

## **PEDAGOGICAL ADVICE ON STUDYING FOR THE MBE**

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The NCBE provides four on-line practice examinations (OPEs) that can be purchased on the NCBE website ([www.ncbex.org](http://www.ncbex.org)). Each includes 100 questions that have appeared on a recent MBE along with a detailed explanation of why the correct answers are correct and the incorrect answers are incorrect. These explanations were written by members of the expert committees that wrote and reviewed the questions prior to their usage on the MBE. Purchasing an OPE provides a one-year subscription for unlimited on-line access to these questions and explanations; it also produces a score that is linked to the MBE score scale.

I recommend the following approach to those who are preparing to take the MBE:

1. Take the first OPE under exam conditions using an appropriate exam-type setting and following the appropriate timing.
2. Review your score and note your estimated score on the real MBE. Study the 100 questions and the explanations for why each correct answer is correct and why the incorrect answers are incorrect. Review the references. Study the material thoroughly until you believe you would get 100% correct if you took this test under exam conditions.
3. Take the opportunity to evaluate your test-taking strategy. Make sure you know how to pace yourself so that you finish within the allotted time. Because you might be nervous when you take the actual exam, it might require more time per question than when taking the OPE even though the OPE questions were taken from a recent MBE. But also, think about how you approach a question – some people find that reading carefully from the top is the best approach; some

find that scanning the question and possible answers quickly and then rereading the question carefully works better; some prefer to begin with the possible answers; some prefer to begin with the actual question before going back and reading the case presentation. All of these approaches work for some people; figure out what works best for you. Regardless of your approach, read each question carefully; every word is important.

4. Move on to the second OPE. Again, take it under exam conditions. You should find that your score is higher than your score on the first OPE. Studying the material actually works! Then study the questions on this OPE, reading the explanations and reviewing the references. Study this second set of 100 questions until you believe you would have obtained 100% correct.

5. Move on to the third OPE following the same strategy. And then move on to the fourth. Learning the material presented in the four OPEs should put you in a very good position to do well on the MBE. Each set of 100 represents a good sample of the content in the full length MBE. The actual MBE should be very familiar to you if you follow the approach outlined above.

A similar resource is available for the MPRE.