How to Pass the CPSM Exams

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Hello! My name is Randy Mauldin, president of Jack Quinn Solutions, LLC and the founder of the Certified Professional in Supply Management (CPSM) Boot Camp. The CPSM Boot Camp is a rigorous and effective 3 day course that focuses on the necessary information to take and successfully pass the CPSM certification exam. The sole intent of this course is to prepare attendees to pass and achieve certification!

I originally created this course because I myself was once seeking to gain my CPSM certification. At that time, I was making a career transition from the military; focused on finding an occupation.

I had very little time to dedicate to studying for certification. I understood that a CPSM certificate under my belt would speak to my experience and credentials in logistics and supply chain management earned in the military. Obtaining a CPSM certification would tell the world that I was a quality supply chain leader, which is a significant achievement for anyone in supply chain management. For that reason I was determined not only to help myself, but help others, demonstrate professional skills with a CPSM certification.

In organizing and creating this course, I was determined to help make certification as easy as possible for those who are truly experienced and prepared. Creating a boot camp was the ideal way to present the effective and intense study methods required to pass all 3 exams required for certification.

Utilizing the techniques and study methods explored in the course, we make passing the exam easier and faster for all students. All supply chain professionals deserve the opportunity to achieve the certification so they can maximize their resume and proclaim they are a supply chain management professional!

I would like to present to you the methods of preparation for the CPSM exams which we instruct and teach each of our attendees
in depth at the CPSM Boot Camp. These methods are able to help you become the successful and valuable professional you seek to be to potential employers all over the world.

If you feel that you need further assistance or would like to learn some of these study techniques in person we would be glad to welcome you to any of CPSM Boot Camps! If you are among the many that cannot join us, we will discuss our study strategies in-depth with you here. Good luck and happy testing!

Regards,

Dr. Randall M. Mauldin

USMC (ret), CPSM®, PMP®
Chapter One: CPSM and Associated Benefits

This eBook is intended to inform potential CPSM exam test takers about how to prepare themselves for the exam so that they can succeed and obtain certification. Before you delve into studying it is important to understand some basic information on the CPSM exam and how you can benefit from certification both personally and professionally. Before you sign up for the exam you should take all information into account in making your decision to take the CPSM certification exam.

The CPSM Exam

The CPSM exam is an acronym for the Certified Professional in Supply Management exam. This certification is an internationally recognized reflection of expanded knowledge, skills, and the abilities needed to be a successful supply management professional. This professional qualifications exam, overseen by the Institute of Supply Management, is used to ensure that a professional is aware of the complexities of supply management positions and new developments in the supply environment. The exam will include risk factors for supply managers, technology developments, sourcing concepts, as well as other skills that are considered crucial to successful supply management professionals both now and in the future.

Criteria for Exam Qualification

To ensure the dedication of individuals who may become certified there are certain criteria that must be met before anyone can take the CPSM exam. These criteria are in place to ensure that professionals who are interested in taking the exam are experienced and have a vested interest in the supply management industry. Additionally, it is important for future employers who recognize CPSM certification on a resume as an understanding that there are certain qualifications that must be met before
certification can even be considered, and that an individual who is CPSM certified is a professional. For that reason, CPSM certification is even more valuable asset to have in your resume.

In order to sign up for the CPSM exam the following requirements must be validated:

- Three years of full-time supply management experience is required. Clerical and support positions do not qualify as supply management experience.
- Verification of a bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited institution or international equivalent.
- A passing score on 3 CPSM exams or a current Certified Professional Manager in good standing are permitted to take the Bridge exam

There are no exceptions to the requirements of exam qualification as they are used to gauge the level of understanding of each test taker.

**Recertification of CPSM credentials**

Once earned, you have will need to recertify every three years. The Institute of Supply Management (ISM) requires that recertification be accomplished by 60 credit hours of continuing education over a three year period. These continuing education credits can come from any of the following sources:

- College courses (in which you are the student or the instructor)
- Professionally recognized contributions
- Successful completion of the CPSM exam

Recertification may be required per your employer. Some companies will reimburse you for your recertification courses
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and CPSM exam, contact your Human Resources department for more information.

Benefits of CPSM Certification

In order to analyze the full benefits of CPSM certification you should assess yourself as a marketable entity in the supply management industry, as well as the value it can have for your current supply management company. Every company has a supply chain, and the most competitive and resilient companies actively manage their supply chain with a strategic focus. Some studies suggest that a 2.5% decrease in cost creates the same amount of profit as a 10% increase in sales.

Some companies only seek to hire certified professionals or may require certification before higher pay scales or new positions are offered. Among some of the other benefits of CPSM certification for an employer include:

- CPSM certified employees are more likely to produce quality work which demonstrates proper supply management strategies and a firm understanding of new technology as it relates to the profession.

- CPSM certified employees are more likely to be able to work cooperatively in all facets of supply management.

- CPSM certified professionals are more likely to possess the skills to make positive, accurate, and profitable decisions for companies as a whole.

CPSM certified professionals are always in demand. There are some employers who will even cover the cost of testing or offer you compensation for your time as an incentive to get their employees to become certified. There are no employers who could not benefit from hiring of CPSM certified professionals, and if your employer tells you it is insignificant for your career then you should consider the personal benefits of certification.
While each of these benefits is for the greater good of an employment company, there is plenty to be gained on a personal level from CPSM certification. Certification sets you apart from your peers and can act as a demonstration of your knowledge and passion for your profession. There are several personal benefits that a certified professional in supply management will have:

- Solidifies the foundation of understanding for professionals in organizational supply management and enable managers to understand the implementations for certain procedures in supply management.

- Firm understanding of current topics in supply management allows supply managers to implement and successfully create supply strategies for their companies.

- Certification demonstrates further supply management qualification and communicates to employers that you are a well-qualified individual in the supply management industry.

- According to the ISM salary survey, professionals who are CPSM certified can earn an average of 23% more annually over an individual who is uncertified.

- The ability to further your understanding and demonstrate certification demonstrates you are a marketable asset to the supply management industry.

If two people with identical work histories were applying for the same management position in a supply company, the applicant with the CPSM certification listed on their resume is much more likely to be hired. The same occurs when you promote from within a set group of employees, the one who is certified will be seen as more marketable and valuable to the position over all others.

CPSM certification is beneficial for both the company and the supply management professional. Now that you have a basic understanding of what the CPSM exam is and how you can benefit
How To Pass The CPSM Certification Exams

from certification it is important to understand how the exam works and what you need to do to get certified.

**CPSM Exam Process**

The CPSM is a formal examination that should be taken seriously by all interested and qualified professionals. Prior to taking the exam it is important for you to understand the individual components of the exam, how it is scored, and to ensure that you have all of the necessary prerequisites in order.

The Certified Professional in Supply Management exam is a professional qualifications test that is intended to cover the entire scope of a professional career in the industry. The exam is not intended to explain how competent you are for certain positions within a company; rather it should be seen as a demonstration of understanding in the supply management community. Your scores will not be influenced based on the scores of your peers, nor is there any curve with which exams are graded on.

Each CPSM examinee is encouraged to participate in some form of preparedness exercises or courses before their exam in order to test their level of comprehension for topics concerned with supply management. This practice should be centered on the exam portions and dedicated to certification.

There are three separate exams each CPSM Candidate must fulfill entirely. Exams 1 and 2 contain a total of 165 questions and 180 questions on Exam 3 (15 questions on each exam are test questions to be used on future exams and are not scored). The questions have various levels of difficulty and styles of presentation. It is important to understand the exam is timed with 2 hours and 45 minutes for Exams 1 and 2 and 3 hours for Exam 3. There is no opportunity to go beyond that scope of time, so it is the responsibility of the test taker to manage their time appropriately.
Action Steps from Chapter One

1) Understand the purpose of the CPSM exam.
2) Verify your eligibility to participate in the exam.
3) Analyze the professional and personal benefits of certification as they relate to you.
4) Familiarize yourself with the CPSM certification exam process.
Chapter Two: The CPSM Exam

Whether you have been working in supply management for twenty years or barely meet the requirements to take the CPSM exam, it is important for you to prepare yourself for the exam. This means you should study up on current trends in the industry, revisit previously learned material, and familiarize yourself with some of the questions that you may face throughout the exam. To gain certification you will have to draw on some of your professional experiences from working in the supply management industry and information that you have gained from texts. Your success in the exam depends on you and how well you prepare and practice supply management techniques and information.

Understanding the Exam

In order to succeed with your CPSM certification it is important that you understand the exam and test taking process so that you can properly prepare. Most of the exams that are issued are computerized; however there is no need for any special computer skills in order to pass the exam. There is an online tutorial available prior to the start of the test that will instruct you on how to use the computer to answer the questions that are included in the exam. Additionally, each test center has an administrator available who will be able to answer any questions regarding the test taking process and how to use the computer system. Be advised however that the administrator can assist you with technical issues but nothing related to the questions on your exam or content related to supply management.

Since each portion of the exam is timed it is permissible for a test taker to flag a question and return to it after they have answered all of the questions in that section of the test. This feature allows you to skip ahead to another question if you are unsure of an answer and wish to return to it at a later time within that portion of the exam. It is recommended that if you
are questioning one of your answers that you flag and skip the question and return to it for further examination. In the Boot Camp Course, we discuss the strategies for approaching different questions so you can maximize your time management and complete the exam within the allotted time.

For those test takers who may require certain accommodations, Pearson VUE Testing Centers will gladly assist all those with disabilities who seek to become a certified supply management professional.

Special accommodations must be discussed at the time of registration in order to ensure all needs are met.

**The Cost of Certification**

Certifications of any kind are never going to be cheap; however in comparison to some other professional examinations the CPSM exam is rather affordable.

ISM member rates- $180/ examination

Non-ISM member rates- $265/ examination

While these rates may be affordable it does not take away from the seriousness of the CPSM exam. Using practice materials and studying for the exam can eliminate the need for re-exams and having to pay for several attempts.

It is important to note that if you are being reimbursed by your employer for your examination that there are sometimes stipulations involved. Some employers will only pay for your first examination and will not cover the cost of a second. Preparation is key!
Action Steps for Chapter Two

1) Understand the CPSM Exams
2) Decide if the CPSM Exams are for you
3) Develop a budget for the exam fees
4) Determine if your company will invest in your professional development
5) Ask your employer to invest in you for your CPSM certification
Chapter Three: Preparing for the CPSM Exam

Preparation for the CPSM Exam

Now that you have a firm understanding of how the CPSM exam works during the test taking process it is important to understand the pre-test taking process that each test taker should undergo. Fortunately there are several tools which test takers can use in order to prepare themselves for the CPSM exam. ISM does not require test takers to complete any preparedness materials or courses, however they are recommended to help review and further grasp the content of the CPSM exam. Here are some of the preparedness materials that test takers often use:

- Participate in CPSM Review Course
- Utilize various business, supply, and trade publications to get informed on current trends in the supply management industry
- Review the CPSM study guides or ISM professional series books
- Use the CPSM Diagnostic Kit to take practice tests to refresh their knowledge
- Study the CPSM Supplementary Reading List and certain supply management student textbooks

While there have been plenty of test takers who become CPSM certified studies suggest that practicing and refreshing knowledge before the exam can result in higher finalized scores. Keep in mind that the more sources you are able to gain information from the more prepared you will be for the various questions on the exam. CPSM study guides will not contain the exact questions from the CPSM exam.
We are going to take a more in-depth look at some of the preparedness options that examinees have the option to participate in prior to taking their CPSM certification exam.

**Participation in CPSM Review courses**

When you participate in review courses you are going to be in a classroom setting discussing the techniques and strategies of supply management professionals with other students. This method of preparation is recommended if you are taking the course with a certified professional who can speak to their experiences in taking the exam and are familiar with all the content. All information covered in these types of courses should be up to date and they should be packed full of test taking skills and comprehension activities.

**Utilizing business, supply and trade publications**

Utilizing business, supply and trade publications to study up on new technologies or practices in the supply management community is a great idea. These journal and research articles can help you gain a firm understanding of new practices that you may perhaps otherwise be unaware of. When relying on information from publications it is important to note the credibility of the author or company providing you with the information. Mere website content does not count as a publication and can provide you with some misleading information, so it is best to always use credible sources.

**Reviewing CPSM study guides**

CPSM study guides and preparation materials that have been provided by ISM are perfect methods to help you prepare for the material you will see on a test. These guides will often contain tips on how to study material that will be covered in the test and how to read the questions that you will see on examination day. Some of these study guides will even offer you information on the specific knowledge that you should focus on when studying for CPSM certification. Just as with the website
content it is important that whatever study guides you use are from a reputable company that is familiar with the CPSM exam. Choosing from the many ISM study guides will ensure that you are getting quality information from those who specialize in the CPSM exam.

**Utilizing practice tests**

It is always recommended, before you enter into the CPSM exam, that you use practice tests to check your understanding. These tests are created using actual questions from previous tests and will use the same skills necessary to succeed in your upcoming exam. Practice tests can help you gauge your preparedness for the exam and pinpoint the supply management components and concepts that you may be struggling in so that you can focus your study time on them. The best part of taking practice tests is that you can evaluate yourself based on the score of the diagnostic exams. If you take a practice test and are satisfied with your score then you know you are more than likely going to succeed in the exam. On the same note, if you take a practice test and are not happy with the score then you know you need to work a little harder on understanding the material to be covered.

**Supplementary reading list**

The supplementary reading list is a compilation of all the textbooks and literature pieces that contain useful information that could be on the exam. These texts vary in topic, however they have been cited as containing crucial information that a prepared supply manager will use on the examination. While some of these texts must be special ordered, there are plenty that you can find online or at your local library.

Regardless of which study method you chose it is in each examinee’s best interest to utilize one method of preparedness. Our CPSM Boot Camp is the perfect culmination of several of these preparedness opportunities and seeks to provide you with all the information you will need for the exam in one location.
There is a lot of content and information for the supply management industry, and the CPSM Boot Camp aims to clarify all of it for you.

Study Environment

While it may not be considered a testing material it is important for all test takers to create a study environment where they are free from distractions. Not only does this help to focus in on the information you are studying, but it will help to simulate the actual testing environment where you will be taking your certification exam. Some even suggest that the radio can be a distraction, as there will certainly not be music playing at your testing center.

There is nothing wrong with taking a few minutes out of your day to sit in silence to review your test materials, longer if you are planning on taking a diagnostic exam. This means that it is not the best study environment at the office, driving in a car, or waiting for the metro. In order to dedicate your time and efforts entirely to your supply management studies you should be in a comfortable location.

Reading as a Preparation Method

As we have previously touched on reading is one of the most important study methods that a CPSM examinee can partake in. Reading for studying and learning is much different than reading a novel in your free time, there are certain techniques that can be used to maximize your learning potential from a piece of literature.

- Take notes. Your notes can be anything from concepts in supply management which you understand for the first time, concepts you need to revisit, terms you don’t know, etc. Studies demonstrate that note taking is among one of the
best study aids for any exam, the CPSM exam is no exception.

- Focus on the various learning concepts presented in that particular piece of literature. These learning concepts could generate an in-depth question on the exam, so it is important to understand the theme behind various concepts. If you are reading about inventory management then it would be a good idea to take note of the various terms or concepts introduced in inventory management.

- Take note of vocabulary you might not know the meaning of. Take time at the end of each study session to look up the vocabulary that you may not know (some people benefit from creating flash cards with those new terms). Some of these words you do not know could be new concepts which could surface on the exam.

- Make a list of technical formulas that your readings mention. While not all these formulas may be on the exam it is a good idea to know them and be prepared.

Even if you have been in the supply management industry for several years and are very experienced there are always going to be concepts that you are unfamiliar with. Your reading should be used as a tool to refresh your knowledge and gain new knowledge you may be overlooking. Since the CPSM exam covers a broad range of topics in supply management it is important to learn as much as you can through your readings.

**Action Steps for Chapter Three**

1) Develop a plan to prepare for the CPSM Exams
2) Invest in the materials required to prepare for the CPSM Exams
3) Identify a place to study that is quiet and allows you to focus
4) Read the CPSM Study Materials
5) Consider investing in a CPSM Review Course that includes all the above
Chapter 4: Question Formats

Question Formats on the CPSM Exams

A key strategy for preparing for the exams is understanding the types of questions that the CPSM exam contains in order to prepare for your test day. Each question on the exam is followed by a multiple choice answer (A, B, C, and D) where only one of the answers is actually correct. But, not all exam questions were created the same, instead you will be faced with a series of ranging questions from sentence completion, to comprehension, and even list based questioning. Here is a closer look at the question formats and examples you should be expected to encounter during your test taking process:

Sentence completion questions

Sentence completion questions typically will offer the test taker a sentence that is missing a phrase or word from its content. The options that are listed are intended to complete the sentence into one fluid and comprehensive thought.

Example:

Organizations actively managing their supply chain use contracts which include continuous improvement clauses that contain information on target cost, quality, and _________.

A) Innovation enhancements  
B) Customer responsiveness  
C) Cycle times  
D) Supplier performance

The best answer is supplier performance (D) because enhancing supplier performance will help improve the overall organization.
In sentence completion questions there may be several answers that could complete the sentence; however the test taker is expected to make the best possible choice of those presented.

Closed stem questions

Closed stem questions are the most common questions that will be seen on the CPSM exam. These are basic question and answer formatted questions that are asked to the test taker.

Example:

What category of documents would you receive for a listing of multiple shipments from a shipper?

A) Manifest  
B) Independent inspection certificate  
C) A commercial invoice  
D) A dock receipt

The best answer to the question is (A) manifest. Manifest breaks down the number of shipments and cartons to be received into a list of exact quantities of the contents to be received.

Closed stem questions are utilized to check your understanding of basic supply management techniques and functioning. It is recommended that the test taker utilize the process of elimination to find the best answer for the question posed.

Except format questions

In except format questions the test taker must be able to recognize that there are three answers which could correctly answer the question. However in this questions format the incorrect option should be selected as it is the answer that is the exception to the group. Be advised that in some forms of this question EXCEPT can be replaced with a NOT.
Example:

Purchasing inventory, such as wood, on consignment will help a supply management professional achieve savings on all of the following EXCEPT

A) Interest costs
B) Storage costs
C) Cost of obsolescence
D) Taxes

The best answer is storage costs (B). Storage costs do not change no matter how inventory is purchased. The other choices, interest costs, the cost of obsolescence, and taxes may change when product is obtained using a consignment supplier.

Except format questions are intended to test the comprehension of the test taker, and to see if they can pay attention to instructions. In essence you are seeking the answer which does not fulfill the question.

Most/least/best formatted questions

The most/least/best questions that you will encounter on the CPSM exam are all geared to ensure that you can identify a better or worse answer to the question posed.

Example One:

Which of the following methods of payment for international purchases would be MOST beneficial to use?

A) Cash advance
B) Draft
C) Letter of Credit
D) Open Account
The best answer is (D) an open account. All the answers have applicability for international purchases; however, an open account with an offshore supply organization is the best answer.

Example Two:

If you are developing a contract for the manufacture and design of a specific component which of the following concerns is the LEAST important?

A) The ownership of the design
B) The location of the supplier
C) The right to apply for a patent
D) The ownership of special tooling

The best answer is the location of the supplier (B). The other answers are more important in the procurement of a special component than the location of the supplier.

Most/least/best formatted questions are intended for the examinee to use their supply management skills to choose the answer which is the best or worst answer to the question. This will utilize all the knowledge the test taker has with respect to each answer.

Question Difficulties on the CPSM Exam

While you have now been versed on the types of questions that you may encounter on the CPSM exam it is important to understand the difficulty levels of some of the questions that you will see. A range in difficulty levels is important in determining that the right candidates for certification are meeting all the industry standards and truly have a firm grasp of all supply management concepts. These questions will range from easy to difficult, each testing a different aspect of the test taker’s knowledge.

Recall questions
Recall questions are considered the easiest questions for a prepared test taker to answer. As the name suggests they require you to recall ideas or information that a qualified supply manager should be familiar with. You may be asked to define a term or identify the right answer.

Example One:

An interim agreement that states a company will deliver products or services before a permanent contract is developed is called a __________

A) Letter of intent
B) Purchase order
C) Customized contract
D) Standard contract

The best answer is (A) letter of intent. The letter of intent is used by a supplier to develop a definitive contract. The other answers are not used to start delivery of products.

Example Two:

The term used to describe the charge assessed against a shipper for using a railcar beyond the free time period is known as

A) Absorption
B) Demurrage
C) Drayage
D) Dockage

The best answer is (B) demurrage. Demurrage refers to the time in which a rail car, ship, or other cargo carrier is detained when the shipment is held up for extended periods of time.
As these two recall questions demonstrate there is no additional directions to these questions save for the recollection of the definition or meaning of the terms given. These questions are often fastest to answer for most test takers.

**Comprehension questions**

Questions that are of higher difficulty than the recall questions include comprehension questions. Comprehension questions are used to test the capabilities of the examinee and to determine their understanding for information that is presented to them.

**Example One:**

Specifications from a supply management professional that order specifics about developing a CPSM training course for 25 people to be presented in a 3 day course are examples of

A) Engineering specifications
B) **Performance specifications**
C) Restrictive specifications
D) Technical specifications

The best answer is (B) performance specifications. The specifications describe the requirements to perform the requested task. The remaining answers are different types of specifications, but are not consider performance specifications.

**Example Two:**

Using a separate purchase order for several items, rather than a single purchase order for each item will most likely result in a decrease in

A) Overall number of purchases made by the organization
B) **Average cost of processing a purchase order**
C) Number of purchasing errors
D) Amount of staff needed by purchasing
The best answer is (B) average cost of processing a purchase order. Issuing separate purchase orders affects the average cost of processing.

Comprehension questions seemingly present a fact or principle of supply management and may present a scenario in which that principle must properly be applied. It is important that you thoroughly read all aspects of comprehension questions in order to obtain the correct answer.

Application question

Applications could perhaps be the most difficult questions on the CPSM that you may encounter. These questions are intended to measure the understanding of content and apply that understanding to a new scenario or situation. Application questions are intended to test your ability to apply the information in supply management that you may already have.

Example:

The ABC Corporation identified a non-biodegradable byproduct within the manufacturing process that requires an expensive disposal process. As the supply manager you are tasked with identifying a method to dispose of the product that is cost effective. In this situation which of the following would be the BEST course of action to take?

A) Re-engineer processes to eliminate production of the byproduct
B) Sell the byproduct to another manufacturer who has a need for it
C) Organize a team to identify potential uses for the byproduct in-house
D) Solicit competitive bids to identify recyclers who are more cost-competitive
The best answer is (B) sell the byproduct to another manufacturer who has a need for it. In this situation an organization would benefit from selling the byproduct instead of expending funds for disposal.

Application questions are used in order test the examinee’s capability to draw from their experience in the supply management industry, as well as use their skills to find the best solution to the question. Application questions typically incorporate various forms of questioning as they are commonly believed to be the most difficult for CPSM test takers.

**Action Steps for Chapter Four**

1) Become Familiar with the different types of questions
2) Beware of distracters within the question
3) Develop a strategy for addressing each type of question
4) Use the Diagnostic Exams to become familiar with the different types of questions and how they affect time management
Chapter 5: CPSM Certification in Less Than 30 Days

30 Day Test Prep

Sitting for the CPSM exams requires time to prepare for the exams and time to take the exam at the testing center. Our professional and personal lives constantly invoke demands that distract us from achieving the CPSM certification. Most of us have the experience and ability to pass the exams, but lack the time required to properly prepare. Therefore, we need to commit to success then develop a plan to achieve results.

The best way to achieve results is to decide the CPSM certification is for you and commit to doing whatever it takes to achieve this goal. We recommend a 30 day preparation plan. Some may question whether or not it is feasible to pass the exam with less than 30 days of preparation time. Surprisingly it is! For those who attend the CPSM Boot Camp there will be thorough training into the SRTAP method of preparation. For those who cannot attend, we have provided the strategy we used to prepare candidates for success.

Study

Review

Test

Analyze

Plan...and repeat!

To touch briefly on the SRTAP method of preparation it is important to understand what this acronym is intending to communicate.

First, you must STUDY the information on the exam. Reading the CPSM Study Guide and practice questions presented in CPSM textbooks is often useful to gain an understanding of what to
expect on the exam. Take notes on the reading material that help you remember the concepts and allow you to review the material quickly as you prepare for the exam. In 30 days time you should plan on spending at least a few hours a day to study time.

Second, you must REVIEW your notes and any additional material which can help you further understand the concepts in supply management which you are unfamiliar with. These materials could be textbooks or publications that are specific to supply management, so long as they are from a credible source. Reviewing this material can help you grasp any concepts you may not be aware of in the industry, or just refresh your mind on ones you may have forgotten.

You should then TEST your understanding with practice exams. Using online diagnostic testing provided by the Institute for Supply Management, you can ANALYZE and pinpoint the information you know and what you need to study further. Even if you score well on a practice exam you should still continue to study and explore other information in the supply management industry as you will not get the same questions for your real CPSM exam.

Finally, PLAN your study efforts so that you can maximize your study time. Focusing on the information that you do not know can help you study the materials that you will need to succeed on the exam. With a 30 day window of study time it is important for you to make every minute count! Therefore you should plan time out of your busy schedule to dedicate to studying and honing in on all your supply management skills that you might not use on an everyday basis. Creating set study times will help keep you on track for your upcoming examination.

The 30 day preparation method for the CPSM exam provides the structure for a person who is determined to earn the certification. Others who use a method that is longer than 30 days end up using the same amount of study time over a longer period of time. Examinees who want to get it done in less than 30 days will successfully implement the SRTAP method of studying and received their certification.
Action Steps from Chapter Five

1) Commit to earning the CPSM Certification
2) Follow the CSPM Boot Camp 30 day preparation strategy - SRTAP
3) Don’t mess around. Get it done!!!
Chapter 6: CPSM Test Day

Studying is not the only form of preparation that is needed for the CPSM exam. There is a process which must be completed and certain considerations which must be kept in mind before you walk into your testing center. These steps and considerations are important as it can mean the difference between a successful CPSM examination and one that will have to be retaken or rescheduled.

Scheduling an Exam

For those who feel they are ready to take the CPSM exam there is a process that must be followed in order to register and schedule yourself for an upcoming exam.

The Computer Exam Test Site Information Pearson VUE is a recognized global provider of testing solutions that is responsible for hosting all CPSM exams. If you wish to register for an exam you must enroll through their website (www.pearsonvue.com/ism). Here you will find details regarding the testing centers and the testing process overall if you have any questions.

Within 24 hours of your CPSM examination registration through Pearson VUE you will receive an e-mail confirmation with key information that is needed to take your exam. Your e-mail should be retained for your records and it will contain the following:

1) Your candidate ID number
2) Scheduling instructions from a Pearson VUE testing center
3) Instructions to follow before your exam

This is the first step in scheduling your exam. Once you have obtained your confirmation e-mail you must wait another 12 hours before you can schedule your official exam. The faster you schedule your exam the better chance you will have at obtaining
the test date you desire, as seats are reserved on a first-come first-serve basis.

To schedule your exam there will be a link in your confirmation e-mail to the Pearson VUE site (or you can schedule via telephone at 888-273-2971), where you will be prompted to enter your candidate ID number. It is here that you can choose the date you wish to take your exam at your local test center.

Please keep in mind that if you are not successful passing the exam, you will have to wait 30 days before you may re-take the CPSM exam.

If for some reason you need to cancel or reschedule your CPSM exam appointment or date you should contact Pearson VUE within 24 hours of your exam date, otherwise you will forfeit your exam fees. For a cancellation contact Pearson VUE, and then e-mail a cancellation request to ISM (custsvc@ism.ws). ISM will then re-register you and send you new confirmation information within 48 hours for your rescheduled exam.

CPSM Exam Day

On the day of your exam there is no doubt that you will be somewhat nervous. However, it is important to take the necessary time to ensure that you will meet all the protocols of your testing center. These protocols and rules will be listed in your confirmation e-mail which you would have received when you signed up for your test.

You are required to check in with your testing center about 30 minutes before your exam is scheduled to begin. Any test takers who arrive more than 15 minutes late will forfeit their test fees and will be asked to leave the testing center.

There are no electronic devices permitted within the testing designated areas, this includes cellular phones, calculators,
laptops, PDAs, etc. These electronic devices are not needed for the exam and can be used as a distraction for other test takers.

The proctor of the testing center may excuse any test taker at any time for misconduct or demonstrating disruptive behavior. You may be asked to vacate the testing center if you are:

- Impersonating another examinee
- Falsifying your information
- Causing a disturbance to other test takers
- Giving or receiving assistance on the exam
- Attempting to remove testing materials or are using notes to complete your exam

Each test taker is expected to bring one form of photo identification, without this identification you will not be permitted to take the exam and will be asked to vacate the testing area. Acceptable methods of photo id include:

- Driver’s license
- Passport
- Military ID
- Government or National ID
- Employee ID
- Student ID
- Photo credit card

Please not that the name on your ID card should read identically to the name with which you have registered to take your examination.

While you may feel that these rules are somewhat excessive they are in place to ensure that each examinee is who they claim to be, and that they are truly demonstrating their own personal supply management knowledge throughout the course of the exam.
Reading Your Results

While reading your results may not be a part of preparing yourself for the exam it is important to understand how your score will be communicated to you once it is completed. The results that you will see reflect the level of mastery of over the topics that are covered in that exam. They will be reflected in a fraction format as follows:

**Example One:**

If your test results read 7/10:

This means that out of 10 questions in that portion of the exam, that you have mastered 7 of them.

**Example Two:**

If your test results read 2/10:

This means that out of 10 questions in that portion of the exam, that you have mastered only 2 of them.

As previously stated your results are non-reflective of any other test takers in your testing center, nor are they based on any form of curve system.

It is recommended that when you take a practice or diagnostic test that you grade yourself in a similar method so that you are clear in the grading process and your results will be similar to those of the actual CPSM certification exam.

Actions Steps from Chapter Six

1) Begin and complete the CPSM examination scheduling process, and obtain a test date.
2) Learn the protocol and rules that will be implemented at your testing center before your test day.
3) Learn how to read the results of your CPSM examination, when they are returned to you.
Chapter Seven: CPSM Boot Camp

Given the previously discussed information, your main question has still not been answered; how do I pass the CPSM exam? The answer is simple, sign up for CPSM Boot Camp training. While yes, you may study at home with your own materials and obtain your certification still, experience has demonstrated that those test takers who prepare for the exam with a CPSM course tend to be more successful than those who don’t. In this chapter, we will be discussing our CPSM Boot Camp and how your attendance is guaranteed to help you successfully pass the CPSM exam.

What is CPSM Boot Camp?

The CPSM Boot Camp is an intensive 3 day course in which test takers are prepared to successfully pass the CPSM exam. Throughout the course test takers will explore their knowledge of the supply management industry and will be introduced to new topics which could potentially be seen on their upcoming certification exam.

The following are some of the topics that will be touched on throughout the CPSM Boot Camp:

- Cost and finances of supply management (as set forth by ISM)
- International business
- Sourcing
- Logistics
- Material and inventory management
- Project management
- Strategic sourcing
- Leadership…and much, much more.

Each of these topics will be on the CPSM exams and are important concepts in the supply management industry. You will be surprised in the new methods and techniques you can use to
immediately achieve cost savings, thus increasing your return on investment in the course.

**How will the course be spread out over 3 days?**

With so much information to cover in the CPSM Boot Camp it is a wonder it can all fit into a mere 3 days. However, we have created and utilized some of the best instructional techniques in order to maximize the understanding of each student, as well as incorporated the use of study materials help you study beyond the scope of 3 days. There is a detailed course description available on the Boot Camp website ([http://www.cpsmtraining.com/](http://www.cpsmtraining.com/)) for those interested in gaining a breakdown of what each day will entail. All three days are geared toward assisting examinees with each of the three tests, so day one is geared toward exam one, day two is geared toward exam two and day three is geared toward exam three.

*Day One- Foundations of Supply Management*

Day one examinees will be presented with areas of supply management that are essential to forming a generalized knowledge of a successful supply management chain. This portion of the course covers costs and finances, international business, social responsibility, supplier relationship management, sourcing and more.

*Day Two- Effective Supply Management Performance*

Day two of the CPSM Boot Camp is geared toward the managerial aspect of supply management, items that are intended to maximize customer values within any organization. This portion will cover issues like organization assessment, planning, project management, inventory management, product development, forecasting, and logistics.

*Day Three- Leadership in Supply Management*
Day three of the CPSM Boot Camp is geared toward supply chain managers and what it takes to be a successful industry leader. This final portion of the Boot Camp will cover supply management in general, effective managerial performance skills, and leadership and communication skills in supply management.

The information covered throughout our 3 days together will be presented in a cumulative fashion, allowing our attendees to build on their previous understanding of supply management concepts as we progress.

What does the course include?

The CPSM Boot Camp is not an all day lecture format of preparation, as that would be torturous. Instead we will be incorporating different learning techniques and materials to help each attendee gain the most out of their time working with us. Each participant will also be issued their own study materials to assist them throughout the three days and even in their study efforts after the course. Upon registration at Boot Camp each participant will receive their own study prep kit which comes complete with the following:

- Course binder
- Workbook with answer key
- ISM study guide, ISM Professional Series, ISM glossary, and ISM web-based diagnostic exam
- Professional instruction to prepare for the CPSM exam

Additionally, within each prep kit comes the certificate of CPSM Boot Camp completion issued by Jack Quinn Solutions, LLC. While this is not your CPSM certification it is a measurement of the hard work and dedication you have put in to preparing for your future, which should most definitely be recognized. You can use this certificate to document the 21 hours of CEUs earned during the course.
These materials will be referred to throughout your time in Boot Camp, and offer you test-taking advice and practice questions to continue your studies even after the Boot Camp has ended. All of the information included within the study prep kit is directly related to the Institute of Supply Management CPSM certification exam and is intended to helping you pass your CPSM exam.

**How will the course materials be utilized?**

There is plenty of knowledge to be gained through the attendance of our CPSM Boot Camp. Remember that all materials that are introduced in the CPSM Boot Camp are yours to continue studying with even after you have taken the exam and become certified. Some of the materials are broken down here to explain their significance to the attendees of the CPSM Boot Camp.

**ISM Literature**

In CPSM Boot Camp, we work closely with the ISM Professional Series textbooks with all our attendees. The Professional Series provides the details required to understand the concepts of supply management. We break down the concepts by task as covered in the Study Guides throughout the three days our attendees are in CPSM Boot Camp.

- **Day One** - Foundations of Supply Management
- **Day Two** - Effective Supply Management Performance
- **Day Three** - Leadership in Supply Management

Each of these textbooks is modeled after a separate portion of the exam and the content that should be presented in those parts. This ISM Professional series is available for purchase through their website ([www.ISM.ws](http://www.ISM.ws)), however our CPSM Boot Camp attendees will receive the set upon registration. There is no additional fee for these texts as it is covered in the cost of attendance. These texts, when coupled with the training and offered by the CPSM Boot Camp Instructors can be perhaps most beneficial to readers. In CPSM Boot Camp we break down the
books to their most important information in a simplified and comprehensive manner to all attendees, that’s something you will not get when you study and purchase them without attending our Boot Camp.

**ISM study guides**

Each text provided by ISM will also be accompanied by individual study guides for that particular book. These study guides are a useful way to narrow down the information in the text that could be presented in the exams.

These study guides are intended to supplement the information you will learn in your CPSM Boot Camp as they do not go into thorough detail as our instructors do. They are a great overview that can be used for quick references and can even be used incorporated into your workplace for those times when you are unsure of a concept.

**ISM glossary**

The ISM glossary is a particularly useful tool for those who are having difficulty with some of the supply management terms that are introduced. Our CPSM Boot Camp leaders encourage our attendees to add to their glossary and ask questions regarding terms they may not be familiar with.

This glossary is also particularly useful, after your examination, in the workplace. It would be wise for a dedicated supply management professional to build on their glossary so that they can expand their understanding of all concepts in the industry.

**Mind map**

While a mind map may not be on the list of course materials which are offered it is an intangible tool that the CPSM Boot Camp hosts seek to instill in each attendee. With all the studying you will be doing it can be difficult to retrieve and reuse all the information which you will be learning, especially on the day of the exam. Our mind mapping techniques can help teach you the best methods of storing and retrieving all the
necessary information you will gain in regards to the CPSM exam. This will help you score higher on your CPSM exam as you will be able to filter through information stored to obtain the specific material you are looking for to answer a question. Mind mapping a great tool that most attendees seem to enjoy utilizing; Organization of this material can help you plan for success on your exam and can be taken with you into your professional career as well.

**Diagnostic kit**

Diagnostic exams are crucial when preparing for the CPSM certification examination. These tests can help you focus on the material that you have mastered and help you to identify that which you are struggling with. At our CPSM Boot Camp we are dedicated to helping our attendees use diagnostic exams to their benefit, and helping them to focus on the information they are struggling with.

The diagnostic kit for each exam that our attendees will be receiving allows for three tests. The first test is a baseline test that will help you identify your initial level of understanding of the supply management industry. We require the diagnostic exams to be taken prior to the start of the CPSM Boot Camp before you are presented with additional information. The second test of the diagnostic kit allows you to verify the information you already know and identify the information that you are unsure of and need to study again. The third test of the kit is a review which should be taken about 3 days before your actual CPSM exam. This final test will measure your progress and tell you where to focus your final preparation efforts. If there is information that remains an area of concern, you still will have a few days to revisit this information before you will actually have to take your test.

The diagnostic kit is discussed more thoroughly throughout your 3 days in CPSM Boot Camp and will be referred to throughout your attendance.

These materials are yours to keep following the CPSM Boot Camp. We feel that you will be able to benefit from the knowledge you
obtain and the content in these materials throughout the rest of your CPSM certification studying and well into your career as a certified supply manager.

What learning methods will be employed?

Throughout your three days in Boot Camp we will introduce our attendees to several study methods and techniques that will help them study on their own more in-depth. While our 30 day method of studying is known as SRTAP, with more time in our 3 day course we introduce R2TAP.

R2TAP is another acronym that stands for reading and review, testing, analyzing and planning. Also we remind our attendees that the 2 in R2TAP is a great way to remember that the process should be repeated more than once throughout their preparation time for the exam.

The R in R2TAP is used to cover to major components in your preparedness for the exam: reading and reviewing. During this time we encourage our attendees to read supply management information and to review those concepts which they might have forgotten about over the years. In CPSM Boot Camp, we will demonstrate how you can read and review materials to maximize your knowledge and apply that knowledge to the exam.

The T in R2TAP is similar to the T in SRTAP; it stands for testing of skills with diagnostic exams on your own. Our Boot Camp attendees will receive several diagnostic and practice tests with which we use to explain the overview of the exam, and we teach how to answer some of the various questions you will see come examination day.

The A in R2TAP is in place because it is not enough to merely take a diagnostic test, but to analyze it as well. You may notice that you miss certain types of questions, or have problems with a concept. Our CPSM Boot Camp staff will help you to focus on study techniques that will help you overcome these problem areas. Testing your knowledge with these diagnostic
exams will help you gain a firm understanding of where you are in regards to preparedness for the actual exam.

Finally, the P in R2TAP stands for planning. In our CPSM Boot Camp we help our attendees to develop realistic study plans that will ensure their ongoing preparedness success. These study plans can vary per examinee, but we strive to offer adequate timeline assistance that will help each examinee plan for their study time.

While R2TAP and SRTAP are based along the same lines, CPSM Boot Camp attendees are more encouraged to repeat and take their time in studying the material they need to succeed.

Where and when will the CPSM Boot Camp be held this year?

The schedule of CPSM Boot Camp courses can be found at www.cpsmtraining.com. We host the Boot Camp several times a year and various locations.

Each attendee will be required to make their travel and room accommodation for the CPSM Boot Camp, as this is not included in the cost of registration.

If you have not scheduled your CPSM exam yet and would like to attend one of our CPSM Boot Camps it is recommended that you schedule your exam within two weeks of the Boot Camp you are planning to attend. This will allow you to be protected under our company CPSM Boot Camp success guarantee.

CPSM Guarantee

One of the final questions you may be asking yourself is why do I need the CPSM Boot Camp to help me prepare for the exam? The correct question you should be asking yourself is why should you not attend the CPSM Boot Camp? Jack Quinn Solutions, LLC Guarantees that each attendee will pass the CPSM exam when they
attend our program; We are so sure that the information we provide will prepare you for all aspects of the CPSM exam that we guarantee your certification if you take the exam within 14 days of Boot Camp completion.

It is our guarantee that sets us apart from any other study guides you may have, study groups you may participate in, or other CPSM courses you may take. We stand by our program 100% and are willing to stake a claim to your successful certification.

If in the unlikely event that you should not pass the CPSM exam (taken within 14 days of your Boot Camp completion) we will:

- If you fail, we’ll assume the financial risk and pay the re-exam fees for up to 2 re-exams during the CPSM series of exams
- Throughout your journey to achieve the CPSM designation you must pass a series of (3) separate exams.
- Our guarantee will pay for a maximum of (2) re-exams for each series of exams (not for each exam)
- First example, if you do not pass Exam 1, then we will fund the re-exam fees for Exam 1. If you do not pass Exam 1 a second time, then we will fund the re-exam fees for a third attempt. At this point, the individual will have to fund any other re-exams.
- Second example, if you pass Exam 1 then fail exam 2, we will fund the re-exam fees for exam 2. If you pass the re-exam for exam 2, attempt exam 3 and do not pass, then we will fund the re-exam for exam 3. At this point, the individual will have to fund any other re-exams.
- In summary, JQS will fund (2) re-exams for each series of exams for individuals attending the CPSM Boot Camp.

It is rare to find any organization seal their services with a 100% seal of guarantee, so this sets the CPSM Boot Camp a bar above the rest. You know that your certification preparedness is taken seriously when you are guaranteed to see results on your
CPSM exam. For more information about the terms of the guarantee visit www.cpsmtraining.com

**Commitment to Success**

Now you must ask yourself, what do you have to lose by attending? Hopefully, with all the information that we have covered you will see that there is nothing to be lost, but plenty to be gained through your participation in the CPSM Boot Camp!

Becoming professionally successful is not easy, and CPSM certification is a huge step in the right direction to professional success in the future. Commitment to your goals and commitment to your success is key in driving you forward with your certification. Those times when you don’t feel like studying or you don’t want to read, think about what certification can do for you, your career, and your family.

Let us help guide you in your ongoing commitment to success. Together we can raise the bar on supply management professionalism and take your future to new heights. Come join us at one of our CPSM Boot Camps this year, because our goal is to see you succeed!

**Action Steps for Chapter Seven**

1) Learn about the CPSM Boot Camp and the benefits you have to gain from attendance this year.
2) Understand the courses, inclusions, and topics that will be covered in the 2011 CPSM Boot Camp.
3) Familiarize yourself with the materials and learning methods that will be employed throughout the course.
4) Learn about the CPSM guarantee.
5) Find out when and where the next CPSM Boot Camp will be held.
6) Create a commitment to your success and sign up for one of the CPSM Boot Camps in 2011!
Farewell Note

While I would hope that this is not a farewell note to those of you who have found this information useful, and rather a welcome note. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the start of a new future in your professional career in the supply management industry.

Taking the first step toward CPSM certification can take some time and effort, as we all have busy lives. However, you should be commended for merely seeking to better your professional opportunities for the future. You are taking the first step toward a bigger goal in life, and I wish to congratulate you.

I sincerely stand behind our CPSM Boot Camp, and hope that you will take the time to at least learn more information about the course from our website (http://www.cpsmtraining.com/) or through one of our dedicated team members at 1-800-961-6762. We are here to assist you and seek to help you along your journey to certification.

As president of Jack Quinn Solutions, LLC I stand by our services and whole-heartedly believe that we can help you build on your pre-existing supply management knowledge and prepare you for a long career as a supply management professional. In fact I not only stand by our services, but I will guarantee them!

Again, congratulations on your continued learning endeavors and I hope to be shaking your hand at the next CPSM Boot Camp, where together we can explore all of the information the supply management industry has to offer!

Sincerely,

Dr. Randall M. Mauldin
USMC (ret), CPSM®, PMP®