

Create Your Own Sample Questions for the PMP Exam

By Cornelius Fichtner, PMP

Among the best study tools for the PMP Exam are PMP exam sample tests. As you prepare for the PMP exam – you are in fact preparing to take a 200-question multiple-choice exam. And just as if you were an Olympic athlete, taking the exam becomes your sport and you have to practice it again and again.

However, instead of answering someone else's questions, it is a good thing to create your own.

You may be wondering how in the world you can make up sample questions about a subject you don't feel you know enough about. Well, that's the whole point!

In order to ask a question, you must know something about the subject and so you must study it. If you're not sure about the elements of team building and want to include some practice questions about it, you're going to have to study that topic carefully. By studying and forming practice questions in your mind and on paper, you'll begin to know that subject from a different point of view and you'll retain what you learn.

This approach also will help you address your weak spots.

Once you've discovered an area of weakness, you should begin to focus on the elements that confuse you and thoroughly read all materials relating to that area.

Suppose you need to study the five processes groups of project management that are outlined in the PMBOK® Guide. Which of those is giving you the most trouble? Are you also having difficulty applying it in your work?

It helps to discuss this with other PMP aspirants or a study partner. As you study the subject, you should write down particularly troublesome areas and you may even think of some practice questions as you're reading. Jot those down and go over them the next day. See if you can answer them. You might be surprised at how much you've retained by applying your reading in the form of questions.

By framing questions as you study, you're examining all the details of the subject that may have escaped you before. You'll find yourself understanding more and you'll be able to analyze the area much better. Don't just stick to dry facts, either. Create situational and conceptual questions that force you to apply the principles in a theoretical real-life scenario.

By practicing this kind of thinking in-depth about the subject that's giving you trouble, you're learning much more than you would just reading about it. Your mind is wrapping itself around the concept and internalizing the information, applying it to the workplace. This can be the most effective method of studying for your PMP exam, particularly in the areas in which you're deficient.

When you think of questions and then are able to answer them, try posing them to others. Toss them out to one of the online forums for prospective PMPs and see what their feedback is. As you get the opinions of others on your practice questions, you can gauge whether you're being too easy on yourself. It's important to know this now, because the final exam will have no such consideration!

Once you've formulated practice questions, answered them to your satisfaction and gotten them critiqued by others, you'll be able to form others that may be more challenging.

Learning which questions to ask is sometimes just as important as the answers you give. Remember, it's crucial to be tough on yourself.

The PMP exam questions are drawn randomly from a database containing more than 2,000 possible questions! The more practice questions and scenarios that you can come up with, the better your chance at passing the PMP exam with a score you can be proud of.

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