

# Exam Taker Guide

Aug 24, 2016

Jun12, 2015 (last baseline)
Aug 23, 2015 (needing email link to maintain certification)
Jan 15, 2016 (paper certificate can now be printed by student, no fee)
Aug 24, 2016 (complete update of Appendix B: added picture guide)
(Editors please see working .odt copy for changes highlighted in yellow.)



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# **Chapter 1 Secret to Your Success**

#### The interview disaster: a real-life story

A recent college graduate walked into the room for an interview with a major international financial institute. This candidate had excellent academic record. He spoke well and was well-informed of the current business news within the industry. Everything was going well for him... until... he took out his cell phone to check his messages in the middle of the interview, while his potential employer was waiting for him.

Needless to say, he didn't get the job. Even worse, he never found out the reason why.

## You don't know what you don't know

You don't think this will ever happen to you? Perhaps. According to surveys, over 90% of employers indicated that they hire somebody based *not* on the academic ability of the applicants; which are expected to be appropriate to the position, but actually on the human impression during the face-to-face interview.

Your school report card can only get you to the interview. The door is only half open. The secret to the other half? From that point on in life, it is your people skills that will get you hired, promoted or...fired. Yes, fired! Did you know that 99% of people who were relieved of their position didn't get fired because they couldn't do the job but because they couldn't get along with others.

Yes, it is mostly an attitude thing.

#### The solution

So how do you show that you have a good attitude? A good starting point is to know your manners. But it is not good enough just to say the odd "thank you" or "excuse me", you also need to work on your appearance, your dining and business etiquette, and your office communication skills.

For example, many people make the mistake of thinking that what you wear and how you look is a matter of personal self-expression. But if you want to get ahead in life, you may want to change that attitude and start treating your professional presence (appearance, etiquette and communication) as a sign not only of respect for others, but also as a powerful tool to distinguish you from the competition, be successful at your job, or climb the promotion ladder.

Want to learn more? Or get training to improve your image? Find classes that are offered by

a certified image consultant, or get information from a variety of excellent publications on the subject. And after the training, get certified by writing an IITTI test.

#### Why IITTI?

IITTI is the worldwide standard on business image and etiquette. You can think of IITTI as the SAT or TOEFL or IELTS standard for image, business etiquette and interpersonal skills.

By including your IITTI achievement on your resume, it shows not only that you have a certain level of people skills, but also that you have the **initiative** to learn about etiquette on your own.

Bottom line: it shows that you are a competent person, willing to do what it takes to secure a good job, and that you **care** about your career path.

# **Chapter 2** The IITTI Exam

#### What is the Exam like?

There are three (3) levels of certification:

- (1) Level 1, Basic
- (2) Level 2, Standard
- (3) Level 3, Advanced

We find it useful to describe each level with a single word or phrase; this allows everybody to describe very concisely what each level is about:

- (1) Level 1, Basic "keeping up"
- (2) Level 2, Standard "fluency"
- (3) Level 3, Advanced "refined"

Why three levels? At different point along your career, you may want to attain different levels. Think of Level 1 as the "survival", or "keeping up" level. It is designed to evaluate your interpersonal skills in the three areas of business etiquette: business dress, business behaviour, and dining etiquette for business interaction. Passing this exam ensures that you can identify appropriate and inappropriate behaviour - and have the necessary knowledge to not embarrass yourself at a job interview. It is a vehicle that allows you to raise your general awareness of the importance of appropriate appearance, behaviour and business communication.

With this in mind, the IITTI Level 1 is designed to be a compact unit. It is not a full-fledged business etiquette exam. It tests the knowledge that is minimally acceptable for the uninitiated. Anyone who aspires to work with people would be a good candidate. It is a "catch all".

Level 2 is designed for a more particular group of audience. It is meant to be a full-fledged, wide-spectrum delivery for people who really want to have an advantage in their own branding. While Level 1 is there to help *prevent* people from making big mistakes that would embarrass themselves, Level 2 is there to help people stand out in the crowd.

We ask Level 1 candidates to demonstrate *knowledge*, with only a written test. But Level 2 is where the "rubber meets the road"; not only would candidates need to sit for a written exam, but it is also where they would need to physically demonstrate their *skills* in front of an examiner. There is no faking it!

At a Level 2 practicum exam, candidates would need to demonstrate fluency in the execution of their skills. For example, if the examiner asks a candidate to demonstrate the American style of dining, we would expect the candidate not to hesitate in transferring the fork from the

left hand to the right for eating.

At Level 2, expected skills should be second-nature. Successful candidates are those who have formed good habits by putting into practice the learned skills. You may call it a form of "muscle memory", just like top athletes can perform their skills "in their sleeps"!

Level 3 is a high-level critique. It calls for successful candidates to have not only mastered the essence of business image and etiquette, but also take it to the next level of refinements by reinforcing the learning outcomes through real world experience. The exam is a critiqued practicum conducted at one of our testing centres. The focus is to put into practice the learned skills in a real world setting. There is no written exam for this level.

Level 3 is for managers of multinationals, professionals, professors, and politicians. That is, any vocations that demand the person to see and be seen as a public figure. A Level 3 candidate is somebody who will not only represent themselves, but their company, their profession, their university or their political parties. They are the upwardly mobile.

## Anything fun?

We ask Level 2 candidates to produce their own home-made video about business image and etiquette skills they have learned. And Level 3 candidates to help rate them!

The videos can be something minor, like holding open a door for people behind them at a shopping mall, or giving up their seats on a bus for the elderly. It is not meant for students to need to spend a lot of money in doing; even a cellphone video could suffice, but the content message has to be sound.

Why are we asking this? It is a way to get students to be thinking about what they would consider important. By going through the process of taking the video, they each would need to plan, design, and act; something that they will remember for a long time.

## What does the Exam actually look like?

The computerized, written part of the Exam is web-based.

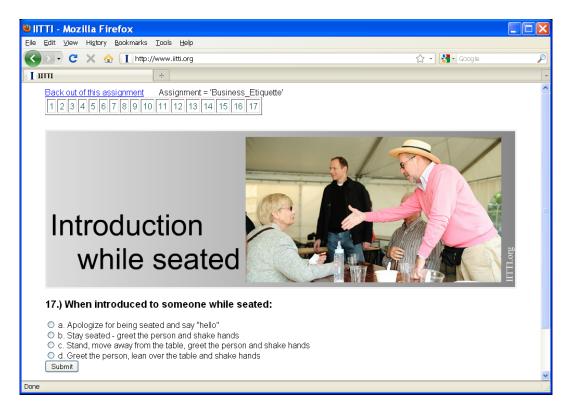
For example, Level 1 certification requires only a computerized exam, and consists of four (4) separate sections in total of fill-in-the-blank and multiple-choice questions with their respective weights of:

General 0%
 Professional Appearance 30%
 Business Etiquette 34%
 Dining Etiquette 36%

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The "General" section is in a fill-in-the-blank format. It asks survey questions about whether the exam candidate had prior training, etc. Although the General section carries zero weight, it is a compulsory section. The other three sections are in a multiple-choice format, asking technical questions in their respective subject matters.

Here is what the actual screen looks like:



# **Chapter 3 Test Structure & Overview**

The Institute of Image Training and Testing International (IITTI) is a non-profit organization formed by seasoned, certified image and etiquette consultants due to a recognized need for standardized business etiquette guidelines. It allows a uniform way for employers and jobseekers to measure soft skills.

Here is a quick snapshot of the different test for each level:

Level	Test Format	Timing	Location
1	Written	1 hour	Local
2	Written and Practicum	1 hour written, 1.5 hour practicum	Local Local
3	Practicum	In-depth (over a few days)	Overseas (in Vancouver, Canada)

#### How does it work?

The written tests consist of web-based fill-in-the-blank and multiple-choice questions done locally at or near the city of the exam candidates. The questions are selected from a large pool of potential questions ranging across all the various topics of the IITTI guidelines such as professional appearance, business etiquette, dining etiquette, etc.

The practicum will test candidates' actual hands-on skills such as business interactions, dinning etiquette, etc. Level 2 practicum is done locally where an IITTI examiner will travel to a location near you to conduct the test. Level 3 practicum requires candidates to travel to a test centre in North America for in-depth, hands-on testing.

#### What if I make a mistake or guess in a written test?

We recommend candidates to go through the different sections in a sequential manner as presented. Once a multiple-choice question is answered, the computer system will score the question immediately, and the answer cannot be changed. The IITTI Exams are intend to test candidates on how well they know the materials, not on random guesses or marginal knowledge.

#### What if I did not finish the written test within the allotted time limit?

Pacing is critical, as there is a heavy penalty for not completing. Just like in real life there are deadlines and schedules, exam candidates are strongly recommended to carry a watch and frequently checking to see the number of questions still unanswered. There are between 50-60 questions in each of the written exams in Level 1 and Level 2.

#### How is my score determined?

For a written test, your score is determined by:

- The number of questions you answered
- How many of the answered questions are correct

There is only a pass / fail score for a written test. The passing score is <u>75%</u>. The practicum is also based on a pass / fail system. In the case of Level 2, a candidate only passes the whole test if both the written and practicum have been passed.

#### What if I didn't answer the survey questions in the "General" section with 0% weight?

The General section is mandatory. If you ignore the General section, you will not be allowed to pass the exam.

#### Are all questions counted in a written test?

Every test contains trial multiple-choice questions being pretested for use in future tests. These questions are not identified, nor will they appear in different locations within the test. You should, therefore, do your best on all questions. Answers to trial questions are not counted in the scoring of your test.

#### What computer skills do I need for the written test?

You only need minimal computer skills to complete the written portion of an IITTI Exam. Familiarize yourself with the mechanics of taking an online multiple-choice test such as the one available at <a href="http://www.IITTI.org/forStudents/sampleTest.htm">http://www.IITTI.org/forStudents/sampleTest.htm</a> may be useful.

#### How do I pay for the test?

You pay for the exam fee by buying an IITTI exam pass. In most cases, you can get an exam pass through your etiquette school. Some schools may bundle the exam fee as part of the tuition fee of the classes.

In other cases, your college or university may also carry the IITTI exam passes. Ask your Career Services Office or your Corporate Communications Office of your college.

You can also buy an exam pass directly online using PayPal inside your account (see Appendix B for detail).

The exam passes are like cellphone cards. Once you get your exam pass, you can enter the exam pass code into your personal account on the IITTI website, under:

Test Takers > Login > Personal data > Enter exam code

You won't be able to access any exam without entering the exam code into your account.

It is strongly advised that you enter your exam pass into the account **before** the exam day.

#### What is the refund policy?

All sales are final. There is no refund. (Note that your exam pass is good forever until you use it. If you cannot make it to one exam, you can re-book another exam date.)

If you are booked for taking the exam on a certain date and you fail to notify us of your cancellation via email within 7 days ahead ("late cancellation"), you will have to pay a penalty fee (detail see Appendix B).

#### **Exam date and logistics**

Your college, university or etiquette school will help coordinate with IITTI to arrange for a suitable date for your test. Sign up on the list of names for the exam at your school; make sure the name on the list is EXACTLY the same as the identification you will be required to show at the exam room.

Each written test has a password. On the day of the exam, once you are allowed into the exam room, the exam proctor will tell you this exam password.

#### What you must bring to the exam

You need to bring valid identification such as a driver's license, birth certificate, or passport. Your name on your identification document must be the same as the name in your IITTI user account, otherwise you could be refused entrance into the exam room, and worst, your exam could be voided.

You need to remember your IITTI user account ID and user password for the exam; without your successful logging in onto your account once inside the exam room, you won't be able to access the test.

You should already have entered your exam pass into your account **beforehand**. You are strongly encouraged to carry a watch for time-keeping.

You must not bring any books, leaflets, laptop, tablet, smart phone or any other Internet devices in to the exam room. There will be computers provided inside the exam room for your use.

You won't be allowed into the exam room 15 minutes after the start of the test.

There may be video cameras set up in the exam room to prevent cheating. When you enter the exam room, and under the guidance of the exam proctor, stand close to one of the cameras, smile, and announce yourself as follow:

"Hi, my name is	I am from	(your city	<u>and</u>	<u>country)</u> .	And I am
here to write the ET exam."					

Make sure your face is visible to the camera without any hat or hair covering your face. Take off sunglasses. Do not put on heavy makeup to distort your facial features. Speak clearly and loudly so that the video can pick up your voice. Your exam will be voided if IITTI finds your identity to be in doubt or unclear.

After the exam, make sure you log out of your account! If you don't log out, others can gain access to your account and change your information.

#### When will I know the final score?

After you complete each question, your score will be immediately stored into the IITTI database. But the overall, final percentage won't be available until 1-2 weeks later. The reason for the time lag is that it allows IITTI to scrutinize certain questions to see if they should be counted in the final tally. (There may be trial questions that we put into the exam; these can be counted or not counted depending on our internal review.) The final score is given in an overall percentage.

All candidates will be officially notified 1-2 weeks after the exam via emails.

#### Can I get a paper certificate?

Yes, you can print your own official certificate on paper. Once the overall final percentage is released and you have passed, there will be a link shown in your account where you can print your paper certificate. Look under:

Test Takers > Login > Personal data > My scores

and then click on the link to the exam that you have done.

### How do I maintain the standing of my certificate?

Your certification standing is good as long as you maintain a valid email address in your IITTI user account. This is required because there is a continuing education program where you can attend our occasional online lessons. IITTI will send notification of any such lessons to you via your email address. Although attendance of these lessons is optional, a record of lessons completed will be shown together with your certification record when employers look up your user ID. Please note a small administration fee (\$2-\$3) for every lesson will be charged to cover cost.

#### Is there any circumstance that I can lose the standing of my certificate?

IITTI reserves the right to revoke your certificate if you have been convicted of any criminal offence in any country.

# **Chapter 4** Content of the test

Here is a guide to what is covered in the Level 1 "Corporate Basic" exam.

#### **Professional Appearance**

Business Dress – the differences between formal, semi-formal, and informal Use of Colour – different colours that make you more authoritative, caring, approachable or energetic

Fabrics, Prints, Patterns – the use of wool, cotton, or synthetic materials, prints such as floral, plaids, and matte vs. shiny

Grooming, Hygiene – hair styles, body scents, tattoos

#### **Business Etiquette**

Definitions – what is the definition of the words "etiquette", "manners"

Networking – purpose of networking, what to talk about, behaviours to avoid

Introduction – introducing lower rank to higher rank, introducing one's self

Handshakes – positioning and motion of handshake

Name tags – correct placement of a name tag

Business Cards – how to give and receive a business card

Behavior – appropriate and inappropriate behavior in a work environment

Meetings – who leads a meeting, what about cellphones?

Job Interview – who leads an interview? how to follow up?

Body Language – the personal space

Eve Contact – how long is an eve contact for business?

Telephone & Techno-Etiquette – how to put customers on hold? how to answer calls?

Email Etiquette – salutation usage, using capital letters

Social Media Etiquette – abbreviations, what not to post

Good Manners: Everyday Applications – how to use a wet towel in a restaurant, where can a lady apply make-up?

#### **Dining Etiquette**

Business Dining Etiquette – who is the most important?

Business Seating Arrangement – is it male-female-male or is it gender-neutral?

Duties of Host & Guests – specific protocols for hosts and guests at home and at a restaurant

Categories of Meals – a four-course meal consists of what?

Place Settings – placement of forks and knives, plates, glasses

Wine & Beverages – basic knowledge of wine and wine pairing

Utensils – recognize different types of knives, forks, spoons

Table Manners – what to do with your elbows, how to pass food around table

European vs. American Dining Style – what are they?

Difficult Foods – appropriate way to eat them

Tipping – how much?

# Appendix A Guidelines to Taking the Exam

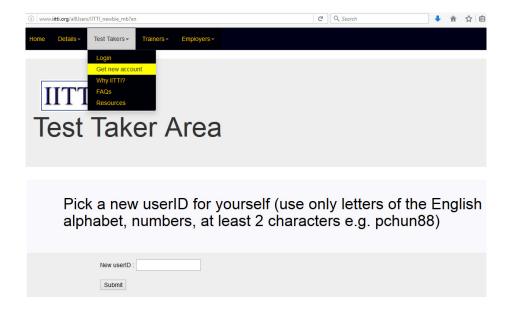
Here are the guidelines to taking an IITTI written test.

- 1.) This is the basic level test. In order to ensure accuracy of the test, please do not seek assistance in answering the questions.
- 2.) There is a time limit of one (1) hour. You must complete this test in one sitting.
- 3.) The test consists of a fill-in-the-blank section followed by three (3) sections with a total of 50-60 multiple choice questions. You must answer all the questions.
- 4.) Please be informed that once you have entered your answers for each question, you CANNOT return to change your answers.
- 5.) The first section of the test would require you to provide some general information about yourself. If you ignore the General section, you will not be allowed to pass the exam.
- 6.) Don't forget to click **Log out**, otherwise other people can get inside your account.
- 7.) If you have any questions about the exam, please contact us via email.

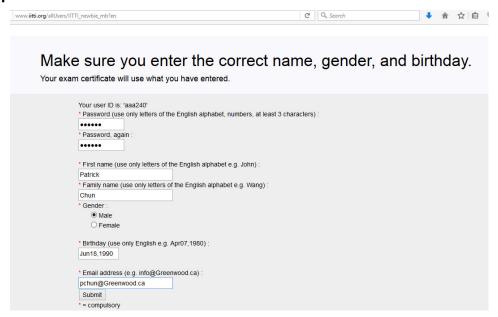
# Appendix B Step-by-Step to the Written Test

Here is the step-by-step guide to gain access to an IITTI written test.

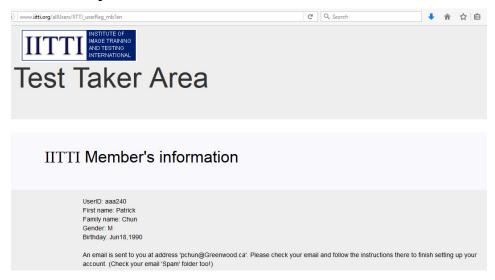
#### Open a new account



#### Enter your personal data

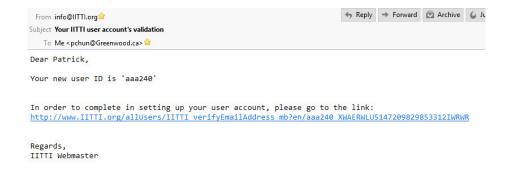


## An email will be sent to you

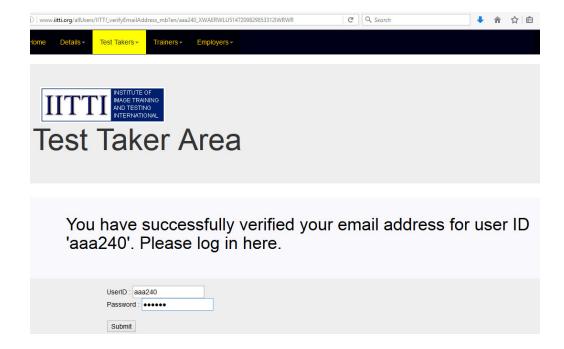


Make sure you check your spam folder too. Your email program may think IITTI had sent you a junk mail!

# Click in your email to validate your new IITTI account

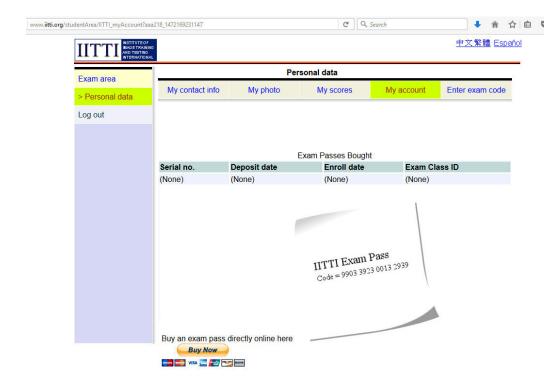


## Log in after you have completed validation of your user account



#### Now get your exam pass

Get an exam pass from your college, university or image etiquette school. Or you can also buy an exam pass directly online using PayPal inside your account:



Test Takers > Login > Personal data > My account

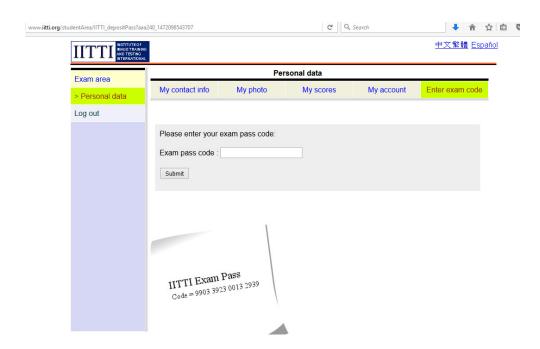
This exam pass is your ticket to an IITTI written test.

## **Enter your exam pass**

Before the actual test date, log in under 'Test Takers'.

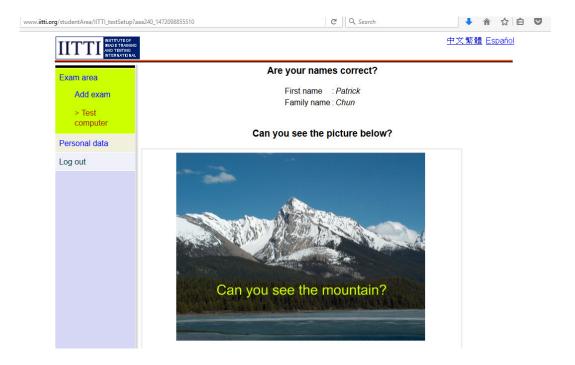
Enter the exam pass' code under:

Personal data > Enter exam code



Now you are almost all ready for the exam...next check your computer.

# Check your computer for Adobe Flash driver



Now you are ready for the exam!

## On the test day

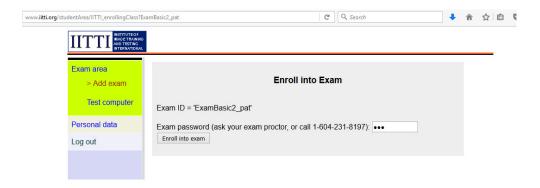
On your test date, go to your exam venue. Log on to your IITTI account under 'Exam Takers', go to:

Exam area > Add exam

In the exam room, your exam proctor will give you the **Exam ID** and **Exam Password** so that you can access the actual exam. First select the correct Exam ID.



After clicking on the Exam ID, now enter the Exam Password.



Done! You have just successfully joined an exam!

Now you can go to 'Exam area' and click on the exam and do the test! Good luck!



#### Click on the Exam ID. You should see:



After the exam, make sure you log out of your account!

#### Late Cancellation Fee

For late cancellation (notifying us less than 7 days ahead of actual test date), you will need to pay a late cancellation fee of US\$30. Go to "My account" and go to "Late Cancellation" to pay via PayPal.

#### Contact IITTI at:

Institute of Image Training and Testing International Vancouver, Canada

Tel: (604) 231-8197 web: <a href="https://www.IITTI.org">www.IITTI.org</a> email: <a href="mailto:info@IITTI.org">info@IITTI.org</a>



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