



PMF Book Review

Book Title: CAPM/PMP All-In-One Project Management Certification - Exam Guide, First Edition

Author: Joseph Phillips, PMP, CompTIA Project+

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Reviewer: Earl W. Crisp, D.P.A.

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Introduction to the Book

This is a specialty book of approximately 478 pages that begins with an introduction section and then divides the remainder of the book into three main parts that include four appendices, a glossary, a topical index and 13 chapters. The book also includes a CD that contains Live Video training featuring the author and 350 exam questions that include both a practice and final mode of testing. The focus of the book is to provide a systematic way of preparing for taking (and passing) the Certified Associate in Project Management exam or the Project Management Professional exam preferably on the first attempt. The book is designed into chapters and follows the order of the Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK). All the major headings reference the corresponding PMBOK sections and nearly all the practice questions reference the PMBOK for additional information.

Overview of the Book

The author's intent is to make the arduous task of studying the PMBOK sections, the processes, terms and definitions and the general concepts and approaches of Project Management Body of Knowledge much more palatable and less intimidating. The author acknowledges that the examination developed by the Project Management Institute has a reputation for being a challenging thus demanding that the candidate be thoroughly prepared or suffer the consequences of an examination retake – in addition to having to pay additional fees each time a re-examination is administered.

The author's approach is interesting in that he tends to apply a unique and fun methodology to learning the material that helps to reinforce the major concepts.

He uses short video clips of himself that gives the learner an appreciation of the author's personal style of lecture in addition to his writing style that includes innuendos and subtle remarks that add humor while not diminishing the importance of the material. Each chapter has a similar format in that he outlines the objectives to be learned and he provides a brief narrative that he uses in a positive and encouraging approach in order to motivate the reader, especially with the intent of remaining focused whenever the material becomes tedious or boring. He wants the reader to see that the time and effort invested is not wasted.

Part I of the textbook book covers the first three Chapters in the PMBOK and extracts the most important information and referencing the pages and sections where additional supporting materials can be found. Each chapter begins with bulleted learning objectives outlining what will be covered and then the author builds his lecture around these objectives. The author provides some historical information on the background and development of the Project Management Institute's PMP exam and he provides ample figures, tables, exam tips and topical outlines to help the reader develop a strategy and methodology for preparing for the examination. He emphasizes key terms and at the end of the chapter he offers a multiple choice self-test with approximately 20 questions on the material just covered to validate that the reader has studied the material sufficiently or needs to go back and review again. The author then provides the answers to the questions and supplies the PMBOK section references where the answer can be verified. The author expects the reader to excel on the tests and score 80 percent correct or above. He emphasizes that the higher the score, the greater the confidence factor will be when taking the real examination.

Part II is described as the Project Management Professional Testing Areas and covers PMBOK Chapters 4 through 13. Each chapter begins with a list of learning objectives to be accomplished and references the PMBOK sections for verification and additional study. The chapters are again summarized and a multiple choice test of approximately 20 questions is provided along with a separate section for the answers that have supporting data and PMBOK section references.

Part III discusses the four appendices – A through D. Appendix A describes and defines the documents used in project management. They are listed in alphabetical order and each document description also includes the PMBOK reference section(s) for further study. Appendix B is entitled Passing the CAPM and the PMP Exam and provides testing tips and suggestions for organizing and remembering the PMBOK information. The author outlines everything a CAPM/PMP candidate needs to know such as the 44 project management processes all the way through procurement facts. He closes the appendix with "A Letter to You" as well as outlining 10 final tips for passing the exam. Appendix C emphasizes Understanding the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct that outlines the vision and applicability to the code, responsibilities of the Project Manager, adhering to the respect value, adhering to the fairness value, and adhering to honesty. Appendix D describes the

CD-Rom and discusses the “live” video training and the testing software that holds more than 350 practice questions. The appendix discusses the system requirements and installation of the software and describes the difference between self-testing in the practice mode versus the final mode.

The textbook’s glossary appears to be shorter than the PMBOK glossary, however the Project Management Documents and their definitions and descriptions were moved to Appendix A making it somewhat easier to study by concept rather than by complete alphabetical listing. Also, the author identifies the more commonly used terms and gives enough of each definition for comprehension without some of the extra verbiage provided by the PMBOK. Of course, the author never advises the reader to not study the PMBOK in its complete format.

Shortfalls: What was Missing!

The book is an excellent tool for motivating potential CAPM and PMP candidates who are studying for the exam. The author’s philosophy focuses on involving the reader so that the material will become second nature to their thinking. The author suggests that the students develop their own flashcards since he considers the retention factor to be greater than working with preprinted cards. Therefore, no flashcards are included as part of the text materials or on the CD as with other publishers.

Also, the question bank contains fewer questions than some of the other publishers even though the author asserts that his questions are actually more difficult or more complex than the questions on the PMP exam – therefore, based on his experience, the candidate should be better prepared. The CD-ROM disk provided is limited to Microsoft 2000 or earlier versions and will not play the lecture videos when only Microsoft XP or Vista is loaded on the computer. Now that Microsoft Vista has been introduced the publisher will need to upgrade the software to accommodate the systems.

The author indicates that he can be contacted through his website www.projectseminars.com. After viewing the website it appears that he does not offer an errata sheet update on the PMBOK or on the exam self-study questions. Other companies support their websites with one or more support enhancements.

Who might benefit from the Book

The author targets a specific audience of upcoming CAPM and PMP candidates who are intent on passing the Project Management Certification examination. This all-in-one course package includes coaching from the author, exam tips and structured motivational techniques that help focus on the philosophy of PMI and it also stresses the need for a high level of professional standardization through testing.

The price of the book at \$49.95 (US) is very competitive when compared to the pricing of other publishers that offer a complete self-study review courses.

The book is hardbound like a textbook and has a single CD attached in a pocket cover for easy portability. The textbook covers the key elements of the PMBOK and it has a summary review along with self-tests and detailed answers at the end of each chapter so the reader can determine the level of knowledge gained. The CD contains two full practice exams, short video training clips with the author, and the complete book in an electronic format.

Conclusion

The author made an excellent presentation of how to effectively study for the CAPM/PMP exam using his textbook and CD. In many ways the book is easier to use than the PMBOK because it is similar in size to a traditional textbook and the sections of chapter reference the page numbers and paragraphs in the PMBOK where the question and answer originated as well as further explanation can be found. Also included are many excellent exam tips, diagrams, tables and charts are included to help explain the concepts in an organized manner that should help the candidate retain the PMBOK material. The author's sense of humor helps keep a lighter approach towards learning the material and I think that many readers will find this all-in-one course enlightening as well as entertaining.

About the Reviewer:***Earl W. Crisp, D.P.A.***

Earl W. Crisp, D. P. A. teaches for the Management Department at the University of Texas at Arlington and for the College of Business at Dallas Baptist University. He is a former Navy C-130 pilot and he enjoyed collateral assignments in Administration, Training, Quality Assurance, and Human Resources. He also works for the U. S. Department of Education in the area of Post-Secondary Education for Eligibility and Oversight. He recently started his own project consulting company that specializes in college accreditation. His Doctorate in Public Administration is from the University of La Verne and his M. S. in Management is from Troy University. He is a certified mediator, private pilot and radio announcer. He recently completed his Project Management Professional training at the University of Texas at Dallas and he is preparing for the PMP examination making the review of this publication very timely.