Networks - C480-(Network+ N10-1008) PASSED First Attempt

Hey everyone! Got to mark another one off the list today after passing the CompTIA Network+ certification exam with a score of 743! Before I get into what I did to pass, I think its important to note that my semester ends July 31st so I was definitely in a rush to get this one done, hence why I didn't spend as much time on this cert compared to previous ones such as the A+, Project+, etc, and also why I probably didn't do as good as I could've on it. But oh well, a pass is a pass!

As always, I like to go as in depth as I can to explain exactly what I did, but if you are just interested in my steps, scroll to the bottom and it should be summarized there!

Now to begin, I started preparing for this cert just like I did for my previous CompTIA certs and even non CompTIA certs, find a good video series to build a base with. For CompTIA, my go to is Professor Messer on youtube, its free and he seems to cover almost everything that will be on the exam. I've heard good things about Dion/Meyers but I just didn't have the time to fit all those in, definitely an option if you don't want to use Messer. If you've read my posts before, you'll know my thoughts on Professor Messer are he's a blessing and a curse lol There is so much information to go over so it's not his fault at all, but good lord is it rough having to watch 90+ videos (even on 2x speed). But, it had to be done. I printed off the objectives and followed along with his videos, taking notes. Once I finished the extremely long video series, I then worked on what material I wanted to memorize for my whiteboard.

Whiteboard Material

To begin, I felt like it would be important to know the process of subnetting, so I watched this short youtube series (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BWZ-MHIhqjM&list=WL&index=1&t=12s&ab_channel=PracticalNetworking>) and memorized the cheat sheet they give you. This series was amazing for teaching subnetting in a short and concise matter. 100% recommend it, if subnetting is confusing to you. Again, I believe Messer/Dion have ways of teaching it, but trying to learn subnetting from Messer on 2x speed was just not happening lol I also memorized the different 802.11 standards for my whiteboard, this was fairly easy because I already had them pretty much memorized from my A+ studies. After that, memorize the OSI layers (along with what goes with them, ex: Network Layer= IP and routers, Transport: TCP/UDP, etc), again, this was pretty easy because you should already have them down from taking Networks and Security foundations. Lastly, I made mnemonic for the troubleshooting steps as well. This all my seem like a lot, but once you practice writing it a few times its fairly easy. In summary my whiteboard material was:

-Subnetting cheatsheet from youtube series

-802.11 standards

-OSI layers

-Troubleshooting steps

Just a heads up, I spent a lot of time practicing subnetting, just to get literally 0 multiple choice questions on it. I've seen some people have a different experience but just thought it would be important to throw out there. Is subnetting important to know? Absolutely. Is it worth memorizing the process for this exam? For my experience, it wasn't. But YMMW. I had a couple questions on the 802.11 standards, along with the OSI layers, that my whiteboard made fairly easy to answer, so I felt like those were definitely worth it.

Practice Tests

Once I had my whiteboard material down, I decided I was ready to take some practice tests. I'll say it again, if you have followed my other posts for CompTIA certs, you'll know I absolutely despise the CertMaster materials and practice tests, they aren't anything like the actual exam IMO. It is beyond me why WGU still uses them, but enough rambling lol I personally love Jason Dion's practice tests, they helped me pass the A+ cert and he has package of 6 tests with like 400-500 questions to help prepare you. I took his first one, scored a 85%, reviewed and took again, scored a 95%. Then I took the second one, and again scored a 95%. At this point, I was like screw it, might as well give that first attempt a go and pray. I definitely was rushing and was not as prepared as I should've been, but I was on a time crunch.

Exam Day and what to expect

I scheduled at a testing facility (I personally think everyone should avoid taking it at home, had a horrible experience with PearsonVUE which is explained more in my first A+ post if you're interested), got there, wrote all my whiteboard material and started the exam. I had two PBQs which weren't too bad, not sure how much I can talk about them but one was configuring some APs and the other had to do with a little subnetting and setting up networks to communicate. The multiple choice were pretty brutal though, not going to lie, I legit felt like I 100% failed. I had 73 total mulitple choice questions and felt 100% confident on maybe 30-35 of them. The other 40+, I could either get down to a 50/50 or had to almost completely guess. I either had some serious luck or maybe I just didn't give myself enough credit for knowing the material. The questions were your typical CompTIA styles questions, ambiguous questions that sometimes don't even make sense, with multiple right answers, but you have to know what is most right or what is done first, etc. I have been able to just accept the test will have bad questions, it's more important to just really be able to decipher what they want. In my opinion, the only way to do that is just repeated exposure to CompTIA tests/questions and then eventually you'll be able to see a trend. I truly believe my experience with taking previous CompTIA tests (A+ part 1, A+ part 2 twice, Project+) is the only reason I passed.

With that being said, there were a ton of troubleshooting questions which is to be expected, knowing just the steps of troubleshooting isn't enough, you have to be able to apply those to tons of different situations. Knowing different cable standards is important, 802.11 standards, know some basic security threats, and lastly STUDY THE ACRONYMS. I personally didn't follow that advice (time constraints) and it definitely made the tests much harder. I honestly can't recall any questions on port numbers, but I did have questions regarding the different protocols. All in all, if I'm able to pass this cert with less than two weeks of preparation, taking 2 practice tests a couple times, then you should be fine if you commit some actual time to prepare!

What I did/would do if I had more time summary

-Watch professor messer series on 2x speed, took notes here and there. If I did it again, I would've watched on 1x speed to try and retain the info better

Watched [this](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BWZ-MHIhqjM&list=WL&index=1&t=12s&ab_channel=PracticalNetworking) series to learn subnetting and memorize cheat sheet for whiteboard. It isn't too long and after some practice, subnetting is fairly easy. Pretty annoying that I literally 0 multiple choice questions regarding it, but I have seen other people say they had questions on it. Up to you if you want to spend the time.

-Practiced writing all my whiteboard material I listed above, memorizing OSI layers and 802.11 standards definitely allowed me to get a few right. Memorizing troubleshooting steps also helped a bit

-Took Jason Dions first two (out of 6) practice exams, reviewing what I got wrong and why. If I had more time, I would've 100% drilled all 6 as many times as I could, I probably would've felt much more confident and done much better. His 6 exams are the sole reason I passed A+ part 2 on my second attempt.

[Subnetting series](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BWZ-MHIhqjM&list=WL&index=1&t=12s&ab_channel=PracticalNetworking)

[Professor Messer Series](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=As6g6IXcVa4&list=PLG49S3nxzAnlCJiCrOYuRYb6cne864a7G&ab_channel=ProfessorMesser)

Sorry for the long posts, I hope this is able to help anyone else preparing to tackle Network+! Let me know if anyone has any questions, Ill try to help as best as I can!