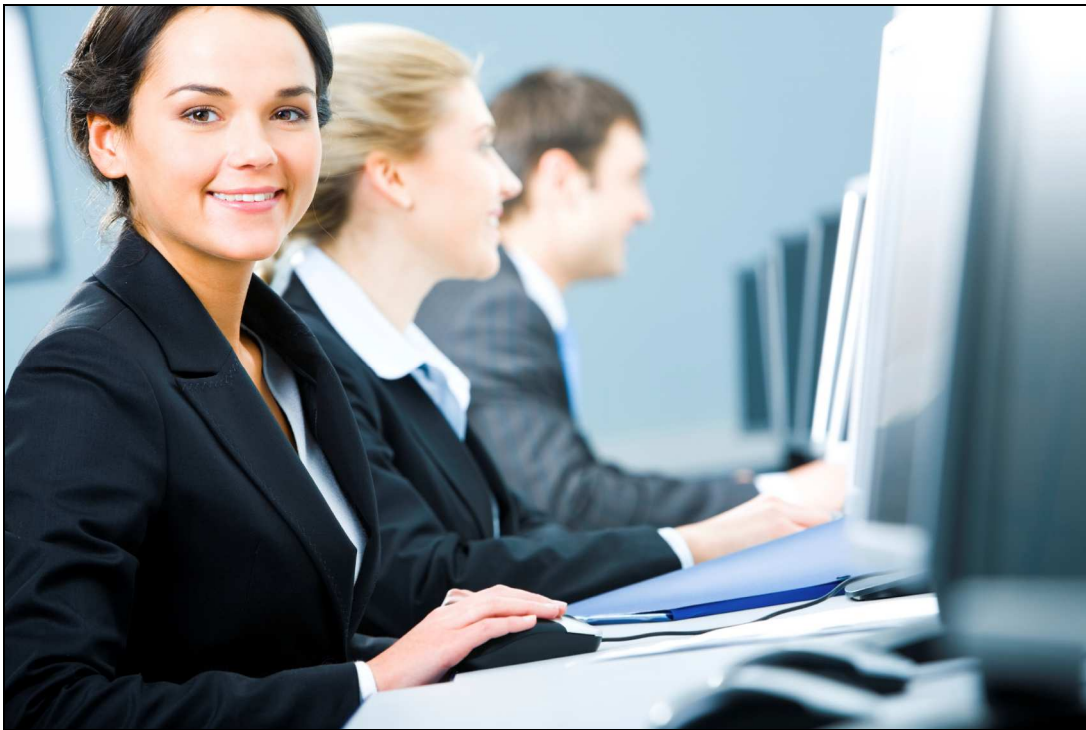


# Test-Taking Tips and Strategies

Improve Your Performance  
on APICS Certification Exams



The following certification study tips were created by surveying APICS CSCP and CPIM exam participants. Please read through these tips and apply them as you study for the exam.

---

## General Studying and Note-Taking Tips

- Try not to procrastinate until the last minute to study. Space out study hours to allow sufficient time to review the study materials.
- Consider studying at home rather than at the office. It may be more difficult to focus in the work environment.
- Develop test-taking and time-management skills. Be methodical in your exam preparation.
- Take the day off before testing to relax and review study questions. Get a good night's rest before the exam.
- Be consistent with study habits.
- Don't wait too long between exams. Consider taking the exams for all five APICS CPIM modules within a two-year maximum time period (one year, if possible) to keep the momentum going. Take the exams in the recommended order.
- Take the exam while the information from studying is still fresh in your mind.
- Calculate how much time you will need for studying. Study one chapter and based on this, determine how many dedicated study hours you will likely need. Use this approximate calculation to determine when you should take the test.
- If testing in the morning, allow enough time to go over your study materials one last time. Eating something before the test is also recommended.
- Understand manufacturing processes before taking the exam. This is helpful.
- Use actual work experiences to compare information in study notes to better and more accurately understand what you are learning.
- Test yourself constantly and spend at least an hour a day studying.

- Focus on understanding the concepts and their practical applications.
- Understand why incorrect answers are incorrect. During study learn not only what is correct, but also what answers are incorrect and why. Certification exams demand mastery level understanding and this requires the ability to distinguish 100% correct versus 90% correct / 10% incorrect responses.
- Write your own quiz. As you study, try to develop your own test questions and sample responses. If you develop sample questions you cannot answer ask your instructor or mentor to explain.

## Study Materials

- Read the *Exam Content Manual* and purchase the listed reference materials to prepare for the exam.
- Read the reference materials carefully. Thoroughly understand the concepts instead of just memorizing terms. Keeping an outline as you read each chapter may prove useful.
- Become familiar with APICS words and technical terms. Study the terms and acronyms in the *APICS Dictionary*.
- Take the practice tests located in the *Exam Content Manual*.
- If the number of reference materials is a concern, focus on one or two reference books at a time.
- Use flashcards to help study the terms in the dictionary and *Exam Content Manual*.
- Use the practice CD and take mock exams. They help you understand how questions are presented and how to identify your strengths and weaknesses.
- Mix your preparation with the Datachem mock exam kit. It is a helpful tool to practice the knowledge and achieve a better understanding of the material.
- Make time for a second reading of reference materials.
- Read the articles in the reprints for each exam module. Reprint articles expand on the topics and enhance your knowledge.

- Take online pretests or practice tests and pay extra attention to your weak points, giving you the opportunity to learn what topics need additional study time.
- Maintain a balanced study diet. Don't rely on just one kind of study tool or approach. Mix things up where possible, for example use books, labs, review questions, and trying to teach what you have just learned to a fictional new employee. Variety helps ensure a solid understanding.

## Before the Test

- Take practice tests before, during, and after each study block to enhance learning. Make sure you understand why you got some answers wrong.
- Note all details that the instructor mentions in the courses and ask questions if something is not clear.
- Plan to study up to 100 additional hours per module, in addition to the instructor-led course for each module.
- Take exam soon after completing the course.
- Self-study all materials from class again.
- Study with a study partner to quiz each other.
- Take each module exam in sync with the class – that way the material will be fresh in your mind.

## On the Exam Day

- If taking public transportation to the exam center, use the time to review practice questions. Drink some coffee to wake up your brain during the journey!
- Mark any answers on the exam that you are unsure of, continue with the exam, and then revisit them before submitting - sometimes other exam questions will jog your memory.
- Don't over think your answers. Be logical; sometimes the best answer is based on logic.

- Make sure to read each question carefully and select the BEST answer.
- Be ready for test taking. Stay calm and focused during the test.
- Use the entire time allotted in completing the exam.
- If you see the first few questions are giving you trouble, skip over to the next question until you find one you are confident of the answer. This will build your confidence and enable you to get the "feel" of the exam.
- Pay particular attention to the wording of the questions on the exams. Read carefully!
- If possible, allow sufficient time to go through your answers at the end of the exam.

## **At Work**

- Talk with colleagues who have passed the exam for their insight.
- Practice what you learn from your studies, associating learning with daily work.
- Relate concepts to real-life examples. As you read the material, think about how it applies to your work environment.
- Interact with others who are also studying for the exam to help each other and create study groups.

**Good luck on your exam!**