

Patterns to Look for and Questions to Ask When Evaluating Multiple-Choice Practice Question or Exam Results

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- For disappointing results on practice questions or multiple-choice exams, you will want to look for specific patterns of errors in your wrong answers.
- Actually making a log of why you got each question wrong will help you to discover the patterns across multiple practice question sessions or within a final exam.
- Here are some of the error patterns you can consider:
 - Did you misread the instructions given for the exam or for particular sections of the exam?
 - Did you get panicky because the fact patterns were different than you thought they would be or the questions were harder than you expected?
 - Were there strings of wrong answers due to how you were feeling or reacting at that point in the exam?
 - Did you misread any fact patterns, questions asked, or answer choices?
 - Did you lose track of the facts or rules or exceptions to the rules that you needed to consider?
 - Did you choose a general correct answer rather than the desired specific correct answer?
 - Did you read too much into the fact patterns, questions asked, or answer choices?
 - Did you get confused by double negatives or changes to “least likely answer” scenarios?
 - Did you get confused by combination answers where you had to find the best combination of the possible choices?
 - Did you get confused by “none of the above” or “all of the above” choices?
 - Did you choose an answer for the wrong role (example: chose the correct answer for the defendant’s attorney when asked for the plaintiff’s attorney answer)?
 - Did you miss the significance of the “because” or “unless” or other modifying string in the answer choices?
 - Did you answer the question asked or a question you rather answer?

- Had you studied the topic or sub-topic recently or did you assume it would not be on the exam?
- Did you understand the topic or sub-topic of the question to the depth that you needed?
- Did you choose an answer by “gut reaction” or quick judgment rather than carefully reading the full answer and considering it in light of the facts and rules?
- Did you second-guess an earlier correct answer choice and change it because you were confused or panicky or argued yourself out of the logical best choice?
- Did you run out of time and have to hurry through questions?
- Did you finish way ahead of your classmates and not give careful thought as you answered the questions initially?
- Did you make Scantron mistakes by “misbubbling” the choice or misaligning the questions and answers?
- Did you practice enough questions throughout the semester to hone your skills and prepare for a variety of scenarios?
- Were there other patterns of error that you noticed?

Revised 6/2011