
7 Lessons Learned from the PMI-ACP® Exam

By Cornelius Fichtner, PMP, CSM

Everyone has their own method for studying for the PMI Agile Certified Practitioner ([PMI-ACP](#))® Exam. You might carry the PMI-ACP® Examination Content Outline or some Project Management Institute (PMI)® recommended study material around with you. You might join your local PMI® Chapter to study with others who also have the goal of passing the PMI-ACP® Exam. No matter what study method or methods you choose, someone has been there before you.

While everyone may have a slightly different story to tell, there are some things that can make a big difference in your success with passing the PMI-ACP Exam. Luckily, exam candidates are more than happy to share their personal stories and lessons learned with you. We have reviewed and analyzed a number of lessons learned from the PMI-ACP Exam that successful exam takers have posted on our website. Below is a summary of 7 lessons learned.

1: Learn the exam topics

“The exam covers most of what is in that outline,” according to one of the students on our forum. PMI published the PMI-ACP Examination Content Outline which covers topics, tools & techniques, as well as knowledge & skills for the exam. If you ever feel lost in all of the possible study material, return to this outline to make sure you are studying the right topics.

2: Read a variety of PMI-ACP Exam material

Unlike the Project Management Professional (PMP)® Exam, the PMI-ACP Exam does not have a single guide or book of consolidated knowledge. PMI suggests a variety of reading material that can be used to study for the PMI-ACP Exam. A list of the current suggested reading material, the PMI-ACP Examination Reference List, can be found on the PMI website. According to one forum commenters “you have to read information from several sources and study more methods” compared to the PMP Exam.

One method for learning is to highlight important information as you read through the material the first time. On the second read through, create flashcards of the highlighted areas that you can use on the go to study important points. While reading the study material, pay particular attention to definitions and terminology as they may not be the same as those you use for Agile projects in your organization.

3: Take sample exams

The best method for practicing for an exam is to take sample exams. And sample exams can be your best indicator of readiness for the PMI-ACP Exam as well. You can take one before you start studying for the PMI-ACP Exam to gauge the areas in which you should focus. You can also take one when you think you are ready to take the PMI-ACP Exam to ensure you are actually ready.

Whichever way you plan to use sample exams is up to what best fits your study style, just make sure to use this valuable tool. Being familiar with how the exam works and the types of questions that will be asked can greatly increase your chances of passing.

4: Make the most of your study time

It can be difficult to find time to study, but there are ways to take advantage of even a few moments of time. If you have a long commute to work you can listen to The Agile PrepCast. This program offers more than 40 hours of PMI-ACP Exam preparation videos that can be downloaded to your smart phone, computer, tablet, or other portable media device. These videos can be viewed or just listened to while doing house work, working out, waiting in line, or even during your lunch break.

Passing the PMI-ACP Exam requires a lot of study time – possibly even more than you first thought. Seek out extra time in your day where you can increase your study time.

5: Be confident

Believe in yourself. If you are scoring well during the sample exams then you can feel confident about your ability to pass the PMI-ACP Exam. One key strategy to building confidence is taking practice exams to both identify what you need to focus on, and where you have improved as a result of studying.

6: Time yourself

Three hours may seem like a lot of time, but as many PMI-ACP certification holders know that time can go by quickly. The best way you can ensure you will not run out of time while taking the PMI-ACP Exam is to take at least one full length practice exam in a similar environment. Find a quiet location without distractions, set a timer, and start a full length 120 question exam. If you finish with plenty of time to spare, and pass, then you will probably do well during the exam. If you can barely get through all 120 questions in three hours or run out of time then you may need to look at what you can do to speed up your test taking or evaluate if you simply don't know the material and need to study more.

7: Listen to others

Lessons learned by others can be a great asset in your own PMI-ACP Exam preparation. Talk to previous students, discuss your study plans with members of your local PMI Chapter, and listen to those who have already successfully completed their journey to PMI-ACP certification, chances are they will have some very valuable advice for you.

Do you want more PMI-ACP lessons learned? Go to our [PMI-ACP Exam discussion forum](#) to read more advice from previous PMI-ACP candidates. There are always great ideas and suggestions that people have for other exam takers. And when you've completed your own PMI-ACP journey, don't forget to come back and share your experiences on the forum as well!

About the author: Cornelius Fichtner, PMP, CSM is a noted PMP and PMI-ACP trainer. He has helped nearly 600 students prepare for their PMI-ACP Exam with [The Agile PrepCast](#). His

interviews with project management experts from around the worlds are available for free on The Project Management Podcast website.

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Summary

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Keywords

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About the Author

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Thank you.

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