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V1.1.0

Secrets to Success PMP® Certification Roadmap

Our aim in developing this guide was to distill the insights gleaned from training over 13,000 students since 2010. At AGILEST®, while we aspire to be your chosen provider for PMP® Certification training, we understand that may not always be possible. This guide is intended to support your journey to certification, regardless of where you choose to train.

To ensure you benefit from our collected wisdom, we've highlighted a couple of proprietary tools unique to AGILEST®'s training program that include:

- Head-Start Advantage™ (Exclusive to AGILEST® students)
- PMP CertifyIQ™ (Exclusive to AGILEST® students)

Recognizing that not everyone will train with us, we've also provided effective alternatives that are widely accessible. Our goal is to equip

you with the knowledge and tools necessary, whether you train with us or elsewhere.

AGILEST® is a company that is focused on Cultivating the Talents of Individuals to Empower Organizational Success.

Head-Start Advantage™

Pre-class training to ensure that you get the most from the PMP certification training.

CertifyIQ™

A system that tests your readiness for the PMP® Certification exam, and adaptively provides multimedia training to get you certification test ready faster.

The PMI® developed PMP® test simulation

No other simulation is closer to the real exam than this one.

Pass Guarantee

We know our system works for everyone who uses it, and we guarantee that it will for you.

AGILEST® Tampa Bay community platform

You will receive lifetime access.

PMP® Certification Training

Led by an industry expert with extensive experience in American corporations and government agencies.

The PMI Authorized PMP® Exam Manual

Learn and get ready for the PMP® Exam with the right tools.

AGILEST® University

Access that includes post class resources including PDUs for life.

35 Contact Hours

This is required by PMP® to attend the PMP® Certification exam.

Learn how **you** can be another **Certification Success** by visiting the AGILEST® [PMP Certification page](#) on our website.

Welcome to PMP® Certification Success Secrets!

I am J Charles, the main author of this guide. This roadmap equips you with secrets and strategies necessary for a successful journey through the PMP® certification process. It's designed to boost your confidence and enhance your understanding of project management, ensuring you're well-prepared whether you're just beginning or nearing your exam date.

Proven Success

The expert instructors at AGILEST® have provided certification training to over 13,000 professionals over the course of 15 years and in that time, we have learned what it takes for our students to successfully prepare for and pass rigorous certification exams and we have developed tools to support that success.

Double Up with the Alternatives

But we know that not everyone will be able to take advantage of the complete success system developed by AGILEST® so additionally for every one of our tools developed internally, we are presenting you with effective alternatives. Also, even if you have access to the AGILEST® tools and systems, there is no reason that you cannot leverage both.

Tailoring Practices to Enhance Organizational Efficiency

Understanding PMI's flexible methodology that emphasizes tailoring to align with what is needed is crucial, especially if it differs from your current practices. Adhering to industry standards might seem restrictive, but it actually provides structure and proven efficiencies that benefit the organizations that adhere to them.

The Dynamic Nature of PMI's PMP Curriculum Over Two Decades

PMI's development of the PMP curriculum over many years highlights its evolution and responsiveness to changing project needs and environments. For example, the approach to project management has significantly shifted over the past two decades, incorporating alignment to the needed delivery approaches being predictive, hybrid, or adaptive which are integral to the PMI framework. This is important because it illustrates that PMI recognizes the value of iterative development, contrary to the common misconceptions within parts of the Agile community.

Adaptable to what is needed

It's essential to recognize that while Agile methods are highly effective for software development, they may not be suitable for all project types, such as construction. This is because construction projects benefit from centuries of accumulated knowledge, making their processes very predictable and allowing for extremely accurate project estimations.

However, software development by orders of magnitude is less well codified, requiring flexibility that Agile methods provide. It's important to understand that each project management methodology, be it Agile, Waterfall, Scrum, or Kanban, has its place and suitability depending on the specific project or development work being managed.

Methodology Matters

Although having expressed that, the single biggest factor in the failure of project failure that can be attributed to methodology, at its root, is a result of the methodology not actually being followed. And this is true of any methodology, even though some methods are a much better fit for certain applications than others, but it is important to understand this fact, when followed properly, they all work.

Resistance to Advocacy

A common pitfall in project management isn't the methodology itself but a lack of adherence to the chosen method. In my over two decades of experience, I've seen how novice engineers sometimes resist structured project management, perceiving it as bureaucratic overhead, whereas seasoned engineers often advocate for it, recognizing that such discipline minimizes risks and enhances delivery success.

Leveraging PMI's Framework for Optimal Project Outcomes

As you delve deeper into this guide, you'll learn to identify the most effective methodologies for different project types, guided by PMI's comprehensive framework. This insight won't just prepare you for the

PMP® exam; it will also refine your skills, making you a more adaptable and effective project manager ready to tackle challenges across any industry.

Secret #1. Preparing before you get to the PMP® Certification Training Bootcamp

Preparing for Your Training

Before you step into the classroom, it's crucial to build a solid foundation in the PMP® principles to enhance your learning experience. Even if you are seasoned in project management, the PMI methodology may differ significantly from your current practices, focusing on flexibility and specificity.

We highly recommend beginning with AGILEST®'s **HeadStart Advantage™**. This pre-training module introduces you to the essential frameworks and concepts of project management, ensuring you are well-prepared before diving into the complexities of the full bootcamp. However, if you're unable to join the HeadStart Advantage™, independently studying the PMBOK® Guide offers a comprehensive alternative. This approach allows you to develop robust foundational knowledge at your own pace.

Navigating Through PMI's Resources

It's important to understand that the PMBOK® Guide is an excellent resource, continuously refined to reflect the evolving practices of project management. Currently, in its 7th edition, the PMBOK® outlines a broad application of standards across various industries and project sizes, regardless of the management approach—be it predictive, hybrid, or adaptive.

When you access the PMBOK®, begin with reviewing the table of contents to understand the organizational framework, which will aid in knowledge retention. This is not a quick read; instead, take the time to thoroughly digest each topic, allowing the fundamental principles to resonate. The dual table of contents in the PMBOK® offers perspectives on the material, enhancing your understanding from multiple angles.

In-depth Study of Key PMBOK® Sections

Pay close attention to the section "1.1 Purpose of the Standard for Project Management," which serves as a cornerstone for understanding how project management enables intended outcomes across various environments. This section also delves into the integration of project management and product management, highlighting governance and operational functions within an organization.

Your Path Forward

By preparing effectively before your PMP® bootcamp, you equip yourself to fully engage during the training, ask insightful questions,

and derive maximum benefit from the in-depth discussions and expert insights provided. This proactive approach not only prepares you for the PMP exam but also enriches your professional capabilities in managing diverse and dynamic projects.

Secret #2. Create flash cards

As you progress in your PMP® study, incorporating flashcards can significantly enhance your retention of key terms and concepts. Flashcards offer a swift and convenient method to solidify your knowledge, especially during those brief moments throughout your day. Whether you're waiting in line at a coffee shop or any other daily pause, these portable study aids turn downtime into productive learning opportunities.

Here's how to effectively integrate flashcards into your study routine:

Consistent Vocabulary

Always use the precise terminology used by PMI on one side of the flashcard. This consistency is crucial as the PMP® exam will use these specific terms, and familiarizing yourself with them can greatly improve your test performance.

Personalized Definitions

On the reverse side of each flashcard, write the definition in your own words. This practice not only helps reinforce your understanding but also ensures you are actively engaging with the material. For

instance, for the term "Outcome," you might note: "An outcome is the result or effect of a process or project, emphasizing the benefits and value delivered, beyond just outputs and artifacts."

Selective Studying

As you become more familiar with certain terms, remove those flashcards from your daily review stack. This method helps you concentrate on areas that need more attention, making your study sessions more efficient.

Additionally, if you opt for AGILEST® training, flashcards are provided as part of the course materials, saving you time and ensuring you have professionally prepared resources at your fingertips. However, creating your own flashcards can still be beneficial, as it encourages deeper engagement with the content and ensures that you process the information thoroughly.

By integrating these strategies, you'll be able to maximize your learning potential and move towards your PMP® certification with confidence.

There is one more technique that is more effectively conveyed with video. Click [Here](#) to view the video.

Secret #3, the PMI "Ideal World" mindset

When preparing for the PMP® exam, it's beneficial to adopt an "ideal world" mindset. This approach means considering how project

management processes would operate under optimal conditions, aligning with best practices as outlined by PMI, rather than focusing on the specific practices of your current organization.

Overcoming Resistance to Change in Project Management

Throughout my career, I've helped numerous companies transition to industry-standard practices. A common challenge encountered is the initial resistance to the phrase, "that's not how we do things here." It's essential to recognize that while your company's methods have developed over time, they may not have been solely focused on refining projects and product delivery processes.

A singular focus

PMI, however, has dedicated over three decades to enhancing the delivery of value through standardized project management practices. The reason you pursue a PMP® certification is to learn from an organization that has continually worked to improve these methodologies, which have been proven to deliver more value for the investment made in development.

The Key to Mastering the PMP® Exam

As you engage with the PMBOK® and prepare for your exam, keep an open mind. Understand that the exam will test you on these standardized methodologies, not necessarily the practices currently in place at your company. Embracing what you learn through PMP® training can provide significant benefits, not just to you but also to your organization, by aligning your practices with those that have been shown to deliver superior results.

Secret #4. Take time to understand the diagrams in the PMBOK®

As you delve into the PMBOK®, it's crucial to recognize that the diagrams provided are far more than mere visual aids; they are integral to grasping the underlying project management concepts effectively. These diagrams encapsulate complex information in a visual format that simplifies comprehension and enhances memory retention.

When studying these diagrams, take a systematic approach:

Examine Each Diagram Carefully

Start by closely observing each diagram to understand what project management elements represent and how these elements interact. Notice the flow, the connections, and the overarching structure that the diagram is communicating.

Summarize in Your Own Words

After you have a good grasp of what each diagram illustrates, try to summarize the information in your own words. This exercise will reinforce what the diagrams represent and deepen your understanding. Writing summaries helps in translating visual data into verbal knowledge, which can be particularly beneficial for retaining complex concepts.

Cross-Reference with Textual Content

Align your understanding of the diagrams with the related textual content in the PMBOK®. This will ensure that your interpretations are accurate and that you grasp the full context of the information being presented.

Create Your Own Versions

If you find it helpful, redraw the diagrams or tweak them to include your notes and insights. This active engagement with the material can further solidify your understanding and make the learning process more interactive.

By thoroughly analyzing and summarizing the diagrams in the PMBOK®, you equip yourself with a clearer and more structured understanding of project management processes. This method not only aids in your exam preparation but also enhances your ability to apply these concepts practically in your project management career.

Secret #5. Learn and know the 12 principles

Mastering the 12 principles outlined in the PMBOK® is essential for effective project management. These principles aren't just theoretical concepts; they are practical guidelines that shape your approach and behavior as a project manager, ensuring that your projects not only meet but exceed expectations through strategic and thoughtful management.

- 1. Be a Diligent, Respectful, and Caring Steward:** Uphold integrity and accountability, manage resources wisely, and act with an awareness of your impact on people, the environment, and society.
- 2. Create a Collaborative Project Team Environment:** Foster an inclusive atmosphere that encourages open communication and teamwork. This environment will be the bedrock of your project's success.
- 3. Effectively Engage with Stakeholders:** Maintain continuous communication with all stakeholders to ensure their needs are met and their concerns are addressed, which will help in steering the project direction effectively.
- 4. Focus on Value:** Every decision and action in project management should be aimed at maximizing value, ensuring that the project delivers the greatest benefits to its stakeholders.
- 5. Recognize, Evaluate, and Respond to System Interactions:** Be aware of how different elements of the project interact with each other and the broader system. This holistic understanding helps in anticipating issues and leveraging opportunities.
- 6. Demonstrate Leadership Behaviors:** Lead by example and guide your team through challenges with vision and integrity. Leadership is pivotal in navigating the project through its ups and downs.
- 7. Tailor Based on Context:** Adapt your project management approach to fit the specific needs and constraints of the project, recognizing that there is no one-size-fits-all solution.
- 8. Build Quality into Processes and Deliverables:** Quality should be a priority from the outset, integrated into every process and

output. This proactive approach prevents costly revisions and errors.

- 9. Navigate Complexity:** Develop strategies to manage and simplify complex project elements and scenarios, ensuring clarity and direction remain clear to all team members.
- 10. Optimize Risk Responses:** Identify potential risks early and develop effective mitigation strategies that keep the project on track and within scope.
- 11. Embrace Adaptability and Resiliency:** Be prepared to make adjustments in response to new information and challenges. This flexibility can be crucial to the success of your project.
- 12. Enable Change to Achieve the Envisioned Future State:** Be a change agent, ready to drive and manage changes that align with long-term goals and project visions.

Project management transcends the mechanical execution of tasks; it involves a deep understanding of these principles to guide decision-making and strategy. Knowing why you are doing something is as crucial as knowing what to do, especially when the PMBOK® does not prescribe a specific method. This foundational knowledge not only enhances your capability to implement projects effectively but also equips you to handle unique challenges creatively and effectively.

Secret #6. If possible, attend the PMP class in-person

The Benefits of In-Person PMP® Classes

Attending your PMP® class in person, if feasible, is highly advisable. The value of the PMP certification is well-documented, and statistics show a significantly higher exam pass rate and satisfaction level among those who participate in face-to-face training compared to remote learners. In-person attendees not only report greater satisfaction but also recommend this mode of learning to others, even if it involves travel.

Accelerating Success with Face-to-Face Learning

The benefits extend beyond personal satisfaction; engaging directly in a classroom setting can expedite your learning process. Typically, individuals attending in-person complete their exam preparation faster than those who opt for remote learning. This efficiency in preparation is crucial, considering the substantial pay differential—approximately 25%—between project managers who are PMP® certified and those who are not. Furthermore, possessing a PMP® certification is often a prerequisite for employment in many companies, especially in roles involving government contracts.

AGILEST®'s Flexible PMP® Training Options

AGILEST® accommodates various schedules and needs by offering flexible class formats, including weekday bootcamps, weekend sessions spread over two consecutive weekends, and hybrid options. For instance, if unforeseen circumstances prevent you from attending in person for a day, you can participate remotely and return to the classroom when able. Additionally, AGILEST® provides free access to remote retakes of any class sessions, ensuring that you can revisit the material as needed to solidify your understanding and preparation.

This comprehensive support system is designed to maximize your learning experience and success in obtaining your PMP® certification.

Secret #7. Sharpen your skills with an adaptive learning system

Refining Skills Post-Bootcamp with AGILEST®

Upon completing the AGILEST® PMP® Certification Training Bootcamp, it's crucial to keep refining your project management skills. **CertifyIQ™** our proprietary test simulation and integrated training reinforcement system is designed to cater to your unique learning needs. This advanced tool not only identifies areas that require more focus but also reinforces your knowledge through customized exercises. By integrating both testing and teaching methodologies, our system ensures that you absorb and retain the essential concepts more effectively. This tailored approach not only deepens your understanding but also streamlines your study process, significantly enhancing your efficiency and readiness for the PMP exam.

Alternative Study Methods with the PMBOK® Guide

For those who may not have access to AGILEST®'s specialized learning tools, revisiting the PMBOK® Guide remains a viable alternative. Systematically reviewing and marking sections that you are confident about helps consolidate your knowledge and identify

areas that might need more attention. This method allows you to focus on weaker areas, ensuring a comprehensive preparation strategy for your PMP certification.

Secret #8. Leverage the PMI® developed PMP® exam simulation

Testing Readiness with PMI's PMP® Exam Simulation

Once you've sharpened your project management skills using AGILEST®'s bespoke training tools, it's time to assess your exam readiness with the PMI-developed PMP® exam simulation, which is an integral part of your training package. This simulation replicates the actual PMP® exam environment, offering you a realistic practice experience that evaluates your preparation level comprehensively.

Building Test-Taking Muscle with High-Fidelity Simulation

Engaging with this high-fidelity simulation does more than just test your knowledge; it pinpoints areas where you might need additional focus, allowing you to fine-tune your study efforts effectively.

Successfully navigating through this simulation suggests you are ready to schedule and pass the real PMP® exam. The experience not only bolsters your confidence but also strengthens your exam-taking capabilities—what I like to call "building your test-taking muscle."

This rigorous practice under real exam conditions prepares you to handle the pressures of the actual test, ensuring that you can perform optimally when it matters most.

Secret #9. Test Mapping Technique

So, this one is a little “gray hat”, but it is permitted.

You are obviously not permitted to take notes into the exam, but nothing stops you from recreating test taking notes from memory leveraging AGILEST®'s unique test mapping technique. This method is not only allowed but can significantly enhance your recall and confidence during the exam.

Here's how it works

While you cannot bring pre-written notes into the exam, AGILEST®'s test mapping technique enables you to recreate a strategic outline from memory once you're inside the test center. Using the materials provided at the center, you'll draft a 'test map'—essentially a quick-reference guide that organizes key concepts and formulas. This preparation is done entirely from memory, just moments before the exam begins.

This technique capitalizes on the extensive preparation you've undergone through our training simulations. By organizing your knowledge into a coherent structure on paper, you effectively reinforce your memory and enhance your ability to quickly access critical information during the test. This not only boosts your confidence but also provides a tactical advantage, allowing you to navigate the exam more effectively and improve your overall performance.

Remember, while the test mapping technique might seem like a clever workaround, it's fully within the rules and leverages your hard-earned knowledge in a practical, exam-friendly format. This approach doesn't just prepare you to pass the exam; it equips you with a powerful tool to ensure your success, underlining your readiness to achieve your PMP® certification.

This secret is different from the others and is the only secret that we can only reveal in-person.

Secret #10. Get focused rest before taking the exam

For your final preparations before the PMP® exam, I strongly recommend taking the PMP® Certification Bootcamp training in person, if feasible. Additionally, consider booking a hotel room near the test center the night before your exam, especially if you don't live alone or find it difficult to avoid distractions at home.

Choosing to stay in a hotel close to the test center—ideally next door or across the street—can significantly reduce pre-exam stress, such as traffic concerns, and helps ensure you get a good night's sleep without any domestic interruptions. This setting can provide a calm environment where you can mentally prepare, review your notes, and relax.

Here's a methodical approach to ensure you're optimally prepared:

Prepare Your Test Map

The night before your exam, go through the process of creating your test map from memory. This exercise solidifies your recall and ensures you're primed to reproduce this information at the test center.

Ensure Restful Sleep

After preparing your test map, aim to get to bed early. A restful night's sleep is crucial for cognitive function and overall performance.

Morning Preparation

On the morning of your exam, recreate the test map once more to reinforce the material freshly in your mind.

Maintain Routine

Have breakfast as you normally would to keep your day's start as routine as possible, which helps in reducing any additional stress.

Walk to the Test Center

If possible, choose a hotel close enough to allow for a short walk to the test center, letting you approach the exam with a clear mind, confident that you've done everything possible to prepare.

By following this structured approach, you not only maximize your readiness for the exam but also approach it in a calm, collected manner that enhances your likelihood of success.

**You have earned it, after you
pass the exam - Celebrate!**