



CRA Domain Development

The CRA exam is based on a blueprint determine by focus groups and surveys to quantify the tasks, skills, and knowledge sets of quality imaging management.

If you've taken even a quick look through CRA materials, you've probably realized that the CRA exam focuses on 5 content areas called domains: human resource management, asset resource management, fiscal management, operations management, and communication and information management.

And, you probably have discovered that the CRA program is all about these domains, as are the test questions. One prerequisite to apply to take the CRA exam is having management experience in these 5 domains. And, when CRAs renew their credential, their CEUs must relate to these domains.

These 5 domains are an important aspect of the CRA credential.

Where the Domains Came From Determining the domains was the crucial first step in determining content for an exam testing imaging administration.

Before the CRA exam could be developed, there had to be an accurate study to determine what, exactly, the exam should test. You would require a plumber to be knowledgeable in joining pipes and running drains, but not require a full understanding of the molecular structure of a water molecule or the factory procedure for nickel-plating a faucet. In the same way, there is a skill set required of excellent imaging administrators that is different from the skills required of techs, radiologists, or managers in other fields. There is some overlap between related fields, to be sure, but the total set of skills is unique to the imaging management profession.

The domain process began with a 10-member panel of imaging management professionals intentionally selected to represent a wide range of backgrounds, facility types, practice settings, and geographic regions. Guided by test preparation specialists, this group spent several days discussing imaging administration. When they were finished, they had distilled the profession into discrete tasks and domains and detailed the skills and knowledge required to perform each task.

Next, the results of their work were used to create a 15 page survey that was distributed to approximately 1000 imaging administrators. The responses from these administrators, which were carefully analyzed by the test preparation statisticians, served to test and fine tune the panel's work and provide a solid set of tasks, knowledge, and domains for the CRA exam.

The final list of 5 domains is the shorthand version of these tasks and knowledge set, which is available on our

CRA website, www.CRAinfo.org, from the "Future CRAs"> "Content and Format" page. You can download the full 14 page breakdown of the tasks, knowledge, and skills that form each of those 5 domains—the specific skill set you use as an excellent imaging administrator.

Domains, Validation, and What it Means to the CRA Program The validation process explains why CRA candidates must have some management experience in the 5 domains—these domains constitute the knowledge and skills the CRA is certifying. The validation process also explains why the CRA exam covers all of the 5 domains and only the 5 domains—the CRA credential certifies a standard of excellence in imaging administration, and skill and knowledge in the 5 domains is the standard examinees are measured against. Finally, the validation explains why renewing CRAs must renew with credits that relate to the CRA domains—credits that don't relate to one of the domains simply don't relate to the body of knowledge certified by the CRA program.

The fact that the domains are carefully studied and tested is very important for the CRA credential and for those who hold it. CRA certification is meaningful because it is based on sound research of the profession of imaging management.

When employers are seeking a professional with the specific skill set they need in their imaging management team, they can look to the CRA credential as a proven, validated means of ensuring a candidate meets that standard.

And, when administrators seek to prove that the unique combination of experience, education, and understanding they have gained in the field of imaging administration has given them the knowledge and skills they need to attain excellence in imaging administration, the CRA credential gives them a proven, validated means to demonstrate that indeed it has.

In test development terms, the CRA is a content-valid examination— it has been tested and documented to appropriately evaluate the knowledge and skills required for excellence in imaging administration. In short, the CRA credential is backed by a validated standard represented by the domains. When an individual attains the CRA certification, that individual has attained more than just a set of initials to put after a name—the CRA credential stands for a tested measure of knowledge and skill in the field of imaging administration.