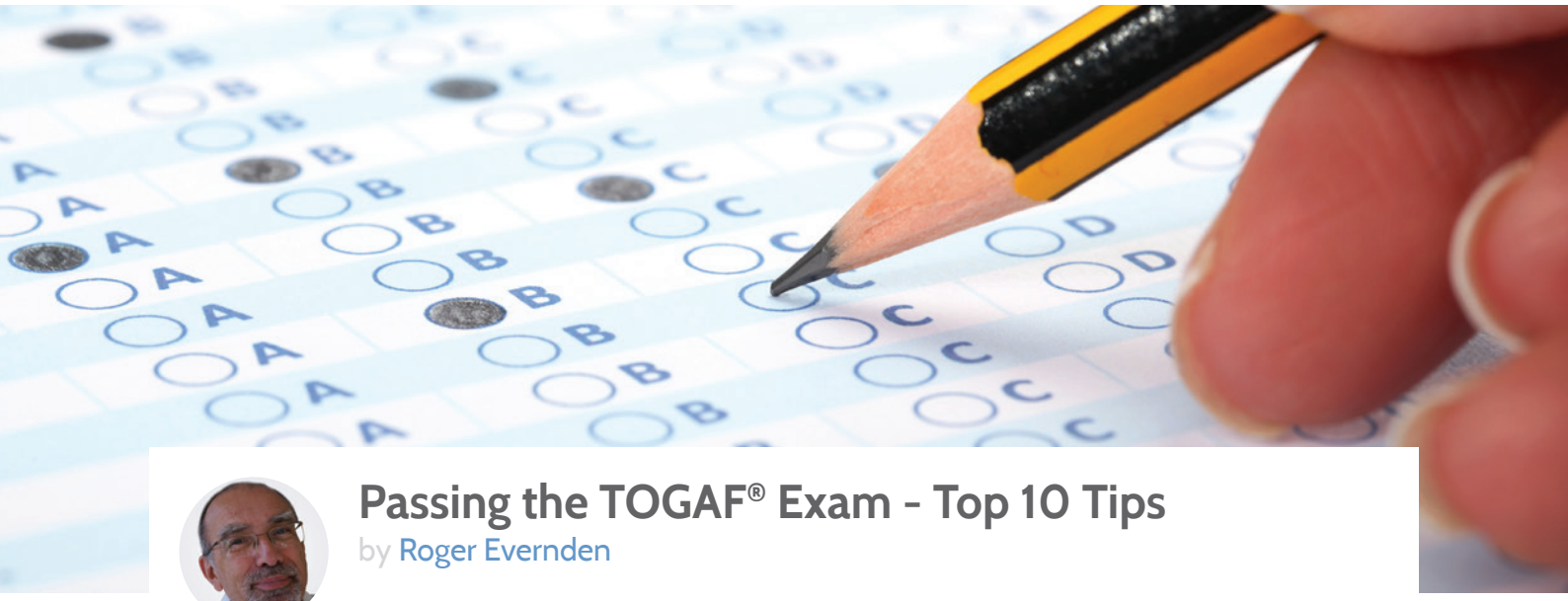

Passing the TOGAF® Exam - Top 10 Tips

by Roger Evernden

Don't get me wrong – I'm not suggesting that you would only want to pass the exam without really learning about TOGAF! Of course you also need to learn about the black art of Enterprise Architecture – to understand the techniques and skills, to get plenty of practice and experience, and to become an expert in your field.

But the fact remains that you also need to get to through the 2-part TOGAF exam in order to be certified. So here are my top ten tips for passing the exam:

1. Pace Yourself

There is a fixed amount of time to complete the exam – 60 minutes for 40 multiple choice answers for Level 1, and a further 90 minutes to answer 8 scenario questions for Level 2. Once you start the clock is unstoppable.

Keep an eye on the time – the remaining time is shown at the top of the screen throughout. If you are not a native English speaker you can select the English as a Second Language (ESL) option to get more time – 90 and 135 minutes respectively.

When you complete Level 1 you can choose to move on to Level 2, or Level 2 will start automatically when the time for Level 1 is over. Remember that once you move on to Level 2 you can't go back to Level 1 to change your answers, so pace and keep an eye on the time.

2. Answer Questions You Know First

Level 1 consists of 40 multiple-choice questions, and you need to answer 55% correctly – i.e. 22 questions. It is easiest to answer the ones you know first. This will leave more time for the other questions. If you know 22 correct questions then you've already passed! If you are not sure of an answer, then you can mark if for review.

After last question you are given a summary page that lists your answers, tells you which questions are still unanswered, and shows you which questions you marked for review – so choose to go back to questions that you stand the best chance of getting right.

3. Eliminate "Wrong" Answers

Level 2 consists of 8 scenarios. You have to choose the answer you think is most appropriate for each scenario from four options. Answers are worth points for "correct" answer, 3 points for "right" answer, 1 point for "plausible" answer, but you only need to get 60% to pass – which is 24 points.

Read the scenario carefully to work out what it is about – think about which phases are relevant, the concerns of stakeholders, and how well each option meets their needs. Then eliminate any obviously "wrong" answers and concentrate your choices to those you think are right.

You have access to the TOGAF 9 Part 1 and Part 2 manuals in PDF format. Use these to look up terms in the process scenarios, but be smart with your searches.

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Linux is the registered trademark of Linus Torvalds in the United States and other countries.

4. Learn the Language of TOGAF

Questions and answers are all carefully worded using language as defined in the TOGAF documents. So make sure that you know the words and their definitions!

5. According to TOGAF...

This tip is especially useful if you are already an experienced architect. If you know your stuff it is easy to be critical of TOGAF, but to pass the exam remember that you are being tested on the gospel according to TOGAF – not your interpretation or criticism of it!

6. Know What's in TOGAF

Get to know how TOGAF is structured. It will help you take advantage of the open book in the Level 2 exam. It's also useful to go through the document and ask yourself what makes sense to you, and more importantly – why you don't get. For things you don't understand, ask yourself why it's included, how it can be used, and which stakeholders it supports.

Relate things that are difficult to other bits that make more sense and [illegible] your own, try learning with others.

7. Know the PDF Open Book

Using the PDF Open Book in the exam is far from ideal! But you can [illegible] structure before the ex[illegible] key words to find the se[illegible]

8. Draw the ADM Diagram

ADM is at the heart of TOGAF. Learn it by heart. You are given pencil and paper for the exam, so quickly draw the diagram before you start the exam.

9. Practice the Exam

Study example questions, especially Level 2, to get a feeling for the exam.

10. Think like an Architect

Finally, remember this is about being an architect – so put your architect hat on and think like one.

TOGAF has strict rules about keeping the actual exam material confidential, so I can't give you any specific questions to remember, but if you follow my top ten tips it should give you a head start in passing the exams!

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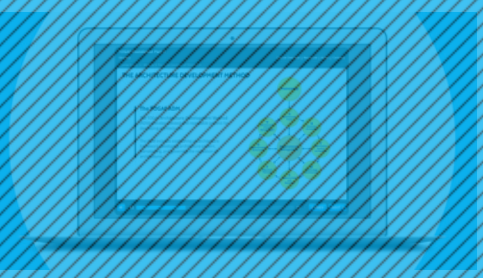

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