

# How I got my PMP by attending PMP Exam Coaching Class

by Jeffrey Turfboer

Twice a year the PMI Netherlands Chapter provides a PMP Exam Coaching Class. With a clear focus on the PMP material, the main goal of this Coaching Class is to help individuals pass the PMI PMP or CAPM exam. However, that's not the only benefit you'll receive from attending this class! In this article you'll read more about the benefits and also about my own experience with the PMP Exam Coaching class, which helped me a lot to achieve my PMI PMP certification.

I first learned about PMI and the PMP certification a few years back, when I was browsing the job listings for a job in the USA. For almost every Project Management role the PMP certification is required. The PMP certification, although it originated in North-America, now has grown to a worldwide known certification. So having a strong desire to travel and work abroad, I started acquiring the necessary experience to become eligible to take the PMP exam. In general, you'll have to have done 4.500 hours leading and directing projects and also already have spent at least 35 hours on project management education.

The best approach I read in the information on the PMI Netherlands Chapter website was to schedule the exam within a short period after the last day of the PMP Exam Coaching class. Before doing this, I became a member of both PMI and the PMI Netherlands Chapter. PMI members get a discount on the exam itself and PMI Netherlands Chapter members get a discount on the PMP Exam Coaching Class. Both discounts are almost the same as the membership fee, so for me, that was a no-brainer.

After scheduling my exam, I registered for the PMP Coaching Class. The PMP Exam Coaching Class is held on four Saturdays over a period of two months. Each Coaching Class is held with a free week in between, giving you time to study and work on the gaps in your knowledge.

Before each Class day, you'll have to do homework, which consists of reading up on several chapters of the Guide to the PMBOK and the PMP Exam Prep book (also known as the Rita book), and do certain exercises as well. During the class, you'll mostly answer questions on the topics you have read, discuss these answers and get an overview of the topics which will be handled on the next Class day.

The PMP exam is tough. All questions are multiple-choice, however almost every question can be interpreted in several different ways, with each interpretation leading you to a different answer. This is where the PMP Exam Coaching Class comes in. By taking the Class, you'll come to understand what it is PMI asks in the exam questions. Being able to understand this greatly increases your ability to pick the right answer.

Another benefit of taking the PMP Exam Coaching Class is that it helps you break down the heavy

study load needed for the PMP exam into smaller bits. This makes it easier for you to study for the exam, even if you already have a very busy schedule.

The Class is given by other PMI members who have a great track record in the field. This is where another benefit of the Coaching Class comes in. The coaches, with more than 8 years PMP experience on average, can give real life examples, helping you to understand the theory you're studying.

My class consisted of 12 people from all over the (business) world. This means you'll not only learn how to pass the PMP exam, you'll also extend your network and meet some new interesting people, with whom you already have a shared interest: Project Management.

To prevent any language barriers, during the Class the common language used is English. I found this to be of great help, because the exam is in English as well. By discussing the topics for the exam in English, you'll come to better understand the topics, as well as become better able to understand the topic when described from different points of view.

On the last Class day, we made sure we were all connected on LinkedIn so we could keep in touch. This led to an active discussion where we could keep track of each other's progress and send out congratulations when someone passed their exam. After all of our class passed, we went out to dinner to celebrate. That was such a success, that we will get back together on a regular basis for dinner and drinks. Like I said: the Coaching class also is a great way to extend your network! I work for a consulting firm called Pimarox Infrastructure Solutions, which is based in Nieuwegein in The Netherlands. After I passed the exam, there was a noticeable increase in assignments for which I was invited for an interview. Having the PMP certification gave me an edge over my competitors. This led to my current role as a Project Manager for Staples, Inc., and now I'm managing projects all across Europe!

Should you have any questions or remarks about this article or the PMP coaching class, or if you'd like to get in touch, you can find me on LinkedIn.