EEF and OPA – The Differences

The latest versions of the *PMBOK® Guide* and PMI's Organizational Project Management Maturity Model, OPM3® have placed an increased focus on the ability of the organisation's systems to support Portfolio, Program and Project (PPP) management. In the OPM3 knowledge base, these capabilities and systems are referred to as 'organisation enablers'; organisational (or business as usual) 'best practices' that facilitate the implementation of PPP best practices and help make organisational improvements sustainable[1].

The *PMBOK® Guide* defines 'Enterprise Environment Factors' (EEF) and 'Organisational Process Assets' (OPA) as the two forms of support (and in some cases constraints) the organisation provides to assist project teams manage and deliver their projects. It is nearly impossible to consistently deliver successful projects if the organisation cannot provide the necessary resources and support. This White Paper focuses on defining EEFs and OPAs.

Enterprise Environment Factors (*PMBOK® Guide* 1.8)

EEF = the **Environment**: just as you need different approaches to the management of a project to deal effectively with different physical environments (hot or cold / wet or dry) you need different approaches to deal effectively with the cultural, political and legal environments the project is operating within.

The Enterprise Environment Factors (EEF) include all policies, practices, procedures and legislation that exist, both inside and outside of the organisation that will impact the way you manage a project. This ranges from environmental, anti-discrimination and occupational health and safety legislation to the choice of project management system used by the organisation, its personnel management policies and PMI's Code of Ethics. Some elements of the EEF are mandatory, some represent good practice others cultural norms; regardless of the nature of the factor, you have to work within the physical and cultural environment to be effective.

Organisational Process Assets (*PMBOK® Guide* 2.4.3)

OPA = **Assets**: artefacts and information you actually use in the management of the project. Most organisations have developed a range of templates, proforma contracts, registers and assessment tools to assist in the management of the project. Organisations have also acquired knowledge in the form of lessons learned and the organisation's knowledge base that can be very useful.

Therefore, Organisational Process Assets would include virtually anything the organisation has acquired that you can use (or organisational policies state you must use) in the management of the project; OPAs are directly aligned with facilitating the execution of the 44 process in the PMBOK.

Comment

In summary, you use OPAs to improve the management of the project. You manage within the constraint and guidelines established by the EEFs.

Note: *The dividing line between some internal policies and some assets you use in managing the project can be a bit blurry. I feel some elements may be in the wrong list in the current version of the PMBOK. However, I have not heard of any PMP or CAPM question seeking differentiation between items in the OPA list -v- items in the EEF list.*
And for the exam, the PMBOK is 100% correct!!

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[1] For more on OPM3 see: http://www.mosaicprojects.com.au/OPM3.html