

HINTS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF CASE STUDIES FOR LPCC EXAMINATION

Several suggestions come to mind so I will list them below:

Have student complete case study section first when they are fresher, more alert

Give students several examples of case studies that are of equal length and subject matter and have them time themselves so they are aware of how long it will take them to answer one case study with adequate time allotted.

Make sure they are very familiar with the DSM-IV and are able to make decisions about the best approaches to problems, including what should be addressed first, etc. Understand the differences between Bi Polar I and Bi Polar II Disorders.

There will be a great deal of information in each case study that is not needed to distract, of course. Suggestion would be to take notes about important issues, information, to cut down on having to read it twice. Reading it twice is a good option if the person is able to read quickly. Other suggestions include reading it once and not reviewing the questions and then reading it again, taking notes. This depends on how people pace themselves and their ability to integrate materials.

Learn the most common DSM-IV disorders, including signs and symptoms, criterion to be met, age of onset, course and duration. Also, have a solid understanding of the personality disorders as these were definitely present in several of the case studies that I had.

They are looking for diagnosis, treatment, evaluation and professional experience/ethics. They may be some case management issues to address such as procedural aspects, significant features, decision making, consultation/supervision and agency policy.

Most of the case studies were approximately eleven to twelve paragraphs long or two full length pages. Five case studies is, in my opinion, one too many and the board should acknowledge that and make changes but of course we know that is unlikely to happen.

Students should have a solid understanding of the theories so they can apply these approaches to each case study. Know the strengths and criticisms of each approach, as to best apply to the case being presented.

Keep Maslow's hierarchy in mind. Think about most immediate/important to tackle first. Life threatening (suicidal ideation) would obviously be addressed first and foremost. When an answer mentions consultation or supervision choices, that is most likely the correct answer. Look for key words like, most important, initial activity, limited degree, with this counselor, certain theoretical approach mentioned, early indicator, capitalized lettered words.

Approach each case study in this order, if possible, to enhance clarity. Diagnosis, commitment to counseling, ethical dilemmas, treatment techniques/tools, and outcome.

Other thoughts that I have heard to be helpful include, eating a healthy snack between case studies, taking a short break to stretch. Don't worry about others in the room and how much time they are taking to complete their exam. Each exam is different and many different tests are given at the same site so individuals may complete exams in various time frames. Use the entire four hours.

If I can be of help in any other way with this, please let me know. I hope this information is helpful to students preparing for this examination. It's a tough one!

Michelle