PMP®
Quick Start Guide
All of the up front stuff you need to know... before you even begin studying

Belinda Goodrich
PMP, CAPM, PgMP, PMI-SP, PMI-RMP, PMI-ACP
About the Author

Belinda Goodrich, PMP, CAPM, PgMP, PMI-SP, PMI-RMP, PMI-ACP, is an internationally recognized project management consultant, author, and public speaker. With three decades of project management experience, Belinda has worked across multiple industries, including finance, healthcare, IT, engineering, and government.

She has provided training and consultation to thousands of project managers and organizations globally. The first woman in the world to achieve the original five PMI® credentials, she has developed multiple successful project management exam preparation programs, including Project Management Professional (PMP)®, Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)®, PMI Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP)®, and PMI® Risk Management Professional (PMI-RMP)® boot camps.

Her robust exam prep courseware is utilized by hundreds of training companies internationally.

Belinda is the Founder of PM Learning Solutions, a learning and development firm based out of Phoenix, Arizona.

PMLearningSolutions.com
BelindaGoodrich.com
# Table of Contents

**Chapter 1 – The PMP Credential / Eligibility** ........................................ 7  
  The Project Management Professional (PMP)® Credential .................... 7  
  PMP Eligibility ...................................................................................... 9  
  Other Important Information .................................................................. 11

**Chapter 2 – Key Players** ................................................................. 12  
  Project Management Institute (PMI) .................................................. 12  
  Prometric ............................................................................................... 13  
  Training Providers ................................................................................ 14

**Chapter 3 – Application Process** .................................................. 15  
  Steps to Your PMP® Credential ......................................................... 15  
  Application Submission ......................................................................... 16  
  Application Approval ............................................................................ 17  
  Application Audit .................................................................................. 18

**Chapter 4 – Preparation** ................................................................. 19  
  What to Study ......................................................................................... 19  
  How to Study ......................................................................................... 20  
  10 Questions for Training Providers .................................................... 23

**Chapter 5 – Exam Experience** ....................................................... 26  
  The Test Center ..................................................................................... 26  
  Exam Experience .................................................................................. 27  
  7 Deadly Sins of PMP Exam Prep ....................................................... 30

**Chapter 6 – Credential Maintenance** .......................................... 32  
  PDU Requirements ............................................................................... 32  
  Reporting PDUs .................................................................................... 33

**Chapter 7 – Additional Resources** ............................................... 34
Introduction

If you are interested in or curious about PMP certification, you have come to the right place. This quick and dirty guide will give you everything you need to know about the process of getting certified as a Project Management Professional (PMP) by the Project Management Institute (PMI).

Here is the super-quick version:

- Ensure you meet the criteria for experience and education
- Submit your PMP application on www.PMI.org
- Study and prepare for a very challenging (albeit doable) exam
- Schedule your exam at www.Prometric.com/PMI
- Maintain your credential (60 PDUs – training hours – every three years)

I truly enjoy assisting project managers pursue and achieve their credential. While this guide will get you started, I also have a number of free resources on our page:

PMLearningSolutions.com

Interested in learning more about me or having me speak or facilitate a session at your event? Check out my page:

BelindaGoodrich.com

Best of luck on your preparation and exam!

Belinda
Chapter 1

The PMP Credential / Eligibility

In This Chapter

- The Project Management Professional (PMP)® Credential
- PMP Eligibility

The Project Management Professional (PMP)® Credential

Congratulations on your decision to pursue the Project Management Professional (PMP)® credential! Being a credentialed (and possibly multi-credentialed) project manager can greatly enhance your career opportunities and salary.

The first PMP exam was offered by the Project Management Institute (PMI) on October 6, 1984, to 56 participants with 43 passing to become the first credentialed Project Management Professionals. Since that time, the PMP has become one of the most widely recognized global credentials for project management. As of March 31, 2018, there are 853,281 PMP credential-holders. More stats on PMP (and other PMI certifications) can be found here:

There are project managers across virtually all industries in all locations. The PMP signifies that the credential holder speaks and understands the global language of project management and connects you to project management professionals worldwide.

The PMP exam is intended for professional individuals who have the responsibility of leading and directing project activities.

### Credential Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credential Name</th>
<th>Project Management Professional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Role</td>
<td>Leads and directs project teams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduced</td>
<td>1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam</td>
<td>200 multiple choice (4 hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 175 scored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 25 pre-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility</td>
<td>HS Diploma / 7500 hours AND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35 hours of PM education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bachelor’s / 4500 hours AND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35 hours of PM education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tested skills and</td>
<td>Knowledge and situational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge</td>
<td>questions based on PMBOK® Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>concepts and other relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>project management sources:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Initiating (13% of the exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>questions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Planning (24% of the exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>questions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Executing (31% of the exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>questions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Monitoring &amp; Controlling (25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of the exam questions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Closing (7% of the exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>questions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credential maintenance</td>
<td>3 years; 60 PDUs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PMP Eligibility

In order to be eligible for the PMP® exam, candidates must meet all eligibility requirements:

**Project Management Education**

Candidates must have 35 contact hours of formal project management education. There is no time limit on when those contact hours were accrued as long as you have some type of verification to use in the event you are audited. Verification could include a transcript or certificate of completion.

If the education was part of a college or university class that met twice per week for two hours, for 12 weeks, you would submit 48 hours of education. If only a portion of the class or program was dedicated to project management concepts or topics, only that portion would be admissible.

You can use multiple classes to get to the 35 hours. However, I always advise folks to keep it as simple as possible. If you have one class, such as a PMP exam prep boot camp, that meets the requirement, use that.

**Project Management Experience**

The candidate must have documented experience hours leading and directing project activities in a project management role, with or without a project manager title. Candidates must show project management hours in all five project management domains:

- Initiating
- Planning
- Executing
- Monitoring and Controlling
- Closing

All domains do not need to be documented for each project, but there should be hours for each across all the projects submitted. The project management experience hours must have occurred within the last eight
years and simultaneous hours will not receive duplicate credit. PMI will accept no more than 40 hours per week, despite the fact that we frequently work much more than 40 hours. Factor in any vacation time, paid time off, administrative time, etc. when determining your total number of hours.

**Example:**

Devin has been a director for a financial services firm for the last six years. This year, he was responsible for leading and directing two concurrent projects. Using the information in the graphic, Devin can claim 180 hours and one month of experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>May 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TIP: Keep your application as simple as possible! There is no extra credit for extra projects! Once you have met the experience requirement on the PMI application, you will not be able to submit any additional projects. Always use the projects that are the easiest to have verified in the event of audit.

To best organize your project experience to see if you have enough qualifying hours we highly recommend using the PMP® Application Assistant Spreadsheet that can be downloaded for free at:

https://www.pmlearningsolutions.com/pmp-spreadsheet
Other Important Information

- ALWAYS prepare for audit. Although the audit is randomly generated, one out of four applications is selected. To best prepare, do not add experience or education to your application that cannot be verified with the appropriate documentation.

- Keep in mind that you will not be notified of audit until after you have paid your credentialing fees.

- You must have at least some documented experience within each of the project management domains (initiating, planning, executing, monitoring and controlling, and closing).

- Although your project management education does not have a date limit, you can only go back eight years for your project management experience.

- In order to complete your application online, you will be required to create a PMI® login. This will save your application information for a period of 30 days in the event you are not able to complete it in one sitting. (Note: there is no save button, just exit your browser)

- If you are pursuing the PMP® certification, it will save you approximately $30 to purchase a PMI® membership before paying your credential fee.
Chapter 2

Key Players

In This Chapter

- Project Management Institute
- Prometric
- Training Providers

Project Management Institute (PMI)

Role:

- Approves the PMP application
- Generates audit request
- Issues the eligibility ID
- Validates continuing education requirements
- Offers annual membership

Founded in 1969, the Project Management Institute (www.PMI.org) is the leading not-for-profit professional membership association for the project management profession.

PMI offers eight certifications, produces multiple global practice standards, and pursues thought leadership and academic research. There are PMI chapters located in over 80 countries.

PMI offers three types of membership:

- Individual member - $129 to join plus $10 application fee, $129 to renew
- Student member - $32 to join, $32 to renew (must be a full-time student at a college or university)
- Retiree member - $65 to renew

Being a PMI member entitles the participant to discounts on exams and products, access to digital copies of the practice standards, and member-only information on PMI.org.

For the PMP exam, as a member, the exam fees are discounted from $555 to $405.

**Prometric**

Role:
- Schedules the examination
- Administers the examination

Prometric testing centers: [www.Prometric.com/PMI](http://www.Prometric.com/PMI)

Prometric testing locations provide the examination on an on-going basis year round. In order to schedule your exam, you will need to have an approved application from PMI with your PMI eligibility ID.

While you will need your eligibility ID in order to schedule your exam, you are able to find the closest test center and also verify test seat availability.

The Prometric sites tend to fill up quickly for Friday and Saturday appointments. If you would like to test on Friday or Saturday, be prepared to book at least two to three weeks in advance. Many times there are last-minute cancellations and a spot will open up during that week, so continue to check the site availability online.
Training Providers

There are a number of training providers offering classes and/or study groups at a wide range of prices.

- Colleges / universities
- Training companies (generalized or specialized)
- PMI chapters

Some training providers are a PMI Registered Education Provider (R.E.P.). In order to qualify as an R.E.P., the training company undergoes a periodic quality review of their materials by PMI. In addition, R.E.P.s pay an annual fee to participate in the program. While the R.E.P. designation does not necessarily guarantee the program, it does certainly indicate that the organization was willing to invest in the designation and have their materials reviewed by PMI.

Essentially your choice of a training provider depends on personal preference. Unfortunately, the market is flooded with companies offering examination preparation – buyer beware! Perform your due diligence before investing time and money into a class.

I provide more information on training options in Chapter 4.
Chapter 3

Application Process

In This Chapter

• Steps to Your PMP Credential
• Application Submission
• Application Approval
• Application Audit

Steps to Your PMP® Credential

1. Review the certification requirements on PMI.org to verify your eligibility.
2. Download and complete PMLS’s PMP® Application Assistant Spreadsheet available at: https://www.pmlearningsolutions.com/pmp-spreadsheet
3. Create an account at PMI.org
4. Using PMLS’s Application Assistant Spreadsheet as a reference, complete the online PMP® application at PMI.org and submit.
5. Upon approval (after approximately 5 business days), log into PMI.org and pay your credential fee. Within minutes, you will receive an auto-confirmation containing either:
   • Your eligibility ID
   • Notification of audit
6. With your eligibility ID, access Prometric.com/PMI to find a testing location nearest you and schedule your exam.
Application Submission

Upon verifying that you meet the experience requirements, you will create your profile on PMI.org, purchase a membership (optional), and complete the PMP application.

1. From the PMI homepage, select “Certifications” and “Project Management Professional”.
2. On the right-hand navigation bar, select “Apply Now”.
3. Enter or update your contact address, contact information, and attained education.
4. Experience and project management education will be entered next. As each project or class is entered, you will be able to view your progress on the “Eligibility Worksheet”.
   - Whomever you designate as your “organization contact” will be the individual who will need to verify your experience (by hard-copy signature).
5. Be very diligent in documenting your experience descriptions. It is important that the descriptions accurately and adequately describe your experience leading and directing project activities, versus participating on a project team or performing operational tasks. You only have between 350 and 550 characters to describe your project work in a way that conveys your leadership and directing of the activities.
   - Follow the requested structure: a brief description of the project objective, project deliverables summarized by domain, and a brief one sentence outcome.
   - Avoid using words such as: ongoing, maintenance, support, etc.
   - Minimize the use of technical jargon and acronyms while leveraging PMBOK® Guide terminology.
6. You can exit the application at any time and your information will be saved for 30 days. Be sure to proceed to the next screen in order to save any work you did on the current page.
7. Once you have fulfilled all the requirements on the application, you will submit to PMI for approval.
Application Approval

Upon submission of your application, PMI will review your project information to validate that it meets their criteria. This process typically takes five business days from submission.

After PMI reviews your application, there could be three potential outcomes:

- **Approved** – your application has been approved and you are instructed to pay your exam fees.
- **Rejected** – your application has been rejected as not meeting requirements.
- **Rejected for missing information** – your application has been rejected pending requested information.

After paying your exam fees, you will receive an auto-generated receipt. That receipt will provide you with one of the following outcomes:

1. **Eligibility ID** – this is required in order to schedule your exam.
2. **Notification of audit** – audit selection is randomly generated with an estimated 25% of applications being selected.
Application Audit

When you submit your application, always proceed as if you were going to be audited. Ensure that all information on your application can be verified.

Keep in mind that you will not know if you have been selected for audit until after you have paid your exam fees. The audit selection process is random (25% of all applications are selected) and it is typically not based on information submitted on your application.

If you are selected for audit, PMI® will provide you with instructions on how to proceed. You will need to take the following steps:

1. Using the links provided by PMI®, print out the PDF experience verification sheets.
2. Provide the verification sheets to the individual identified on your application.
3. Verifiers will need to sign the sheet and the place the signed sheet into a sealed envelope. Verifiers will also sign the back of the envelope across the seal.
4. Collect all of the experience verification sheets, your college education transcript or copy of your diploma, and your project management training certificates or transcripts and send in one envelope to PMI®. We recommend sending to PMI® via priority mail with tracking information.
5. Within three to five business days, typically, PMI® will email your eligibility ID upon clearance from audit.
Chapter 4

Preparation

In This Chapter

• What to Study
• How to Study
• Readiness Assessment

What to Study

The PMP is notoriously challenging and the format and scenario questions are difficult to navigate. The basis of the exam is also not black and white. While the exam is based, in-part, on the PMBOK® Guide, PMI also references “other relevant sources”. These sources are not identified or listed anywhere.

While studying the PMBOK® Guide will certainly give you a foundation for the exam there are some drawbacks:

1. It is a great cure for insomnia – it is not an interesting read!
2. Because the information is presented in a very technical format, the reader is not able infer or see the practical implementation, testing considerations, relationships, etc. or how it may be presented on the exam.
3. The PMBOK® Guide processes are presented by Knowledge Area, whereas in practice, they are more likely to actually be performed by Process Group.

I would strongly recommend supplementing your review of the PMBOK® Guide with other study aides or exam preparation materials.
How to Study

While everyone is different when it comes to learning, I have observed that candidates typically fall into one of four buckets as it relates to PMP exam prep (keep in mind, this is just my assessment and is not a technical analysis):

- About 10% of people self-study and successfully complete the exam.
- About 40% of people complete a comprehensive PMP exam prep boot camp with minimal previous study and successfully complete the exam.
- About 40% of people complete a comprehensive PMP exam prep boot camp but still require some additional studying and reinforcement in order to successfully complete the exam.
- About 10% of people are unable to successfully complete the exam, regardless of preparation approach. This could be due to a lot of reasons, but a common one is underestimating the difficulty or struggling with exam anxiety.

Regardless of your approach, I strongly recommend that you set a target date to take your exam and do everything in your power to work diligently towards that date. Life will always get in the way, things will always happen. Try to stay focused on your goal.

It’s like having kids: if we waited to have kids until we could afford them, the world population would decrease drastically. If you wait to take your exam until you are 100% confident and everything is perfect, it quite simply will probably not happen.

When determining your studying approach, some things to consider:

- How much time can I devote to studying?
- Will a compressed timeline serve me better or do I want to have an extended timeline?
- How much experience and knowledge do I have of the PMBOK® Guide and the application of the concepts?
- How do I test? Do I have exam anxiety?
• What is my budget for exam preparation? Will my company pay for a class proactively or via reimbursement upon completing my exam?
• Have I successfully completed other similar credential or certification exams in the past?

**Self-Study**

The first option is to self-study for the exam. This would be appropriate for individuals that:

• Have the discipline to dedicate time consistently to studying.
• Have a solid understanding of the *PMBOK® Guide* principles and the PMI approach to project management.
• Are able to synthesize large amounts of information and apply that knowledge to scenario-based questions.
• Have limited funds to apply to an exam preparation program.
• Have the luxury of time before achieving their credential.
• Do not experience significant test anxiety.
• Have successfully completed similarly difficult certification exams in the past.

**Study Groups**

Many chapters and some businesses offer study groups. These may be formal or informal groups that entail a portion of facilitated discussion and a portion of self-study. Study groups are appropriate for individuals that:

• Have the discipline to dedicate time consistently to studying.
• Are able to synthesize large amounts of information and apply that knowledge to scenario-based questions.
• Have limited funds to apply to an exam preparation program.
• Have extended time to devote to preparation before achieving their credential.
• Do not experience significant test anxiety.
• Have successfully completed similarly difficult certification exams in the past.
A word of caution on study groups: ensure that the facilitator has either tested on the most recent version of the exam or has solid knowledge and understanding of the current version of the exam from a reputable source.

**On-Line Self-Paced Learning**

With advances in technology, on-line self-paced learning has come a long way. This offers a great learning approach with a lower cost investment. However, this has also opened up the market to a lot of providers offering very low cost solutions but delivering poor quality products.

On-line self-paced learning is appropriate for individuals that:

- Have discipline to complete a self-paced training program.
- Are seeking a shorter time frame for preparation and testing.
- Have some funds to apply to an exam preparation program.
- Do not experience significant test anxiety.
- Have the time and knowledge to conduct some due diligence on the various providers (I recommend using a Registered Education Provider).

**Instructor-Led Training**

There are number of training providers that offer training classes on PMP exam preparation:

- Universities / colleges – these may be extended (i.e. semester-long) classes. Ensure that the instructor is PMP-certified.
- Training companies (generalist) – a number of training companies offer boot camp classes. Ensure that the program is managed by a PMP-holder and there is thorough understanding of the requirements and that they are a PMI Registered Education Provider (R.E.P.). Ensure that the instructor is PMP certified.
- Training companies (specialist) – these are companies that specialize in project management certifications. Ensure that they are a PMI R.E.P. and that the instructor is PMP certified.
Instructor-led training is appropriate for individuals that:

- Need some discipline and rigor around studying and preparation.
- Are on a limited or compressed time-table for achieving their credential.
- Have some pressure on being successful on the first attempt.
- Have exam anxiety.
- Have a source to fund their exam preparation.
- Desire minimal outside study and preparation.
- Need some guidance on the *PMBOK® Guide* processes and the PMI application of those processes in a practical environment.

**10 Questions for Training Providers**

1. **What is your BBB rating?**

   We cannot underscore the importance of Better Business Bureau reviews and ratings. These are much more significant and honest than any social network/review board, etc. If the company is accredited by the BBB it means that they have paid an annual fee to hold accreditation. Always verify their BBB file and grade. I was surprised to learn that two of the top-"ranked" PMP Prep Provider companies both had scores of "F".

2. **Has the instructor for my class already been assigned?**

   Many larger training companies wait until the class enrollment has met their minimum before contracting with an instructor. While this is understandable from a business perspective it does pose a problem at times, especially for the students. We have witnessed multiple occasions where on the Thursday or Friday before a PMP class, the company is scrambling to find an instructor. Needless to say, the best instructors are already booked, so you are left with someone who happened to have availability. The instructor should be assigned as soon as the class is published on the calendar. Which leads to the next question to ask:
3. Can I contact my instructor prior to class?

The answer should always be "yes". Having access to your instructor means that a) they can begin working with you on the course expectations and any questions you may have and b) there is actually an instructor assigned to the class! This can be hugely beneficial to work through any application questions, etc. You can verify their credentials on the PMI Credential Registry.

4. Will you assist me with my PMI credential application?

A good exam prep program will recognize that exam prep is not just about learning the PMI concepts. There is also a very important, and quite cumbersome, application process. This application process should be started prior to the class, not during the class. And there should be resources to assist you with completing the application the appropriate way, reflecting your TRUE project management experience.

5. Do you offer any pre-course learning to provide the 35 hours of education before the class itself?

While this isn’t a requirement (as you should be getting 35 hours for the actual class you will be taking), it is a nice option. For those students that don’t have the required hours, an online module can provide that. (Although, be a little concerned with the ethics of the company if they offer you a "35-hour" training module that will only take you "a few hours" to complete).

6. Describe your student course materials

You’re not looking for words like "robust" or "comprehensive" here. Specifically ask them if they will be providing you with a course book with exercises, practice questions, etc., how many pages is the course book, who authored it, when was it last updated, etc. Many of the course materials we’ve seen are actually print-outs of the PowerPoint slides, photocopied, and spiral-bound. PowerPoint does not a course book make. Ask how they developed their practice test questions. If they make statements regarding having “actual” test questions, you know the company is a fraud. PMI, under no circumstances, will release actual test questions.
7. What are the details of your course "guarantee"?

If the guarantee isn't described, in detail, on the company's website, ask for it in writing - including any type of forms (with small print) that you will need to sign. Keep in mind that no company can guarantee you will pass the exam. However, they can offer you a guarantee that if you do not pass, they will pay your re-examination fees and/or refund course costs. Just read the fine print! (I had a student take a class where they had to pay for the exam guarantee as an additional fee. They were collecting money from the student that was equal to the amount of money they were going to give back to the student if they needed to re-take the exam.)

8. Are meals included in the cost of the course?

A small item, but one to be considered. Many of the boot camps offer breakfast and lunch included in their course fees. Be sure the training provider specifies if meals are truly included or if there will be an "extra fee".

9. What are the (verifiable) names of some past students in your course? Including some that failed the exam?

Every company has students that do not pass the exam and the best way to know the truth about the company is to talk to some of those students. Find out how the training provider handled the "guarantee", why they believe they failed, etc. For any references they give you of students who passed the exam, verify that they did indeed pass. Check the PMI Credential Registry and look for their profile on LinkedIn.

10. Will you give me personal recommendations on my readiness for the exam?

Many companies feel their role starts when the class starts and ends on the last day. Their “job” should not be done until you pass the exam. This should include a customized personal readiness assessment and honest feedback as to your readiness for the actual exam.
Chapter 5

Exam Experience

In This Chapter

• The Test Centers
• Exam Experience
• 7 Deadly Sins of PMP Exam Prep

The Test Center

As mentioned previously, the PMP exam is offered at Prometric testing centers globally. It is important that you verify the location of your test center, anticipate driving conditions (such as rush-hour traffic), and plan to arrive at least 30 minutes early.

Upon checking in, you will need to show ID and your name on your picture ID must match your PMI® PMP application. All of your belongings, including your cell phone and possibly your watch, will need to be put into a locker. The key to the locker will remain in your possession throughout the exam.

If you feel you will need a snack or a drink during testing, be sure to leave them on the designated shelf in the testing center lobby. No food, drink, or gum is allowed in the testing room. If you put it in your locker, you will not be able to access it during the test.

You will want to use the restroom prior to starting your test. Once your exam starts, your time will continue to run, even during restroom or snack/water breaks. Depending on how busy the testing center is, there may also be a delay in checking back into the testing room after your break.
Exam Experience

Before the Exam Begins

When you are called to go back to the testing room, you will need to reverse your pockets (if possible), roll up your sleeves, and possibly be checked with a metal detector wand. Do not take offense to these actions, as they are meant to protect the credibility of the exam and the testing process.

For the PMP® exam, you will be provided with a booklet of paper and multiple pencils. Some test centers will offer you a calculator, others may not. If they do not give you one, ask. They may refuse and have you use the one in the testing mechanism itself.

The proctor will escort you to your computer. There will be a camera on the room, and possibly one over your computer station. If you are worried about noise/distraction, they have headphones available. Some centers will allow you to bring in headphones, as well.

When you sit down at your computer, you will first need to acknowledge your name on the screen. You will then have fifteen minutes to complete the tutorial, which should only take you a few minutes. Previously, you were able to use this time to write down your memorized “dump sheet”. However, they have amended this policy and you will not be allowed to start your “dump sheet” until the exam clock has been started.

During the Exam

Once you begin the test, the question-counter will appear in one corner of the screen and the timer in the other corner. You will be presented with one question at a time.

For each question, you have the option to answer the question, answer the question and mark it for review, or simply leave it blank. You can navigate forward and backward through the questions. They have also added “strike-through” and “highlight” functionality on the questions.
After the last question, you will have a summary screen showing the questions answered and those that are marked or left blank. You will have the option of reviewing all or reviewing just those that are blank and marked.

Testing suggestions:

- On your first few passes through the questions, only answer the questions you can answer quickly and easily.
- Always mark math questions for review so that you have an opportunity to double-check your math.
- Use the calculator on your math questions, even for easy math. Between exam anxiety, time concerns, etc, there is a high potential for errors.
- Once you have answered a question, do not go back and change your answer unless you are certain your initial response was incorrect.
- Never leave a question blank!
- Practice eliminating the completely implausible options first.
- There will always be those situations where you have no idea what the question is asking. Use educated guessing to select the most appropriate option. Remember, you only have an average of 72 seconds for each question. If you do not know the answer of a question, mark it and move on and revisit it later if you have time.
- Answer the questions based on the *PMBOK® Guide* concepts first, and then consider your experience. If they are in conflict, the *PMBOK® Guide* wins.
- There are certain questions that contain extra information. This information is irrelevant and it does not relate to the correct answer. Beware of such questions and remember it isn't necessary to use all the information provided to answer the question, especially on any math question.
- Read all the answer options before you select one.
- You need to answer the questions from a PMI® perspective -- not from your own perspective, which you acquired through experience. Ask yourself, “what would PMI do?”
• Of the 200 questions, 25 are pre-test questions and will not count against your results. You will not know which questions are pre-test, so approach all questions as if they count. Pre-test questions are being evaluated for possible inclusion in the question bank at a later date.

As mentioned previously, if you need to take a break for a drink, snack or to use the restroom, your clock will continue to run on your exam. You will need to sign out of the room and back in to the room. You will not be allowed access to your locker.

Once you have completed the exam, there will be a pop-up confirming you are ready to submit. Upon submission, you will first receive a survey and then you will receive the results of your exam on the screen. Acknowledge your results on the screen and then see the proctor for your printed report.

Exam Report

Starting 28 August 2017, the exam report for the PMP exam will be modified to provide the candidate with more information regarding their performance on the exam.

Beyond the “pass/fail” notification and proficiency ratings of the previous report, the new Exam Result Report and Exam Analysis page offers test-takers:

• A detailed, visual explanation of their performance at the domain and task level
• A better understanding of how they performed compared to the passing point of the exam.
• Customized tips on next steps to focus their study or future professional development.

Performance rating categories will change from the previous ratings of Proficient, Moderately Proficient, and Below Proficient, to:

• Above target – your performance exceeds the minimum requirements for the exam.
• Target – your performance meets the minimum requirements for the exam.
• Below target – your performance is slightly below target and fails to meet the minimum requirements for this exam. Additional preparation is recommended before re-examination.
• Needs improvement – your performance is far below target and fails to meet the minimum requirements for this exam. Additional preparation is strongly recommended before re-examination.

Failing the Exam

As I previously mentioned, the PMP exam is tough! There is a chance that you will not pass the first time. You are allowed three attempts during your eligibility year. Your eligibility year begins the day your application is approved by PMI.

If you are unable to pass the exam after three attempts, you will need to wait a full year before submitting a new application to PMI.

7 Deadly Sins of PMP Exam Prep

In order to pass on your first attempt, be aware of these common mistakes made by people who fail the exam:

1. They only read the PMBOK® Guide or otherwise fail to properly prepare and understand how all of the concepts work together. The PMP® exam is much more than just definitions and processes. It requires a full understanding of how the concepts work together in practice.

2. They assume that years of project management experience and/or the ability to “test well” will get the job done on the exam. Because the PMP® exam tests your ability to apply PMBOK® Guide processes to practical situations, many aspirants find that the questions do not necessarily parallel their experience. In addition, the PMP® test is not a test you can “logic” your way through, even if you do test well.

3. They struggle with exam anxiety. As one of the most common fears, exam anxiety propels the tester into fight-or-flight mode which can significantly impair their ability to understand the questions.
Recognizing your anxiety and the signs of escalation and having go-to strategies are highly recommended.

4. They **over-analyze, over-read the questions**, consuming too much time. We are project managers and, as such, we are typically analytical. We tend to add more to a question based on our experience. This can seriously derail progress during the 4-hour exam.

5. They **change their answers** after reviewing the questions. Usually your gut is right. If you have extra time during the exam, do not review all of your questions. I recommend reviewing math questions mainly – it never hurts to run your numbers again. But revisiting all questions, can lead to changing answers. The first answer selected is typically the right answer.

6. They **do not have a memorized “dump sheet”**. Think of your dump sheet as your security blanket. At a minimum it will contain all of your earned value, forecasting, and TCPI formulas. This is not stuff you want to stress about remembering during the exam.

7. They **rush through the exam**. Sometimes it is because people get bored and check-out after a few hours. Sometimes it is because they are stressed about time. Being successful on the exam requires you to balance taking too much time with taking too little time.
Chapter 6
Credential Maintenance

In This Chapter
- PDU Requirements
- Reporting PDUs

PDU Requirements

To maintain your PMP credential you will need to submit 60 professional development units (PDUs) every three years.

PMI recently launched the PMI Talent Triangle® which categorizes PDU requirements into Technical Project Management, Leadership, and Strategic and Business Management.

The PMP requirements are:

- A minimum of 35 hours from “education” with a minimum of eight hours from each of the Talent Triangle categories.
- A maximum of 25 hours from “giving back” with a maximum of eight hours coming from working as a practitioner.

Education – Minimum of 35 Hours

Education can include:

- In-person or online courses.
- Organization meetings (such as PMI chapter meetings).
- Online self-paced learning, reading, or other informal learning (such as lunch-and-learn sessions at your employment).
Giving Back – Maximum of 25 Hours

Giving back to the project management profession can include:

- Work as a practitioner (maximum of eight hours).
- Creating content for use by practitioners and the public at large.
- Give a presentation on topics relevant to the profession.
- Share knowledge to help others learn and grow.
- Provide volunteer services to non-employer or non-client organizations.

Reporting PDUs

PDUs are reported to PMI via the Continuing Certification Requirements System (CCRS): https://ccrs.pmi.org/login

After logging into the system, PDUs are recorded for each of the different categories and submitted for approval. PMI reserves the right to request verification of any submitted hours or to audit a submission. Be sure to save proof of completion and/or maintain records of the work completed for at least 18 months after submission to ensure you are able to verify your hours.

Once you have met the PDU requirements for your credentialing cycle, you will have the option to renew your credential. Renewal is $60 for members and $150 for non-members.
Chapter 7

Additional Resources

In This Chapter

- PMP Application Assistant Spreadsheet
- PMP Learning Concepts Series
- PMP Question of the Day
- PMP Study Materials
- PMP Training Courses

I hope you have found the information in this Quick Start Guide helpful as you prepare to achieve your PMP certification. I have put together a list of additional resources that we offer to help supplement your studying and preparation.
PMP Application Assistant Spreadsheet (FREE!)

The PMP application is a project in and of itself. The PMP Application Assistant Spreadsheet is a great way to organize, document, and break down your project experience exactly how PMI is going to want it.

https://www.pmlearningsolutions.com/pmp-spreadsheet
PMP Concepts Learning Series (FREE!)

This learning series includes 42 posts with both text and videos of commonly tested topics on the PMP Exam. This series has become extremely popular garnering tens of thousands of views each month by project managers from around the globe.

https://www.pmlearningsolutions.com/pmp-concepts-learning-series
PMP Flashcards (Print or Kindle)

A great resource to add to your PMP study efforts. Contained in a convenient spiral-bound or Kindle format, these comprehensive PMP Exam Prep flashcards are the most well put together on the market today. Contents include over 360 concepts and terms organized by PMBOK® Guide knowledge area.

PMP Pocket Guide

Build your exam preparation confidence with this exceptional PMP quick reference study guide. This supplemental tool is a key weapon in your PMP exam preparation arsenal. The concise summaries of all of the important concepts are essential to passing the PMP exam. Includes:

- The PMBOK Guide Framework
- Descriptions of all 47 processes
- Full list of the inputs, tools & techniques, and outputs (ITTOs)
- Important "must-know" sequences
- Key topics such as critical path method, estimating techniques, and earned value
- The ultimate dump sheet
- Application process and timeline
- Summary sheets for all 10 knowledge areas
- Exam tips and exam day experience
- The 7 Deadly Sins of Exam Preparation

PMP Training Courses

This 4-day PMP Exam Prep Boot Camp is an intense, fun, energized, and effective course that provides all of the knowledge you need to pass the 6th Edition PMP or CAPM Exam.

The information is delivered in such a way as to ensure maximum transfer and retention, while also creating a fun and entertaining environment. We strongly encourage engagement and participation and our instructors provide a small group learning environment to ensure that you are comfortable asking questions and learning the concepts at your pace.

https://www.pmlearningsolutions.com/classes
I provide training, facilitation, workshops, and key note presentations on critical project management topics.

Are you interested in learning more? Check out my page: https://www.belindagoodrich.com/