The California Bar Examination

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The California Bar Exam

- Overview
- The Application Process
- Preparing for the Bar Exam
What is the Bar Exam?

- Licensing test that you must pass in order to practice law.
- Minimum competency test
California Bar Exam Format

Day 1 (Tuesday):
- 3 60-minute essays
- 1 3-hour PT

Day 2 (Wednesday):
- MBE

Day 3 (Thursday):
- 3 60-minute essays
- 1 3-hour PT
MBE

- 200 multiple choice questions drafted by NCBEX
  - 100 in a.m. [3 hours]
  - 100 in p.m. [3 hours]
- Day 2 of Exam
Subjects Tested:

- Constitutional Law
- Contracts
- Criminal Law & Procedure
- Evidence
- Real Property
- Torts
A landowner was severely pressed for cash, so he advertised a proposed sale of standing timber on a 2,000-acre tract of his land. The only response as an offer by a contractor who owned a large, integrated construction enterprise. The contractor offered to buy, sever, and remove the standing timber from the advertised tract at a cash price 70 percent lower than the regionally prevailing price for comparable timber rights. The landowner, in desperate financial straits and knowing little about timber values, signed and delivered to the contractor a letter accepting the offer. Before the contractor began performance, the landowner’s investments suddenly improved and he wished to get out of the timber deal.

Which of the following legal concepts affords the landowner his best prospect of effective cancellation?

(A) Bad faith.
(B) Duress.
(C) Equitable estoppel.
(D) Unconscionability.
California Essays

Subjects Tested:

- All MBE Subjects
- Federal and CA Civil Procedure
- Corporations
- CA Community Property
- CA Professional Responsibility
- Remedies
- Trusts
- CA Wills & Succession
Performance Test

Closed universe--only information applicant needs is what is provided
Includes a task memorandum, a “library” and a client’s case file
Designed to test: legal analysis, fact gathering, fact analysis, tactics and problem solving, ethics, and communication.
The Application Process

Two different portions of the bar application (both must be submitted on-line):

1. Bar Exam Application
   Application available-March 1
   Timely filing-April 1
   Final filing deadline-June 15

2. Character & Fitness
   This is generally extensive, detailed, and time consuming
Character & Fitness Application

Relevant Background Information Includes:

- Education
- Employment History
- Disciplinary Actions
- Criminal History
- Financial Difficulties

Resolve any discrepancies between your admissions application and your bar application.
Risk Factor Assessment

- Academic Standing
- Enrollment or performance in bar-tested courses
- Inability to Devote Sufficient Time to Preparation
- Nontraditional Student Status
- Accommodations not available
- Test Anxiety or History of Poor Performance on a Type of Exam
What Should You Do Now?

Work on Test-Taking Skills -- essay writing, multiple choice and memorization

Work on any time or stress management issues

Make hotel reservations
Accommodations

Request accommodations early. Separate application. You may need additional or different documentation than what was required for law school, the LSAT, and/or college.
Plan for Post Graduation

Your best chance of success is to study for the Bar full time starting after commencement through the exam

- Plan your finances
- Living arrangements
- Childcare, family assistance, etc. . . .
Tips For The Study Period

• Sleep!
• Eat regularly
• Make healthy choices
• Stay calm
Tips For The Study Period

• Don’t follow predictions about what subjects will not be tested on the exam
• Adhere to the study schedule that you made at the beginning of the summer
• Memorize—make and use flashcards
Tips For Exam Week

• Choose accommodations near the exam location
• Arrive on Sunday
• Bring earplugs to the exam
• Bring lunch to the exam
• On Wednesday (Day 2), turn off your cell phone; do not read e-mail
• Do not plan on leaving town after the exam ends
Tips For Exam Week

• Use headings and underlining in your answers
• Continue working on the exam (despite mid-exam distractions) unless you are told to stop
• Do not be alarmed when people leave the exam early, particularly the MBE portion of the exam
• Limit your time for each essay to 60 minutes
• Take your break during the Performance Test slightly before the time that BarBri suggests
Seek help now if you are worried or need it.
Otherwise, take a deep breath; with proper and methodical preparation, you will pass.