PMP Tips and Tricks

PMP®

RefineM PROJECT MANAGEMENT CONSULTING

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Agenda

1. What is Virtual Lunch & Learn
2. Your Expectations from this Webinar
3. Introduction – Myself
4. How to Pass the PMP Exam on Your First Attempt
   a. Qualifications Review
   b. Prep Course and Study Materials
   c. Studying for the Exam
   d. Taking the Exam
   e. Other Tips and Tricks
5. Upcoming Learning Opportunities from RefineM
6. How to get 1 PDU for this Webinar?
7. Q & A

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RefineM's Virtual Lunch & Learn

This is a monthly webinar delivered during the lunch hour in the first week (Wednesdays) of every month.

It's designed to help you learn while you eat lunch, providing a relaxed environment to enhance your experience.

The monthly webinars will cover a variety of Project Management/ Agile topics.

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Your Expectations

What are your expectations from this webinar?

Why are you here today?

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Helping organizations turn their project management capability into a *competitive advantage*

* CEO/Consultant since Dec 2011
  * Agile Coaching/Adoption
  * Project Management/ Process Improvement Consulting and Training
  * Project Management Toolkits (for PMs, Executives and Agile Practitioners)
* Board Member – SWMO PMI Chapter

My professional journey b/f RefineM

* 20+ years of Successful Project Leadership
  * Led 100s of projects of all sizes, successfully
  * Recovered many projects, saved millions of $
  * Implemented numerous process improvements
  * Coached/mentored 100s of PMs, and some executives

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PMP Tips and Tricks

- **Qualifications Review**

- **Prep Course and Study Materials**

- **Developing a Study Plan**

- **Test-Taking Strategies**

- **Other Tips and Tricks**

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Make Sure You Are Qualified

Educational Background	Project Management Experience	Project Management Education
Secondary degree (high school diploma, associate's degree or global equivalent)	Minimum five years/60 months unique non-overlapping professional project management experience during which at least 7,500 hours were spent leading and directing the project*	35 contact hours of formal education
OR		
Four-year degree (bachelor's degree or global equivalent)	Minimum three years/36 months unique non-overlapping professional project management experience during which at least 4,500 hours were spent leading and directing the project*	35 contact hours of formal education

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Source: PMP Certification Handbook

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PMP Examination Details

	PMP
No. of Scored Questions	175
No. of Pretest Questions	25
Total Questions	200
Allotted Examination Time	4 hours

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Number of PMPs is growing

* According to PMI, as of August 2014 there are 617,986 PMP certification holders.
* In August 2013 that number was 552,977.
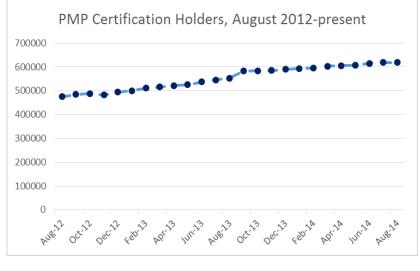* The number of new PMPs is growing very rapidly.

Don't get left behind

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Source: PMI Today. Requires PMI Member Access.

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PMP Since 2012

PMP Certification Holders, August 2012-present

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Source: PMI Today, May 2014 and May 2013 issues.
Requires PMI Member Access.

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How to Get Contact Hours?

* Prep Courses
  - ✓ Face-to-face
  - ✓ Instructor-led virtual sessions
  - ✓ Look for R.E.Ps or local PMI chapters

* College Courses
  - ✓ Look for colleges accredited by PMI
  - ✓ # weeks x hours/week
    - ➢ Example: 10 weeks x 3 hours/week = 30 hours

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About the PMP Exam

1. Includes 200 multiple-choice questions to be answered in 4 hrs.
2. The passing score is not exactly known, it is believed to be 61%, strive for 80% or more.
3. The questions are randomly generated from the database containing hundreds of questions.
4. The questions may jump from topic to topic and may cover multiple concepts in a single question.
5. You get 1 point for every correct answer, there is no penalty for wrong answers.
6. Keep in mind three very important things about this exam;
   - I. It is not ONLY a test of the information in the *PMBOK® Guide*,
   - II. You can't rely only on real-world experience, and
   - III. Training in professional project management that is aligned with the *PMBOK® Guide* is critical

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Prep Courses/Boot Camps

* Immersive
  - ✓ Treat it like a vacation

* Collaborative
  - ✓ Get help from others
  - ✓ Meet people who can be in a study group later

* Can be very expensive

Usually worth the cost

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Recommended Study Materials

* *PMBOK® Guide Fifth Edition*
  - ✓ Can get free copy as a PMI member

* *PMP Exam Prep, Eighth Edition*
  - ✓ Rita Mulcahy
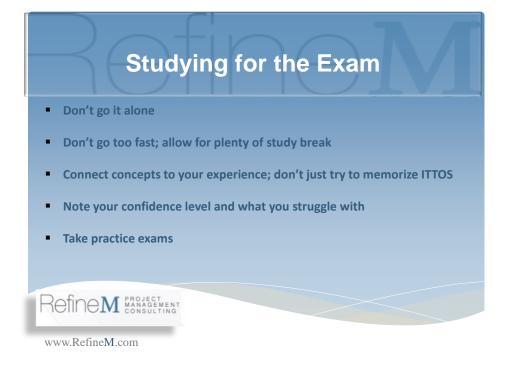 - ✓ Has good examples and practice questions

* Practice Exams
  - ✓ http://www.examcentral.net/pmp/pmp-practice-exam - FREE
  - ✓ http://www.passionatepm.com/free-pmp-exam-practice-test-questions - FREE
  - ✓ http://www.pmstudy.com/enroll.asp#PMP - FREE & Fee
  - ✓ Many others . . .

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Tips & Tricks for passing the exam

* The PMP® exam tests knowledge, application and analysis, which makes it more than a memory test. Don't expect the exam to have all straightforward definition-type questions.

* It is important to realize the PMP® exam deals with real-world use of project management. The majority of the questions are situational, you need to have real life experience to answer them.

* There may be instances on the exam where the same data is used for multiple questions, such as with network diagram questions; read each question carefully before answering.

* Expect 8-10 formula related questions, so understand and remember the formulas very well.

* Expect 10-12 earned-value management (EVM) questions, but not all these require calculations. Understand EVM concepts very well.

* Most acronyms will be spelled out (work breakdown structure/WBS), but you should know both the acronym and the full term.

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Studying for the Exam

- **Don't go it alone**

- **Don't go too fast; allow for plenty of study break**

- **Connect concepts to your experience; don't just try to memorize ITTOS**

- **Note your confidence level and what you struggle with**

- **Take practice exams**

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Tips for Good Study Plan

* *Don't go it alone*
  * ✓ Join or form a study group
  * ✓ More accountability and interaction
* *Don't go too fast*
  * ✓ Need time to let material soak in
* *Connect concepts to your experience*
  * ✓ Don't just try to memorize ITTOs
  * ✓ Understanding will help more
  * ✓ Use logic on the questions

**PMP does not just test *PMBOK® Guide* –
it tests your project management experience**

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Tips for Good Study Plan

* *Note what you struggle with*
  * ✓ Build a "brain dump"
  * ✓ Look for our "brain dump" document on RefineM.com

* *Allow for plenty of breaks*

* *Keep track of your confidence level*

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Practice Exams – What to Look For

* *Explanations of answers*
  - ✓ Use these! Especially if they have references to *PMBOK*
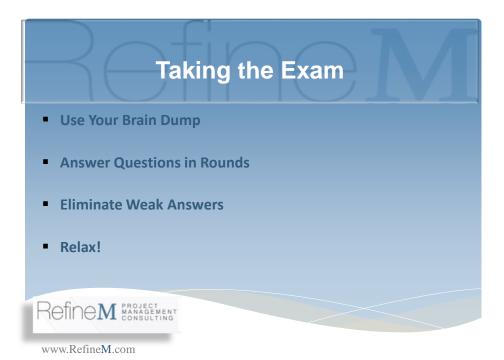 - ✓ Understand why you missed each one

* *Knowledge Area Assessments*
  - ✓ Discover where you are below proficient
  - ✓ Review weakest areas

* *Large Pool of Questions*
  - ✓ So you don't see the same ones over and over

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Taking the Exam

- **Use Your Brain Dump**

- **Answer Questions in Rounds**

- **Eliminate Weak Answers**

- **Relax!**

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Use Your Brain Dump

* *Possible candidates for Brain Dump*
  - ✓ Types of task dependencies
  - ✓ Contents of Plans
  - ✓ Earned Value formulas
  - ✓ Sigma levels, PERT, Standard deviation
  - ✓ Organizational Theories and Theorists
  - ✓ Communication channels ($n*(n-1)/2$)
  - ✓ Risk Response Strategies
  - ✓ Contract types
  - ✓ Professional and Social Responsibility Categories
  - ✓ Anything else you have trouble remembering

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Answer Questions in Rounds

* *First round: <30 seconds per question*
  - ✓ Attempt all questions involving formulas or brain dump
  - ✓ Mark others for review after 30 seconds

* *Second round: 2 minutes*
  - ✓ Review the list of questions marked for review, and answer ones that you can
  - ✓ Leave others for review after 2 minutes

* *Third round: 5-10 minutes*
  - ✓ Review the list of questions marked for review, and answer ones that you can
  - ✓ Leave others for review after 5-10 minutes

* *Fourth round: Guessing Game* ☺
  - ✓ Pick up the answers randomly for the remaining

Use less time on the ones you know
To gain more time on the ones you don't

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Eliminate Weak Answers

* *Best way to do this is break down the question*
  - ✓ Look at how each part contributes
    - ➤ What conditions are in place (i.e. is there a contract)
    - ➤ What is the question asking for (input, process, etc.)
* *Look for what doesn't fit*
  - ✓ If question wants input, eliminate tools/techniques
* *Try to get down to at least 50/50*
  - ✓ If you have to guess from there, you have a better chance
  - ✓ NEVER leave anything blank!

There is no penalty for guessing

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Example Question

All of the following are tools and techniques for Monitor and Control Project Work except:

a. Expert judgment

b. Analytical techniques

c. Organizational process assets

d. Meetings

Can you determine the answer that does not fit?

(Hint: one of these is not a tool/technique)

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Source: Rita Mulcahy's PMP Exam Prep, 8th Edition

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Example Question - Answer

All of the following are tools and techniques for Monitor and Control Project Work except:

    a. Expert judgment

    b. Analytical techniques

    c. **Organizational process assets**

    d. Meetings

Expert Judgment and Meetings are typical tools and techniques for monitoring and controlling processes. Analytical Techniques are another common tool. That leaves C, Organizational Process Assets, which is usually an input, sometimes an output, but not a tool.

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Source: Rita Mulcahy's PMP Exam Prep, 8th Edition

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Most Important Tip: Relax

* *Don't let hard questions throw you off*
  - ✓ Some are pretest, so will not count for score
  - ✓ You will not get every question—and you don't need to
  - ✓ Something you didn't see in study may be pretest
* *Control your time*
  - ✓ Make sure you have enough to adequately review
  - ✓ Use as much of the time as you can
  - ✓ Answering in rounds helps with time
* *Have a good attitude*
  - ✓ If you feel nervous, smile
  - ✓ Maybe take a short break, or stretch out

Best of luck!

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You Are Ready Now

Best of luck!

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More Learning Opportunities From RefineM

* **MS Project 2010 Basic–Sept 10-11, 2014 – 7 Hrs/PDUs**
  - ✓ Instructor led virtual course, 2 sessions (4 hours a day)
  - ✓ Learn basic techniques of Microsoft Project including how to schedule

* **PMP Exam Prep Course –Oct 7-17, 2014 – 36 Hrs/PDUs**
  - ✓ Instructor led virtual course, 8 sessions (4 hours a day, Tuesdays-Fridays)
  - ✓ Includes a full length mock test, and tips & tricks to pass the exam

* **A Product Owner's Workshop—Oct 20, 2014—7 Hrs/PDUs**
  - ✓ Venue – eFactory, 405 N Jefferson Ave, Springfield, MO, USA
  - ✓ Learn more about how product owners "drive" Agile projects

We also offer customized trainings, On-site & Virtual

Topics include Agile, Project Management, Strategy, Leadership, Process Improvement, and PMI Certifications.

More info at http://refinem.com/trainings/

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October Lunch and Learn

* *Role of a Product Owner on Agile Projects*
  - ✓ **What are product owner roles and responsibilities?**
  - ✓ **How can product owners "drive" Agile projects?**
  - ✓ **Pitfalls and Best Practices**
* *Wednesday, October 1, 12:00-1:00 PM CST*

Register Today - Don't wait for the last Minute

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How to Claim 1 PDU for this Webinar?

* PDU Category – B, Continuing Education
* Program Title – Webinar on "PMP Tips and Tricks"
* Date Started – Today's date
* Date Completed – Today's date
* Hours Completed – 1.00
* Provider
  - ✓ Name – RefineM
  - ✓ Phone # 417-414-9886
  - ✓ Email – nks@refinem.com
* PDUs Claimed – 1.00

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Questions?

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