

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SPORTS MEDICINE (NASM) BEHAVIOR CHANGE SPECIALIZATION (BCS) PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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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. What can contribute to a sustainable behavior change?**
 - A. Creating a rigid schedule
 - B. Fostering a supportive environment
 - C. Avoiding all temptations
 - D. Taking frequent breaks
- 2. The EAT acronym to describe a process of dealing with negative emotions stands for:**
 - A. Emotion - Automatic Problematic Thoughts - Time-out Thoughts
 - B. Emotion - Automatic Problematic Thoughts - Turn-around Thoughts
 - C. Expression - Automatic Problematic Thoughts - Time-out Thoughts
 - D. Expression - Automatic Stressor Maintenance - Turn-around Thoughts
- 3. What is a primary focus of behavioral coaching?**
 - A. To punish negative behaviors
 - B. To facilitate personal growth and change
 - C. To maintain rigid routines
 - D. To compare progress with others
- 4. How can creating a supportive community influence behavior change?**
 - A. It fosters motivation and shared experiences among individuals
 - B. It highlights individual achievements only
 - C. It discourages dependence on others
 - D. It leads to isolation due to competition
- 5. The main reason for using the transtheoretical model when dealing with exercise behavior is to:**
 - A. A. Match the intervention to the specific stage in which the client is currently.
 - B. B. Understand the reasons the client is participating in exercise in the first place.
 - C. C. Understand all of the barriers to exercise.
 - D. D. Provide a multimodal interdisciplinary approach to exercise adherence.

- 6. What is the purpose of the combined stages of change and multimodal screening matrix?**
- A. Focus on personality factors affecting exercise participation
 - B. Provide information on how significant others impact a client's desire
 - C. Offer background on reasons and causes for fitness program participation
 - D. Consider the client's influential factors for behavior change and readiness
- 7. Which of the following is an example of a process goal?**
- A. Drink an extra 32 oz of water per day
 - B. Reduce daily calorie intake from 3,000 to 1,500
 - C. Lose 20 pounds
 - D. Control my appetite
- 8. The E in the acronym OCEAN, which describes five major personality traits, stands for?**
- A. Extraversion
 - B. Expressiveness
 - C. Explicitness
 - D. Empathy
- 9. Which coaching technique may assist a client in maintaining motivation for change?**
- A. Imposing strict rules
 - B. Offering rewards
 - C. Encouraging self-reflection
 - D. Setting vague goals
- 10. Which stage of change involves actively modifying behavior and strategies?**
- A. Preparation
 - B. Maintenance
 - C. Contemplation
 - D. Action

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. What can contribute to a sustainable behavior change?

- A. Creating a rigid schedule
- B. Fostering a supportive environment**
- C. Avoiding all temptations
- D. Taking frequent breaks

Fostering a supportive environment is crucial for achieving and maintaining sustainable behavior change. This supportive environment includes social networks that encourage and reinforce positive behaviors. When individuals have support from friends, family, or communities, they are more likely to stick to their goals. Support can come in various forms, such as encouragement, mentorship, or shared experiences, all of which play a significant role in enhancing motivation and accountability. Creating a rigid schedule may impose unnecessary pressure and could lead to burnout if the schedule becomes unmanageable. Avoiding all temptations is impractical, as encountering temptations is a part of life; instead, learning to cope with them is more beneficial. Taking frequent breaks can be helpful in some contexts; however, without a supportive environment to maintain one's motivation and positive reinforcement, breaks alone won't facilitate long-term behavior changes. Hence, a supportive environment is paramount for fostering adherence and resilience in behavior change efforts.

2. The EAT acronym to describe a process of dealing with negative emotions stands for:

- A. Emotion - Automatic Problematic Thoughts - Time-out Thoughts
- B. Emotion - Automatic Problematic Thoughts - Turn-around Thoughts**
- C. Expression - Automatic Problematic Thoughts - Time-out Thoughts
- D. Expression - Automatic Stressor Maintenance - Turn-around Thoughts

The EAT acronym, which stands for Emotion - Automatic Problematic Thoughts - Turn-around Thoughts, provides a structured approach to dealing with negative emotions effectively. This method begins with recognizing the initial emotion being experienced, which is crucial as it establishes the foundation for addressing the subsequent thoughts that can arise from that emotion. The next step focuses on identifying Automatic Problematic Thoughts, which are often negative or distorted thoughts that can exacerbate negative feelings. Acknowledging these thoughts is pivotal in understanding how they influence emotions and behaviors. The final component, Turn-around Thoughts, encourages individuals to challenge and reframe their Automatic Problematic Thoughts. This involves shifting from negative or unhelpful thinking patterns to more balanced and constructive thoughts, helping to mitigate the impact of the initial negative emotion. By utilizing this acronym, individuals can develop a clearer understanding of their emotional and cognitive processes, leading to better emotional management and improved overall mental well-being. This approach is based on the premise that recognizing and altering thoughts in response to emotions can facilitate behavior change, which is a core principle in behavior change disciplines.

3. What is a primary focus of behavioral coaching?

- A. To punish negative behaviors
- B. To facilitate personal growth and change**
- C. To maintain rigid routines
- D. To compare progress with others

A primary focus of behavioral coaching is to facilitate personal growth and change. This approach emphasizes understanding individual motivations, fostering self-awareness, and encouraging actionable steps toward achieving personal goals. Rather than focusing on punitive measures or maintaining rigid routines, behavioral coaching seeks to empower individuals by helping them identify their strengths and areas for improvement. This method encourages self-reflection and supports sustained behavior change, making it a more positive and effective approach in helping people navigate their journeys towards healthier lifestyles and habits. The aim is to create an environment conducive to learning and growth, where clients feel motivated to engage in the change process actively.

4. How can creating a supportive community influence behavior change?

- A. It fosters motivation and shared experiences among individuals**
- B. It highlights individual achievements only
- C. It discourages dependence on others
- D. It leads to isolation due to competition

Creating a supportive community is instrumental in influencing behavior change because it fosters motivation and shared experiences among individuals. When people are part of a community that shares common goals or challenges, they can encourage each other and provide accountability. This support can enhance individual motivation, making it more likely for members to engage in behaviors that drive change. Additionally, shared experiences allow individuals to learn from each other, build camaraderie, and feel a sense of belonging, which can be very powerful in overcoming obstacles to change. As they witness collective progress and support each other's journeys, individuals are more likely to remain committed to their goals and adopt healthier behaviors, significantly increasing the likelihood of sustained behavior change.

5. The main reason for using the transtheoretical model when dealing with exercise behavior is to:

- A. A. Match the intervention to the specific stage in which the client is currently.**
- B. B. Understand the reasons the client is participating in exercise in the first place.
- C. C. Understand all of the barriers to exercise.
- D. D. Provide a multimodal interdisciplinary approach to exercise adherence.

Using the transtheoretical model in the context of exercise behavior is centered on effectively aligning interventions with the specific stage of change that a client is experiencing. The model identifies several stages individuals go through when modifying behavior—precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, and maintenance. When a practitioner matches the intervention to the client's current stage, they can provide the most relevant support and strategies necessary for progress. For instance, an individual in the precontemplation stage might require different motivational techniques compared to someone in the action stage. This tailored approach increases the likelihood of the client successfully moving through the stages, enhancing their commitment and likelihood of long-term adherence to exercise. While understanding the reasons for participation, recognizing barriers, and employing a multimodal approach to adherence are valuable aspects of promoting exercise, they do not specifically address the tailored support that the transtheoretical model emphasizes for effective behavior change at a particular stage.

6. What is the purpose of the combined stages of change and multimodal screening matrix?

- A. Focus on personality factors affecting exercise participation
- B. Provide information on how significant others impact a client's desire
- C. Offer background on reasons and causes for fitness program participation
- D. Consider the client's influential factors for behavior change and readiness**

The combined stages of change and multimodal screening matrix is designed to thoroughly evaluate a client's individual circumstances, which includes their readiness for behavior change. This approach recognizes that behavior change is complex and influenced by multiple factors, such as personal motivation, social support, and surrounding environment. By considering these influential factors, practitioners can tailor interventions that are more likely to resonate with the client's unique situation, thus increasing the likelihood of successful behavior change. This understanding helps in creating a personalized action plan that aligns with the client's current stage in the behavior change process and addresses specific barriers or facilitators to fitness program participation. Recognizing where the client is in their journey allows for more effective support, encouragement, and strategies that match their level of readiness, ultimately promoting sustainable lifestyle changes and adherence to fitness goals.

7. Which of the following is an example of a process goal?

- A. Drink an extra 32 oz of water per day
- B. Reduce daily calorie intake from 3,000 to 1,500
- C. Lose 20 pounds
- D. Control my appetite**

A process goal is focused on the actions or behaviors one can control, which ultimately lead to achieving an outcome goal. In this context, controlling appetite reflects an intention to implement specific habits that directly influence eating behaviors, making it a clear example of a process goal. This choice emphasizes the ongoing effort in managing one's behavior, which is essential when making lasting lifestyle changes. By focusing on appetite control, one can develop strategies to prevent overeating or make healthier food choices, establishing a foundation for achieving broader objectives like weight loss or improved health. In contrast, the other options presented are examples of outcome goals which are quantifiable and result-oriented. Drinking a specific amount of water or reducing calorie intake are specific targets that reflect desired outcomes but do not encapsulate the behaviors necessary to reach those goals in a way that encourages a process-oriented mindset. Similarly, losing a certain amount of weight is a clear outcome and does not address the behaviors required to bring about this change.

8. The E in the acronym OCEAN, which describes five major personality traits, stands for?

- A. Extraversion**
- B. Expressiveness
- C. Explicitness
- D. Empathy

The E in the acronym OCEAN indeed stands for Extraversion. This trait reflects an individual's orientation toward or preference for social interaction and the extent to which they seek stimulation in the company of others. People who score high on this trait are typically outgoing, energetic, and enjoy being around other people, often thriving in social situations. Understanding Extraversion is important in behavior change contexts, as individuals with high levels of this trait may be more likely to engage in group activities and benefit from social support when pursuing fitness and health goals. This contrasts with other traits like expressiveness, explicitness, or empathy, which do not fit into the OCEAN model. Extraversion, as a fundamental aspect of personality, helps practitioners tailor interventions and approaches in motivating clients along their behavior change journey.

9. Which coaching technique may assist a client in maintaining motivation for change?

- A. Imposing strict rules
- B. Offering rewards
- C. Encouraging self-reflection**
- D. Setting vague goals

Encouraging self-reflection is a powerful coaching technique for maintaining motivation for change. This approach allows clients to examine their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, facilitating a deeper understanding of their motivations and goals. Through self-reflection, clients can identify personal values and connect their actions to those values, which can enhance intrinsic motivation. It empowers them to recognize their progress, reassess their strategies, and make informed decisions about their journey. Self-reflection also promotes self-efficacy, as clients gain insights into their strengths and areas for improvement. This insight can lead to a sense of ownership over their changes, making them more committed and motivated to continue on their path. In contrast, imposing strict rules may lead to resistance or feelings of external pressure, which can undermine motivation. Offering rewards might provide short-term incentives but does not foster long-term commitment and internal motivation. Setting vague goals can create confusion and a lack of direction, making it difficult for clients to stay motivated as they may not clearly understand what they are working towards.

10. Which stage of change involves actively modifying behavior and strategies?

- A. Preparation
- B. Maintenance
- C. Contemplation
- D. Action**

The stage of change that involves actively modifying behavior and strategies is the Action stage. During this phase, individuals are engaged in making significant changes to their behaviors and are taking concrete steps toward their goals. This includes implementing new strategies, making lifestyle adjustments, and focusing on practices that support their desired changes. For instance, someone aiming to lose weight may start exercising regularly or change their diet plan, marking tangible and observable efforts toward their objectives. This stage requires a high level of commitment as individuals transition from thinking about change to actively pursuing it. It is characterized by visible actions and behaviors that align with the person's goals. Successfully navigating this stage is crucial for progress, as it sets the foundation for consolidating these changes into long-term habits in the subsequent stage.

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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:

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

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