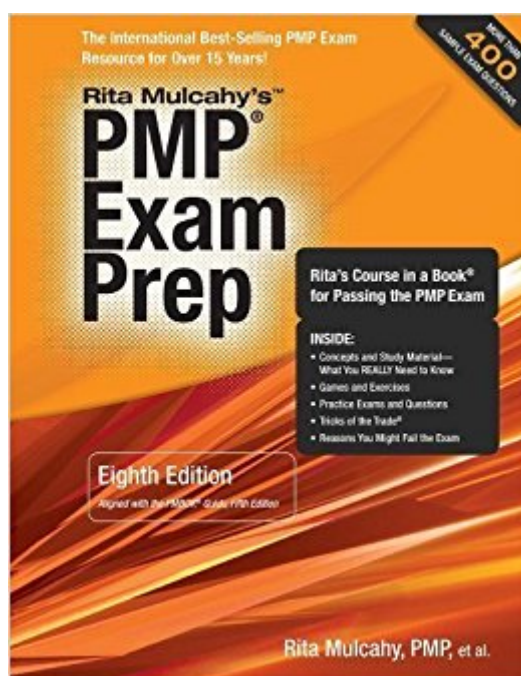


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Synopsis

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Rita's PMP Exam Prep book is all you need to pass the exam. But you need to know it backward and forward. Highlight and scribble all over this book as you go through it. I never read the tedious PMBOK guide, but instead went straight to this book to do my studying. The test questions at the end of the chapters are similar to what you would expect on the exam. I did also buy PM FASTrack:PMP Exam Simulation Software when I felt I was getting close to ready. The software isn't a must-have if you are on a tight budget - but it certainly will make your life easier. It is important to take a "real environment" simulated exam several times before the real day. This is because the PMP exam will take you the 4 full hours. You should be used to sitting and interacting with with a computer (and thinking hard) for at least that long. Good Luck to You! If I can do it, then you certainly should have no problem if you study hard.

I just took the PMP exam yesterday and passed (this was still the 2004 exam...the 2005 exam begins after September 26, 2005). Rita's book is an excellent resource and essential for passing the exam, period. Although the 2004 exam had a lower bar to reach than the 2005 exam, my passing score would have been good enough for the 2005 exam, too. Rita offers many exam tips and exposure to topics not addressed, or not addressed well enough in the PMBOK Guide. That's not to say that the PMBOK isn't essential; it is. You'll be well served by following Rita's advice on reading her book 3 times, doing the practice exams until you score 90% or better, and read the PMBOK Guide until you're well versed on inputs, outputs, and tools for each knowledge area. It will seem like a lot to memorize -- and it is! -- but the more you memorize and ingrain the material, the less flustered you'll be during the exam. Don't cram for the 2005 exam. Get a plan together that has you studying consistently for several weeks at the least, and several months is even better. Even if you are a project manager already and have been for years, unless you use PMI's methods and are very familiar with their philosophy governing project management, you will do a disservice to yourself by cutting short your exam prep time. Finally, good as Rita's book is, it won't cover everything you need to know. She has an exam prep CDROM that has many test questions. I found that companion CD to be very helpful, as it allowed me to test my knowledge with a bank of questions I hadn't seen 3 times before. Good luck!

Rita's PMP Exam Prep book may not perfectly package the PMP Exam for you to digest in one effortless meal. But having recently passed the exam, I can say that if I had to do it again, I'd again use this book as the core of my preparation routine. We all purchase PMP Exam Prep materials for one reason: to pass the PMP exam. The exam itself is rather ambiguous, and test preparation is really an exercise in trying to find materials that really dial you into what you need to know to pass. This book reviews the key knowledge areas you need to have mastered to pass. It correctly identifies most of the core values the exam questions will test you on, and it's expertly written not just to present them, but to teach you to interpret the questions, reason through the answers, and to help you learn to select the correct answers more often than not. All the other pros or cons are superfluous after that. The book is organized into chapters that mirror the PMBOK chapters, and there's a sample test at the end of each chapter. The sample tests contain about 30 to 40 questions. Please note that these questions are designed to reinforce material in each chapter, and not necessarily to mimic the style and content of exam questions. RMC sells an add-on test simulator with gazillions of sample questions; I didn't use that product, but a colleague used it successfully. The chapters themselves are a very focused distillation of the materials most likely to

be required to pass a typical exam session (the exact questions you will take are randomized, so it's impossible to predict what specific topics will be hit, and how hard, in any one sitting). The book is impressive just for this topical coverage, which has some practical value beyond exam preparation purposes alone. The book won't take you any deeper into a topic than you need to go to pass the test, and this economy of material is a big part of what makes the book so valuable: really, part of what you're buying is Rita's judgment about what you need to know and what you don't. I found that her advice wasn't perfect, but it was pretty darn close. I took about 2-3 hours to cover each chapter, including the chapter test. In addition to the main chapters, the book reviews some important exam advice. Specifically, Rita catalogues several dozen key points that usually trip people up (some people call these PMI-isms). These are listed in a separate section near the front of the book, but also woven into chapter text and chapter tests. That focus on material that helps the reader pass the exam is a big differentiator for this product. In the course of preparing, I was warned that this book's sample questions would be slightly easier than those in the exam. Another PMP recommended using Kim Heldman's PMP Study Guide (which came with a CD of sample exams) in addition to Rita's book, noting that the Heldman questions were harder than the PMP exam. My last round of pre-exam prep confirmed that, at least for me. I scored very high on Rita's book questions, and about 15% lower on the Heldman questions. My exam score was right in the middle of the two. If you're like me, you are probably willing to do any reasonable preparation for the exam, but are not sure what the best source is to be sure you pass. The good news for prospective PMPs is that the exam can be adequately prepared for in a reasonable amount of time. The Mulcahy book is probably the most cost and time effective way for most candidates to prepare to pass the test. Supplementing this book with the test simulator or with another source, such as Heldman, will improve your preparation noticeably. Do not rely on the PMBOK alone, as it will not prepare you to answer very many exam questions. Using the Rita book is definitely the most important single, but not the only, source to use in preparation. The book was well worth the money and the time spent reading it. Good luck to you!

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