Rita Mulcahy's Free Tips on Passing the PMP® Exam

by Rita Mulcahy, PMP

Introduction

First let me state, as you might have heard, that our focus at RMC Project Management is on helping people learn in order to pass the exam, not spending days in rote memorization. Therefore, this document is written with real learning in mind. Our suggestions are born from helping thousands and thousands of people in over 43 countries learn project management for the real world and pass the PMP® Exam. I hope you keep this perspective in mind while you read these tricks. We love to help!

This document has two parts:
1. About the PMP Exam
2. More Tips for Passing the PMP Exam

Part 1: About the PMP Exam

Why Take the PMP Exam?

Let me start this section by quoting one of my students:

> The exam has changed my life. (Could I be more dramatic?) The process of studying for the exam, taking your class, and passing the exam has changed how others look at my abilities.

By passing the exam, you can say that you have passed an international examination designed to prove your knowledge of project management. Since the exam focuses on situations you might see in the real world, passing also indicates that you are experienced. The PMP certification is an impressive way to set yourself apart. And there are other benefits.

PMI's salary survey has found that PMPs are paid at least 10 percent more than non-PMPs in the United States (and even more in some other countries). I have had many students who have received a U.S. $15,000 bonus *and* a 15 percent raise when they passed the exam. Others have said they got a job over 200 other applicants because they were a PMP. These are good reasons to finally get around to taking the exam.

Are You Ready to Take the PMP Exam?

You are not ready to take the PMP exam if you have not had basic project management training using PMI terminology! From my experience, 50 percent of those who fail the exam do so because they have not had training that uses PMI terminology. Take this requirement seriously—real-life experience or just reading the *PMBOK® Guide* is not enough to pass the PMP exam. Knowing PMI terminology is so important that PMI requires candidates to have 35 contact hours of project management training before they can take the exam. But be careful! While PMI may accept most classes that relate to project management to meet the 35-contact-hour requirement, some classes in using project management software, quality, or some other such topic may still not be enough to pass the exam. You should have at least one basic project management class using PMI terminology before you take the exam.

Rita Mulcahy, PMP
President of RMC Project Management

Author of the books *PMP® Exam Prep* and *Risk Management, Tricks of the Trade for Project Managers* and the products *PM FASTrack®* exam simulation software and *Hot Topics* flashcards
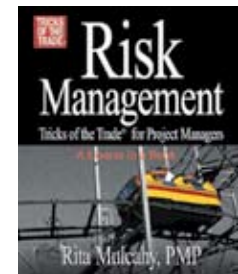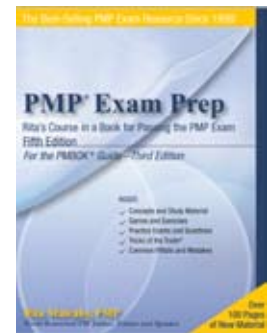
Do you know enough about project management to take the PMP exam? Check yourself against the following lists.

If you answer "yes" to two or more of the following questions, you do not know enough about project management to take the exam:
- Do you experience large cost or schedule overruns?
- Do you have unrealistic schedules?
- Are there excessive changes to the scope or schedule of your projects?
- Do you experience poor communications and increased conflict?
- Do you find that you run out of time near the end of projects?
- Do you experience unsatisfactory quality?
- Do you have problems with low morale on your projects?
- Are people on the team unsure of what needs to be done?
- Do your projects require excessive rework and overtime?
- Do you have too many project meetings?

If you answer "no" to five or more of the following questions, you do not know enough about project management to take the exam:
- Do you use a step-by-step process for managing projects and understand the reasons why each step is necessary?
- Do you understand the roles of the project manager, sponsor, and team?
- Do you use historical information from previous projects?
- Do you apply lessons learned from previous projects?
- Do you create lessons learned on your projects?
- Do you use and understand project charters?
- Do you know what a work breakdown structure is and how to create it, and do you understand that it is not a list in a bar chart?
- Do you know how to manually create a network diagram?
- Do you understand critical path, including how to find it and what benefits it provides the project manager?
- Do you use three-point estimating on your projects?
- Do you use and apply Monte Carlo analysis?
- Do you understand earned value?
- Do you apply schedule compression, crashing, and fast tracking on your projects?
- Do you know that an unrealistic schedule is the project manager's fault?
- Do you create realistic and approved project management plans that you are willing to be held accountable to achieving?
- Do you measure and implement corrective action on your projects?
- Do you understand the risk management process and know that risk management involves more than just using a checklist?
- Do you understand expected monetary value?
- Do you calculate budget reserves on your projects and understand their relationship to risk management?
- Do you control the project to the project management plan?

If, by going through the questions above, you find that you do not have enough project management knowledge to take the PMP exam, I encourage you to consider taking RMC's three-day Tricks of the Trade® for Project Management course in addition to our two-day PMP Exam Prep course. Combining these courses into a one-week experience will give you the 35 contact hours that PMI requires to take the exam. RMC's e-Learning-based PMP Exam Prep course also meets PMI's 35-contact-hour requirement. You can learn more about these opportunities in the second section of this article or by visiting our Web site at www.rmcproject.com.

Applying to Take the Exam

To qualify for the exam, you must submit an application to PMI® by mail or electronically. PMI's response time is significantly shorter if you apply online at www.pmi.org. The application requires documentation of your experience in leading and directing project tasks and your training in project management. The trick here is to remember that PMI must know that most people do not have detailed records of their previous projects; the only way most people can really complete the application is by making an educated guess as to the amount of time they spent in various areas of project management.

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PMI's requirements to take the exam are as follows:

Category	General Education	PM Education	Experience Leading and Directing Project Tasks	PM Experience	Number of Questions
1	Bachelor's degree or equivalent	35 contact hours	4,500 hours	3 years within the last 6 years	200
2	High school diploma or equivalent	35 contact hours	7,500 hours	5 years within the last 8 years	

Applications may be audited by PMI. If you are audited, you will be required to provide copies of diplomas and signatures of the managers of the projects referenced on your application.

Upon approval of your application, you will receive a letter from PMI authorizing you to take the exam. PMI often makes changes to the way the exam is administered. Therefore, you should read the authorization letter carefully. **You must take the exam within one year from the date of approval!** In North America and much of the rest of the world, the exam is computer-based and is given by appointment through Prometric Testing Centers. The cost of taking the exam is U.S. $405 for PMI members or U.S. $555 for non-PMI members. A one-year individual membership to PMI costs U.S. $119.

What Is the PMP Exam Like?

PMI's Web site states:

> The PMP Credential Examination measures the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques that are utilized in the practice of project management. The PMP examination is comprised of 200 multiple-choice questions. Of the 200 questions, 25 questions are pretest questions. Pretest questions do not affect the candidate's score and are used in examinations as an effective way to increase the number of examination questions that can be used in future PMP exams. The pretest questions are randomly placed throughout the exam. The allotted time to complete the examination is four hours. The four-hour examination is preceded by a 15-minute computer tutorial, which is not part of the allotted four hours.
> PMP Credential examination questions:
> - are developed and validated by global work groups of content experts;
> - are referenced to current resources from project management textbook sources;
> - are monitored through psychometric analysis;
> - satisfy the test specifications of a job analysis.

The passing score for the exam is 61 percent (106 questions correct out of 175 scored questions).

Keep in mind three important things about the PMP exam: **First, this is not a test of the information in the *PMBOK® Guide*!** Second, you cannot rely on only real-world experience. Third, training in professional project management based on the *PMBOK® Guide* is critical! This does not mean you need weeks of training or a master's certificate in project management to take the exam, however.

The PMP exam includes 200 multiple-choice questions with four answers per question. (**Note:** If your study material has five choices per question, do not use it! It is either related to an old exam and is therefore out-of-date or it has not been created using the same modern test creation standards as the exam.)

The PMP exam is knowledge, application, and analysis based and includes many situational questions. The exam questions are randomly generated from a database containing hundreds of questions. The questions may jump from topic to topic or cover multiple topics in a single question. You get one point for each correct answer. There is no penalty for wrong answers.

The following table offers a breakdown of the percentage of scored questions currently on the exam in each process group: (**Note:** This list may change from year to year. Visit www.pmi.org for the latest list.)

PMP Exam	
PM Process	Percent of Questions
Project Initiating	11
Project Planning	23
Project Executing	27
Project Monitoring and Controlling	21
Project Closing	9
Professional and Social Responsibility	9

For many people, the toughest knowledge areas on the exam are Framework, Integration, Procurement, Risk, and Time. The toughest process groups are Executing, Monitoring and Controlling, and Professional and Social Responsibility. Make sure you study these knowledge areas and process groups carefully.

Warning: The PMP exam is not like any multiple-question exam you have taken before. The passing score may be 106 out of 175 (about 61 percent), but because the exam is written psychometrically, there are questions on the exam that even experts find difficult. Do not get frustrated!

How Are the Questions Written?
Feedback from thousands of my students has provided the following insights:
- The PMP exam tests knowledge, application, and analysis. This makes the PMP exam more than a test of memory. You must know how to apply your knowledge and be able to analyze situations involving this information. Do not expect the exam to have all straightforward, definition-type questions.
- It is important to realize that the PMP exam deals with real-world use of project management. It contains many "What should you do in this situation?" questions (situational questions). These questions are extremely difficult if you have not used project management tools in the real world or do not realize that your project management efforts include common errors. You have to have been there to pass the exam.
- The exam emphasizes the process of project management (the project management life cycle, or process groups).
- There are a few instances, particularly for network diagram questions, where the same set of data may be used for additional questions later in the exam.
- Only a few questions on the exam expect you to **memorize** the step-by-step *PMBOK* Guide* processes. Only 10 to 12 questions expect you to **memorize** the inputs or outputs from the *PMBOK* Guide*.
- There may be only 8 to 10 formula-related calculations on the exam.
- There should only be 10 to 12 earned-value questions on the exam. Some of these questions may not require calculations using the formulas.
- Most acronyms (e.g., WBS for work breakdown structure) should be spelled out on the exam.
- The correct answers should not include direct quotations from the *PMBOK* Guide*.
- Most students feel uncertain about only 40 of the 200 questions on the PMP exam.
- Many students need only two and a half hours to finish the PMP exam and then take the rest of the time to review their answers.

Types of Exam Questions
Many people ask what the questions on the exam are like. The questions are mostly situational. Many are ambiguous, and some seem like they have two or more right answers. Be prepared for these types of questions so you will not waste time or be caught off guard when you are taking the exam.

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1. **Situational questions:** These questions require you to have "been there."

   You receive notification that a major item you are purchasing for a project will be delayed. What is the BEST thing to do?
   A. Ignore it; it will go away.
   B. Notify your boss.
   C. Let the customer know about it, and talk over options.
   D. Meet with the team, and identify alternatives.

   The answer is D.

2. **Questions with two or more right answers:** Questions that appear to have two, three, or even four right answers are a major complaint from many test takers. Questions may often list choices that could reasonably be done or that less-experienced or less-qualified project managers might choose. To those test takers, it looks like there is more than one right answer. To more experienced project managers, however, the same questions may appear to have one or possibly two right answers. Honestly, the more of a problem you have with such questions, the less you really know about project management.

   Let's look again at the question above. Couldn't you really choose to do more than one of these actions? The "right" answer is certainly D, but isn't it also correct to tell the customer about the delay? Yes, but telling the customer is not the first thing a project manager should do. Essentially this question is really asking, "What is the BEST thing to do *next*?"

3. **Questions with extraneous information:** It is very important to realize that, for many questions, not all information included in the question will be necessary to answer it. Can you imagine multiple paragraphs of information for a question on the exam? Most of the data provided in such a question would **not** be needed to answer it. In the following example, the numbers are extraneous.

   Experience shows that each time you double the production of doors, unit costs decrease by 10 percent. Based on this, the company determines that production of 3,000 doors should cost U.S. $21,000. This case illustrates:
   A. learning cycle.
   B. law of diminishing returns.
   C. 80/20 rule.
   D. parametric cost estimating.

   The answer is D.

4. **Out-of-the-blue questions,** or words that you have never seen before. Many people taking the exam expect all the terms used as choices to mean something. They do not! There are often made-up terms on the exam. Perhaps the question writer needed another choice, or perhaps the writer intentionally added a made-up term to trick those who do not know the answer. If you consider yourself well trained and see a term you do not know on the exam, chances are it is not the right answer.

   No matter how well you study, there will **always** be questions where you have no idea what the question is asking. Here is an example:

   The concept of "optimal quality level is reached at the point where the incremental revenue from product improvement equals the incremental cost to secure it" comes from:
   A. quality control analysis.
   B. marginal analysis.
   C. standard quality analysis.
   D. conformance analysis.

   The answer is B.

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5. **Questions where understanding is important:** In order to answer many of the questions on the exam, you must understand all the topics. Memorization is not enough!

The process of decomposing deliverables into smaller, more manageable components is complete when:
A. project justification has been established.
B. change requests have occurred.
C. cost and duration estimates can be developed for each work element at this detail.
D. each work element is found in the WBS dictionary.

The answer is C.

6. **Questions with a new approach to known topic:** There will be many instances where you understand the topic but have never thought about it in the way the question describes.

In a matrix organization, information dissemination is MOST likely to be effective when:
A. information flows both horizontally and vertically.
B. the communications flows are kept simple.
C. there is an inherent logic in the type of matrix chosen.
D. project managers and functional managers socialize.

The answer is A.

TAKING THE PMP EXAM

You must bring your authorization letter from PMI to the test site, as well as two forms of ID with exactly the same name you entered on the exam application.

Once you arrive at the test site, you will be given scrap paper and pencils (and possibly even earplugs or headphones) and have the chance to do a 15-minute computer tutorial (if your exam is given on computer). This tutorial should help you become familiar with the computer and its commands.

When you take the exam, you will see one question on the screen at a time. You can answer a question and/or mark it to return to it later. You will be able to move back and forth between questions throughout the exam.

The exam does not adapt to your answers. This means that 200 questions are presented when your exam starts, and those 200 do not change.

You will have multiple opportunities to indicate that you are finished with the exam. The exam will not be scored until you indicate you are ready or your time is up. If you pass the exam, the computer will print out a certificate and a report of your test results, and you will officially be certified. If you do not pass the exam, PMI will be notified and they will send you information on retaking the exam. You will have to pay an additional fee to retake the exam.

Just because you are taking an exam, do not expect the exam site to be quiet. A student in one of my PMP Exam Prep courses had a band playing outside the testing center for three hours. Another person sat next to someone taking an exam that required intensive typing and, thus, a higher level of noise.

KEYS TO ANSWERING PMI'S QUESTIONS

1. Understand the material cold. Do not assume this exam tests memorization; it tests knowledge, application, and analysis!
2. Have real-world experience using all the major project management techniques.
3. Read the *PMBOK® Guide*.
4. Understand the areas PMI emphasizes (PMI-isms).
5. Be familiar with the different types of questions.
6. Practice interpreting ambiguous and wordy questions.
7. Practice being able to pick an answer from what appear to be two or three right answers.
8. Get used to the idea that there will be questions you cannot answer.

HAVE A PLAN FOR TAKING THE PMP EXAM

Here is an interesting idea: You are a project manager—why not project manage your studying for the PMP exam? You will need time to prepare your application and time to study. Do not take longer than necessary to complete your project. In chat

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room sites, you will see that many people make the mistake of reading everything they can find about project management and studying for six months. That slow approach is not what RMC Project Management is all about. Here are some tips to help you complete your project efficiently.

- Compile your information, and complete PMI's application form. Remember: It will save time if you submit your application electronically. Allow time for any delays or audit requests by PMI.

- Schedule your exam as soon as you are approved, to give yourself a target date to work toward. The testing center may not have immediate openings. Remember: You have one year to take the exam from the date you are approved.

- Create and follow a study schedule, using the process suggested at the end of this document as a guide.

Think this was useful? Imagine how much more you could learn from our other materials. See www.rmcproject.com or the second part of this article for details about RMC's PMP Exam Prep System—the only materials other than the *PMBOK® Guide* that you need to pass the PMP exam!

Part 2: MORE TIPS ON PASSING THE PMP EXAM

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE EXAM

With people from over 43 countries attending our courses and using our *PMP® Exam Prep* book, *PM FASTrack®* exam simulation software, and Hot Topics flashcards, we hear everything. There are many things being said about the exam that can be misleading. To answer more questions correctly, understand these common misconceptions and the following tips.

Misconception: *I should be able to answer almost all of the questions correctly on the exam!*

This test is written psychometrically, which means, in part, that there are questions on the exam that even experts find difficult to answer. Be prepared for this when you take the exam. Many people get so frustrated with some of the questions that it slows down their response time and causes them to get more questions wrong than they otherwise would have. Not you! You will be prepared!

Currently, the minimum passing score is 106 out of 175. Do not be frustrated, just mark the questions that you are unsure of for later review (a feature on our PM FASTrack® exam simulation software and on the real exam) and then come back to them later. Take your best guess after narrowing down the answers as much as you can. There is no penalty for incorrect answers.

Misconception: *I need to memorize the inputs and outputs from the PMBOK® Guide in order to pass the exam.*

This one always makes me laugh! People often cheer in RMC's PMP Exam Prep courses when my other instructors or I tell them we will help them understand the inputs and outputs right in class. You see, they were worried. How about you? If you have heard that you need to memorize all the inputs and outputs, ignore the suggestion. Let's take it a step at a time, and perhaps we can save you some effort.

First, what is an input? It is something that is needed before you can do something else. For example, can you name an input to risk management? Come on—do not read ahead for the answer. Try to answer the question on your own.

Your responses could include a project charter, a WBS, or a network diagram. If you know what risk management is, you should understand that risks are identified for a project but also for each work package. Therefore, you need the WBS before you can start risk management. Make sense? Now ask yourself why you would need a project charter or a network diagram. If you can answer this question, then I prove my point. Inputs should not be something to worry about when you take the exam **if** you know project management.

How about outputs? Just interpret any mention of activity sequencing on the exam to mean, "What is needed to create a network diagram?"

When you take the exam, use the interpretation trick. Any time the word "input" is on the exam, just interpret it to read "What do I need before I can complete…?"

When you see the word "output," just read it as "What do I have when I am finished with…?"

Misconception: *The* PMBOK® Guide *is not real-world.*

Do not believe this misconception. The *PMBOK® Guide* was not created by some company trying to sell you a methodology. It was created with input from hundreds of your colleagues around the world. It is real-world to them. In our classes, RMC quickly helps people understand the *PMBOK® Guide*. They discover real-world techniques that could have been helping them all these years to more easily manage their projects.

While you are studying, think about why the information you are learning would make sense in the real world. Maybe it would make sense on projects larger than yours, on projects that are international, or on ones that have more support for project management than your project does. Not only will thinking about the practical applications of the *PMBOK® Guide* help you in the real world, it will also help you answer many of the questions on the exam that call for real-world understanding of *PMBOK® Guide* terms.

Misconception: *I should answer each question on the exam in the order it is presented.*

How would you feel if you were taking the actual exam and had no idea of the answer to the first question? You move on to the second question, and you again do not know the answer. You move on to the third question and still do not know the answer. Would you be getting upset? Be prepared, because this may happen to you on the real exam.

It always seems to people that the first few questions are the hardest on the exam. They are not—people are often just not ready to answer questions. Why suffer through the first questions while you get into test-taking mode? Mark any for later review to which you do not immediately know the answer, and then go on until you can start quickly answering questions. When you are finished, go back and review the questions you marked. You may be surprised to find they look easier the second time around.

Find the Gaps in Your Knowledge Regarding Executing and Monitoring and Controlling!

In order to pass the exam, you must get over a hurdle that causes many people great difficulty. To pass the exam, you must be able to score well on questions that address what to do when the work is ongoing, **assuming you have properly planned the project!** You must therefore know what to do during Executing and during Monitoring and Controlling.

For many people, what the *PMBOK® Guide* says about how to plan a project is new. Before studying for the exam, they might have thought project planning was just creating a bar chart, or they may never have heard of the all-important management plans before. How about you?

To make it easier for you, try looking at the following chart. As you read this, think about your real-world project management activities. Does the following help you identify gaps in your knowledge? A more extensive list is provided in RMC's PMP Exam Prep course.

What Project Managers Are Currently Doing	What They Should Be Doing Per the *PMBOK® Guide*
Working overtime	Working overtime only as a last resort, because the project is always kept on track; options like crashing or fast tracking are tried before overtime
Focusing on percent complete	Making sure tasks are well defined and using the 50/50 rule
Holding "let's go around the room to see what everyone is doing" meetings	Creating effective status reports and saving meetings for communication, problem solving, risk reviews, etc.
Dealing with problems	Implementing contingency plans created through risk management
Figuring it out as they go	Implementing staffing, communications, procurement, scope, time, cost, and other management plans created during project planning
Having no way to measure how the project is really going	Determining performance criteria in advance and measuring performance to those baselines, plus implementing quality plans and earned value measurement
Allowing changes	Having all changes go through a change control process; telling people the scope, time, cost, quality, risk, and customer satisfaction impacts of changes

Some other actions a project manager should be taking include:
- Exercising judgment to determine what variances are important
- Refining control limits
- Collecting data
- Holding meetings regarding controlling the project
- Identifying the root cause of problems
- Issuing updates to the project management plan
- Obtaining formal acceptance of deliverables and the project
- Replanning
- Documenting lessons learned
- Managing time and cost reserves
- Recalculating how much the project will cost and how long it will take
- Holding periodic inspections

- Ensuring that authorized approaches and processes are followed
- Making decisions to accept or reject work
- Evaluating the effectiveness of corrective actions
- Reassessing the effectiveness of project control plans
- Improving quality
- Distributing information

Get Familiar with How Questions Are Asked!

It is important to get familiar with the types of questions on the exam, as the exam will find any gaps in your knowledge. Complex situational questions can be difficult without practice. Try this sample question from our *PM FASTrack*° exam simulation software.

> **Question:** You have just discovered that one of the sellers on your project has not submitted the weekly status report, as is required in the contract, for the last four weeks. What is the BEST thing to do?
>
> A. Send a letter to the seller letting him know he has breached the contract and demanding corrected performance in the future.
> B. Determine if the report is important to the project before doing anything.
> C. Suspend payment.
> D. Call the seller and ask when the report will be issued.
>
> **Answer:** The answer is A.
>
> **Explanation:** This will be a hard question for many people. Generally, ANY part of the contract not performed is some kind of breach of the contract. In order to maintain control, a letter should be sent. Choice B is incorrect because, if it is in the contract, you have already determined that the report is needed. You can rarely suspend payments (choice C), as that would make you in breach of your contract and make you equally wrong. Choice D might be done after sending a letter, but not before. The best answer is choice A.
>
> **Source:** PMP° Exam Prep   **Page:** 381

Many people look for an answer that deals with the question "Why did this occur for four weeks without action?" However, that is not the question. Do you see that?

In this case, there is a contract, and the contract is legally binding. Therefore, there is no choice but for the project manager to understand the legal implications of their actions and to protect the company's rights. A letter must be sent (choice A). If you chose D, you are missing the point. The seller breached the contract, and they **must** be put on notice. You might do Choice D after Choice A. If you picked Choice C, read it again. If you were to not make payment at all, you would also be in breach of the contract and now also liable. It may not be a bad choice if it said, "Stop payment for the work in question," but it does not. Many project managers who do not realize that a contract is legally binding pick choice B. Generally, if it is in the contract, it must be done.

It will not come as a surprise to hear that the PMP exam is a very difficult exam. I hope that these tricks and tips will make you more comfortable in preparing for it. RMC offers PMP Exam Prep training and products to support you in your preparation for the exam and throughout your project management career.

Take a Course

How would you like a guarantee that you will pass the PMP exam? And how would you like learning new information that is useful in the real world? People from all over the world have taken RMC's classes because we focus on real learning that is useful after passing the exam, not just mind-numbing rote memorization.

Think you need a lot of classes to pass the exam? Think again. If you have not had training in project management using PMI terminology, take our Project Management Tricks of the Trade° course and then our PMP Exam Prep course. If you have had previous project management training, just take the PMP Exam Prep course. We then guarantee that you will pass the exam.

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Our Project Management Tricks of the Trade® course

This course is so focused on what you need to know in the real world that even PMP certified project managers and those with master's certificates in project management have rated this course close to a perfect 10! In fact, between 74 and 81 percent of people who only took our PMP Exam Prep course wished they had also taken this course! RMC is so confident that you will benefit greatly from this course that we offer a guarantee to those who attend the public session of the course. If you are not completely happy with the experience, we will refund your registration fee. Come and see for yourself how much you will learn.

This course is designed for project managers, team members, project offices, senior management, and those studying for PM certifications who require a refresher of the project management process.

This world-class course replaces the four to eight classes that other PM training companies recommend. Students will learn real-world PM techniques plus advanced Tricks of the Trade® for dealing with issues that project managers face everyday. Let RMC help you translate the International Standards for Project Management into real-world project management technologies and real-world applications!

Why should you take this course if you are preparing for the PMP Certification Exam?
- An astounding 74 to 81 percent of students who have taken the PMP Exam Prep course wish they had also taken this course but did not know they needed it.
- This course covers the process of project management (over 50 questions on the PMP exam) and situational analysis (over 75 questions on the exam) and is a great refresher course.
- Most of the students who do not pass the PMP exam attribute it to poor training in project management and their inability to get their minds around the PMI approach to project management, rather than a lack of practical experience.
- If your current project management training consists of a series of outdated and/or unrelated courses in project management, you should be warned—you may not be able to pull it all together well enough to pass the PMP certification exam! This course will fill that gap.
- This course counts toward the 35 hours of project management training required by PMI to take the PMP certification exam.

Our PMP® Exam Prep course

This accelerated learning course is designed to help you prepare for the PMP Exam—and gain the most understanding of project management with the least amount of study. Developed by Rita Mulcahy, this course is designed to decrease your after-class study time from hundreds of hours to less than forty.

Unique features of this course include games, exercises, case studies, and other tools to help you understand—not memorize—the concepts necessary to pass the PMP exam. The course includes Rita's entire PMP Exam Prep system for free as part of the course materials.

Never stagnant, RMC Project Management works hard to constantly update and improve the PMP Exam Prep course to keep it the best available course to get ready for the PMP exam. No other companies can keep up!

Here is what you can expect from RMC's PMP Exam Prep Course:
- An overview of the exam
- Detailed coverage of the process and framework of project management
- Assistance in understanding how the PMP exam questions are written
- Tricks for shortening your study time
- Tricks for finding holes in your project management knowledge
- Reasons people fail the exam and how to make sure you do not do the same
- Exercises to help you understand, memorize, and conceptualize the information you need to pass the exam

Self Study

If you have had training in project management, you should not need any materials other than the book *PMP® Exam Prep*, *PM FASTrack*® exam simulation software, *Hot Topics* flashcards, and the most current *PMBOK® Guide* to pass the PMP Exam.

Receive FREE Rita's exclusive "What to Read in the *PMBOK® Guide®*" when you purchase the PMP Exam Prep System directly from RMC at www.rmcproject.com.

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RMC PMP Exam Prep System

The PMP Exam Prep System includes the *PMP® Exam Prep* book, *PM FASTrack* exam simulation software, and *Hot Topics* flashcards in either audio or flip-book format (your choice). As a system, these products will help you gain the knowledge necessary to get into test-taking mode. These products provide **everything** you need to prepare for the exam. As a bonus, system purchasers also receive Rita's "What to Read in the *PMBOK® Guide*" for ordering directly from RMC!

PM FASTrack® Exam Simulation Software

How would you like to know you are going to pass the exam before you take it? *PM FASTrack* is an exam simulation software program containing more than 1,400 questions and six testing modes. Developed with the help of a psychometrician (just like the actual exam), *PM FASTrack* features automatic question bank updates (for people with Internet connections), comprehensive scoring and reporting capability, and even more difficult questions than in previous versions.

Hot Topics Flashcards for Passing the PMP Exam (Book or CD)

Finally there is a way to prepare for the PMP exam that fits into your busy schedule. Now you can study at the office, on a plane, or even while driving in your car with Rita's portable and extremely valuable *Hot Topics* flashcards—in hard copy or audio CD format. *Hot Topics* flashcards allow you to review the most important and difficult to recall PMP-exam-related terms and concepts—as you drive, fly, or take your lunch break.

PMP Exam Prep Online, Full Registration

Rita Mulcahy has been teaching her innovative techniques for passing the PMP exam on the first try since 1991. Now the thousands of development hours that have gone into her two-day and four-day intensive classroom-based courses are available online—24 hours a day, seven days a week—to project managers around the globe! This online course, designed by Rita Mulcahy, PMP, offers:

- A 12-lesson interactive tutorial
- Dozens of exercises and games
- Timed and scored practice exams
- Audio-narrated flashcards
- A comprehensive glossary of terms
- Online study groups
- Real-time chat functionality
- Tips and tricks from Rita herself
- Unlimited 24/7 access

Test Tactics #1: Approaching and Answering Difficult Questions

How valuable would it be to have Rita Mulcahy helping you understand 15 extremely difficult PMP exam sample questions? In this online session, Rita will guide you through interpreting questions, eliminating choices, spotting traps, handling questions with multiple correct answers, and choosing the "best" answer—even when one is not immediately evident.

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Test Tactics #2: Silly Mistakes People Can Make on the PMP Exam

If someone could explain to you the most common mistakes people make on the PMP exam **and** teach you how to avoid them, would you listen? As the second online product in Rita Mulcahy's innovative *Test Tactics* series, this online strategy session will reveal the eight most common PMP exam mistakes that test-takers make—using sample exam questions and simulated exam scenarios as learning tools.

–Quantity discounts are available on all RMC products.–

How to Study for the PMP Exam Using RMC's Materials

Since I do not want you studying for six months, I will focus here on using RMC's materials to get ready for the exam. If you use any other materials in addition to the *PMBOK® Guide* and RMC's PMP Exam Prep System to pass the exam, you may become confused and waste valuable time.

After working with thousands of people, I have perfected what my students say is the shortest and most efficient process for studying for the exam! Please consider this method, using the PMP Exam Prep System, before you determine how you will study.

The Magic Three
Studies have shown that if you visit a topic three times, you will remember it. Therefore, you should read the book *PMP® Exam Prep* and use our other products three times before you take the exam.

Be In Test-Taking Mode
Get used to jumping from one topic to another and practice taking an exam for four hours. Do not underestimate the physical aspects of taking an exam that lasts four hours.

An Efficient Step-By-Step Study Plan
1. Before you review the materials, take the practice tests in the book *PMP® Exam Prep* in one sitting—as you would during the actual exam. If you have the CD-ROM *PM FASTrack®*, use the software instead of the questions in the book. Answer 20 questions in each process group and knowledge area. This will give you a baseline to tell you how much you have learned after using the materials. It will also help you determine how much study time you need and what chapters to read more carefully. Do not analyze your right and wrong answers at this point; just note the chapters where you have the most and least difficulty. This will help determine an overall study plan.

2. Read the material in the book for the first time, focusing on the chapters where you had the most errors in Step 1. Refer to Rita's Process Chart for each chapter, and at the same time, skim through the corresponding chapter in the *PMBOK® Guide* to get an understanding of the flow of the processes.

3. As you finish each chapter, review the Quicktest terms listed on the first page of the chapter. Also use the *Hot Topics* flashcards to improve recall and test your understanding of that chapter. Then take an exam on the chapter in *PM FASTrack®*. You are doing well if you score over 70 percent.

4. If it is at all possible, form a study group any time after you have read the book for the first time on your own. This will actually make your study time shorter and more effective! You will be able to ask someone questions and the studying (and celebrating afterward) will be more fun. A study group should consist of only three or four people.

   When you meet with your study group, pick someone to lead the discussion of each chapter (preferably someone who is *not* comfortable with the chapter). Each time you meet, go over questions about topics you do not understand and review the hot topics on the exam using the *Hot Topics* flashcards, if you have them. Most groups meet for one hour per chapter.

   Note: The *PMP® Exam Prep* book is written for individual use. Because it includes exercises and activities, each member of the study group will need their own copy.

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5. Either independently or with your study group, further research questions you do not understand or answered incorrectly. This does not mean read many books! Simply refer back to the *PMP® Exam Prep* book, the *PMBOK® Guide*, project management class materials.

6. Take and retake the practice tests until you score over 85 percent on a PMP simulation exam. You should be careful not to become too familiar with the questions. *PM FASTrack* and its over 1,400 questions will help you to not see the same question too often, giving you the most representative evaluation of your knowledge. You are overstudying if you see too many of the questions repeated in *PM FASTrack*!

7. Use the *Hot Topics* flashcards to retain the material you have learned until you take the exam.

8. Pass the exam!

Good luck! Let us know when you pass the exam so we can celebrate with you!

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