



Helpful Tips



Online Workshop:

Once you are notified of being accepted to the Certification Program, do not procrastinate about completing the online workshop. It is designed to help you through the program. Log in, learn, and complete the workshop.

Writing the Technical Paper:

The technical paper is the most difficult part of the certification process for most candidates. It is not that the paper is really difficult, it is more of a psychological handicap because most of us have not had to write a paper like this since we were in school. The hardest part is just getting started. Prepare your paper well in advance of the due date. Set the paper aside for a few days then read it with a critical eye. Make sure your ideas flow well and are not disjointed. Check the format grading sheet to be sure you have complied with all of the requirements such as double spacing and numbering the pages. Run spell check and grammar check, you can catch these problems before anyone reads the paper. Remember, this is where a lot of candidates fail. Not because they wrote poor papers, but because they did not write a paper at all!

The GEK Test:

If you are a general contractor, there will probably not be a need to study very much for the GEK exam. However, if you are a subcontractor, you may need additional study time for the GEK exam because it is very heavily weighted with General Conditions and General Requirements questions. Regardless of what trade you estimate, get a copy of the latest AIA 201 document and review it before taking the test. If you are a subcontractor, read the General Conditions & General Requirements in the specifications of every project you bid between now and the time you take the test.

The DST Test:

There is not much you can study for the DST's. The test are for estimators with years of experience that cannot be substituted by study. If you are a general estimator taking the 1.4 exam, and you know you have weakness in your experience, such as electrical or mechanical, you might want to brush up on some of the basics. All the test are based upon commercial construction, not residential. Be sure you sign up for the right test for your experience. For example, mechanical estimators have three different test to choose from; Plumbing, HVAC Sheet Metal, or HVAC Piping.

Taking the Test:

There are rules to taking test, remember them. If the question is True/False and the words "always" or "never" are in the statement, it is most likely False. All of these test are fast paced. You do not have time to over analyze the question or the answer. Writing comments about questions that are unclear is important. Write down the number of the problem question then move on to the next question. You can go back after you have turned in the answer sheets and write any comments you may have. Ask the proctor to let you write your comments after the test.