

# IABC Heritage Region June 9, 2021 GCCC Certification Webinar – Q&A

Answers provided by Deborah Hileman, SCMP, past chair, GCCC

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## Preparation

### **Please talk about how to prep for the certification exam.**

The application is the first step in demonstrating the knowledge and experience required to successfully apply for and take the exam. The Job Task Analysis, contained in the Candidate Handbook, contains specific domains to focus on. There are sample questions available in the Candidate Handbook, which is available on the GCCC webpage. There is a study resources page within this website.

### **How can we find the classes that give credits toward certification?**

In the Candidate Handbook training is defined as: Training refers to skill-based courses offered by businesses, nonprofits, industry associations, colleges, universities, trade schools, or vocational schools. Training must have occurred within the two years prior to an application for certification. If education is recent, then it may qualify as both education and training.

### **How much time should I expect to spend preparing for the exam? Are study materials available?**

That depends on any number of variables, including the breadth of your communications experience, years in the field, and others. For example, if your specialty is internal communications, you may need to spend some time studying media relations. The Job Task Analysis, contained in the Candidate Handbook, contains specific domains to focus on. There is a study resources page within this website.

### **Can you clarify the experience requirement.....do your past job titles need "Communications" or can it be the content of the job? For example, worked in a COO role but was responsible for Business Communications.....does that count as experience?**

The GCCC will review the content of the jobs you have held and the specific duties you performed. Be sure to detail these responsibilities in the application. See the [Candidate Handbook](#) for details.

## Resources

### **What are the best resources for the CMP exam? For example, the PMP certification has the PMBOK.**

The [Job Task Analysis](#), contained in the Candidate Handbook, contains specific domains to focus on. There is a [study resources page](#) within this website.

I am interested in the CMP certification but am running into problems figuring out how and what to study. I see the "Job Task Analysis" in the GCC handbook but it is extremely broad. I even purchased a year long pass to IABC academy but there is only a four class

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training path labeled "CMP refresher". **Can you point to more resources?** The sample questions in the handbook are rather framework specific (i.e. seven principles of

communication). So it is critical that we learn from the source that claims these seven principles. Some very good high-quality communications training may opt for a different framework (i.e. five key points of communication), and that training would not help with the CMP exam.

Agree. I'm **searching for a course or specific materials** that would prepare me for the exam.

You have encouraged us to find outside resources to study for this test. I just googled "principles of communication" and found reputable sources claiming there are 4, 5, 7, and 9 principles of communication. I bring this up because your fourth CMP sample question *could* apply to this. Even a well-meaning and studious person could get this question wrong without knowing your framework source. I am wondering if your low 66% CMP pass rate may be because of this lack of detail in the handbook or online.

Those who have failed the test typically fell short in one or two domains in which they were inexperienced.

There is presently no detailed study guide to prepare for the test. Part of this is by design due to the requirements of the accreditation body. Being certified is about much more than the ability to pass a multiple-choice test. The test measures knowledge, most of which is gained through your on-the-job experience in the profession. I encourage you to review the [job task analysis](#) and determine those areas in which you may have the least knowledge or practical experience. Focus on these in your preparation. Check out the [practice test](#) on the GCCC website.

Start with the Study Resources suggestions on the [GCCC website](#). Consider finding others in your chapter who are interested in certification and form a study group, either in-person or online.

### Testing

**What is the average duration of this process? If you fail a portion, do you only repeat that portion?**

The exam result is reported as "pass" or "fail," not with a percentage or numerical grade. Candidates who fail the exam will receive a report showing how they performed in each category to help them prepare to attempt the exam again. Candidates who fail the exam are eligible to retake it for an exam registration fee of US\$100. Candidates

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who fail a second attempt must wait a minimum of six months before a third and final attempt. Candidates who fail may ask to have the result checked (this is called manual verification). This request must be received, along with required fees within 60 days of receipt of exam results.

### **Is the exam scored by sections & you must pass each section? Or is it scored on the total exam with 1 score?**

The exam is scored in its entirety, with a “pass” or “fail” score, and not a numerical grade.

### **Will there be virtual exams in 2021?**

The GCCC is working through the requirements to offer the exam online. The ANSI accrediting body requires a live proctor for the exam, so we are working on the updates to policies and procedures required to offer a live, remote proctor for exam takers. Our goal is to have this available by 4Q 2021.

### **If you don't pass, can you retake the exam? Do you have to wait?**

The exam result is reported as “pass” or “fail,” not with a percentage or numerical grade. Candidates who fail the exam will receive a report showing how they performed in each category to help them prepare to attempt the exam again. Candidates who fail the exam are eligible to retake it for an exam registration fee of US\$100. Candidates who fail a second attempt must wait a minimum of six months before a third and final attempt. Candidates who fail may ask to have the result checked (this is called manual verification). This request must be received, along with required fees within 60 days of receipt of exam results.

### **How long until you find out if you passed the exam - in person and online exam?**

Typically you will receive your exam results within 7 business days.

### **What areas/questions on the SCMP tripped up the most test takers of that exam?**

I would suggest asking [Dr. Sarah Fowdy](#), the GCCC program director, this question.

### **Do you think there is value in obtaining the CMP prior to SCMP?**

If you have 11 or more years of total communications experience, you may qualify for either one. If you have less than 11 years' experience, you may only qualify for the CMP. It is up to you to determine the best route. For me, I applied for the CMP first because at the time, SCMP was not yet available. It was worth it to me to earn the CMP first, because passing the test validated my knowledge and experience. The benefits of certification are, in my opinion, even more valuable for the CMP since it is available for those with less experience.