# Transcript: IT Podcast - Ep 95 - C393 Tips with Basil Muhammad and Jessica Galterio - mix

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Welcome to the IT audio series. I'm Jessica Galterio and I've been a program mentor with WGU since 2015. Today I have with me Basil Muhammad from the IT Fundamentals Group, who has been with WGU since 2016. Thank you for joining me today Basil.

Thank you for having me.

Today, we're going to talk about C393 IT Foundations or the first half of the A plus certificate exam. What is this course about? What's your mission statement?

This course is about preparing students for the CompTIA A Plus 220-1001 exam. Our mission is to not only prepare students for the exam, but also get them prepared to be an IT tech in the field.

Perfect. What are some of the key resources that students should be using in this course?

Our official resource is CertMaster, which is created by CompTIA. Other resources that we recommend might be LinkedIn learning, resources available in the WC Library, CertMaster or any other free to use resource that is not banned by the resources list created by CompTIA.

Okay, perfect. What are some common barriers that students run into with this course?

The biggest barriers the students face are the volume of information that our students are expected to learn, especially if they're new to IT. In the past, the resources seem to not match what is actually on the exam. CompTIA has come up with their own learning resource platform called CertMaster, which we are using officially now here on WGU. As students seem to be more satisfied with that learning resources as opposed to other resources in the past.

That's great to hear.

It's has been a definitely a vast improvement on student satisfaction, as well as the learning resource content matching is actually on the exam.

What would you recommend to students? What's the best way to get through this course efficiently?

I recommend students who are new to the course to take their time. Usually it takes about 4-6 weeks to prepare for the exam if you are new to IT. For seasoned veterans, it might take 2-3 weeks. Where I do not recommend going through this course quickly as the concepts might be phoned, then when we actually know in the field. Answering or learning the content based on how CompTIA presents the CompTIA to be is going to be the best way to pass the exam,

and that might take some time to go. For instance, CompTIA has verbiage that they use on their exam that might be hard to decipher. A seasoned veteran might want to study how CompTIA asks questions before going to take an exam. Same thing with newer people to IT. They not only want to learn the topics that are covered in exam, they also want to learn how CompTIA ask questions on the exam.

That's probably one of the main tips, especially if you haven't taken a certificate exam, you need to figure out how they ask questions.

Correct.

Do you feel that CertMaster prepare students well for that?

Right now CertMaster is a relatively new. I want to say where exists the second week of September. It is about two weeks old. Right now we're vetting the resource, but it seems to be doing very well.

That's great.

From students feedback.

Perfect. Now is there anything that students should be watching out for on the exam?

The exam is in two parts. The first part is called the performance-based questions or a PBQ. These are lab simulations that CompTIA ask you in order to demonstrate your acknowledge by actually solving these lab problems. These lab problems are score all or nothing so there are no partial credit for these. This is particularly important because a student wants to be sure that they go through all the steps that are asked of them and they want to be sure to save the lab in order to receive credit for it.

The biggest reason for this is that if a student gets more than one PBQ wrong on the exam is an automatic fail. That's from my professional outlook on it. I don't know if that's official or not, but that's what I have noticed.

That's great to know too, because students want to make sure they really catch every detail in those lab based questions then.

Correct, and is not so detailed as to, you have to spend four or five minutes trying to make sure you get everything done. If you arrive at the solution, you'll get credit for the PBQ. That's the good part. The second part of the exam is multiple choice and multiple select. There are no fill in the blanks. The exam will consist of about 90 questions. You might have 2-4 PBQs and then about 80-85 multiple choice or multiple select problems.

One of my top tips for those multiple choice questions is to not change answers. If you're confident in the answer, click it and move on. Because the question are so wordy and you only have about one minute per question. This strategy in particular is going to help you use your time wisely.

That's a great tip. Now, what excites you about this course?

Well, I'm an IT enthusiast. I've been doing IT since I was about 10 years old, about 31, 32 years I've been doing IT. It's something that I'm particularly interested in. I also take value in showing others how to be IT enthusiasts, as well as how to kick off their career on the good foot in IT.

What type of industry jobs can students expect once they have the certificate?

Because A plus is designed to show basic competency in IT. Entry level IT jobs are going to be key what students are going to be searching for or with people who sit at IT career are going to be searching for at first. These positions could be IT support, help desk or junior network administration jobs.

Great. Is there anything else that we didn't cover today?

I think besides the tip on not changing answers, a couple of other things students might want to keep in mind is to flag questions that are strictly unknown and come back to them.

Okay.

Do not wait to do the performance based questions last. Because if you flagged them and come back to them, students might get lost in the multiple choice and not have enough time to do the performance based questions. Remember in that, what I think up earlier is that if you get more than one PBQ wrong that's an automatic fail. Keep that in mind you want to make sure you get those PBQs done first.

Yeah. Give yourself time for them for sure.

Especially if you want to come back to them.

Well, thank you so much for your time an expertise Basil. We really appreciate you being here today.

Thank you-all for having me.

You're welcome, and that concludes this episode of the IT audio series.

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