Questions and Answers for the Project Management Professional (PMP)® Exam
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PMP® Exam QA Webinar Questions

A Short Introduction

This is a set of answers to questions asked during a Free PMP® Exam webinar held by Cornelius Fichtner, PMP, CSM. The questions and answers here cover such topic as becoming a certified Project Management Professional (PMP)®, the exam application and process, preparing for the exam, exam study materials, taking the exam, and maintaining your certification after you pass the exam. Some questions and answers also address the Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)® exam offered by the Project Management Institute (PMI)®.

Watch the original webinar here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i9OtEqEJQ4U&hd=1

About Becoming a Certified Project Management Professional (PMP)®

Can you please explain the difference between the CAPM® and the PMP® Exam?

Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)®

If you are a junior project management practitioner and have demonstrated your skills as a project team member then the Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)® is the best option for you. You will gain the fundamental knowledge of processes and terminology that will help you effectively manage projects. For the CAPM® certification all you need is a high school diploma and either 1,500 hours of professional experience on a project team, or 23 hours of project management training.

For more info visit: http://www.pmi.org/en/Certification/Certified-Associate-in-Project-Management-CAPM.aspx

Project Management Professional (PMP)®

If you perform your project management duties under general supervision, lead the team, and direct all project tasks then you should go for the Project Management Professional (PMP)® credential. You will develop an in-depth understanding and skills to lead and direct project teams to deliver results within the constraints of budget, time, and scope. This certification requires three years of professional experience with at least 4,500 hours spent leading and directing project tasks with a bachelor’s degree or global equivalent. With a high school diploma, five years of professional experience is required with at least 7,500 hours spent in leading and directing project tasks. Also required is 35 hours of project management related education.

Currently, the PMP® Exam is the most sought after project management credential in the world. For more info visit: http://www.pmi.org/Certification/Project-Management-Professional-PMP.aspx

How is PMP® Certification likely to benefit someone who has been practicing Project Management for years?

Is there an age limitation to sit for the PMP® Exam?

No. There is no age limit to taking the PMP® Exam.

What is the most effective way to study and get started with the PMP® Exam?

Everyone has different ways of studying for the Project Management Professional (PMP)® certification so hopefully these lessons learned shared by actual PMP® Exam passers can help:
7 Lessons Learned from the PMP Exam

About the PMP® Exam Application

Is there a new process to apply for the PMP® Exam? And what are the requirements?

To apply for the PMP®, you need to have either:

A four-year degree (bachelor’s or the global equivalent), at least three years of project management experience, with 4,500 hours leading and directing projects, and 35 hours of project management education.

OR

A secondary diploma (high school or the global equivalent), at least five years of project management experience, with 7,500 hours leading and directing projects, and 35 hours of project management education.

You can apply ONLINE. There is also a printable application form here:

How do you document your work experience for the PMP® certification?

The following FREE worksheets from The PM PrepCast will help you document your work experience and determine if you have enough experience and education hours to qualify for the PMP® Exam.


How is work experience being verified by PMP®?

The PMI Audit Process is explained in the PMP Handbook on page 16. You can also read this article which will provide you with a clear picture about what is “actually” happening in a PMI audit:
About Preparing for the PMP® Exam

What is the secret of passing the PMP® Exam on the first attempt?

Is there a "secret sauce" that will help you pass the PMP® Exam? Not really. However, there are seven items, concepts, and best practices that you should be aware of. Applying them in your PMP® Exam preparation will make your preparation go that much smoother. This video will explain them: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r1zTsE0A30c

How to succeed with the PMP® Exam the very first time?

Everyone has different ways of studying for the Project Management Professional (PMP)® certification. You may carry the PMBOK® Guide around with you, or use flashcards. You may join your local Project Management Institute (PMI)® Chapter and study in a group. Whatever your study path, someone has been there before you.

While everyone has a slightly different story to tell, there are some things that make a big difference to your chances of success with the PMP® Exam. Luckily, exam candidates are very happy to share their stories and lessons learned with you. We have reviewed and analyzed a number of lessons learned from the PMP® Exam that successful exam takers have posted on our website. Here are our top seven lessons learned: http://www.cornelius-fichtner.com/index.php/pmp/518-7-lessons-learned-from-the-pmp-exam

Can you provide best practice guidelines on how I can plan for this certification?

Suggested material: Eight videos on How to prepare for the PMP® Exam by Cornelius Fichtner, PMP, CSM - http://www.project-management-prepcast.com/8videos

Is there a minimum time required to prepare for the PMP® Exam?

It would be hard to recommend a minimum time to allot to PMP® Exam studies. Only you can assess your readiness to take the PMP® Exam. Here is my recommendation: Study the PMBOK® Guide 2-3 times. Note that I say "study" and not simply "read". Begin applying the principles described on your day to day projects and also relate them back to your previous projects. That way you will see how these principles work. Doing it this way will make you a better project manager and help you pass the exam, as opposed to just mindless memorization.

How should I manage my time effectively in the PMP® Exam?

One important recommendation I have for those taking the PMP® Exam is that to manage the time allotted to answer each question on the exam. Call it budgeting, call it time management, call it whatever you want; but do it! You need to walk into the examination room with a clear plan on how many questions you will answer per hour, when you plan on taking a break, and what you will do if time seems to be running out.
Remember that the exam is composed of 200 questions that you must answer within 4 hours. That’s 1.2 minutes per question. Once you begin, the clock starts and will not stop even when you take a break. So plan your approach - say for the first 2 hours, answer all easy questions first and mark those difficult ones for later. Be sure to read all the questions carefully and understand them before you answer. Then take a 10 minute break before going back to the harder questions for the rest of the allotted time. By doing this you will be able to finish the whole exam on time.

But that’s just one of many possible approaches and you should define your own. Also, by having a plan and implementing it you will relieve a lot of the exam pressure. So plan well, and budget your time wisely to succeed.


What else can I do to pass the PMP® Exam after listening to the PrepCast?


Are there any really good pre-tests that can closely compare to the exam which can help you prepare to take the real one?

And...

What is level of difficulty of the actual PMP® Exam questions versus the PM Exam Simulator questions?

** Both questions can be thoroughly answered by this article written by Cornelius Fichtner PMP, CSM: [7 Criteria for Selecting Your PMP Exam Simulator](http://www.project-management-prepcast.com/index.php/freetry-it/free-pmp-tips/pmp-exam-tips/281-pmp-exam-tip-manage-the-time-during-your-pmp-exam)

How many sample tests should we take before we decide to give it a go for the PMP® Exam?

We recommend that you answer at least 1,000 PMP® sample questions. This means that you simulate a complete 4 hours exam several times in order to gauge your ability to finish the actual exam on time. As a general rule of thumb: If you are able to correctly answer at least 85% or more of the practice questions on your first try, then you are ready for the PMP® Certification Exam.
Do I have to memorize the PMBOK® Guide to pass the PMP® Exam?

No. In order to succeed on the exam, you will need to have a lot of hands-on experience in project management and be able to relate it to the theory in the PMBOK® Guide. That's why a minimum of 4,500 hours of experience (7,500 if you don't have a bachelor's degree) is a prerequisite to take the exam. Your real life experience of managing projects in your industry will make everything much easier. Many situations in the questions will be familiar to you because you have lived through them.

So here is my recommendation: Study the PMBOK® Guide 2-3 times. Note that I say "study" and not simply "read". Begin applying the principles described to your day to day projects and also relate them back to your previous projects. That way you will see how these principles work. Doing it this way will make you a better project manager and help you pass the exam, as opposed to just mindless memorization.

Is the PMBOK® Guide sufficient resource for the exam preparation or do I have to look for other resources (which one)?

Try to read PMP® online forums where exam passers are more than willing to share their experiences of taking the exam. Read their lessons learned to hear what topics may appear. This can be an essential part of your preparation, but don't get carried away. Spending a few minutes daily, reviewing and commenting on posts is usually sufficient.

So instead of muddling your brains with too many prep books, choose the one you like best to complement your PMBOK® Guide studies to ensure a successful exam.

I will be self-studying and using Rita M.'s prep book 6th edition. What other materials are essential to prepare for the PMP® Exam. Is the PMBOK® Guide a must or can I get by without it?

The PMBOK® Guide is definitely a MUST. The exam is based on much of the information contained in A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide). The questions in the PMP® Exam are based on the following process groups from the PMBOK® Guide: Initiating, Planning, Executing, Controlling, Closing and Professional Responsibility.

Here are a few of our other recommended reading materials: www.project-management-exam-guide.com

Our own products will help you pass the PMP® exam the first time:
In what area will the Flash Cards help in the PMP® Exam?

Flashcards are a convenient and easy study aid to use when studying for the Project Management Professional (PMP)® Exam. You can use PMP Exam Flashcards to study exam-related terminology, processes, and formulas either by yourself or with the help of a friend. Flashcards can help you study a large amount of PMP® concepts through repetition.

Is it compulsory to memorize all ITTOs for all the 42 processes?

No. The current PMP® exam is all about an in-depth understanding of applying project management concepts and principles from the *PMBOK® Guide* as well as general management knowledge from other sources to project situations. Many project managers have successfully passed the PMP® exam without any memorization. Read more here...

What is the best way to study and remember ITTOs?

As you are studying the ITTOs for your PMP® Exam, keep the following concepts in mind:

First of all, Inputs and Outputs are always “things”, like a project management plan, a measurement, a result, an update to a plan, a document, or a deliverable. You can touch Inputs and Outputs.

Second, it is very common that an Output from one process becomes an Input to another process. Focus your studies on understanding how these items flow through the many processes in the *PMBOK® Guide* in order to produce project deliverables. Use the many charts that the *PMBOK® Guide* provides to see this graphically.

Third, Tools & Techniques very often have some form of “action” attached to them, like a meeting, a methodology, a technique, a form that you must fill in, or a matrix that you create.

And lastly, don’t forget to read the complete *PMBOK® Guide* glossary. Study and understand the definitions of the roughly 350 terms that you find there. Again, you are not doing this for memorization sake, but instead you want to learn “the language” of the PMP® exam. Often we use project management terms loosely and interchangeably in our day to day work. But for the exam we have to know exactly what each term means.

Reading the glossary ensures that you know the correct definitions, and, as a bonus, the glossary indicates for each term if it is an input/output, tool or technique.

So move beyond a third-graders approach of fact memorization. Instead, study the big picture, the data flows and how the ITTOs are the glue between the processes.
Questions and Answers for the Project Management Professional (PMP)® Exam

Should I memorize all the inputs and outputs for every process group to pass the test? And...

What is the best way to prepare for the PMP® Exam with regards to Formulas - by memory or by practice?

** Both questions can be answered by reading this article - Should you learn ITTOs by Heart?

My PMP® Exam study tip for formulas:
FORMULA based questions are more than just 'solving for the median' or calculating earned value. There are around 49 PMP® Exam formulas that you must know backwards and forwards in order to pass the PMP® Exam. Understanding them thoroughly down to the importance of each element will give you the decision making criteria to include or exclude the values in the PMP® exam question.

I failed the PMP® Exam the first time I took the exam and realized part of my problem was studying from too many resources. How do you consolidate study materials to best prepare for the exam?

What usually happens is that students preparing for the PMP® Exam try to go through too many PMP® Exam Prep books or on-line courses thinking that they will be able to absorb everything that they watch and read. That is far from the truth. Too many books will in fact confuse you. Usually, one good exam prep book and one course is enough to complement the PMBOK® Guide. Reading the PMBOK® Guide is of course a must for any PMP® student and no exam prep book is a substitute for it. And don’t forget to read the PMBOK® Guide Glossary. As boring as that may seem, you’ll really get to know and understand the terminology you need for the exam. So instead of muddling your brain with too many prep books, choose the one you like best to complement your PMBOK® Guide studies to ensure a successful exam.

About Taking the PMP® Exam

How do I know when I am ready to take the PMP® Exam?

Only you can answer that question. But you can definitely build your confidence by:

- Studying at your own pace - this is where you will find The PM PrepCast very useful. Visit the website for more information: http://www.project-management-prepcast.com/
- Reading PMP® Exam study materials - here are a few recommendations: www.project-management-exam-guide.com
- Practicing in a real-life environment with PM exam simulator - www.pm-exam-simulator.com/
Please describe the exam experience. On the day of the exam what is the best way to start off the exam? (E.g. writing all the activities for each of the knowledge areas to use as reference)

To best answer your question, I would suggest you take a look at these two references prepared by Cornelius Fichtner, PMP, CSM:
- The Day of Your PMP Exam (Article)
- The Secret of Creating Your PMP Exam Brain Dump Sheet (Short Video)

What specific information should you include in your Brain Dump Sheet?

We uploaded a new video to YouTube in which we present the secret behind having a brain dump sheet, because The PMP® Exam is a ‘closed’ book exam. That means the only reference material you are allowed to carry into the testing facility has to be contained in your brain. A Brain Dump is a proven and effective way to bring reference material into the testing facility and it will help you to think clearer while you’re taking the PMP® Exam. But there’s another secret to it, too... [Watch the video here.]

What is the passing rate for the PMP® Exam?

PMI does not release the actual number of questions that you need to answer correctly in order to pass. They are very vague about it. So my advice is you make sure you answer all 200 questions in the PMP® Exam. [Watch this short video to know why.]

What are the areas of concentration in PMP® Exam?

The PMP® Examination Content Guideline is a good reference material - [download it here.]

What percentage of the PMP® Exam are formula based questions?

It is very hard to say, there is no fixed percentage for question types. Some students report that they saw no formula based questions at all on their exam and others say that they were really, really glad that they had studied the formulas so in-depth. You should therefore learn the formulas and their applications, and then, before the actual exam starts, write them down on the scratch pad that will be provided in the exam room.

Does the change in the pattern of the exam change the concept in any way? Are there any major changes coming in the new PMBOK® Guide?

Here is video that will best answer your question: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0zlFQEOO8eM&hd=1]
Will the PMP® Exam questions change with the upcoming 5th Edition PMBOK® Guide?

Most definitely; the PMP® Exam is largely based on The PMBOK® Guide.

After Passing the PMP® Exam

What is the best way to earn free PDUs?

Here are two ways to earn free PDU’s:

● Subscribe to the Free PM Podcast - www.pm-podcast.com/free. Earn another 30 Category C PDUs

● Subscribe to The Free PDU Insider Newsletter - www.pdu-insider.com so you can receive regular newsletters that includes our recommendations and tips about new and other ways to earn free PDU’s

For more information about PDU’s read The PMP Handbook page 37.

How do I renew my Certification?

PMI published a video on their website that answers this question. Here is the link: http://pdu.pmi.org/ccr/#
About the Author

Cornelius Fichtner, PMP, CSM, is a noted PMP expert with nearly 20 years of project management experience in various industries. He has helped over 22,000 students prepare for the PMP exam with The Project Management PrepCast, a downloadable and portable exam prep video workshop available at http://www.pm-prepcast.com.

A former PMI Chapter President, Fichtner is currently an active volunteer in his local PMI chapter and a member of PMI’s New Media Council. He is also the host of the Project Management Podcast and the PDU Podcast.

He currently lives in Silverado, California, USA, with his wife and their three computers.

Product Overview

OSP International LLC is a project management training company headquartered in Silverado, California, specializing in exceptional products to help candidates prepare for the PMP exam. OSP International LLC has been reviewed and approved as a provider of project management training by the Project Management Institute (PMI). As a PMI Registered Education Provider (R.E.P.), the company has agreed to abide by PMI established quality assurance criteria.

The PM PrepCast is a PMP exam prep video Workshop that you download to your portable media player like an iPod, Android or Blackberry. This gives you the freedom to study for the exam wherever and whenever you want. It is a complete PMP exam study approach that increases your chance of passing the PMP exam. It will shorten your study time because it keeps you focused and you don’t have to read dozens of other books to prepare. Watch the 42 hours of video and you’ll be ready to tackle the exam.

The PM Exam Simulator gives you an insider’s view of the actual PMP exam. With this PMI R.E.P. approved exam simulator, you have the opportunity to practice on 1,800 highly realistic PMP exam sample questions based on the current PMBOK® Guide. Practice with the 90-day access as often as you want. Read detailed explanations alongside all answers and learn why your answer was or was not correct. Practice and learn effective test taking strategies with The PM Exam Simulator and pass the PMP exam on your first try.
The PMP Exam eFlashCards™ are portable flash cards and can be used on any device that can display *.png or *.jpg images. They are easy-to-use tools that will place you head and shoulders above the others in the gruelling marathon of the PMP exam. Receive a total of 1,750 PMP exam eFlashCards™ divided into 15 categories. The PMP exam eFlashCards™ run on most smartphones.

The PM StudyCoach is a 10-week long coaching course in which you are taught exactly what you have to study for the PMP exam. It's your study roadmap to PMP certification. Each session is a recorded MP3 file that you can play on your computer or portable player. The course takes you step by step, chapter by chapter through the *PMBOK® Guide* and your PMP exam prep workbook and points out specific areas of focus in every coaching session. In total you will receive over 7.5 hours of recorded coaching.

The PMP® Exam Formula Study Guide and Cheat Sheet is a complete approach to the PMP exam formulas, values, and acronyms and you even get sample questions to test yourself. It's your reference to all the math you need to know in order to pass the PMP exam. You will receive more than just a list of the bare bones formulas as they are usually presented in PMP prep books and on free PMP prep websites. We'll explain the formulas, the concepts behind them and you'll learn how to interpret the results. And the 90-page PDF document with 105 free PMP exam questions then allows you to practice this deep understanding. Our Formula Study Guide contains the correct formulas and is an authoritative source.