

Foolproof Plan for Passing the CBAP[®] Exam

Presented to:

IIBA Minneapolis-St. Paul PDD

April 28, 2010

Richard Larson, CBAP, PMP

Watermark Learning at a Glance

- Training organization established in 1992
- Offering a broad range of skill development programs:
 - Project Management Training
 - Business Analysis Training
 - “Influencing Skills” Training
 - Speaking and Publications
- Private and Public Classes
- Numerous clients in many industries
- Industry Partnerships
 - An “original” PMI® Global Registered Education Provider
 - A Charter IIBA® Endorsed Education Provider
 - Offering BA and PM Masters Certificate programs through Auburn University



Session Objectives

When finished with this session, you will learn:

- List a **7-step plan** to become CBAP® certified, and be ready to apply it to your own plan to become certified.
- Describe how to **overcome** the daunting **application process** and have your application be accepted by IIBA®.
- Put the **BABOK® into perspective** for how it will help with certification preparation.

Session Overview

■ Panel Discussions

- Jennifer Battan, CBAP
- Bob Prentiss, CBAP
- David Stevens, CBAP

■ Plan Overview

■ Plan Details: Seven Steps to Getting your CBAP®

Step 1 - Obtain and Skim the BABOK®

Step 2 - Apply for the Exam

Step 3 - Read the Entire BABOK®

Step 4 - Absorb the BABOK®

Step 5 - Take Practice Exam Questions

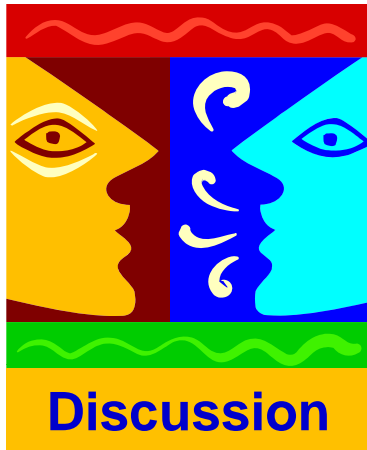
Step 6 - Do Final Preparation

Step 7 - Take and Pass the Exam

What is the CBAP®?

- **Certified Business Analysis Professional**
- **Granted** by the **IIBA®** (International Institute of Business Analysis)
- **Requirements Highlights**
 - 7500+ Hours of BA Experience
 - 900+ hours of experience in 4+ Knowledge Areas
 - 21 Hours of Professional Development Training
 - 2 References
 - Passing a rigorous 3.5-Hour, 150-Question Exam

Panel Discussion



Entire Panel

Why did you

Obtain your

CBAP®?

Foolproof Plan



- “Plans are useless, but planning is indispensable.”

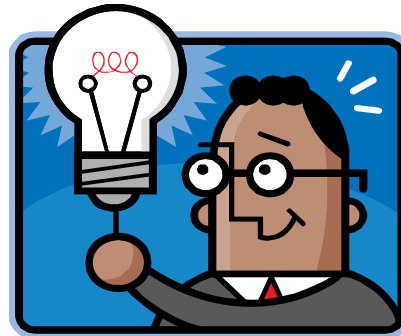
Dwight Eisenhower

- “A plan is only as good as its execution.”

Unknown

Foolproof Plan

- Foolproof: only if you follow it
- Our Advice:
 - **Listen** to our thoughts
 - **Think** about our “foolproof” plan
 - **Create** your own.



Foolproof Plan

- Take your Learning Style into Account
- Basic Styles¹ (details next page):
 - **Blue** - Let me Study!
 - **Red** - Get to the Point!
 - **Yellow** - Get me Involved!
 - **Green** - Let me Review!

¹ Andrew Lothian, Insights, Copyright 2000
www.insightsaustin.com or
www.insightsworld.com

Insights Learning “Wheel¹”

Let Me Study! (Blue)

Give me the details
Thorough processing
Research
Data/facts

Get to the Point! (Red)

Action-oriented
Get to the point
Practical action
Immediate and fast

Give Me Time to Review! (Green)

Reflective
Give me time to process
and review
Structured activities

Get Me Involved! (Yellow)

Experiential
Get me involved
Interactive
Spontaneous

¹ Andrew Lothian, Insights, Copyright 2000
www.insightsaustin.com or
www.insightworld.com

Plan Overview

■ Stakeholders

- You are the sponsor, the PM, and the BA on this one, baby ...
- Family members and co-workers, too

■ Charter

- Your charter (to yourself) is to become a Certified Business Analysis Professional.
- Benefits to your “sponsor” (you) are:
 - Sense of accomplishment
 - Career enhancement/advancement
 - Increased Knowledge
 - Attractiveness to employers

Plan Overview

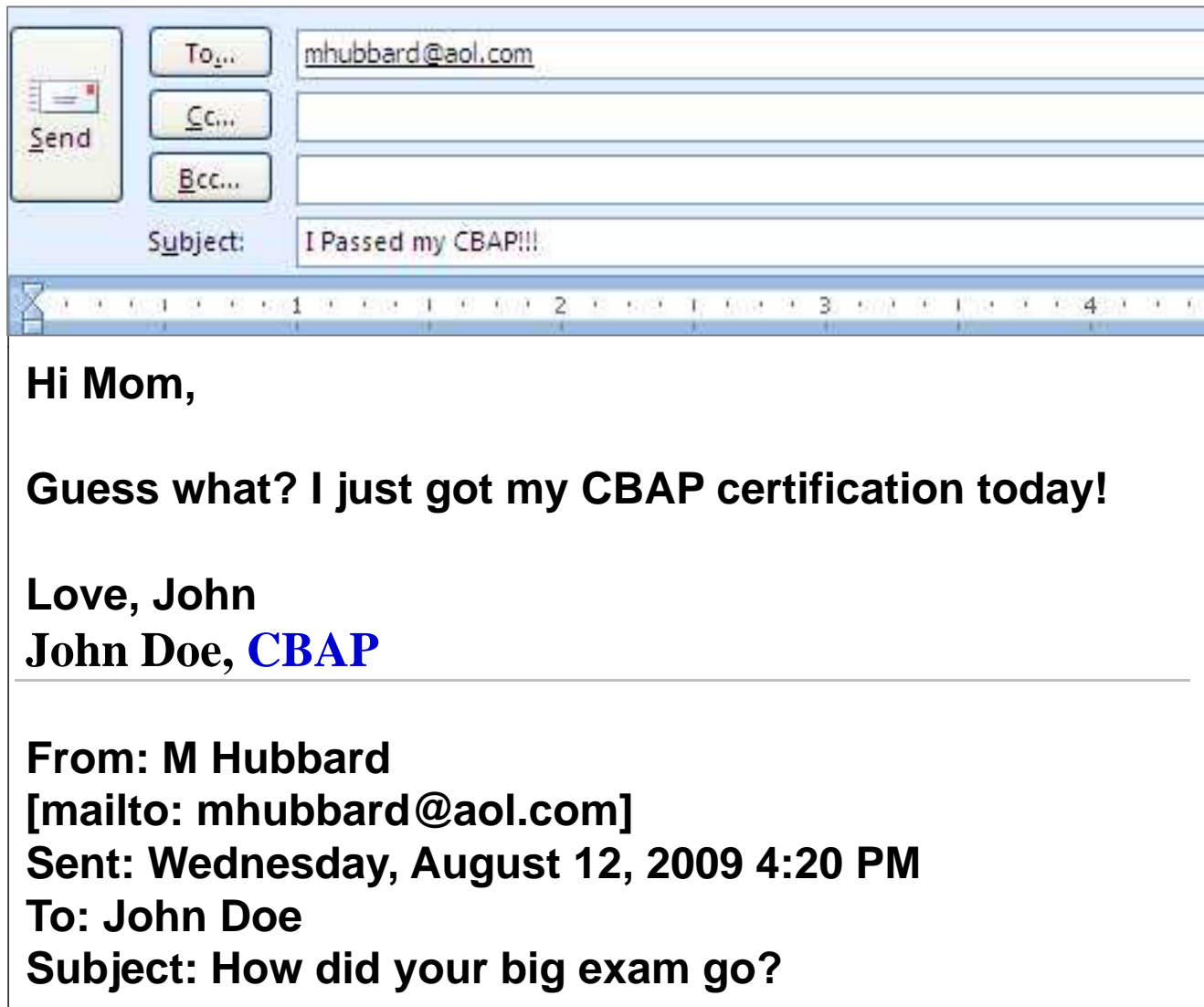
■ Charter (cont.)

- Benefits to other stakeholders are:
 - ❑ Employers can hire with more confidence
 - ❑ Shows a commitment to the BA profession
 - ❑ Demonstrates a high level of professional knowledge
 - ❑ Family members are proud (and relieved 😊)

■ Product Deliverables

- CBAP Credential...

Plan Overview - Deliverables



To... mhubbard@aol.com

Cc...

Bcc...

Subject: I Passed my CBAP!!!

Hi Mom,

Guess what? I just got my CBAP certification today!

Love, John
John Doe, **CBAP**

From: M Hubbard
[mailto:mhubbard@aol.com]
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2009 4:20 PM
To: John Doe
Subject: How did your big exam go?

1) Logo
to use:

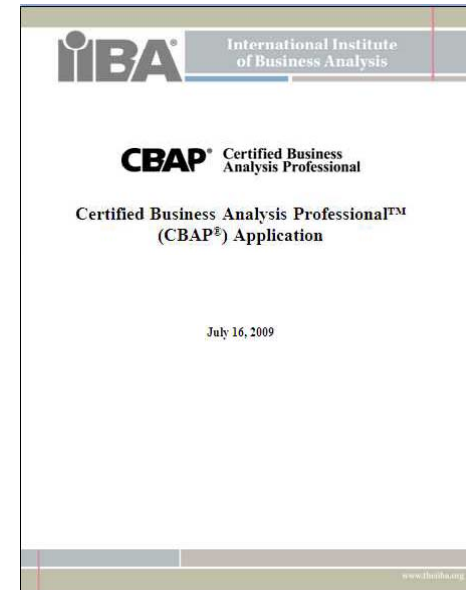
CBAP®

2) **Initials**
(for emails,
business
cards)

Plan Overview

■ Work Products

- CBAP[®] Application
- 2 References
- BA Education hours
- BABOK[®] and Study Guide notes
- Practice exams
- Flashcards and other study aids



Plan Overview

■ Scope Statement

- Features in Scope
 - CBAP® credential
- Features out of Scope
 - Non-BABOK® knowledge or skills
 - Comparing the BABOK® to your experience



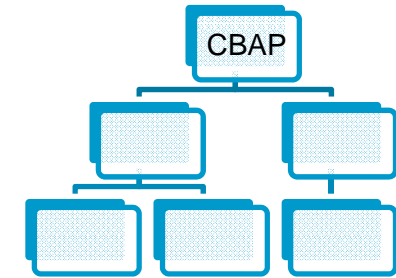
Plan Overview



■ Major Milestones:

1. Getting your application approved by IIBA[®]
2. Scheduling the Exam
3. Finishing your Exam preparation
4. Passing the CBAP[®] Exam

Plan Overview



■ WBS - Task List

Step 1 - Obtain and Skim the BABOK®

Step 2 - Apply for the Exam

Step 3 - Read the Entire BABOK®

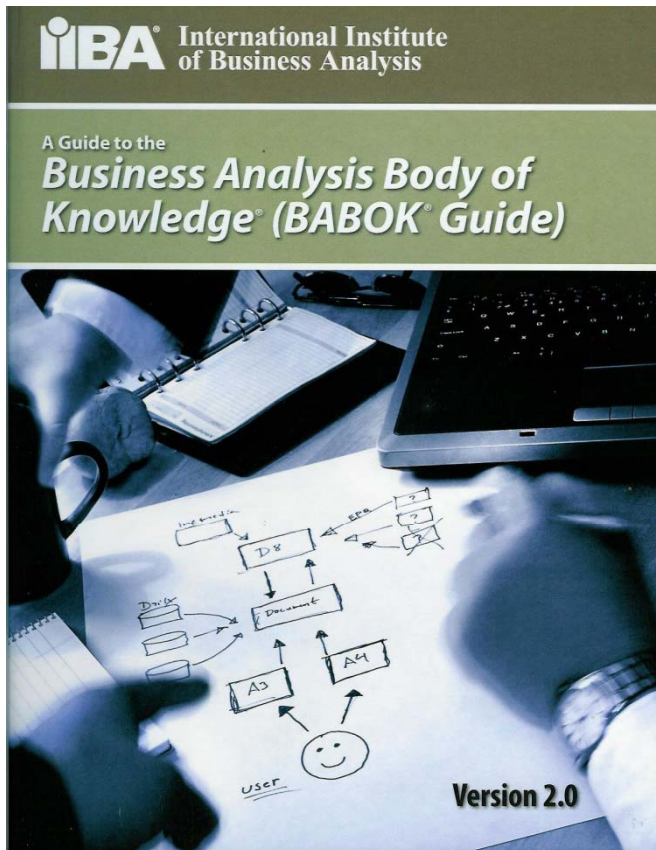
Step 4 - Absorb the BABOK®

Step 5 - Take Practice Exam Questions

Step 6 - Do Final Preparation

Step 7 - Take and Pass the CBAP® Exam

Step 1 - Obtain and Skim the BABOK®



- IIBA members: free PDF
- Non-members: small charge
- Hard copy on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)
- Why do this first?

Step 2 - Apply for the CBAP® Exam

- Visit the [IIBA Application page](#) on [TheIIBA.Org](#) as your “home” for applying for the CBAP®
- Start your online application
 - Complete the CBAP® **Candidate Reference** section first
 - It may help to download the paper application forms to see what is required.



Step 2 - Apply for the CBAP® Exam



- Online application (cont.)
 - Complete the **Personal Information** and **Education** sections
 - The **Work Experience** section is extensive - use a template
 - Applications require a **\$125 USD fee** (non-refundable)
 - Later also an exam fee of **\$325 USD** (members) or **\$450 USD** (non-members of IIBA).

Step 2 - Apply for the CBAP® Exam

- Online application (cont.)
 - Agree to the **IIBA Code of Conduct**
 - **Submit** your application
 - Pay your fee, and then ...
 - Wait for approval.



Panel Discussion

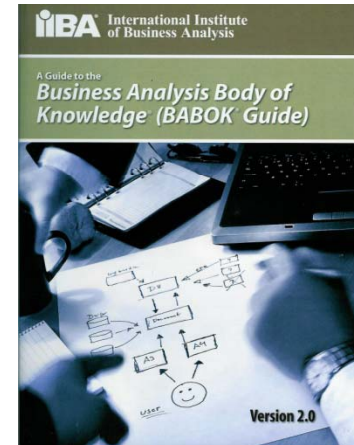


Foolproof Plan Steps

1. Obtain BABOK®
2. Apply for the CBAP®

Step 3 - Read the Entire BABOK®

- Yes, the whole thing!
- Before you do other preparation
- Have a broad understanding of the entire BABOK® to start
 - Eight Knowledge Areas (KAs)
 - 32 Tasks
 - 34 General Techniques
 - 40 Inputs and 35 Outputs
 - Many more KA-specific techniques and elements



Step 3 - Read the Entire BABOK®

■ CBAP® Exam “Blueprint”

Knowledge Area	Stated Percentage	Approximate Questions	Chapter Number
General*	no % stated	~3	1
Business Analysis Planning and Monitoring (BAPM)	19.33%	27	2
Elicitation (RE)	14%	20	3
Requirements Management and Communication (RMC)	16%	23	4
Enterprise Analysis (EA)	15.33%	22	5
Requirements Analysis (RA)	19.33%	27	6
Solution Assessment and Validation (SAV)	16%	23	7
Underlying Competencies*	no % stated	~5	8
TOTAL	100%	150	

* Estimate

Step 3 - Read the Entire BABOK®

- BABOK® Knowledge Areas and Tasks
- Underlying Competencies KA has no Tasks

Business Analysis Planning & Monitoring	Requirements Elicitation	Requirements Mgmt & Communication	Enterprise Analysis	Requirements Analysis	Solution Assessment & Validation
2.1 Plan Business Analysis Approach	3.1 Prepare for Elicitation	4.1 Manage Solution Scope & Requirements	5.1 Define Business Need	6.1 Prioritize Requirements	7.1 Assess Proposed Solution
2.2 Conduct Stakeholder Analysis	3.2 Conduct Elicitation Activity	4.2 Manage Requirements Traceability	5.2 Assess Capability Gaps	6.2 Organize Requirements	7.2 Allocate Requirements
2.3 Plan Business Analysis Activities	3.3 Document Elicitation Results	4.3 Maintain Requirements for Re-Use	5.3 Determine Solution Approach	6.3 Specify and Model Requirements	7.3 Assess Organizational Readiness
2.4 Plan Business Analysis Communication	3.4 Confirm Elicitation Results	4.4 Prepare Requirements Package	5.4 Define Solution Scope	6.4 Define Assumptions and Constraints	7.4 Define Transition Requirements
2.5 Plan Requirements Management Process		4.5 Communicate Requirements	5.5 Define Business Case	6.5 Verify Requirements	7.5 Validate Solution
2.6 Manage Business Analysis Performance				6.6 Validate Requirements	7.6 Evaluate Solution Performance

Step 3 - Read the Entire BABOK®

■ BABOK® General Techniques

Nbr	Technique Name
9.1	Acceptance and Eval Criteria Definition
9.2	Benchmarking
9.3	Brainstorming
9.4	Business Rules Analysis
9.5	Data Dictionary and Glossary
9.6	Data Flow Diagrams
9.7	Data Modeling
9.8	Decision Analysis
9.9	Document Analysis
9.10	Estimation
9.11	Focus Groups
9.12	Functional Decomposition
9.13	Interface Analysis
9.14	Interviews
9.15	Lessons Learned Process
9.16	Metrics and Key Performance Indicators
9.17	Non-functional Requirements Analysis

Nbr	Technique Name
9.18	Observation
9.19	Organization Modeling
9.20	Problem Tracking
9.21	Process Modeling
9.22	Prototyping
9.23	Requirements Workshops
9.24	Risk Analysis
9.25	Root Cause Analysis
9.26	Scenarios and Use Cases
9.27	Scope Modeling
9.28	Sequence Diagrams
9.29	State Diagrams
9.30	Structured Walkthrough
9.31	Survey/Questionnaire
9.32	SWOT Analysis
9.33	User Stories
9.34	Vendor Assessment

Step 4 - Absorb the BABOK®

- There is a LOT to absorb!
- Study Groups
- Classes
- Individual Study



Step 4 - Absorb the BABOK®

- Depending on your learning style, plan techniques that will work best
- Basic Styles:
 - **Blue** - Let me Study!
 - **Red** - Get to the Point!
 - **Yellow** - Get me Involved!
 - **Green** - Let me Review!

Blue	Red
Green	Yellow

Step 4 - Absorb the BABOK®

Learning Preference	Study Mode Ideas
Blue - Let me Study!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read BABOK• Study Guide• Practice Exams
Red - Get to the Point!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice Exams• Classes• Study Guides
Yellow - Get me Involved!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Classes• Study Groups• Flashcards• Read BABOK
Green - Let me Review!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Study Groups• Classes• Practice Exams• Read BABOK

Step 5 - Take Practice Exam Questions

- Rated the #1 preparation aid in recent poll
- Provide the ultimate “test” of your preparedness for the Exam
- Two good ways to use them:
 1. As you study each Knowledge Area
 2. Taking a simulated set of 150 questions like the actual Exam

Step 5 - Take Practice Exam Questions

■ Example:

Colleen has been tracking several problems for quite some time on her project and they don't seem to get resolved. Which of the following could be a reason for that?

- a. **Key stakeholders are not available to make decisions.**
- b. Colleen has not prioritized the issues.
- c. The project manager has not granted Colleen the authority to resolve the issues.
- d. Colleen has mismanaged her deadlines.

Panel Discussion

Foolproof Plan Steps

3. Read Entire BABOK®
4. Absorb the BABOK®
5. Practice Exam Questions



Step 6 - Do Final Preparation

- After absorbing the BABOK, you're on the home stretch
- Focus now on learning and memorizing areas you need to work on
 - Flashcards, Mnemonics, and Memorization
 - More practice Exam questions
 - Re-read portions of the BABOK
 - Last-Minute prep – resting, eating, relaxing, dry run to the site, etc.

Step 6 - Do Final Preparation

Learning Preference	Study Mode Ideas
Blue - Let me Study!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Re-Read BABOK• Writing Notes• Practice Exams• Study Notes
Red - Get to the Point!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice Exams• Re-Read Study Guides• Mnemonics
Yellow - Get me Involved!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flashcards with a “buddy”• Practice Exams• Audio Flashcards
Green - Let me Review!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice Exams• Flashcards• Review Notes

Step 7 - Take and Pass the CBAP® Exam

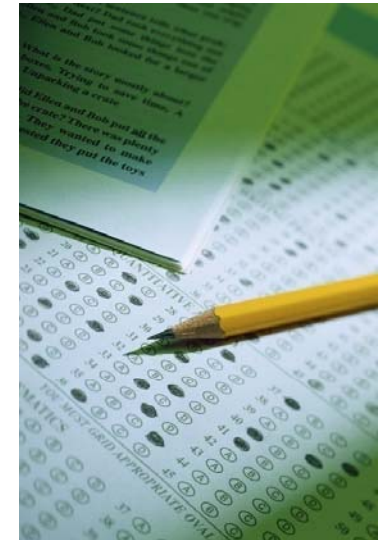
- The day arrives...
- It's time to drive to the test site...
- Don't panic - you're well-prepared, right?
- Exam day tips
 - Eat a healthy breakfast
 - Do something to relax you - take a walk, listen to music, work out, etc.
 - Arrive early
 - Limit your liquids - bathroom time counts against you!



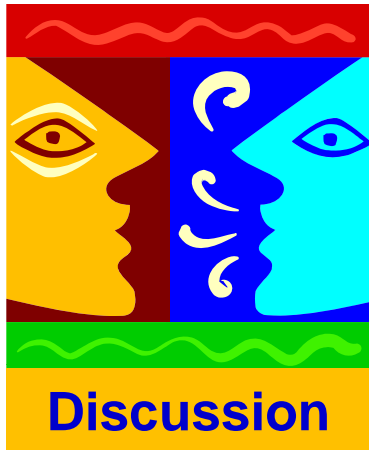
Step 7 - Take and Pass the CBAP® Exam

■ Exam-Taking tips

- Start with a “brain dump”
- 1st Pass: skip questions you are not sure of
- 2nd Pass: complete questions
- Don't change your answer
- Hard questions can be broken into two answers...usually.



Panel Discussion



Foolproof Plan Steps

6. Do Final Preparation
7. Take and Pass the CBAP® Exam

General Q&A

Session Objectives Summary

Now that we're done, you should be able to:

- List a **7-step plan** to become CBAP[®] certified, and be ready to apply it to your own plan to become certified.
- Describe how to **overcome** the daunting **application process** and have your application be accepted by IIBA[®].
- Put the **BABOK[®] into perspective** for how it will help with certification preparation.



Expand your Skills Further

Indicate on a business card if you want:

- A PDF of the **Presentation** and/or
 - An electronic copy of the CBAP **application worksheet**
-

Richard Larson, CBAP, PMP

Richard.Larson@WatermarkLearning.com

800-646-9362, x203

www.WatermarkLearning.com