



12 Tips for Passing the CBAP or CCBA Exam...the Second Time

If you are reading this, it may mean you did not pass your CBAP or CCBA exam. We are sorry to hear you didn't pass. They are difficult exams, and most people who take it tell us it was hard. I'm sure it is discouraging, given how much time most people put into studying. We feel awful when we hear of anyone who failed the exam the first time. Hopefully you will consider re-sitting for the exam and trying again. If you choose to re-take the exam, here are some suggestions:

1. Focus on the Knowledge Areas that the IIBA listed as needing improvement. Re-read those sections in the BABOK completely. If you [subscribe to our Online Study Exam](#), spend the majority of your drill time on those KAs.
2. Make sure to take several simulations before your next exam, and work at getting 80-90% on the Knowledge Areas needing improvement. Part of the challenge of the CBAP exam is interpreting complex, situational questions and applying your knowledge of the BABOK to solve the scenario-based questions.
3. Take "speed tests." As you take practice exams, be sure to time yourself. A challenge for everyone is the short time allotment in the exam, and it helps to know how fast you answer questions. The actual CBAP exam must be completed in 210 minutes, and with 150 questions, you only have 1.4 minutes per question. Aim for answering

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- practice questions online or in our Study Guide in one minute or less to be prepared for the real exam.
4. Make sure you answer questions according to how the BABOK organizes business analysis. If a question seems to differ from real life, don't answer the question according to your experience. Instead, answer according to how the BABOK is written. The questions are almost entirely based on the BABOK, so you need to know it thoroughly and to answer questions the "BABOK way."
 5. If you are not a native English speaker, were there any words or phrases not understandable or difficult to comprehend? The language we use in our Online Study Exam is similar to the real exam. If any wording in our practice questions is difficult, we recommend you translate them using an online translation service.
 6. Make up "memory sheets" for yourself for key areas of the BABOK. Practice writing it out several times before the exam. For instance, listing tasks with each Knowledge Area, key inputs and outputs to the tasks, list of elements, such as requirements attributes or aspects of requirements quality. If you haven't purchased our [CBAP Study Guide](#), or related products, please consider doing so. They will help you with memory aids and areas to focus on. You might also consider taking a [CBAP Prep class](#) that we offer virtually or at sites across the US.
 7. When you re-sit the exam, make sure you take your time. If you finished the first exam in 2-2.5 hours or less, you probably went too fast. It takes time for true understanding of the questions and to think about the right answer.
 8. Along the same lines, did you answer all or most questions the first time and not leave any blank or not flag any? If so, then you answered too quickly. The advice we give in our CBAP Guide is to make one pass through the exam and only answer questions on which you are confident of the right answers. On your second pass through the questions, the difficult questions will be easier, and you can still some blank or flag them. Take a third pass through the questions if need be, and use your 3.5 hours of available time.
 9. Did you answer any questions by looking at the answers first and then the question? We do not recommend this at all because you need to truly understand the question first before looking at any answers. When you read the answers first, you might grab onto one of the answers and not be able to let it go based on your own knowledge, experience, or it simply sounds flashy or cool so it must be the answer regardless of the question.
 10. If your learning style is more suited to a class rather than self-study, consider attending our [CBAP Preparation class](#). We have both virtual and in-person sessions throughout the year.
 11. See our web site for additional free [CBAP and CCBA preparation resources](#) that can help you prepare and pass.
 12. Re-take the exam as soon as possible. For several reasons, you are in the best position to pass it if you do it now vs. postponing it.

We hope these tips help you plan your re-take. We offer best wishes on passing it the second time. Let us know how it goes if you re-take the exam and [give us any feedback](#) about our tips.

About Watermark Learning

Since 1992 Watermark Learning has provided training and coaching in business analysis, project management, agile, business process management, and influencing skills that turns the complexity of industry standards into practical application. Our courses are laser-focused to enhance performance that lead to enduring results in organizations. With multiple learning modes and interactive classes, students are engaged to learn and motivated to perform. Our coaching, consulting, and certification preparation services provide focused guidance for success.

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