YOUR PATH TO GPC SUCCESS:

MAXIMIZING GPCI STUDY TOOLS AND RESOURCES

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GPCI Virtual Presentation

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Seasoned nonprofit professional: 25 + years of experience in nonprofit management, program services, and operations

5 years in government services: $5.4 million in Federal, State, and Foundation grant awards during this time

Passion for nonprofit capacity building: helping nonprofits strategically utilize resources to achieve successful results (i.e., work smarter, not harder)

B.B.A from Middle Tennessee State University
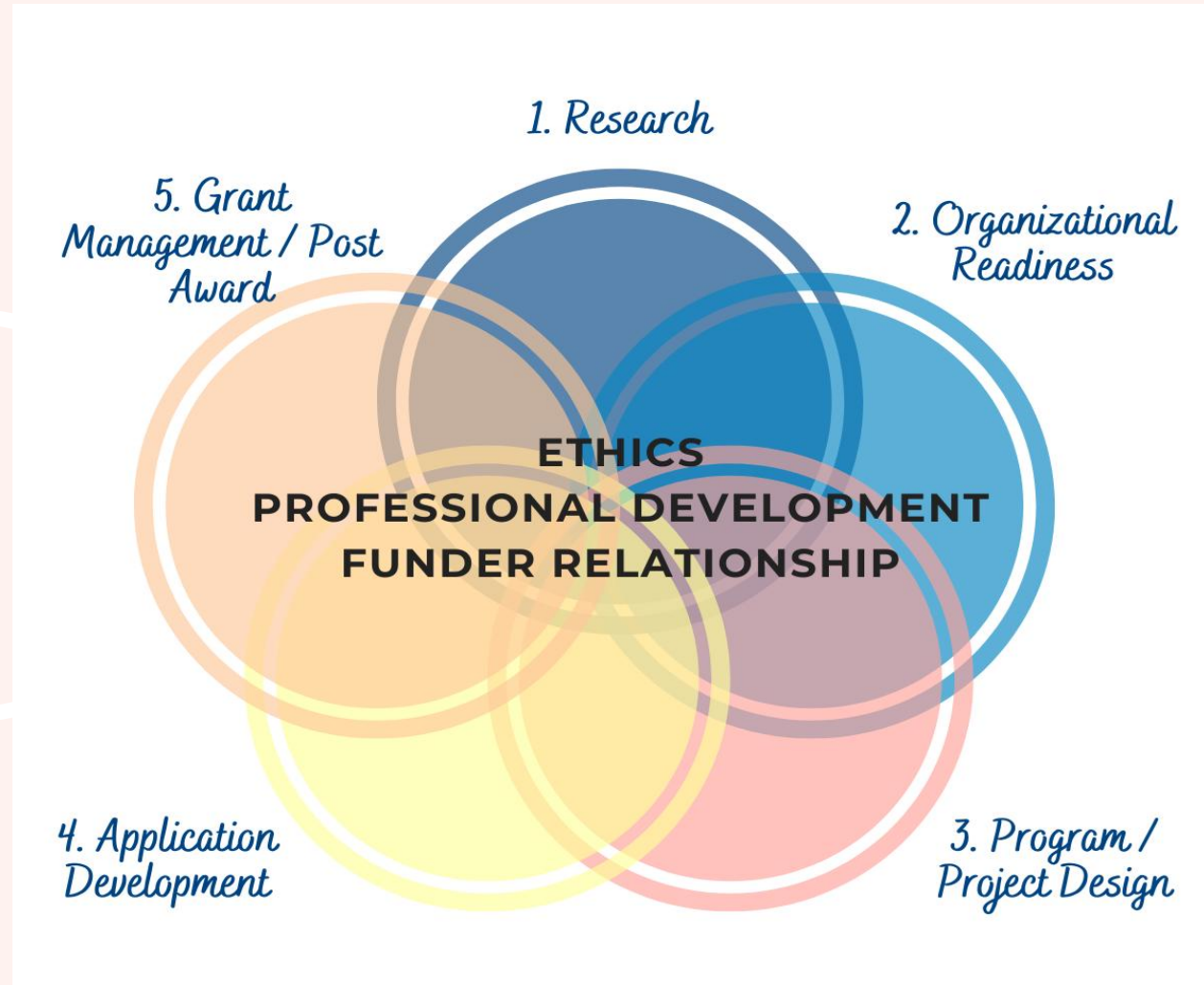M.A. from Tennessee Technological University

Avid reader, strategic thinker, creative junkie and nature watcher

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Apply Existing Knowledge for Exam Preparation: Utilize your current understanding to effectively prepare for the exam.

2. Identify and Address Knowledge Gaps: Pinpoint areas where your understanding is lacking to prioritize your study efforts.

3. Utilize Available Tools and Resources: Familiarize yourself with and leverage GPCI tools and resources.

4. Develop a Comprehensive Study Plan: Create a structured framework to guide your study process.

5. Implement Your Success Strategy: Prepare to execute your personalized steps towards exam success.
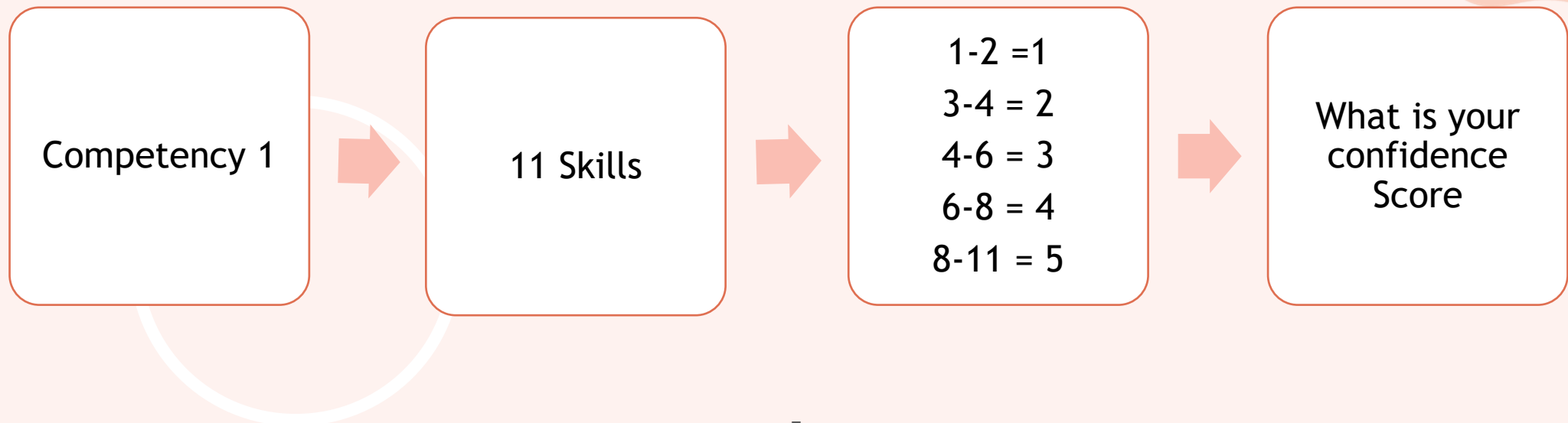
WHAT DO YOU KNOW

1. Research

5. Grant Management / Post Award

2. Organizational Readiness

ETHICS
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
FUNDER RELATIONSHIP

4. Application Development

3. Program / Project Design

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Use the GPCI's GPC Competency and Skills list to do a self-assessment

- Review the list to evaluate your existing skills, knowledge, and understanding based on your current workflows, tasks, and experiences.

- Generate a "Confidence Level Score" for each Competency using a 1 to 5 scale

- Add up your total score. A score of 0-10 may indicate that maximum study time is needed, 10-20 Keep studying (6-8 months), 20-30 Almost there (2-4 months), 30-35 Ready to Go: start final exam preparations.

| Competency 1 | → | 11 Skills | → | 1-2 =1
3-4 = 2
4-6 = 3
6-8 = 4
8-11 = 5 | → | What is your confidence Score |

GPCI TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Complete the knowledge circle

GPCI WEBSITE: ELIGIBILITY TAB

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Competencies Tested: Download and print copy of the Competencies and Skills

Preparation:

Sign up: Fireside Chats
Download and Review: GPCI Literature Review
Download "30 practice multiple choice questions"
Review: Study Guides and Groups
Download: GPA Conference Tracker

Candidate Guide: **Download a copy of the Grant Professional Certification Examination Candidate Guide**

GPCI WEBSITE: Preparation

Preparation

The GPC exam is a generalist test designed for the individual who demonstrates mastery and experience. It is not considered an entry-level exam so a GPC exam candidate should not need to spend a great deal of time studying or preparing. However, studying and reviewing materials may be helpful if you specialize in one area (i.e., you only write federal proposals and not foundation proposals) and need to enhance your knowledge in other areas.

Competencies and Skills

The GPC Exam is based on the **Competencies and Skills** developed and continually updated by subject matter experts within the field. It is intended to give employers and contractors an objective view of a grant professional for hire. A review of this document and the skills listed will provide valuable insight to the types of questions typically found on the exam.

Informational GPC Firesides

Listen to a quick overview of the eligibility requirements and steps to get the GPC (Grant Professional Certified) credential. Then ask your questions in a friendly and supportive atmosphere. From eligibility criteria to the registration process—we'll talk about it all. See if earning your GPC is the next step in your career! Click here to **register for upcoming GPC Fireside sessions**. Panelists will include GPCI Board Members and other GPCs.

GPCI Literature Review

The **GPCI Literature Review** may be helpful to GPC candidates looking to refresh knowledge or fill experience gaps in the grants field. This review contains general grant information as well as a list of books, journal articles and websites that may be of interest. Michael Wells, author and grants consultant, originally prepared the GPCI Literature Review as a tool in developing the credentialing examination for use by grant professionals who wish to refresh their knowledge prior to taking the exam.

Study Guides & Groups

GPCI **does not promote or endorse** any study guide related to the exam and they are **not a requirement** for taking the exam. Below are some publicly available study guides– some formal, some not-so-formal. Should other publications become available, GPCI will make those known, to the best of our ability.

- **Current Study Groups** that may accept new participants.
- Email our **GPCI Ambassador Chair** to be connected with local networking and study groups.
- Conducting a free **GPC Exam Study Group: Train the Trainer kit** available for group leaders.
- A new set of **30 practice multiple choice questions** are available to help you study.

GPCI Accepted Education Program

While GPCI neither endorses or sponsors any specific training providers, our Accepted Education Program lists providers who offer trainings that have been reviewed by GPCI to cover the GPC Competencies. These courses might be valuable as you seek to refresh or supplement your knowledge base. Please visit **Accepted Education Program** to learn more.

GPA is a participant in GPCI's Accepted Education Program and if you attend a regional or GPA chapter conference, you can earn points for attending approved workshops. And if you attend GPA's annual conference, you can earn one point for every hour of workshop attendance. This could include keynote and luncheon speakers but not social events such as the Welcome Reception.

- **GPA Conference 2020 – GPCI Education Point Tracker**
- **GPA Conference 2021 – GPCI Education Point Tracker**
- **GPA Conference 2022 – GPCI Education Point Tracker**
- **GPA Conference 2023 – GPCI Education Point Tracker**
- **GPA Conference 2024 – GPCI Education Point Tracker**

For more information about the exam, please email **info@grantcredential.org**.

PREPARE TO STUDY:

FLYING SOLO OR WITH A GROUP

This page found on GPCI Website-under Preparation, see Study Guides and Groups "Conducting a free GPC Exam Study Group Train the Trainer Kit"

STUDY GROUP GUIDE: HOW TO USE

Virtual GPC Study Group Guide 2023
Revised February 2025

Katherine FH Heart, GPC, M.Ed., Grants Café Co-Organizer & GPC Ambassador, GPC Study Group Facilitator (2016, 2018, 2023)

The methods described in this guide were drawn from my experience facilitating GPC Study Groups for the GPA-Western PA Chapter and the Grants Café, a volunteer-led grant professionals development meetup group.

The first national Virtual GPC Study Group in 2018 grew out of a GPA Forum request for which I volunteered to facilitate group discussions and JulieAnna Carsen, GPC coordinated the virtual technology and communications. We co-produced a GPA webinar and strategy paper and received the GPCI President's Award for our efforts in 2019.

This 2023 Virtual GPC Study Group was a volunteer effort by co-facilitators of the Grants Café https://meetup.com/grants-professionals-of-western-pa. I served as the GPC Ambassador and Study Group Coordinator. with facilitation assistance from Laurie Anderson. GPC. Caitlin

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GPC Virtual Study Group | Scenario #2: Organizational Development

Review the GPC Examination Competency #2: Organizational development as it pertains to grant seeking along with the 7 skills associated with this competency.

INSTRUCTIONS
Discussion: (a) how would you assess the organization's capacity to apply for this grant; (b) what organizational structures and processes affect grant seeking; (c) how does an organization become grant ready; and (d) what steps would you take to assist this organization?

Multiple Choice Scenario: As a grant consultant, you have contracted with a nonprofit organization to develop a federal proposal. The RFP fits the mission and services. However, it is the largest amount and most complex proposal they have ever attempted at $500,000 annually for five years. The requirements are intimidating to staff. Which are the most appropriate strategies for helping the staff?

1. Provide a list of electronic resources that staff can review and reference as they address various grant requirements.
2. Conduct a workshop with staff to provide an overview of the programmatic requirements.
3. Develop a matrix of applicable requirements with management strategies or action steps.
4. Meet with staff to determine whether an award so large would justify hiring a full-time management specialist.

Choose:
A. 1 and 2
B. 1 and 3
C. 2 and 3
D. 3 and 4

This scenario was posted by Katherine F.H. Heart, GPC, M.Ed. for study group discussion purposes only and bears no resemblance to the actual GPC exam. Scenario derived from GPC

GPCI CANDIDATE GUIDE: HOW TO USE

Sample Items

The following items represent both the form and content of questions in the examination. These sample items cannot cover all the competencies and skills that are tested, and they can only approximate the degree of difficulty of actual examination questions. However, these items provide the general format of the multiple-choice questions and the writing exercise.

An answer key for the multiple-choice items and samples of acceptable writing responses follow each section of sample items.

Sample Multiple-Choice Items

1. A federal grant recipient is required to gain the funding agency's prior approval for changes to the approved project or budget. The exception is changes to

   A. key personnel when such persons were identified in the approved project application.
   B. the scope or objectives of the project when a budget revision is required to implement such changes.
   C. the scope or objectives of the project when there is no associated budget revision.
   D. cost categories which represent less than ten percent of the current total approved budget.

2. For an effective grant application, the LEAST appropriate strategy for designing the budget would be to

   A. list each item and increase the cost of each by a negotiations.

35

Sample Writing Response – Excellent

KIDS TAKING CHARGE

Last year, Youth Services Organization (YSO), a community-based organization with a 35-year history of services to youth identified as "high risk," saw its community's crime rate increase. Crime in Hopeville has always been above the national average, but last year's sharp increase in youth-driven vandalism has caused YSO to create new after-school programming to address and reverse this trend in adolescent crime.

Numerous studies have noted the strong correlation between low academic achievement levels, poverty, and crime. The demographics of Hopeville align with this belief. The poverty rate in Hopeville School District #1 (HSD-1) is among the highest in the city and well above the state mean. While the state average of families living in poverty is 33%, 54% of families enrolled in HSD-1 middle schools live under this hardship. Further exacerbating this disparity in living condition is the neighboring school district, where the poverty level remains at 15%.

Sample Writing Response – Acceptable

Schools within our Youth Services Organization (YSO) target area are poor economically and academically. In our three middle schools, 45.5 percent of students live in poverty (range of 42 to 63 percent). That compares to 33 percent of students statewide and just 15 percent of students within our eight neighboring schools.

Similarly, the 6,600 students in those nearby middle schools outperform our students BY [...] in Math, Reading, Practical Living, and Science (2006 Kentucky Performance [...]

Sample Writing Response – Unacceptable

NEED FOR YOUTH SERVICES ORGANIZATION AFTER SCHOOL TUTORING PROGRAM

The youth and schools that Youth Services Organization serves have no after-school tutoring programs, so this is a critical need for our community to help the children read and do math better, otherwise they won't get good jobs when they grow up. Reading and mathematics are key indicators of academic performance as any teacher or principle will tell you, and students who don't learn at grade level need after school programs, besides it keeps them off

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Providing a Standard of Excellence for the Grant Profession

Score	Make a Persuasive Argument – 34%
4	Clearly relates to the focus given in the prompt Compelling and/or urgent to the reader Phrasing is concise and highly specific States the case wholly from the target population's point of view Case is clearly credible and accurate Case specifically illustrates impact of program
3	Generally relates to the focus given in the prompt Somewhat convincing to the reader Phrasing is relatively concise and specific States the case in a mix of benefit to the grantee and the target population Case is somewhat credible and accurate Case generally illustrates impact of program
2	Vaguely relates to the focus given in the prompt Interesting but not compelling or convincing to the reader Phrasing is loose and general or vague States the case mostly from the grantee's point of view Credibility and accuracy of case are questionable and/or uneven

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER:
<u>Example</u> Study Framework

Timeframe (3MO)	Competency Priority	Focus Areas	Resources
3 Months Out	Competency 4 and 5	Federal Grants	Grants.gov, Sam.gov, CFR 200, Federal NOFO, **GPCI Literature Review**
2 Months Out	Competency 1, 2, 3	Org. systems, collaborations, logic models	Webinars on prospecting, Google Search, Evaluation Methodologies, Logic Model Webinars
1 Month Out	Competency 6,7,8	Ethics	"In the Trenches" **GPA Ethics**, Grant Zone
Submit Packet/Register for Exam	Writing	Writing about evaluation measures	review writing samples in the **GPCI Guide**
30-60 days before exam	Writing	Quick review of all competencies	Notes and **Competencies**

STEPS TO SUCCESS: RECAP

1. Eligibility: GPCI Eligibility Quiz and review Candidate Guide

2. Prepare to Study: gather resources, develop a study framework, find an accountability partner

3. Apply: Gather documentation, complete and submit the packet (consider scholarship opportunities through GPF to assist in exam fees)

4. Final review: identify last review needs, practice timed writing, final pass of study materials and resources.

5. Exam: Determine if you want to do the exam offsite or at home, schedule your exam times (can do on the same day or separate days), be ready on exam day, rest, dress comfortably and in layers, arrive early, be confident- you got this!

6. Celebrate! You completed the exam, and your pass results will come in soon!

Q & A

THANK YOU

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