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# ***How Would Elvis Teach the New CPIM SMR Course?***

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# Introduction

- Roger Harris



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# Agenda - *Viva Las Vegas*

- What formats for the course are being used?
- Why are the pass rates so low?
- What does data show?
- How does Colorado teach the course
- Suggestions for improvements



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# Current Pass Rates for SMR

- Last year the pass rate for SMR was 60%
  - *Heartbreak Hotel*
- This year the pass rate has decreased to 52%
  - *Don't be Cruel*
- These could include folks taking it multiple times.
  - *Return to Sender*



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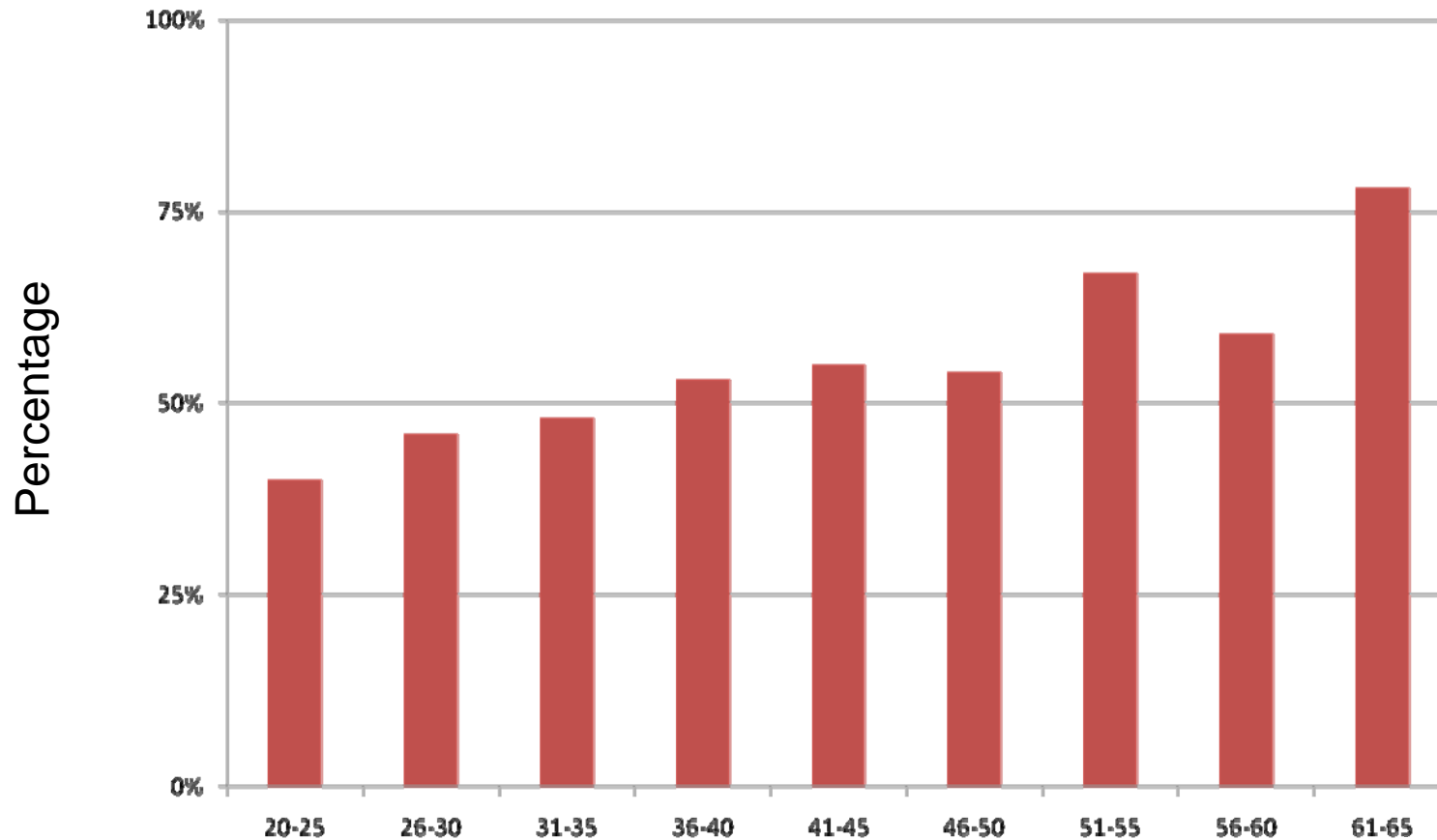
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# APICS Corp. Research

## SMR Pass Rates



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Age Ranges

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# APICS Corp. Research

- Exams match the Exam Content Manual
- Courseware matches the ECM
  - *Treat Me Nice*



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# SMR Class Format

- Most chapters are suggesting this be the last course in the CPIM program
  - *Good Luck Charm*
- Most instructors are staying with the 8 sections in the published order



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# Recommended Texts

- Many! Over \$500 worth
  - *All Shook Up*
- Alternative: SMR Sourcebook
  - Selected reading from texts
  - \$250



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# Class formats

- 2 days with 8 hour sessions
- 3 days with 8 hour sessions
- 4 days with 8 hour sessions
- 2 hour sessions for 8 meetings
- Weekdays
- Weekends



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# Colorado Class Format

- Most of our courses are 2 Saturdays
  - This is the most popular and from what we can tell, it is the most successful for passing/learning
- We do have an occasional private weekday session that is 2 days, all day
- We do have the occasional weekday course that runs 8 meetings at 2.5 hours each



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# Why are pass rates low?

- Who are your students?
  - Planners, buyers, inventory managers, *Jailhouse Rocker's*, etc.
  - Low to Mid level professionals
  - Most are involved everyday at work in operational and/or tactical decisions
  - Few are from the Executive ranks that have strategic planning experience
  - Look at your chapter's strategic planning process

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# What do students say?

- There is a lot of material in this class
  - *Devil in Disguise*
- The exam was tricky
  - *Suspicious Minds*
- There were terms I didn't know on the exam
  - *Crying in the Chapel*
- I should have studied the student guide more
  - *One Broken Heart for Sale*



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# What do instructors say

- The material is new
- Some was confusing to me
- The students were not familiar with the material
- There was not enough time for all the material
- They did not allow enough time to prepare for the class!



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# Roger Harris Research

- Elvis is Alive in Las Vegas!
- The SMR Exam
  - Short questions, pretty straight forward
  - Covered by exam, reading and experience
  - Few to no calculations
  - A few areas that may need extra emphasis
    - *Burning Love*



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# General Colorado CPIM Program

- Normally 2 Saturdays
- Normally 2 Instructors
  - 4 hours each day, each instructor
  - This keeps the instructors fresh and full of energy
  - Give a different flavor, opinion, cadence to the presentation
- Instruction is for learning, not only to pass exam



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# General Colorado SMR Program

- Instruct with passion
  - Love the material
  - Love teaching
  - Love helping students
  - Don't be a *Hound Dog*
- Use real life examples
- Make time for class discussion
- Keep the class fun!



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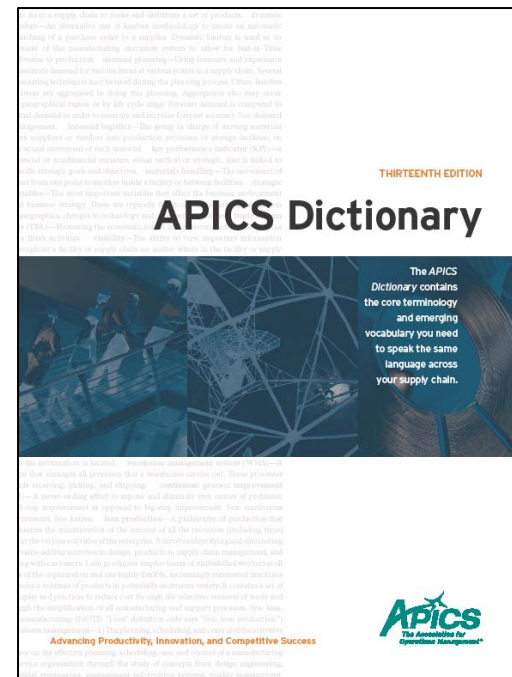
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# Colorado Reference Recommendations

- SMR Student Guide, Actually Read IT!
  - Don't be a *Fool Such as I*
- Take the Course
  - Listen to the Discussions
- Use the APICS Dictionary
- Use Additional Texts as Required



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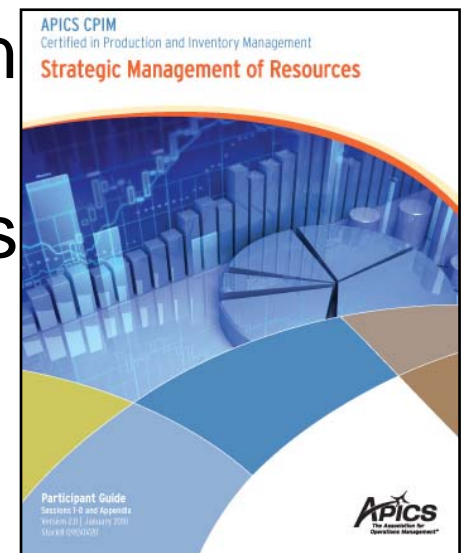
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# SMR Course

- Developing the Business Strategy
- The Global Environment and Sustainability
- Operations Strategy
- Operations Strategy Choices & Financial Measurement
- Aligning Operations with SC Partners
- Infrastructure Systems
- Change Management
- Case Studies



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# What Colorado does not do

- We normally don't do the quizzes in class
  - With the short duration of our courses, we use the time for other things, however, we hand out the answers
- We don't do the Wiki exercises
- We don't add a lot to the material
- All slides are not created equal
  - Some are less important and get less time
  - *I want you, I need you, I love you*



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# Colorado SMR

- Find out who the audience is so you know if there is anyone at a level where they have Strategic experience
  - *I was the One*
  - Use this person for examples throughout the course
- Pay special attention to using examples to illustrate Strategy and/or Strategic thinking



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# Colorado SMR

- Make sure instructors are very experienced themselves, *Teddy Bear*
  - This helps them better understand the Strategic process and be able to explain it
- Tie the SMR course back to the other CPIM course material
  - This allows students to relate to the material



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# Colorado SMR

- Use Real life, Real Company examples
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# Colorado SMR

- Most often mentioned comment is how the examples helped the students understand and retain the material
- Recommend students research any areas they do not have experience with or knowledge of
- **We survey students and believe we have a 73% - 78% pass rate of those who take the SMR course! - *It Is Now***



**or Never**

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# Areas We Emphasize in Class

- SMR is not the course to learn Basics of SCM, DSP, ECO, MPR
- Emphasize Strategic Thinking and Business Strategy
- Emphasize Project Management, Change Management, ERP Implementations (Infrastructure)
- Emphasize Sales and Marketing
  - *Playin' for Keeps*



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# Silver Bullets

- We really don't have any
  - We keep it pretty simple and pretty straight forward
  - Goals are for students to learn the material and how it can help them in the workplace
  - Given this, passing the exam comes pretty natural
    - *Love Me Tender*



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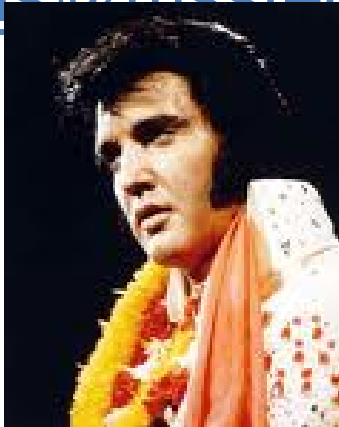
# Thank you, thank you very much!

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**APICS**  
The Association for  
Operations Management®

# References

APICS SMR CPIM Instructor Guide

APICS SMR CPIM Student Guide

APICS Age/Pass Rate Research Project

Roger Harris, trial and error experience

Honey Johnson, CFPIM, CIRM, C.P.M., CSCP

Deb Hansford, CPIM, CIRM, C.P.M., CSCP



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