M3 Area	Maturity level	Comment
Management Control	1	No repeatable or consistent PPM processes
Resource Management	1	No evidence of in-house expertise

Scenario continues on the next page

Scenario continued

Current Situation

There is an existing Centre of Excellence (COE) but no other P3O functions formally exist. The Chief Executive Officer has proposed to the Corporate Board that Buyitall should initially aim for the Proposed Interim P3O Model (**see Figure 2**) consisting of an Organization Portfolio Office (Portfolio Office) and a separate COE providing the assurance function. The Chief Executive Officer will act as Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for a programme being initiated to set up this P3O model. The existing Head of COE and a new post of Head of Portfolio Office will independently report to the Chief Executive Officer. The Corporate Board will undertake the role of a Corporate Portfolio Board, responsible for ensuring ongoing strategic alignment and prioritization across all initiatives throughout the organization. It is recognized that this is only an intermediate state and that the P3O model will then continue to evolve as the portfolio of work develops and the needs of Buyitall change. It is estimated that it will take Buyitall six months to establish the Portfolio Office and a further six months to set up the programme offices described (**see Figure 3**).

The Training Programme

Background

This three-year programme has been set up to change the way Buyitall carries out the training of its 18,000 staff. The company aims to dramatically increase the amount of training it undertakes, and to improve its staff's knowledge of the business and the levels of customer service it provides. This programme consists of over 20 projects. Of these, the six largest projects are the most critical:

Project 1 (Southtown Training Centre)

To close and sell the current Southtown Training Centre and to redeploy all existing Southtown staff to other regional centres. A recent survey has reduced the expected sale price of the Southtown property, and this may result in a shortfall in funding to the Rescue Package.

Project 2 (Outsourcing)

To decide which courses will be outsourced, and to contract with a suitable supplier.

Project 3 (Training Design)

To review and update the current training catalogue.

Project 4 (Training Methods)

To develop new training delivery methods including distance learning.

Scenario continues on the next page

Scenario continued

Project 5 (Working Practices)

To set up a new centralized booking system.

To determine the staff numbers required at each centre.

To create job descriptions for managers and staff to emphasize the new focus on training.

To revise working practices affected by the new ways of working.

Project 6 (Regional Training Centres)

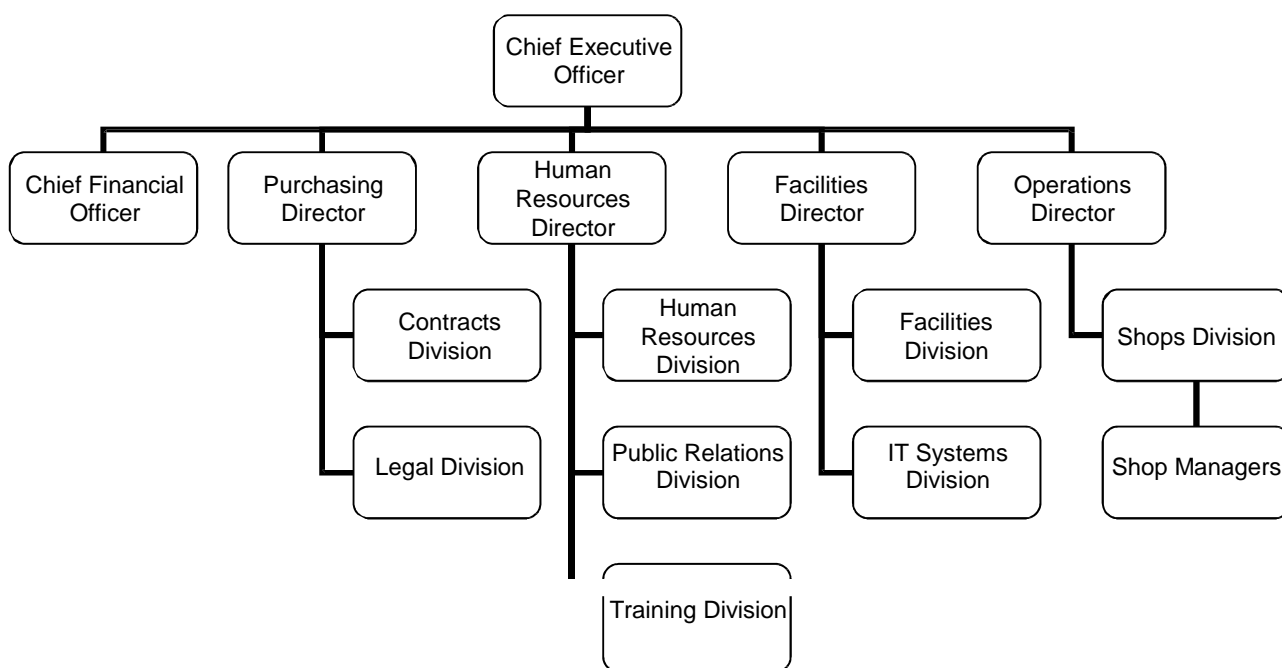
To lease or buy four new regional centres to give good geographical coverage of the country.

To equip the Northtown training centre and the four new regional centres with demonstration shop equipment.

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Scenario continued

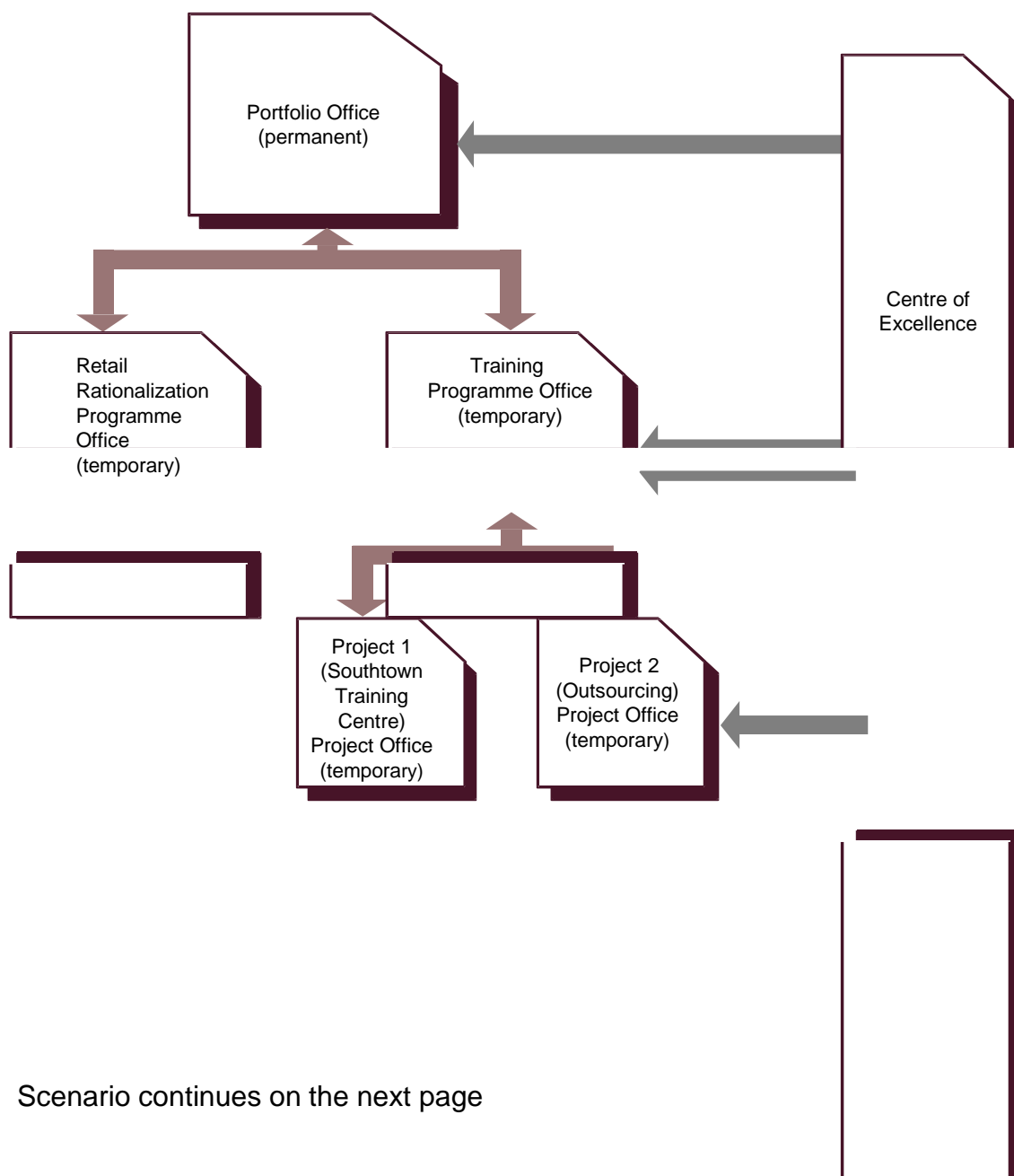
Figure 1: Corporate Organization Structure



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Scenario continued

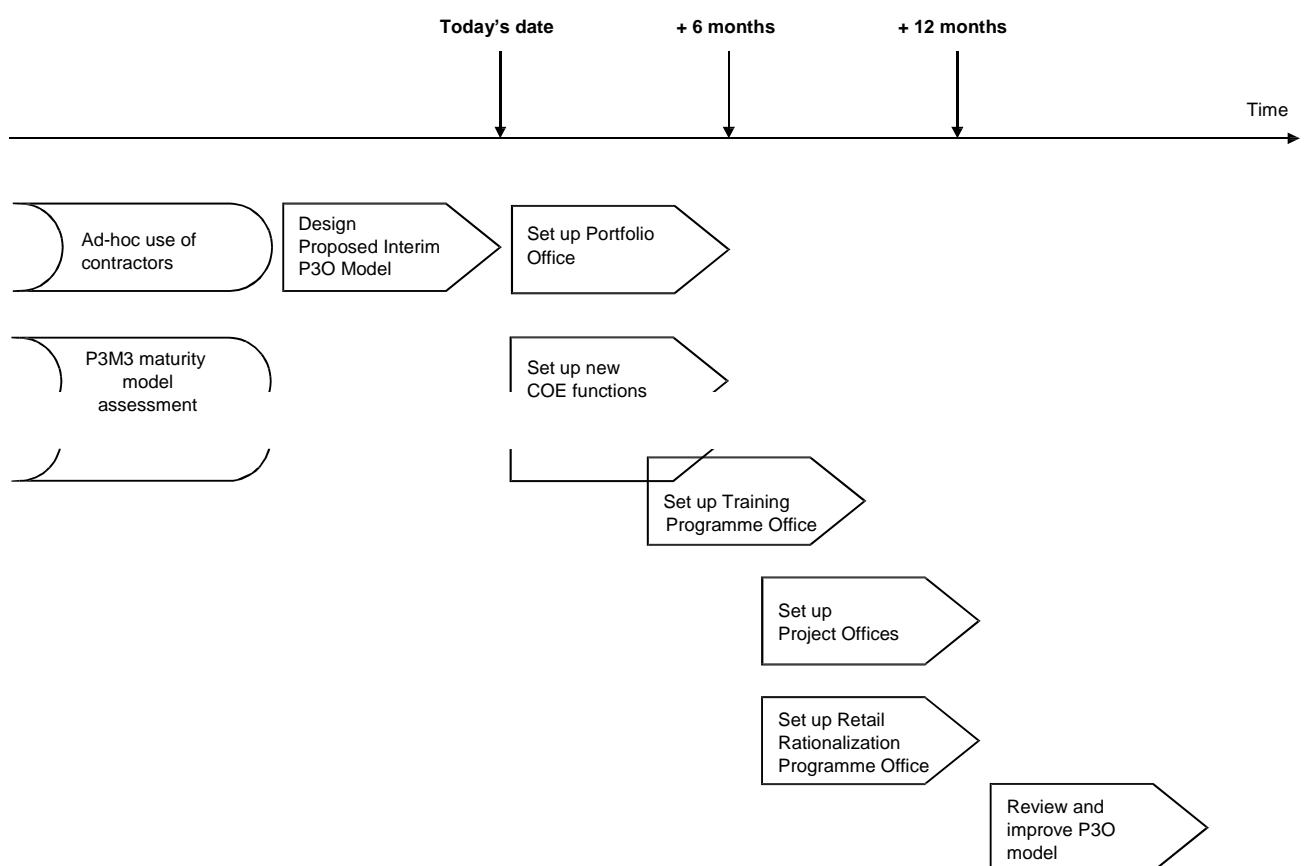
Figure 2: Extract from Proposed Interim P3O Model



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Scenario continued

Figure 3: Timeline Diagram



End of scenario

Question 1: Why have a P3O? - Additional Information

The programme to establish the Proposed Interim P3O Model has been underway for about eight months. The Portfolio Office was established two months ago. The P3O Sponsor ordered a further P3M3 assessment to determine how well the Portfolio Office is performing and what actions might be required to make sure that it meets its Business Case objectives.

The following is an extract from the report.

Extract from the Further P3M3 Assessment Report

1. A report by the Portfolio Office analysing the dependencies between projects in the Training Programme has been submitted and considered by the Corporate Portfolio Board.
2. The Portfolio Office has now obtained information on all of the projects and programmes that are being currently carried out within the organization.
3. The Portfolio Office has reviewed all of the benefits listed for the Rescue Package and has identified where there is overlap between improvements being claimed by the Online Programme and the Retail Rationalization Programme.
4. The Training and Retail Rationalization programme offices are assisting with the management of individual programme risks that do not require escalation to portfolio level.

Question 2: How to operate a P3O (including tools and techniques) - Additional Information

Section A

Portfolio Prioritization and Optimization Report

Buyitall prioritization framework				
Risk assessment			Effort requirement	
3	High		3	> 180 person years
2	Medium		2	90 - 180 person years
1	Low		1	< 90 person years

Prioritization model				
Programme name	Total risk rate	Investment driver priority weighting (1=low 15=high)	Effort required	Overall priority (1=low 15=high)
Retail Rationalization	3	8	2	9
Shop Modernization	3	3	1	4
Online	1	10	3	15
IT Refresh	2	2	3	4
Training	1	8	1	11

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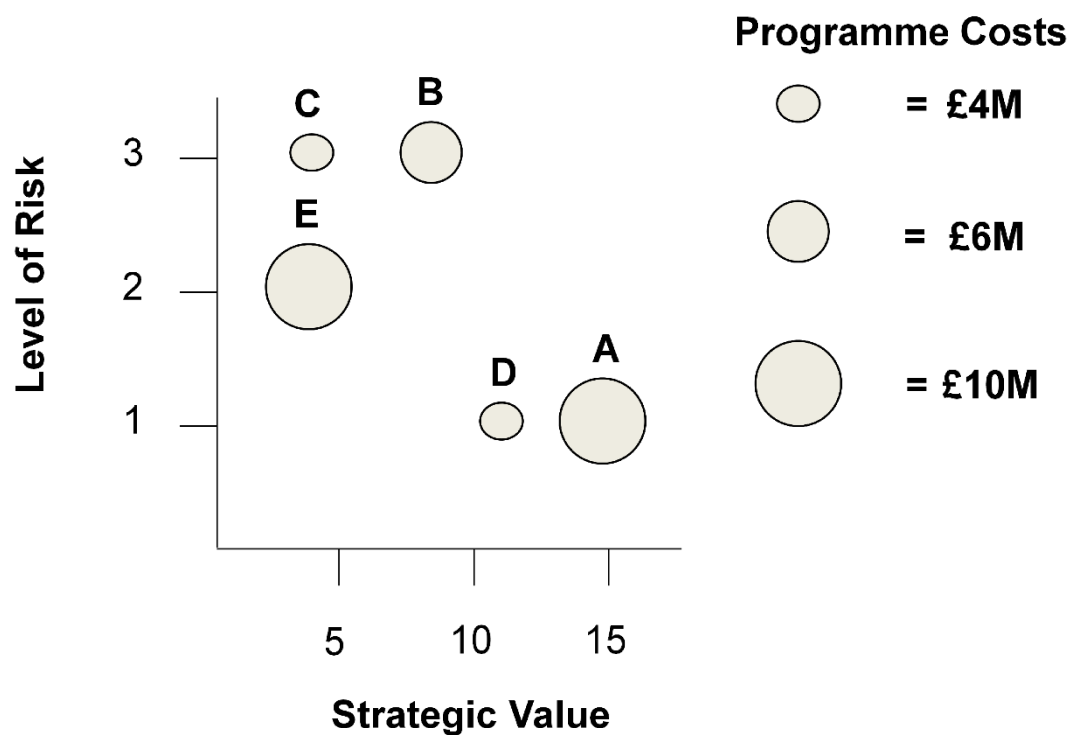
Question 2: How to operate a P3O (including tools and techniques) - Additional Information

Continued

Section B

Strategic Alignment and Risk Level Diagram

Note: The legend identifying the five programmes labelled 'A' through to 'E' below is deliberately missing from this diagram. The identification of these programmes is part of the question.



Additional Information continues on the next page

Question 2: How to operate a P3O (including tools and techniques) - Additional Information

Continued

Section C

Rescue Package Management Dashboard

Distributed on paper to the Corporate Portfolio Board (6 months after Portfolio Office setup)

Retail Rationalization Programme

# Projects at each stage	Not started	Gate 1	Gate 2	Gate 3	Gate 4	Gate 5
	5	5	5	5	5	3

Projects at each status	Red	Amber	Green
	8 (35%)	10 (43%)	5 (22%)

Shop Modernization Programme

# Projects at each stage	Not started	Gate 1	Gate 2	Gate 3	Gate 4	Gate 5
	15	8	5	3	3	1

Projects at each status	Red	Amber	Green
	16 (81%)	1 (5%)	3 (14%)

Online Programme

# Projects at each stage	Not started	Gate 1	Gate 2	Gate 3	Gate 4	Gate 5
	8	4	3	0	0	0

Projects at each status	Red	Amber	Green
	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	7 (100%)

Additional Information continues on the next page

Question 2: How to operate a P3O (including tools and techniques) - Additional Information

Continued

IT Refresh Programme

# Projects at each stage	Not started	Gate 1	Gate 2	Gate 3	Gate 4	Gate 5
	10	3	4	0	0	0

Projects at each status	Red	Amber	Green
	4 (57%)	1 (14%)	2 (29%)

Training Programme

# Projects at each stage	Not started	Gate 1	Gate 2	Gate 3	Gate 4	Gate 5
	0	0	0	5	8	10

Projects at each status	Red	Amber	Green
	0 (0%)	8 (26%)	15 (74%)

Prioritization Model

Programme name	Total Risk Rating	Investment Driver Weighting	Effort	Priority
Retail Rationalization Programme	High	8	Medium	9
Shop Modernization Programme	High	3	Low	4
Online Programme	Low	10	High	15
IT Refresh Programme	Medium	2	High	4
Training Programme	Low	8	Low	11

Gate 1 = assurance review of the Strategic Business Case (Project Mandate)

Gate 2 = assurance review of the Outline Business Case (Project Brief)

Gate 3 = assurance review of Full Business Case (Project Initiation Document)

Gate 4 = assurance review of readiness of the project and operations to go live (readiness for service)

Gate 5 = confirms desired benefits are being achieved and business changes are operating smoothly (project closure)

Question 3: Implement and Re-energize - Additional Information

Interim Priorities

As an interim measure, the Corporate Portfolio Board has decided that Project 1 (Southtown Training Centre) and the Retail Rationalization Programme will be given priority over the other change initiatives in the Rescue Package because:

1. Funding is needed to support the remainder of the Rescue Package. The sale of Southtown Training Centre will provide this funding.
2. Cutprice and Sellmore, two new entrants into the market, have very aggressive pricing strategies and Buyitall is continuing to lose customers to them. The Retail Rationalization Programme will reduce the cost base of Buyitall by disposing of the less profitable shops.