



Lee Burgess: Welcome to the Bar Exam Toolbox Podcast. Today, we are discussing what you can learn from your score report if you failed the bar. Your Bar Exam Toolbox hosts are Alison Monahan and Lee Burgess, that's me. We're here to demystify the bar exam experience so you can study effectively, stay sane and hopefully pass and move on with your life.

We're the co-creators of the [Law School Toolbox](#), [Bar Exam Toolbox](#), and the Career related website [Career Dicta](#). Alison also runs [The Girl's Guide to Law School](#).

If you enjoy the show please leave a review on your favorite listening app and check out our sister podcast the [Law School Toolbox](#)! If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to us. You can reach us via the contact form on [BarExamToolbox.com](#) and we'd love to hear from you.

Alison Monahan: Welcome back. If you got bad news on the bar exam, it's tempting to put your head in the sand and try to move on as quickly as possible. Now while this impulse is understandable, it's also important to take a step back and really try to figure out why it was that you failed the test so that you can try to pass next time. Painful though it may be, one of the best ways to do this is actually to look carefully at your bar exam score reports. Lee, does everybody get a bar exam score report if they failed the bar?

Lee Burgess: Almost everybody. I think New Jersey doesn't, which I think is really cruel and they just switched over to the UBE2, so it's like-

Alison Monahan: Yeah, it's weird. They give you almost no information.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, so if you're in one of those states, you should call the bar and try and see if you can get your score report. I actually had someone tell me they did petition the bar to get more information about their scores and even get their past exams and it finally worked out, so you never know. You could always call and ask and but hopefully, you'd have something to work with. A lot of people will sometimes put these in a drawer and just not want to look at them but you really need to take it out because some states provide a detailed breakdown of your scores on each essay and performance test, and even your performance tests on each topic on the UBE.

Now, unfortunately, some of this information can be kind of confusing. If this is the first time you're seeing it, it can just be a lot of numbers. You're not really sure what's passing, what's failing, but at this point, you and I have read a lot of score reports over the years.



- Alison Monahan: This is very true. I have to say I had not read a lot of them until fairly recently but now I feel like I am definitely an expert on interpreting a score report from any jurisdiction. You send it over and I can pretty much tell you what it means.
- Lee Burgess: Exactly, and so we thought it might be helpful to kind of break it down for our listeners so you guys can get a better idea of what you have in your hand and what you can learn from it, so because I like to put things in lists as you do, here are four things to look for in your score report.
- Alison Monahan: All right and before we get started, I will also put in a plug. If the jurisdiction is not going to automatically send you your essays, you need to get those even if you don't feel like you want to look at them and even if they're charging you money, which I understand is really frustrating and annoying, just go ahead and order them because they will be useful.
- Lee Burgess: Absolutely.
- Alison Monahan: We're not going to talk about that here but just get them.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah, you can learn so much by going through those exam questions and it's not like you'll just go through them once. Oftentimes, even when my students are studying again, later in the process, they'll go back and look at some of those questions and be like, wow, that's what I did on the exam. I didn't know I did that, so it just brings a lot of clarity to the situation of studying again.
- Alison Monahan: Well, people can look at them for you and help you figure out like, okay these are the things that are universally you need to work on et cetera. All right, so putting that aside, what can we learn from our school report?
- Lee Burgess: Well, the first thing that you can learn is how close you are to passing, which is actually very important information.
- Alison Monahan: Yes, this one I think even New Jersey tells you.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah, so even the least forthcoming states are going to tell you your overall score and the score required to pass and it's important to know, if you're new to the bar exam world, that not everyone has the same score to pass. Even if you're in a [UBE jurisdiction](#), the states can still set their own passing threshold, so it's possible that you may fail, let's say, Oregon, but you pass New York at the same time, because you could be licensed in New York and not licensed in Oregon and so it can be kind of frustrating, but you want to make sure that you understand what the passing threshold is in the state where you sat.



This score report that will tell you your overall score gives you in general terms how close you were to passing. If your overall score is within 10 points of passing, we think you have a pretty good shot at passing on your next try. You likely need to do more targeted writing practice. Maybe use a tool such as [AdaptiBar](#) for the MBE and maybe get some [feedback](#) on your work because it's possible you're leaving points on the table with how you're executing the written part of the exam but Allison, what happens if you're looking at like a 30 or 40 point deficit?

Now before we go on, it should probably be noted that we're really talking more in the UBE realm with these numbers because California has their own strange numerical system because their passing score is a 1,440.

Alison Monahan:

Right, so there you may be thinking in terms of if you're 50 points away versus 200 points away, but you can extrapolate with your particular jurisdiction based on this general sense of, if you're 5% away from passing, you've got a pretty good shot but yeah, I mean, if you're looking at a UBE state, for example, just so people are aware that the passing rates for the UBE are somewhere between like a 260 to a 275 or so, so that's kind of what our point of comparison is, so here if you're looking at making up say, a 30 or 40 point deficit, I think that's where you really start thinking, okay, I've got some serious work to do here in this range. You need to be looking carefully at every aspect of your preparation and you're really realistically probably going to need some significant help to learn how to write a passing essay and performance test and to get a solid score on the MBE.

You might be looking at an MBE tutor. You might be looking at a writing tutor. I mean you can overcome a deficit, a fairly large one but you've got to be realistic about what that's going to require, and oftentimes these are the situations I think where people have had problems going back to that first year of law school. Part of what you got to be thinking about here is do I actually have time to make these corrections before the next exam?

This is definitely not, oh I'll just retake the same bar course, maybe study a little more and probably I'll pass. Maybe you can do that if you're five points away but if you're 45 points away, you're really going to have to fundamentally change the way you're preparing and probably the way you're writing and the way you're approaching the MBE to have a decent shot at passing.

Lee Burgess:

I think that's really true and when we do intake calls with people who failed the bar, one of the things I often go back to and I'm looking at deficits of kind of this amount is, hey, did you struggle in law school, and that's kind of one of the things we want to go back to because if you did struggle with those first year classes, if you did struggle with essay exams, there are likely some underlying



problems that need to be fixed, which the good news is that means that maybe across the board solutions will help raise all of your scores but it's likely that this stuff has been plaguing you. I think, after working with tutors, I'm sorry, after working with students for all these years, I often will get the feedback once they have passed the bar that they wish that they had had some of these writing skills when they were in law school.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, exactly. I think we actually talked about that at lunch when we decided to form the Law School Toolbox because we thought hey, if we just teach people this when they start, they probably wouldn't be failing the bar.

Lee Burgess: Well, that was a long, long time ago at this point.

Alison Monahan: It was a long time ago but I think it still stands because the reality is, generally speaking, if you're failing the bar the first time you take it by a pretty large deficit, you probably have had issues all along, and maybe you took paper classes or something and got your grades up in your second and third year, but you may be really never fundamentally knew how to write in IRAC or write concisely or write quickly.

The other thing I think people need to be thinking about here is whether they need accommodations.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, oftentimes when someone has a really large deficit, and I like to raise the question of have you ever had accommodations before and [we've talked about accommodations on another podcast episode](#), which we'll link to in the show notes, but it can be a big deal to have accommodations on the bar. If you have a learning difference, if you struggle with anxiety, or even if you have a medical condition and here's a new medical condition, I've definitely talked to students who struggle with pain and who can't sit for long periods of time, or if they type for certain number of hours, that they are in excruciating pain.

Well, excruciating pain is going to make it hard to pass the exam and so the bar oftentimes will give you some accommodations to try and get through that but you need to explore these accommodations options to see if they may help you even the playing field when you're trying to sit for the exam again, and I would recommend that if you believe that you are a good candidate for accommodations, especially based on a history of accommodations, but you do not have time to apply for those accommodations, you need to talk to someone and evaluate whether or not you should delay your exam to get those accommodations.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think that's right and then the other thing you can think about in a UBE state is are there states that are more or less generous, meaning some of them



are definitely not very generous about giving accommodations, even if we go to a law school in New York, we're looking at you.

Lee Burgess: Yes, we are looking at New York.

Alison Monahan: The point being you could take, say you sit in New Jersey and New Jersey is happy to give you accommodations, you can transfer that score, so I think you need to be a little bit strategic if you've been denied or something like that about reapplying and where that might make sense.

Lee Burgess: I think that's true and different jurisdictions have different deadlines for putting in these applications as well, so let's say a new medical condition has arisen for you, you had surgery recently, and maybe the paperwork won't go through in time in the jurisdiction that you're in, but maybe the one like New Jersey, like you drive a little further and then New Jersey will let you have an application submitted at a later date. You can look at this now. I mean, this didn't even used to be an option, so this kind of forum shopping idea is now available to you and I think sometimes you have to get creative to make sure you can get the circumstances that you need to likely pass the test.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, exactly and sometimes people that we talk to actually have a score that's high enough to pass in one jurisdiction and occasionally, we can even prevent them from having to take the test again, because they come and we say, well, sometimes people just need to be admitted literally in some state and it's like, well, you could just go to Arizona or whatever has the 260 and get admitted so that's also worth considering if your score is close to passing in the place you want to be, but it's actually passing somewhere else.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, Washington, D.C. is a popular option because it's pretty easy to waive in Washington, D.C.

Alison Monahan: Yeah so anyway, yeah, there are definitely a lot more options than even say a few years ago for how you can think strategically about your UBE bar experience.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, now we kind of skipped over this idea of like a 10 to 20-point deficit, so Alison, what about people who missed not by just a few points but aren't really in that 'oh my gosh, I missed by 40 points' situation?

Alison Monahan: Well, I think they're really going to dig into what happened on test day to figure out which of these two categories you're going to be in, so maybe you just had a bad day, you didn't sleep well. You got sick, something happened, you got some topics that you were less confident in on the essays. You might feel pretty solid about the next time, assuming these terrible things don't happen again, you'll



have a pretty good shot at passing if you brush up on those categories you weren't so comfortable in but if you feel like you really did your best, nothing happened. Maybe you got lucky on the topics, you felt really confident and then you still were 20 points short, I think that's going to signal a larger issue that you need to work on.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, I think it's just important to be honest with yourself. I think that's one of the hardest things to do is to really go back and evaluate why you failed. I had someone I was talking to who recently got feedback on their past exam. They were actually passing in some jurisdictions, not passing in another jurisdiction and I think before, really evaluating what happened in the essays, I think the feedback she would have given was I did everything right. I have no idea how I didn't pass but going through the questions, she started to see where she could have still been better and that led to a really positive conversation about some of the things that she could do to overcome just these final barriers that she has keeping her from this highest score but that's not easy work to put yourself in that position to be vulnerable and to really kind of press yourself on what could have happened in the exam room, so whatever mental place you need to get in to do that work is very important.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, because I know a lot of people are like, oh, well, this one thing prevented me from passing. I didn't sleep or I felt queasy or this happened or that happened but the reality is, it's probably not really just one thing. You probably were leaving points on the table in your essays and we're not saying this to be like ha ha ha, like you're wrong, but more to be proactive about it like okay, well maybe you have a bad day next time too. Let's figure out how you can still pass by actually picking up a few extra points per essay.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. All right, so that was really our thoughts on all you can learn from how close you were to passing. Those are a lot of thoughts.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, exactly. It seems obvious but actually probably not.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, maybe I should have made this on the top of my list.

Alison Monahan: Well, I think so many people don't actually understand that they're as far away from passing as they are.

Lee Burgess: That's true. That's a good point. Okay, what about the next thing we think you can learn from your bar essay, which I think we've kind of said is your overall score breakdown, and this is when the states give you more information than just what happened?



Alison Monahan: Yeah, and so most states will give you at least a breakdown of your MBE score versus your overall essay or performance test score, so here, I mean, basically you want to be looking at whether one of these is significantly lower than the other one so you guys if so, obviously, that's where you want to kind of focus your attention, if your MBE score is significantly lower, then you need to raise that score in order to pass. However, it's a little bit of a balance because you also can't neglect all the other parts of the test.

I talk to a lot of people who do poorly on the MBE to start with, really do intensive work there, improve their score a lot and then see their essay scores drop, so you don't want that to happen.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. If you do need to raise your MBE score, we are big fans of [AdaptiBar](#). I mean you need to get this and do practice. We like AdaptiBar because they use real practice questions, licensed from the NCBE and we'll be honest, some of your bar providers, the big commercial ones, don't, so you should ask if you don't know whether or not they use real release questions. We also really like [Emanuel's Strategies and Tactics](#) if you like paper books but we have pushed AdaptiBar on the question of whether or not performance on the computer is different than performance on paper, and they seem to say that through their research, of course, I mean, I guess this makes sense, but they're advocating for this, but they really don't see a huge difference so even though you do end up taking the MBE on paper, I think you can do the practice on the computer and still be fine.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, exactly. I mean, I think there's so many benefits to doing it that way that I think any possible downside is pretty massively outweighed by the fact that you can get detailed breakdowns of what you're doing well on, what you're not doing well on. You can focus on certain types of questions versus just doing a bunch of mixed questions, all of that kind of thing so, I mean, if you need to raise your MBE score, I think the first place to look is something like AdaptiBar.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, and we have an [interesting podcast with the founder of AdaptiBar](#) that we'll link to in the show notes, which allows you to get insight in why this kind of a tool is that beneficial. I mean, we use it with our students. We think it's really good.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, and you also when you're doing these questions, you got to evaluate why you're getting them wrong. Sometimes people just do a bunch of questions. They don't really learn that much from them so you've got to be really focusing on using this as a learning tool and a way to actually learn the law.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. Another thing that I have seen over the years when MBE scores might be high but your writing scores are low, something to look at is whether or not that



means that you may have known enough law on exam day but it's really your writing style or memorizing the rules in a way that you can easily spit them out on paper may be the flaw, so that can happen. You knock the MBE out of the park but the writing holds you back so make sure that you're saying okay, if I am doing really well in the MBE, why am I doing so well in the MBE? Is it just where I'm really good?

Alison Monahan: What is this about this that I'm doing well on? I mean, because absolutely, I'm sure that was me and no, I mean literally, like I'm good at taking standardized tests, and I learned the seven topic areas or whatever it is in the MBE world but if you'd given me just the essays, I quite possibly would have failed.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, so I see the scores where you have somebody who really is successful with the multiple choice but not with the essays, and if that's the case, that's not I think the most common scenario but you can still learn things about that as well. I guess you can still learn things from that as well, which will guide your studies to be more strategic.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I mean I think if you're seeing high MBE scores and low essay scores across the board, probably you are not writing in a style that's getting the most points and/or you may not have enough substantive knowledge on the non-MBE topic areas so you might just be, we'll talk about this later but you might be absolutely bombing half of the essays because you just don't know anything about trust and estates or whatever it is. In order to fix this, I mean, ideally you probably want some feedback to figure out what the actual problem is and then you've got to just do a lot of practice questions.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, and I think the other thing to be thoughtful about is if you need to raise your essay and performance test score, you don't just need to do practices and read a lot of those questions and then think about the answer, which I think is what a lot of people think is practice, you actually have to-

Alison Monahan: Write or outline an answer.

Lee Burgess: Yeah or outline an answer, you actually have to write out the answers. We have some tools that can help you with that if you're not sure where to get practice questions. We have our [Brainy Bar Bank tool](#), which is a database that has categorized practice questions so you can do very targeted practice and know what's the most heavily tested in each subject. We have a [Writing of the Week](#) structured practice video series that walks you through MEE, MPT and California essay questions, so these tools will give you the all the practice problems you want. I don't think anyone's finished the Brainy Bar Bank yet.

Alison Monahan: That would be impressive.



Lee Burgess: It would be a feat, and we're also going to show you how to write a passing answer even if you have fairly minimal knowledge of the applicable law. This is a place to start if you want to do some additional practice and these are low cost tools compared to a full tutoring program either with us or another tutoring program or a whole another bar prep program, so it's worth investigating what your options are because sometimes it's not as oppressively expensive as you think.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, exactly. I think these are, you need to do writing practice. I mean you basically should at least get the Brainy Bar Bank. It has all the released MEE or MPT or California questions for quite a long time, so you're probably not going to run out of topics.

Lee Burgess: All right, so our third thing that we think you should look at in your score report is your individual essay and performance test scores, so if you're lucky, your state's going to give you a detailed breakdown of your score on each essay and performance test and this is really useful for a few reasons. I think the first reason that it is useful is it shows which substantive topics you're struggling with in the same way we kind of talked about. The MBE questions, sometimes their breakdown will show you which subjects you're struggling with but hey, sometimes you're like I know con law, I took advance con law, I was a clerk, I did all of this stuff. I wrote my law review article on a constitutional law topic and then you bombed con law, the question.

Alison Monahan: It happens. Kathleen Sullivan wrote a con law textbook, failed the bar. Yeah, I mean, I think you need to look at this in terms of what information can I get here. You're probably going to need to go back and figure out what were these topics on and to make sure what each performance test was about, which essay was on and there's really look, how did I do.

Lee Burgess: Sometimes it can be a subject specific problem, but oftentimes it can just be that maybe you missed the boat on the question. You could have misread the facts. You could have missed some of the legal issues, especially in states like California, where the questions are longer. They're 60 minutes, there are crossover questions that cover more than one topic. Maybe you missed the cue that you needed to talk about a different topic. There are lots of things that can happen, but you should be able to access the questions even if not all jurisdictions have released any sort of model answer.

You should be able to see the questions from the exam that you took, and you need to go back and figure out what those questions were and do some evaluation of why you struggled on the individual ones.



Alison Monahan: Yeah, exactly. I think you can also, so that's like the obvious stuff. I mean, obviously you can look at it and be like, well, I didn't do so well in evidence but I think you can learn some less obvious things actually from the score breakdown too. One of those is how are you performing across the day, so oftentimes, people will see a drop in their scores either over the course of the day or within a session, and typically that is two things or some combination thereof, either it's fatigue or it is timing issues.

Obviously, if you're spending too much time in the beginning, you're going to run out of time at the end, your scores at the end are likely to be lower. You could also just be fatigued and so figuring out, you're thinking back was I really hungry, was I really distracted, all those kind of things are going to give you a hint about what you can do to prepare differently, whether it's doing longer sessions to build your stamina, looking at day of issues, like your caffeine intake, your food intake, your sleep, all these boring things, they can really impact you on test day.

Lee Burgess: Absolutely. I mean, guys, I think that I have talked to plenty of students who made choices like eating french fries for lunch, like only french fries, and I love a good french fry. I've literally never met a potato that I don't want to eat but if I were to only eat french fries for lunch, there is no way I could do a three-hour focused exam after that.

Alison Monahan: Exactly, or if you like so jacked up on caffeine that you're literally throwing up, which we've heard before. I mean to say it sounds like they're nuts, but they're not, so you have to figure out what you need to do so that you can be focused and alert for those three hours. If it's a timing issue, again, you just have to get realistic about that. Sometimes people say, oh well, I spent two hours on the first performance test on the MPT and then one hour on the second. It's like, well, that's probably why you scored significantly worse on the second, so some of this is just making yourself move on but I think it's also a lot of practice and making sure that you're on point and you know how to do a quick outline and for the MPTs or California performance test, you've got a strategy for getting through that packet and writing everything down as quickly as possible.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, if you see that your scores are consistently low or kind of highly variable, that can also signal a few different things. Let's say you're consistently getting low scores across the board, that's going to be a different problem from someone who does really well in some essays and performance tests and as terribly on others, so if your scores are consistently low, there's probably something across the board in the way that you're writing that's causing you to lose points. Typically, that means that you are lacking analysis or you're missing issues, so having somebody to look over your answers to help you identify kind of the low hanging fruit can be a good idea. Other things that sometimes can



happen, your answers are disorganized or very difficult to read. The graders might not even be seeing all the things that you're trying to raise so you really need to get help to identify what you need to do to clean up your essays but if your scores are all over the place, then I think it's likely more of a substantive law issue, right, Allison?

Alison Monahan: Yeah, exactly. I mean, if you're knocking it out of the park on certain essays, and then doing absolutely terribly on other ones, I'm going to probably assume you don't actually know that law. I mean clearly, you're capable of writing in a way that gets you points, so if something's going on where you're not getting those points, I'm going to assume that you need to study more in those areas.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, I think that's a very good point. We also sometimes we'll see score reports where the essays or the performance tests are much higher than the other, so if you're stronger on essays, that often can mean that you are much more comfortable with very clear fact patterns, issue spotting. Maybe time management is easier when you're doing that. Performance tests can be so unique because they can really challenge you on time management over a longer period of time. Your reading speed, sometimes people who are slow readers really struggle with the performance test.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, and we see a lot with foreign trained attorneys. Maybe if you're taking the UBE, you can learn enough law and learn how to IRAC quickly enough to get through a 30-minute essay, but then when you are struggling with unfamiliar materials on the performance test, and you're not as comfortable writing in that format because you haven't done it, that can really sink people.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, I think that overall, it's just such a struggle for foreign-trained attorneys, just the ability to work at the speed necessary in English. Even if your English is impeccable, you're typically never going to write as fast as you have to on the exam and your work life.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, exactly. It's just something that you've got to figure out a strategy for doing well enough on it that you are able to pass, and so here.

Lee Burgess: Oh, go ahead.

Alison Monahan: Go ahead. Actually here, I think if you do see a really strong variance in between your essays and performance tests, whatever direction that is, I mean it's a pretty clear signal you need to get some assistance on that weaker area if you're going to have a good shot at passing.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, and one thing that I have seen happen is the performance test scores can oftentimes be really high but the essays continue to remain low, and that can



signal that maybe your writing is around where it needs to be as far as style and communication, but something is still happening in the essays, so that usually means that you're not doing enough legal analysis or enough issue spotting and you've got to go back to the facts or maybe you don't have substantive law.

Alison Monahan: Or you're me and you just don't know the law.

Lee Burgess: Well yeah, you're a special snowflake in that way.

Alison Monahan: I don't know but I can guarantee you that based on my performance, that I basically passed the California bar because of the MBE and the performance test. I guarantee, if you only graded my essays, I would say there was a very high likelihood I would have failed.

Lee Burgess: That's probably good you took it when it was a three-day exam, so we had a lot more grading from the performance test.

Alison Monahan: Exactly, but I mean, basically, I think any of these variances, if you see something out of the line with your other scores, you need to think about why that is. That's a big takeaway here.

Lee Burgess: All right, our last thing to dig into on your score report is your topical performance on the MBE. Now Allison, do the bar graders give you a very clear clean report on how you did on the MBE or do they make some sort of logic game type puzzle.

Alison Monahan: You really feel like you're sitting for the LSAT with this. No, they did not make it easy. In fact, I think sometimes we still get emails from our tutors and they're like, am I interpreting this correctly?

Lee Burgess: It's awful.

Alison Monahan: If you don't understand this when you first look at it, it does not mean that you are an unintelligent person. It just means that the way they laid out this information is ridiculous, so what they're telling you with these percentage scores on the MBE per subject and then overall is how many people did worse than you who sat for this exam, so if you, say you see torts and then 10% and you're thinking like, oh I did pretty well in torts. No, you did not do well on torts. That means that 10% of the people taking that MBE test did worse than you on torts. It means 90% did better so here, you want to be looking at obvious outliers, whether it's pro or con, because that can help you identify areas you're stronger or weaker in, so if you, basically a higher score is better so if you see that you're getting 50% or 60% on a certain topic and then you're getting 5% on another topic, that's going to give you some suggestion of the substantive law



that maybe you're not the strongest on and often, this carries over to the essays. I mean for example, if you're getting basically no evidence questions on the MBE, my guess is you're probably not acing that evidence essay either.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, I think that's very true. I mean, like most things with the essays and everything else we've talked about, you have got to look at your scores overall and I get really angry and kind of flummoxed when I think about how they report these because it's so unhelpful. You're super stressed. You get the score report, and then you have no idea how to read these numbers, and attorneys are notorious for being intimidated by math and they're basically like making more calculations to figure this out.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, so I mean here again, like you want to look at just on the essays. Are your MBE scores consistently low? Well, if they're consistently low, you might need help with the MBE strategy or something like that. If they're really highly variable, then again that could be a substantive issue. If you're knocking it out of the park on half the MBE topics and you're doing really well on those essays in those topic areas but then you're bombing the other half, well that probably means you've got some substantive law to learn.

Lee Burgess: Yeah and you might even go back and see if you have any records of what your practice MBE scores were, whether or not any of these issues with certain subjects line up. It would be interesting to see when you did your last three-hour practice MBE, did you also struggle with property and then you struggled with property day of, or was it different? I think that can also be very telling if you still have some of that information.

Alison Monahan: Yeah because so many people will say oh, I was doing really well on these topics with AdaptiBar and then I got to the real test and I obviously did poorly on them. Okay, well, maybe they just got weird questions or something but I think for a lot of people, it's like, oh yeah, I really do hate property, and I didn't really study it. Okay.

Lee Burgess: It shouldn't be too much of a shocker. You missed all those mortgages questions.

Alison Monahan: Exactly but that's just like, you got to sit down and memorize it, you got to do a bunch of questions, and it is learnable.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, so the bottom line here is as you can take away from the last about half hour of us talking about it, it's possible to glean a lot of information from your bar exam score report, so you need to take some time and look it over and understand what it's telling you. Do not put it on a drawer. Do not throw it



away. I've also heard people throw it away. Don't throw it away. If you don't want to read it, send it to somebody like us.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, or have a friend look at it and tell you what you should be working on.

Lee Burgess: Don't throw it away, because this information is the first step in diagnosing what happened and you want to tailor your next round of studying to what actually happened. You don't just want to do the same thing again twice because you need to fix the problems. Fixing the problems is how you're going to pass. Repeating the same mistakes is going to lead to typically the same outcome. That was kind of a dark note to end on. I don't know why it came out so negative.

Alison Monahan: Well, it's pretty much true.

Lee Burgess: All right, well if you have questions about your score report and it is anxiety inducing for you to look at it yourself, you can reach out to us using our contact form on BarExamToolbox.com, and we'll be happy to tell you what we see and we'll link to this information on how to reach out to us in the show notes, and with that, I think we might be out of time.

I want to take a second to remind you to check out our blog at BarExamToolbox.com, which is full of helpful tips to help you prepare and stay sane as you study for the bar exam. You can also find information on our website about our courses, tools and one on one tutoring programs to support you as you study for the UBE or California bar exams. If you enjoyed this episode of the Bar Exam Toolbox podcast, please take a second to leave a review and rating on your favorite listening app. We'd really appreciate it and be sure to subscribe so you don't miss anything. If you are still in law school, you might also like to check out our popular [Law School Toolbox Podcast](#) as well. If you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to reach out to myself or Alison at Lee@BarExamToolbox.com, or Alison@BarExamToolbox.com. Or, you can always contact us via our website contact form at BarExamToolbox.com. Thanks for listening.

Resources:

- [Private Bar Exam Tutoring with Bar Exam Toolbox](#)
- [Brainy Bar Bank](#)
- [Writing of the Week](#)
- [Podcast Episode 2: Accommodations for the Bar Exam \(w/Dr. Jared Maloff\)](#)
- [Podcast Episode 6: A Conversation with AdapitBar CEO Tarek Fadel](#)
- [AdaptiBar](#)
- [Emanuel's Strategies and Tactics for the MBE](#)