FCSI Frequently Asked Questions – Becoming a Professional Member

Why should I become a Professional Member?

Becoming a Professional Member of this Society confirms you have experience providing foodservice consulting services, subscribe to a high ethical standard and code of professional conduct, and have agreed to continue your professional knowledge through continuing education. This serves as notice to the industry that, as a consultant member, you are serious about serving your clients and the industry as well as continuing to improve as a professional.

How do I become a Professional Member?

- Join FCSI by becoming a Senior Associate, at which time you have three years to become a Professional Member. At that time you will receive the Packet for Examinations which will help you understand and prepare for two examinations.
- Invest in the Body of Knowledge (BOK), which includes textbooks
- Prepare for and pass the Industry Knowledge Exam (IKE), which is a multiple choice exam
- Prepare for and pass the Professional Skills Exam (either PSE Track #1 or PSE Track #2), which are written and oral presentations

Are there knowledge and skills that Professional Members must demonstrate?

As specified in FCSI’s Bylaws, a Professional Consultant Member of FCSI shall demonstrate a high level of competence in and knowledge of the following:

- The Foodservice and Hospitality Industry
- Consulting Assignment Management
- Professional Specialism
- Business Management
- FCSI Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

What is FCSI’s Body of Knowledge for the Industry Knowledge Exam (IKE) and Professional Skills Exam (PSE)?

The Body of Knowledge (BOK) is a list of resources to help Senior Associates prepare for the IKE and the PSE. It includes books, a DVD, and articles. The knowledge and skills assessed by the IKE and PSE are referenced specifically to the resources in the BOK.

How does FCSI support me as I’m working toward professional membership?

Upon becoming a Senior Associate, you are assigned a coach to guide you and answer your questions. In addition, FCSI’s Director of Education is available to answer any questions you may have as you move through the Professional Membership Process.
What is involved in preparing for the Industry Knowledge Exam (IKE)?

The IKE questions are created specifically from sections of the resources defined by the Body of Knowledge. These sections are spelled out in the Candidate Information guide. Successfully completing this exam is achieved by implementing a personal study plan based on your own learning skills. Your assigned coach is a great source for helping you develop your plan.

Where and when can I take the Industry Knowledge Exam (IKE)?

This multiple choice exam can be proctored by a current staff member or any FCSI Professional Member. The Director of Education can help you identify and schedule a member in your area to proctor your exam. In addition, the IKE is usually offered wherever FCSI-The Americas is involved in a trade show or conference. The NRA Show, NAFEM, Western Hospitality Expo, the New York International Hotel/Motel & Restaurant Show and the FCSI-The Americas’ Biennial Conference are examples of past events. Additional opportunities will be announced on the FCSI website and/or in the DirectConnection.

What is involved in preparing for the Professional Skills Exam (PSE)?

Two activities are included in the PSE. The requirements for your written summary report and your oral presentation are defined by sections of the Body of Knowledge. These sections are spelled out in the Candidate Information guide. The PSE has two tracks, and you select the track that most closely matches your project work. Successfully completing this exam is achieved by reading the Body of Knowledge and creating two submittals, one for the written summary report and the other for the oral presentation. Your assigned coach is a great source for helping you develop your submittals.

Where and when can I take the Professional Skills Exam (PSE)?

The PSE’s two tracks have different requirements for your submittals. For PSE Track #1, you electronically submit your summary report to the Director of Education and deliver your oral presentation to a review panel at a time scheduled when FCSI-The Americas is involved in a trade show or conference. The available times are shown on the FCSI website. For PSE Track #2, you electronically submit all of your materials to the Director of Education and no scheduled time is required. Your submittals are evaluated by a review panel. The Candidate Information guide more completely describes the different submittals required for Track #1 and Track #2.