Google Cloud PCSE Quick Summary

Fast 3-5 minute refresh for the core ideas, comparisons, and traps that matter most on the exam.

Best for Ultra-fast memory refresh	Focus Definitions, guardrails, and common decision traps	Use with Use with the cheat sheet for deeper review

1. Fast refresh

PCSE focus	Access, boundary protection, data protection, operations, compliance.
Think hierarchy first	Org, folder, and project decisions shape many later controls.
Least privilege wins	Many wrong answers fail because they give too much access.
Visibility matters	Security choices without logs and monitoring are incomplete.

2. High-yield comparisons

IAM role vs Org Policy	One controls who can do things; the other constrains what configurations are allowed.
Google-managed keys vs CMEK	Default simplicity versus stronger customer control.
Firewall vs IAM	Network control differs from identity and resource authorization.
Public endpoint vs private access	Private is often preferred when external exposure is unnecessary.

3. Security shortcuts

Secret Manager	Better than hardcoded credentials.
Audit Logs	Essential for accountability and investigation.
Security Command Center	Posture and finding visibility.
VPC Service Controls	Useful when controlling data exfiltration boundaries.

4. Exam traps

More access is rarely better	Broad permissions often violate least privilege.
Encryption alone is not enough	Keys, access, logging, and boundaries still matter.
Compliance is not one tool	It usually needs multiple controls working together.
Shared responsibility still applies	Cloud provider security does not remove customer obligations.