**Weekly Tutorial 5 – 18 August 2025**

**Case study - Nova Retail Group – Driving Digital Integration through Projects**

Nova Retail Group (NRG) is a well-known South African retail chain with over 60 outlets nationwide. In the past decade, the company has built a reputation for affordable fashion and lifestyle products, but in recent years, it has struggled to keep pace with customer expectations and new competitors. Customers increasingly expect real-time product availability online, same-day delivery, and seamless integration between online and physical stores. However, NRG’s current systems are fragmented: the e-commerce platform runs separately from in-store inventory, while finance, logistics, and customer service use different software packages with little integration.

This lack of functional integration has resulted in data silos, frequent stockouts, duplicate data entry, and inconsistent customer experiences. For example, customers often order products online only to discover they are out of stock in the warehouse, and refunds can take weeks because finance and sales systems are not connected. Internally, departments often blame one another, and decision-making is slow due to inaccurate or incomplete data.

To address these issues, the executive team approved the Project Nexus Initiative — a large-scale project aimed at digitising and integrating the company’s value chain. The project involves implementing an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, linking it with APIs to third-party logistics providers, and migrating collaboration tools to a cloud-based platform for real-time communication across departments. The project has a budget of R40 million and a timeline of 18 months.

However, six months into Project Nexus, challenges are surfacing. Some managers are resistant to change, fearing the ERP system will reduce their autonomy. Others argue that skipping certain SDLC phases could accelerate delivery, but the project manager warns this could introduce costly errors later. Scope creep has already begun, with marketing requesting additional features such as AI-driven customer analytics not in the original plan.

Externally, NRG faces fierce competition from agile startups that use AI and automation to offer faster delivery at lower costs. In addition, there is pressure from stakeholders and regulators to show environmental responsibility, forcing NRG to integrate sustainability tracking into its new systems. Meanwhile, outsourcing parts of the project to an offshore partner in India has led to miscommunication due to time zone differences, causing delays in testing and integration.

As the business analyst, you are tasked with supporting the leadership team in ensuring Project Nexus delivers on its objectives. You must evaluate both the value chain improvements through functional integration and the project management challenges, providing recommendations that align people, processes, and technology while ensuring long-term competitive advantage.

**Case Study Questions: [18 MARKS]**

1. Identify two weaknesses in NRG’s current value chain and explain how functional integration could address them. (4 marks)
2. NRG plans to use ERP, cloud platforms, and APIs. Briefly explain how each tool will support functional integration. (3 marks)
3. If marketing’s request for AI analytics is approved, which elements of the triple constraint are most at risk? Justify your answer (2 marks)
4. Imagine that NRG leadership decides to skip integration testing to save time. As the BA, how would you argue against this decision using project management principles? (3 marks)
5. Evaluate the benefits and challenges of outsourcing in Project Nexus, given NRG’s reliance on an offshore partner. (6 marks)