



**Congratulations!**  
Students Certified in July...

- Alfred Martin



# LTS Lowdown

**August 2011**

## Study and Test-Taking Tips

*We've got your back on the road to certification!*

### Online Study Tools...

There are a number of great websites offering free study aids such as flashcards, quizzes and games. Here's a few...

#### Pro Profs:

<http://www.proprofs.com/flashcards/>  
With over 1,000,000 flashcards and 100,000 quizzes, you'll find something to suit your needs!

#### Study Stack:

<http://www.studystack.com/>  
Create flashcards and turn them into a variety of games and quizzes.

#### Pocket Mod:

<http://pocketmod.com/>  
Tool for creating your own pocket guides on any topic you wish.

#### Drop Mind:

<http://web.dropmind.com/>  
Comprehensive mind-mapping tools, integration with Google Docs, plus options for collaboration, chat, and publishing.

#### Memorize:

<http://www.memorize.com/>  
Create your own study pages and share them with others.

Most preparation for taking an exam comes down to common sense, but there are some tricks and tips that can help you along in the process. I've rounded up all the useful advice I could find and laid it out for you here!

One of the first steps you can take as a student is to know and understand your learning style. Visual learners prefer to use their eyes to perceive information, be it a chart, diagram, or demonstration. Visual learners also tend to watch an activity a few times through before they feel comfortable trying it out themselves. The best tools for these kinds of learners are demonstrations and simulations that involve sight. Take advantage of flash and note cards, and highlight key points in your textbook. When a lecture is coming up, preview the material beforehand and make detailed notes for better absorption.

Auditory learners do best when utilizing the spoken word, and generally prefer lectures as a way to obtain information. These kinds of learners also enjoy reading when they can speak the words aloud or hear them in their head. Rhymes, acronyms, and mnemonics can be used to improve recall of key pieces of information. Other good options for auditory learners are podcasts, study groups, and recorded lectures/study aids.



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Lastly, there are the tactile/kinesthetic students who learn best through touch, movement and manipulation. Often they would rather jump right in and try something out for themselves, rather than just watching. It may be difficult for tactile learners to sit through long lectures. Instead, it is more productive to focus on instructional methods that physically involve you- hands-on labs, tutorials, and simulations. For every lesson you read in your book or hear in lecture, try to find a physical, tangible way to practice it.

Taking into account your learning style, customize a study plan that works best with your schedule and preferences. Decide ahead of time when, where, and how to study, and choose a time of day when you are at your mental peak. Each person is different in what works for them- if you think best at 3am, do your studying then! A quiet, comfortable environment with minimal distractions is always ideal. Multiple short sessions are better than marathon sessions for material retention- figure out what your saturation point is, and give yourself a break! If you don't have long, uninterrupted periods available for studying, fit it in when you can. Listen to recorded study materials while driving, or review your note cards while waiting in line.

While studying, keep this useful "GRASP" acronym in mind:

- (G)et it the first time
- (R)emember to remember
- (A)ssociate new information with something you already know
- (S)tudy the same information different ways
- (P)ractice remembering

As you progress in your studying to a point where the end is in sight, get together with your instructor and come up with an action plan for the last week leading up to your exam. A specific deadline can help keep you on track towards your goal. In addition to studying the test *content*, you should devote a little time to learning the test *format* as well. How many questions are there, what is the passing score, and how much time is allotted? Check the vendor's description page for this information, as well as a list of specific test objectives and how topics are weighted. Make sure you have experience practicing in the same format the test will be in.

Once the big day arrives, there are several tricks you can use to have the best chance at success. Skip the late-night cram session in favor of a good-night's rest; you are unlikely to memorize anything you don't already know at this point. Eat a healthy breakfast, and if you're a coffee drinker, have a nice big cup! Arrive at your test center early to avoid any potentially stressful delays. In the test room, use your scratch pad to jot down any formulas or notes you may not remember during the exam. Then take a deep breath, and dive in!

Read each question with care, and ask yourself, *what is the question asking me to do?* Mentally answer each question before reading the answer options to keep yourself from being sidetracked from the knowledge you already have. Then, read all the answers before making your final selection. Stick to the subject being tested- if multiple choices list options you don't recognize at all, they may be decoys. Pay special attention to wording such as "always," "never," and "sometimes," as well as double negatives- they can dramatically affect your answer choice. If two options are extremely alike except for one word or minor difference, it is very possible that one of them is correct.

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Another important consideration on test day is time management. Before you begin, divide the total numbers of minutes allotted by the number of exam questions to calculate how much time you have for each answer. Glance at the clock once in a while to see how you are doing, and if there's extra time make sure you are not rushing. If you are behind schedule, don't panic! Focus on answering the questions you know, and if you've read something more than twice with no immediate answer coming to mind, skip it and return to it later. If you have a tentative answer but want to return to a question for more consideration, make your initial selection, then mark it for review and move on. The trick is to keep moving forward- if a question is bogging you down, skip it and return to it at the end. It is more important to give your best effort overall than to fixate on one specific exam component.

Hopefully these strategies will help lead you up to the satisfying moment of receiving a passing score and achieving your certification. But if not, don't be discouraged- it happens to the best of us! Consider your experience a valuable opportunity for learning and improvement the next time around. Before leaving the test center, grab a notepad and write down all the topics you struggled with while it's still fresh in your mind. Short-term memory is fleeting, so don't waste any time on this! Use these notes as a study aid for the next time around. Your hard work will pay off, and when it does, don't forget to celebrate!



***\*Reminder! \$100 bucks, greenbacks, dollars to anyone who refers a new student\****

**-Michelle K. Lange**



## Thanks from the LTS Team!

### **Jeff Blomquist**

*Director of Admissions*

Jeff@oregoncomputertraining.com

### **Nathan Keith**

*Director*

NathanK@oregoncomputertraining.com

### **Mary O'Neill**

*MOS Instructor*

MaryIris@comcast.net

### **Greg Faust**

*Director*

GregF@oregoncomputertraining.com

### **Mike Videll**

*Instructor*

MichaelV@oregoncomputertraining.com

### **Michelle K. Lange**

*Administrative Assistant*

MichelleL@oregoncomputertraining.com