

The Master M.B.E. Method

Five Steps toward picking the Right Answer on the M.B.E.

1. Read the call of the question and the answer picks.
2. Carefully read the body of the question.
3. Re-read the call of the question.
4. Give strict scrutiny to each of the answer picks to eliminate incorrect answers.
5. Pick the correct answer or your best guess.

More on the Process of Elimination

1. **Consider the statistics:** Blind guessing gives you a 25% chance of a correct answer. If you can eliminate two picks you have a 50% chance of guessing correctly. 65% is more or less passing. Eliminating wrong picks is worth points on the exam.
2. **Here is how to eliminate incorrect answer picks:**

Read Carefully - Never assume facts. Examine specific details; they are present only to raise testable issues. Pick a simple interpretation of the facts over a more complicated one.

More precise answer choices are superior to vague picks.

Apply Statutes Mechanically - Put reason ahead of emotion. Sometimes the Examiners will give you a statute to govern an issue where there is no settled majority opinion. Use your knowledge of the majority rule when it will allow you to eliminate answer picks.

A correct statement of law is preferable to a correct statement of facts.

Eliminate Answer Picks that Mis-characterize the Facts - Reject answer picks that cite the wrong fact to justify the correct result. Eliminate picks that mis-characterize the facts or assume facts that are in dispute.

Trends on the Multistate Bar Examination

Bar candidates report questions on wills & trusts and civil procedure on recent administrations of the M.B.E.. The National Conference of Bar Examiners has not expanded the range of testable subjects, but instead have gone to areas of torts and contracts and property that inherently cross over into these 'new' subjects.

The biggest change on the exam in recent years was the realignment of the number of questions asked on each subject. Presently, there are 34 questions each on torts and contracts, and 33 questions for each other subject. Before, torts and contracts each had 40 questions and the others had 30 each. The bottom line was that criminal procedure became important than before, torts and contracts somewhat less so.

More on How to Prepare for the Multistate Bar Examination

Take a holistic approach - Everybody in the learning sciences agrees that there is more to exam success than knowledge of the material and exam technique. How you feel, both physically and emotionally, can make the difference between passing and failing the bar examination. Taking the bar exam is not a marathon, it's a sprint. Preparing for the exam is the marathon.

Keep track of your mistakes - Everybody has soft spots. There are two different ways to examine your mistakes. The obvious way is to note the issues you tend to make mistakes on. The more subtle way is to note which question structures tend to trip you up. Do you have particular trouble with the "defendant's weakest argument is..." or the tiered questions which ask you which of several statements is true, "A and B, B and C, B and D?" Your skills will sharpen faster if you identify which type of questions are the most difficult for you. Practice those questions more.

Take a supplemental Multistate Course - The materials in the program offered at this website are a fine introduction to the Multistate Bar Examination, but they are not enough to prepare fully for the examination. A shrewd candidate will do between 1,500 and 3,000 practice Multistate questions before taking the real examination. PMBR is the leading provider of multistate seminars. MicroMash is the leading home study course. Take one or the other, but not both.

Do not neglect the written section of the bar examination - More people fail the bar examination because of the written part of the test than because of the Multistate. Although practice on the M.B.E. should be at the core of your preparation, it is reckless to neglect the written part of the bar exam. Organize your preparation around practice.

Let practice fuel your study - Do as little up-front review of the black letter law as your conscience will allow. Get into practice, and review your mistakes. This way your study will be more practical and focused.