

6 keys to passing the exam the first time!

I have taught real estate to thousands of students for close to twenty years. During this time at least a thousand people have asked “how do I pass the exam the first time?”

The answer is really very simple. Score at least 75 points. I’m not kidding. Those that score 75 or more pass, those that score less than 75 get to take it again. (If you are taking an exam with a different passing grade, substitute it here! The message is the same). I have heard dozens of excuses as to why someone failed. Some of my favorites are “the guy beside me was making funny noises,” and “the room was too cold.” No, they failed because they did not score 75 points plain and simple, period! So the real question is “how do I get at least 75?”

After observing tens of thousands of students there are some definite patterns that students who pass follow, and unfortunately patterns that those who fail follow. So, what are the keys to passing the first time? They are:

1. Attitude. Yes, attitude. Or is that a “yes attitude?” Whichever way you want to say it, attitude is the number one key to passing the exam the first time. From the day you enter your first class you must have a “can do” attitude. Picture yourself with a license. Visualize yourself passing the first time. If you can’t see it, you won’t do it. Too often students come in with the attitude that they are going to fail. Guess what? They probably will.
2. Comprehension. There are two main ways that you are going to learn the material. Your instructor will cover the majority of the material in class, and you will review the material at home. The key to learning the material quickly is to ensure that you comprehend what you are either seeing or reading. There is a big difference between reading and comprehension. Have you ever read an article or page in a book and at the end asked yourself “what did I just read?” If this sounds familiar, you did not comprehend what you read. My suggestion is to read slowly and deliberately. Do not scan. Read with your finger travelling along each line if you have to. Ask yourself questions like: what does this mean? How does this fit with the rest of the chapter? How does this compare with other material I have read?
3. Study habits. Sorry, no way to get around this. Our nature as adults is often to procrastinate or push things to the end. Cramming the night before a test may have worked in high school or college, but as the gray matter ages, cramming becomes more difficult. My suggestion is to develop a pattern of studying. My plan for studying during class would be to read the chapter as soon as possible after covering it in class and to answer the corresponding review questions. Then check the answers to see how you did. Identify any questions you missed and look up the correct answers to ensure that you understand the concept. Before the next class spend a half hour or so to go back and review the material that you have previously covered to get you back up to speed before class. If you follow this procedure throughout class you will find that studying for the

final exam is much easier. The same basic process can be followed for the state exam as well.

4. Assess yourself. You are the best judge of what you know and what you don't know. Studies have shown that when we see or read something we retain very little. However, if we see it, hear it, write it, and repeat it to someone else, the level of retention goes way up. Some tricks for helping to assess yourself include: writing difficult concepts or definitions in your own words, explaining concepts to someone else (this could even be your child or your dog!), and diagramming processes and formulae.

5. Cram Review. Gold Coast provides all sales and broker students with a 1001 question and answer book and a live super exam cram review course. Take advantage of these! The best method that we have found is to schedule a state exam approximately two to three weeks after the end of the course. Use this time to complete the cram book at least three times prior to attending the cram weekend. Answer the questions on a separate piece of paper so that you can later check the answers. Identify any that you got wrong, and look up those concepts. Don't be surprised if your scores are in the 60's the first time through. It is normal. If you have completed all the quizzes three times, your scores should be in the 90's. If your scores don't come up, you need to re-read the text because you are missing some important concepts.

6. Attitude. Oops. I know what you're thinking. Didn't we already cover this? Yes we did! My point is this. The key to passing the exam the first time starts and ends with attitude. If you have a can-do attitude going into this, do everything I've suggested, and have a great attitude when you're ready to take your test, you will do just fine. If your attitude stinks in the beginning, the results will stink at the end.

We will give you all the tools that you need to pass. But in the end it's up to you. You need to choose how you are going to prepare. My suggestion is this: as Nike says.....*just do it!*

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