

ACFE Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE) Investigations Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

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- 1. During the preparation phase of a data analysis engagement, which step involves processing the data?**
 - A. Determining whether predication exists**
 - B. Cleansing and normalizing the data**
 - C. Building a profile of potential frauds**
 - D. Defining examination objectives**

- 2. What role does technology play in modern fraud investigations?**
 - A. It complicates data analysis**
 - B. It enhances data analysis, surveillance, and reporting capabilities**
 - C. It is minimally involved in investigations**
 - D. It only aids in physical evidence gathering**

- 3. When interviewing a fraud suspect, which response indicates the suspect may be guilty?**
 - A. "It could be Green, but I'm not sure"**
 - B. "It could have been anybody"**
 - C. "It wasn't me, that's for sure"**
 - D. "It wasn't anyone I work with"**

- 4. When attempting to diffuse a suspect's alibi, which technique is recommended?**
 - A. Discuss the accused's prior deceptions**
 - B. Challenge the suspect's memory**
 - C. Present irrefutable evidence**
 - D. Use psychological pressure techniques**

- 5. What type of information is typically obtained from a check negotiated by a subject?**
 - A. Name of the payee**
 - B. Bank account details**
 - C. Transaction history**
 - D. Legal documentation**

6. The fraud examiner should document the details of an interview within how long after the interview date?

- A. Within one week**
- B. Within a month**
- C. As soon as possible**
- D. Within two months**

7. Which of the following is an example of financial statement fraud?

- A. Overstating revenue to improve financial performance**
- B. Underreporting expenses to reduce taxes**
- C. Falsifying customer contracts**
- D. All of the above**

8. Which document is crucial for supporting fraud findings during legal proceedings?

- A. A press release**
- B. A diary of events**
- C. An audit report**
- D. An exhibit in court**

9. What is the primary purpose of an investigation in fraud examination?

- A. To gather evidence for legal proceedings**
- B. To determine whether fraud has occurred**
- C. To analyze financial transactions**
- D. To assess company policies**

10. How do interviews aid in gathering evidence for fraud examinations?

- A. By allowing direct communication with witnesses and suspected individuals**
- B. By generating written statements from all parties involved**
- C. By compelling suspects to provide information under legal threat**
- D. By ensuring that all evidence is documented without witnesses**

Answers

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- 1. B**
- 2. B**
- 3. B**
- 4. A**
- 5. A**
- 6. C**
- 7. D**
- 8. D**
- 9. B**
- 10. A**

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Explanations

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1. During the preparation phase of a data analysis engagement, which step involves processing the data?

- A. Determining whether predication exists
- B. Cleansing and normalizing the data**
- C. Building a profile of potential frauds
- D. Defining examination objectives

The step that involves processing the data is cleansing and normalizing the data. This is a critical part of the preparation phase in a data analysis engagement, as it ensures that the data is accurate and consistent, which is essential for effective analysis. Cleansing involves identifying and correcting inaccuracies or inconsistencies in the data, such as removing duplicates or filling in missing values. Normalizing refers to standardizing data formats and structures, making it easier to analyze and compare across different datasets. This processing step is foundational because the integrity of the data directly influences the quality of the analysis and the insights that can be drawn from it. Without proper cleansing and normalization, subsequent analyses could lead to misleading conclusions, which is why it is vital to address this early in the engagement. In contrast, determining whether predication exists focuses on establishing sufficient reason to proceed with an investigation, building a profile of potential frauds entails identifying characteristics that may indicate fraudulent behavior, and defining examination objectives sets the goals and scope for the analysis. While all these steps are important in their own right, they do not specifically involve processing the data in the way that cleansing and normalizing do.

2. What role does technology play in modern fraud investigations?

- A. It complicates data analysis
- B. It enhances data analysis, surveillance, and reporting capabilities**
- C. It is minimally involved in investigations
- D. It only aids in physical evidence gathering

Technology plays a crucial role in modern fraud investigations by significantly enhancing data analysis, surveillance, and reporting capabilities. The vast amount of data generated in today's digital landscape can be complex and overwhelming; however, advanced technologies such as data analytics tools, machine learning, forensic software, and surveillance systems allow investigators to process this information efficiently and effectively. By employing data analytics, fraud examiners can identify patterns, trends, and anomalies that may indicate fraudulent activity, which can lead to quicker identification and resolution of fraud cases. Surveillance technology aids in monitoring activities and gathering evidence, while reporting capabilities enable cleaner and more accessible presentation of findings, improving communication with stakeholders and making the results more actionable. In contrast, some of the other options highlight misconceptions about technology's role. The choice that suggests technology complicates data analysis overlooks how tools are designed to simplify and enhance this process. The idea that technology is minimally involved points to an outdated view, as it is integral to modern investigations. Similarly, stating that technology only aids in physical evidence gathering neglects its broader range of applications in data analysis and documentation, which are essential in the investigative process.

3. When interviewing a fraud suspect, which response indicates the suspect may be guilty?

- A. "It could be Green, but I'm not sure"**
- B. "It could have been anybody"**
- C. "It wasn't me, that's for sure"**
- D. "It wasn't anyone I work with"**

The response that indicates a suspect may be guilty is one that suggests a deflection of responsibility or an attempt to shift blame away from themselves. When a suspect states, "It could have been anybody," they are avoiding admitting any personal involvement or knowledge of the situation. This vague assertion implies a lack of accountability and can indicate an attempt to distance themselves from the wrongdoing. In contrast, other responses may not carry the same implication of guilt. For instance, saying, "It could be Green, but I'm not sure," does not directly deny involvement and leaves room for uncertainty. The phrase "It wasn't me, that's for sure," while assertive, can sometimes be a defensive reaction that doesn't inherently imply guilt or innocence but might suggest panic or anxiety. Lastly, the statement "It wasn't anyone I work with" can imply awareness of the immediate environment but does not directly incriminate or exonerate the speaker. Thus, the response that broadly casts doubt on others without taking any responsibility, such as suggesting that "it could have been anybody," reflects a potential attempt to evade accountability, marking it as suspicious and indicating possible guilt.

4. When attempting to diffuse a suspect's alibi, which technique is recommended?

- A. Discuss the accused's prior deceptions**
- B. Challenge the suspect's memory**
- C. Present irrefutable evidence**
- D. Use psychological pressure techniques**

The recommended technique of discussing the accused's prior deceptions is effective because it can subtly prompt the suspect to reconsider their alibi without direct confrontation. This approach also helps to establish a psychological context in which the suspect may feel vulnerable or compelled to provide more honest information. By highlighting past behaviors, interviewers can create an atmosphere of doubt regarding the reliability of the suspect's current statements, which can lead to inconsistencies that may ultimately help in revealing the truth. In contrast, the other techniques may not be as effective. Challenging the suspect's memory can lead to defensiveness, while presenting irrefutable evidence might provoke a denial or withdrawal instead of fostering an open dialogue. Psychological pressure techniques can create tension that may cause the suspect to shut down or become uncooperative, which isn't conducive to gathering useful information. Thus, discussing prior deceptions aligns with the goals of building rapport and nudging the suspect toward a more truthful account.

5. What type of information is typically obtained from a check negotiated by a subject?

- A. Name of the payee**
- B. Bank account details**
- C. Transaction history**
- D. Legal documentation**

The name of the payee is typically obtained from a check that has been negotiated by a subject because this information is explicitly stated on the check. The payee is the individual or entity to whom the check is written and who has the right to deposit or cash it. This information is essential for identifying who received payment and can be critical in investigations related to fraud or financial transactions. While bank account details may be accessible through bank records or statements resulting from the transaction involving the check, they are not directly found on the check itself. Transaction history typically refers to past activities associated with a particular account and would not be listed on an individual check. Legal documentation, such as contracts or agreements, is also not typically found on a check and usually requires separate records to be validated. Therefore, the name of the payee is the most relevant and easily identifiable information obtained directly from a negotiated check.

6. The fraud examiner should document the details of an interview within how long after the interview date?

- A. Within one week**
- B. Within a month**
- C. As soon as possible**
- D. Within two months**

The correct response emphasizes the importance of timely documentation in the context of fraud examination. Documenting the details of an interview as soon as possible is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, immediate documentation helps ensure that the information captured reflects the interviewee's statements as accurately as possible, reducing the risk of memory alterations or fading over time. This immediacy aids in retaining the nuances and emotional tone of the conversation, which can be vital during the investigation. Secondly, prompt documentation is essential for maintaining the integrity of the investigative process. It demonstrates due diligence and supports the credibility of the investigator's findings. In situations where potential legal action may arise, having a comprehensive and contemporaneous record of interviews can be critical in supporting claims or defenses. Lastly, acting quickly in documenting interviews can help identify and address any emerging issues sooner rather than later, which can be important in preventing further fraudulent activity or in managing the investigation effectively. The other options suggest longer timeframes for documentation, which could compromise the accuracy and reliability of the information collected. While some organizations may have policies for documentation timeframes, the best practice in fraud examination supports a prompt approach to preserve the integrity of the facts.

7. Which of the following is an example of financial statement fraud?

- A. Overstating revenue to improve financial performance**
- B. Underreporting expenses to reduce taxes**
- C. Falsifying customer contracts**
- D. All of the above**

Financial statement fraud encompasses a range of deceptive practices aimed at misleading stakeholders about a company's financial health. Among the choices provided, each example reflects a different aspect of this type of fraud. Overstating revenue to improve financial performance is a direct attempt to inflate a company's apparent profitability. This practice can mislead investors and creditors about the actual viability of the business and is categorized as financial statement fraud because it distorts the information presented in the financial statements. Underreporting expenses to reduce taxes is also a fraudulent act that impacts financial reporting, as it manipulates the numbers presented to tax authorities and misrepresents the company's profitability. This can lead to financial statements that inaccurately showcase higher earnings due to lower stated expenses, thus misleading stakeholders. Falsifying customer contracts represents another fraudulent act that can affect the authenticity of the financial statements. If contracts are altered or fabricated to reflect non-existent sales or income, this would mislead stakeholders about the company's operations and earnings. Since all the activities listed—overstating revenue, underreporting expenses, and falsifying contracts—contribute to an inaccurate portrayal of a company's financial standing, the most comprehensive answer recognizes that all these actions exemplify financial statement fraud.

8. Which document is crucial for supporting fraud findings during legal proceedings?

- A. A press release**
- B. A diary of events**
- C. An audit report**
- D. An exhibit in court**

The most crucial document for supporting fraud findings during legal proceedings is an exhibit in court. Exhibits serve as physical or documentary evidence presented to the judge and jury to substantiate claims made during a trial. This can include a wide variety of materials, such as contracts, emails, financial records, and more, which help to establish the facts of the case. Exhibits are specifically prepared and submitted in accordance with legal standards and regulations, making them an integral part of the evidentiary record. Their admissibility is determined by relevance and authenticity, and they can be subjected to scrutiny and cross-examination. The process of presenting these exhibits can provide critical context and clarity, aiding both legal practitioners and jurors in understanding the complexities of the case. While other options may contain relevant information, such as a diary of events documenting occurrences or an audit report outlining findings, they do not carry the same weight as a formally presented exhibit in court. A press release, for instance, is often intended for public communication and may not meet the evidentiary requirements for legal proceedings. Thus, when it comes to providing concrete evidence in a courtroom, exhibits hold paramount importance.

9. What is the primary purpose of an investigation in fraud examination?

- A. To gather evidence for legal proceedings**
- B. To determine whether fraud has occurred**
- C. To analyze financial transactions**
- D. To assess company policies**

The primary purpose of an investigation in fraud examination is to determine whether fraud has occurred. This involves systematically analyzing various elements and indicators that suggest fraudulent activity within an organization. Fraud examination seeks to gather information and evidence that will help clarify the presence or absence of fraud, including fraudulent intent, mechanisms, and impacts. While gathering evidence for legal proceedings, analyzing financial transactions, and assessing company policies are important aspects of a comprehensive investigation, they are often components that support the main goal of identifying fraud. The ultimate objective revolves around establishing whether fraudulent actions have taken place, which will inform subsequent actions, including legal measures, policy revisions, or remedial steps to mitigate future risks. Understanding this core purpose is essential for professionals in the field, as it shapes the direction of the investigative process and the methodologies employed.

10. How do interviews aid in gathering evidence for fraud examinations?

- A. By allowing direct communication with witnesses and suspected individuals**
- B. By generating written statements from all parties involved**
- C. By compelling suspects to provide information under legal threat**
- D. By ensuring that all evidence is documented without witnesses**

Interviews play a crucial role in gathering evidence for fraud examinations primarily because they facilitate direct communication with witnesses and individuals suspected of involvement in fraudulent activities. This personal interaction allows the interviewer to ask specific questions, explore responses in depth, and clarify points that may arise during the conversation. Through interviewing, investigators can observe behavioral cues, tone of voice, and body language, which often provide additional insights into the truthfulness of the responses. It also fosters an environment where individuals may be more willing to share information they might not disclose in written form or through other channels. Moreover, interviews can lead to the collection of valuable context and background information related to the case, helping investigators piece together the puzzle of fraudulent activities. Thus, this method serves not only to gather evidence but also to build rapport, elicit confessions, or uncover additional leads for further investigation, making it a foundational tool in fraud examinations.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://acfecfeinvestigations.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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