

What! You are planning to take CISSP Exam? Awesome! Hope this wrote up helps.

No, I did not read cover to cover. No, I did not study 6 hours a day. No, I did not try to memorize any definition or terms. No I did not refer to any silver bullet. Now that everything is clear and out of the way. No, wait I have some Yes's aswell.

Yes, I referenced OSG. Yes, I took all the free quizzes on ISC2 website. Yes, I studied 1-2 hours a day, min 3 days a week for couple of months. Yes, I discussed with fellow CISSPians, prospective CISSPians.

Let's begin with the day of the exam shall we? On the day of the Exam:

I had the 8 am exam. Basically took two ID cards and a Covid19 mask. Did not take any breaks as I ran out of time. I answered 150 questions and was on the computer for 179 minutes.

When I finished the 100th question, I was expecting something to happen (like the exam Ending as described by many others, but that only happens if you get the majority of them right in the beginning, now you know). After 100 questions, fatigue and strain on my eyes started kicking in (may be age related close to my 40s). Took 2 minutes to close my eyes and refocus. Then every question I received was intense (too many twists in wordings) and spent a lot of time re-reading as I felt I was not able to focus. This went on till 140 questions. The next 10 questions were like a breeze. It took me less than 5 min to go through them. Also I had about 7 min left :-).

Where are all the resources you used? Oh, those, scroll down or keep reading.

Somethings I definitely advice:

Invest in good training material or programs. Highly recommend IProTV. (Coupon code is available somewhere)

Invest in a Bluetooth headphones and a Bluetooth transmitter. I used to put the videos on my TV and could listen to the lecture without disturbing my family, plus could be doing other things (cleaning, folding clothes, cooking)

Definitely run through at least 2-3 practice exams. One before you start studying, one during and one after.

Have a manager/adviser mindset when answering questions. Not the administrator or problem fixer)

Apply Code of Ethics to the questions when answering.

Use a good Flashcard app* or paper cards. And definitely go through them at least twice.

* (For flash cards, I used the Simple Flashcards app on Android and imported a csv list of terms and definition that I put together mainly from Adam's list, make sure you define it in your own terms.)

Last few words / thoughts:

While I believe in depth (mile deep and inch wide) study is not recommended, I truly believe having a decent experience using/implementing some of the technology and understanding of the core concepts in IT is essential to passing the CISSP Exam. Again, I know most people will disagree but this is not an exam for someone starting in IT but more who has some prior experience.

Yes, you can be a CISSP if you study the OSG (official study guide from ISC2) most material will come from it.

Processes and stages of various life cycles, when they happen, are important. I really wished I had practiced more trying to better understand them.

If you are like me, who has some trouble understanding some of the words in the English language, invest in a dictionary and you will be wiser by the second.

If you need more details, don't hesitate to ask. I am not going to break any rules of Ethics but can definitely guide or answer questions or clarify topics.

Good luck to everyone who is working on their CISSP.

Useful Resources: Books:

ISC2 OFFICIAL CISSP Study Guide (Boson and Official ISC2 Practice Tests.
English dictionary. What would I do without you.

Online:

ITPROTV Accelerated Course (and some Long Versions)
Destination certification Mind Maps (YouTube).
Computerphile Videos on various topics (YouTube).
Kelly Handerhan's cissp tips for exam (YouTube)

Phew!

Last but not the least, join a study group.

There are plenty, there is one that I recommend. Certification Station. certificationstation.org
And if you are looking for free. Discussions and sessions, join me every Saturday exclusively on
Certification Station on Discord.

If you came here looking for old notes and videos, go to <https://icsbits.com/cissp-study/>

Good luck.