HR CERTIFICATION INSTITUTE™

CERTIFICATIONS IN HUMAN RESOURCES »

PHR
PROFESSIONAL IN
HUMAN RESOURCES

SPHR
SENIOR PROFESSIONAL IN
HUMAN RESOURCES

PHR®AND SPHR®
EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE

PHR AND SPHR
EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE
AT-A-GLANCE

PHR EXAM WEIGHTING BY FUNCTIONAL AREA

» Business Management and Strategy (11%)

» Workforce Planning and Employment (24%)

» Human Resource Development (18%)

» Compensation and Benefits (19%)

» Employee and Labor Relations (20%)

» Risk Management (8%)

SPHR EXAM WEIGHTING BY FUNCTIONAL AREA

» Business Management and Strategy (30%)

» Workforce Planning and Employment (17%)

» Human Resource Development (19%)

» Compensation and Benefits (13%)

» Employee and Labor Relations (14%)

» Risk Management (7%)

IF LAWS CHANGE

We realize that employment laws change constantly. Candidates are responsible for knowing the HR laws and regulations that are in effect as of the start of each exam period. New exams are produced for each testing window.

The PHR and SPHR EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE is updated periodically (approximately every five years) to ensure it is consistent with current practices in the HR field. This exam content outline was revised effective Spring 2012.

PHR AND SPHR EXAMS

The Professional in Human Resources (PHR®) and Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR®) exams are created using the PHR and SPHR EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE, which details the responsibilities of and knowledge needed by today's HR professional. The PHR and SPHR EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE is created by HR subject matter experts through a rigorous practice analysis study and validated by HR professionals working in the field through an extensive survey instrument. It is updated periodically to ensure it is consistent with current practices in the HR field.

FUNCTIONAL AREA O1: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT & STRATEGY (11% / 30%)

Developing, contributing to, and supporting the organization's mission, vision, values, strategic goals and objectives; formulating policies; guiding and leading the change process; and evaluating organizational effectiveness as an organizational leader.

RESPONSIBILITIES

01 Interpret and apply information related to the organization's operations from internal sources, including finance, accounting, business development, marketing, sales, operations, and information technology, in order to contribute to the development of the organization's strategic plan.

02 Interpret information from external sources related to the general business environment, industry practices and developments, technological advances, economic environment, labor force, and the legal and regulatory environment, in order to contribute to the development of the organization's strategic plan.

03 Participate as a contributing partner in the organization's strategic planning process (for example: provide and lead workforce planning discussion with management, develop and present long-term forecast of human capital needs at the organizational level). SPHR only

04 Establish strategic relationships with key individuals in the organization to influence organizational decision-making.

05 Establish relationships/alliances with key individuals and outside organizations to assist in achieving the organization's strategic goals and objectives (for example: corporate social responsibility and community partnership).

06 Develop and utilize business metrics to measure achievement of the organization's strategic goals and objectives (for example: key performance indicators, balanced scorecard). SPHR only

07 Develop, influence, and execute strategies for managing organizational change that balance the expectations and needs of the organization, its employees, and other stakeholders.

08 Develop and align the human resource strategic plan with the organization's strategic plan. SPHR only

09 Facilitate the development and communication of the organization's core values, vision, mission, and ethical behaviors.

10 Reinforce the organization's core values and behavioral expectations through modeling, communication, and coaching.

11 Provide data such as human capital projections and costs that support the organization's overall budget.

12 Develop and execute business plans (i.e., annual goals and objectives) that correlate with the organization's strategic plan's performance expectations to include growth targets, new programs/services, and net income expectations. SPHR only

13 Perform cost/benefit analyses on proposed projects. SPHR only

14 Develop and manage an HR budget that supports the organization's strategic goals, objectives, and values. SPHR only

15 Monitor the legislative and regulatory environment for proposed changes and their potential impact to the organization, taking appropriate proactive steps to support, modify, or oppose the proposed changes.

16 Develop policies and procedures to support corporate governance initiatives (for example: whistle-blower protection, code of ethics). SPHR only

17 Participate in enterprise risk management by ensuring that policies contribute to protecting the organization from potential risks.

18 Identify and evaluate alternatives and recommend strategies for vendor selection and/or outsourcing. SPHR only

19 Oversee or lead the transition and/or implementation of new systems, service centers, and outsourcing. SPHR only

20 Participate in strategic decision-making and due diligence activities related to organizational structure and design (for example: corporate restructuring, mergers and acquisitions [M & A], divestitures). SPHR only

21 Determine the strategic application of integrated technical tools and systems (for example: new enterprise software, performance management tools, self-service technologies). SPHR only

KNOWLEDGE OF

01 The organization's mission, vision, values, business goals, objectives, plans, and processes.

02 Legislative and regulatory processes

03 Strategic planning process, design, implementation, and evaluation

04 Management functions, including planning, organizing, directing, and controlling

05 Corporate governance procedures and compliance (for example: Sarbanes-Oxley Act)

06 Due diligence processes (for example: M & A, divestitures) SPHR only

07 Transition techniques for corporate restructuring, M & A, off-shoring, and divestitures. SPHR only

08 Elements of a cost-benefit analysis during the life-cycle of the business (such as scenarios for growth, including expected, economic stressed, and worst case conditions) and the impact to net-worth/earnings for short-, mid-, and long-term horizons

09 Business concepts (for example: competitive advantage, organizational branding, business case development, corporate responsibility)

10 Business processes (for example: operations, sales and marketing, data management)

FUNCTIONAL AREA 02: WORKFORCE PLANNING AND EMPLOYMENT (24% / 17%)

Developing, implementing, and evaluating sourcing, recruitment, hiring, orientation, succession planning, retention, and organizational exit programs necessary to ensure the workforce's ability to achieve the organization's goals and objectives.

RESPONSIBILITIES

01 Ensure that workforce planning and employment activities are compliant with applicable federal laws and regulations.

02 Identify workforce requirements to achieve the organization's short- and long-term goals and objectives (for example: corporate restructuring, workforce expansion or reduction).

03 Conduct job analyses to create and/or update job descriptions and identify job competencies.

04 Identify, review, document, and update essential job functions for positions.

05 Influence and establish criteria for hiring, retaining, and promoting based on job descriptions and required competencies.

06 Analyze labor market for trends that impact the ability to meet workforce requirements (for example: federal/state data reports).

07 Assess skill sets of internal workforce and external labor market to determine the availability of qualified candidates, utilizing third party vendors or agencies as appropriate.

08 Identify internal and external recruitment sources (for example: employee referrals, diversity groups, social media) and implement selected recruitment methods.

09 Establish metrics for workforce planning (for example: recruitment and turnover statistics, costs).

10 Brand and market the organization to potential qualified applicants.

11 Develop and implement selection procedures (for example: applicant tracking, interviewing, reference and background checking).

12 Develop and extend employment offers and conduct negotiations as necessary.

13 Administer post-offer employment activities (for example: execute employment agreements, complete I-9/e-Verify process, coordinate relocations, and immigration).

14 Develop, implement and evaluate orientation and on-boarding processes for new hires, rehires and transfers.

15 Develop, implement and evaluate employee retention strategies and practices.

16 Develop, implement and evaluate the succession planning process. SPHR only.

17 Develop and implement the organization exit/off-boarding process for both voluntary and involuntary terminations, including planning for reductions in force (RIF).

18 Develop, implement and evaluate an affirmative action plan (AAP) as required.

19 Develop and implement a record retention process for handling documents and employee files (for example: pre-employment files, medical files and benefits files).

KNOWLEDGE OF

11 Applicable federal laws and regulations related to workforce planning and employment activities (for example: Title VII, ADA, EEOC Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures, Immigration Reform and Control Act)

12 Methods to assess past and future staffing effectiveness (for example: costs per hire, selection ratios, adverse impact)

13 Recruitment sources (for example: employee referral, social networking/social media) for targeting passive, semi-active and active candidates

14 Recruitment strategies

15 Staffing alternatives (for example: outsourcing, job sharing, phased retirement)

16 Planning techniques (for example: succession planning, forecasting)

17 Reliability and validity of selection tests/tools/methods

18 Use and interpretation of selection tests (for example: psychological/personality, cognitive, motor/physical assessments, performance, assessment center)

19 Interviewing techniques (for example: behavioral, situational, panel)

20 Impact of compensation and benefits on recruitment and retention

21 International HR and implications of global workforce for workforce planning and employment. SPHR only

22 Voluntary and involuntary terminations, downsizing, restructuring, and outplacement strategies and practices

23 Internal workforce assessment techniques (for example: skills testing, skills inventory, workforce demographic analysis)

24 Employment policies, practices, and procedures (for example: orientation, on-boarding, and retention)

25 Employer marketing and branding techniques

26 Negotiation skills and techniques

FUNCTIONAL AREA 03: HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (18% / 19%)

Developing, implementing, and evaluating activities and programs that address employee training and development, performance appraisal, and talent and performance management to ensure that the knowledge, skills, abilities, and performance of the workforce meet current and future organizational and individual needs.

RESPONSIBILITIES

01 Ensure that human resources development activities are compliant with all applicable federal laws and regulations.

02 Conduct a needs assessment to identify and establish priorities regarding human resource development activities.

03 Develop/select and implement employee training programs (for example: leadership skills, harassment prevention, computer skills) to increase individual and organizational effectiveness.

04 Evaluate effectiveness of employee training programs through the use of metrics (for example: participant surveys, pre- and post-testing). SPHR only

05 Develop, implement, and evaluate talent management programs that include assessing talent, developing career paths, and managing the placement of high-potential employees.

06 Develop, select, and evaluate performance appraisal processes (for example: instruments, ranking and rating scales) to increase individual and organizational effectiveness.

07 Develop, implement, and evaluate performance management programs and procedures (includes training for evaluators).

08 Develop/select, implement, and evaluate programs (for example: telecommuting, diversity initiatives, repatriation) to meet the changing needs of employees and the organization. SPHR only

09 Provide coaching to managers and executives regarding effectively managing organizational talent.

KNOWLEDGE OF

27 Applicable federal laws and regulations related to human resources development activities (for example: Title VII, ADA, Title 17 [Copyright law])

28 Career development and leadership development theories and applications (for example: succession planning, dual career ladders)

29 Organizational development (OD) theories and applications

30 Training program development techniques to create general and specialized training programs

31 Facilitation techniques, instructional methods, and program delivery mechanisms

32 Task/process analysis

33 Performance appraisal methods (for example: instruments, ranking and rating scales)

34 Performance management methods (for example: goal setting, relationship to compensation, job placements/promotions)

35 Applicable global issues (for example: international law, culture, local management approaches/practices, societal norms). SPHR only

36 Techniques to assess training program effectiveness, including use of applicable metrics (for example: participant surveys, pre- and post- testing)

37 Mentoring and executive coaching

FUNCTIONAL AREA 04: COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS (19% / 13%)

Developing/selecting, implementing/administering, and evaluating compensation and benefits programs for all employee groups in order to support the organization's goals, objectives, and values.

RESPONSIBILITIES

01 Ensure that compensation and benefits programs are compliant with applicable federal laws and regulations.

02 Develop, implement, and evaluate compensation policies/programs (for example: pay structures, performance-based pay, internal and external equity).

03 Manage payroll-related information (for example: new hires, adjustments, terminations).

04 Manage outsourced compensation and benefits components (for example: payroll vendors, COBRA administration, employee recognition vendors). PHR only

05 Conduct compensation and benefits programs needs assessments (for example: bench-marking, employee surveys, trend analysis).

06 Develop/select, implement/administer, update and evaluate benefit programs (for example: health and welfare, wellness, retirement, stock purchase).

07 Communicate and train the workforce in the compensation and benefits programs, policies and processes (for example: self-service technologies).

08 Develop/select, implement/administer, update, and evaluate an ethically sound executive compensation program (for example: stock options, bonuses, supplemental retirement plans). SPHR only

09 Develop, implement/administer and evaluate expatriate and foreign national compensation and benefits programs. SPHR only

KNOWLEDGE OF

38 Applicable federal laws and regulations related to compensation, benefits, and tax (for example: FLSA, ERISA, FMLA, USERRA)

39 Compensation and benefits strategies

40 Budgeting and accounting practices related to compensation and benefits

41 Job evaluation methods

42 Job pricing and pay structures

43 External labor markets and/or economic factors

44 Pay programs (for example: variable, merit)

45 Executive compensation methods. SPHR only

46 Non-cash compensation methods (for example: equity programs, non-cash rewards)

47 Benefits programs (for example: health and welfare, retirement, Employee Assistance Programs [EAPs])

48 International compensation laws and practices (for example: expatriate compensation, entitlements, choice of law codes). SPHR only

49 Fiduciary responsibilities related to compensation and benefits

FUNCTIONAL AREA 05: EMPLOYEE AND LABOR RELATIONS (20% / 14%)

Developing, implementing/administering, and evaluating the workplace in order to maintain relationships and working conditions that balance employer/employee needs and rights in support of the organization's goals and objectives.

RESPONSIBILITIES

01 Ensure that employee and labor relations activities are compliant with applicable federal laws and regulations.

02 Assess organizational climate by obtaining employee input (for example: focus groups, employee surveys, staff meetings).

03 Develop and implement employee relations programs (for example: recognition, special events, diversity programs) that promote a positive organizational culture.

04 Evaluate effectiveness of employee relations programs through the use of metrics (for example: exit interviews, employee surveys, turnover rates).

05 Establish, update, and communicate work-place policies and procedures (for example: employee handbook, reference guides, or standard operating procedures) and monitor their application and enforcement to ensure consistency.

06 Develop and implement a discipline policy-based on organizational code of conduct/ethics, ensuring that no disparate impact or other legal issues arise.

07 Create and administer a termination process (for example: reductions in force [RIF], policy violations, poor performance) ensuring that no disparate impact or other legal issues arise.

08 Develop, administer, and evaluate grievance/dispute resolution and performance improvement policies and procedures.

09 Investigate and resolve employee complaints filed with federal agencies involving employment practices or working conditions, utilizing professional resources as necessary (for example: legal counsel, mediation/arbitration specialists, investigators)

10 Develop and direct proactive employee relations strategies for remaining union-free in non-organized locations. SPHR only

11 Direct and/or participate in collective bargaining activities, including contract negotiation, costing, and administration.

KNOWLEDGE OF

50 Applicable federal laws affecting employment in union and nonunion environments, such as laws regarding antidiscrimination policies, sexual harassment, labor relations, and privacy (for example: WARN Act, Title VII, NLRA)

51 Techniques and tools for facilitating positive employee relations (for example: employee surveys, dispute/conflict resolution, labor management cooperative strategies)

52 Employee involvement strategies (for example: employee management committees, self-directed work teams, staff meetings)

53 Individual employment rights issues and practices (for example: employment at will, negligent hiring, defamation)

54 Workplace behavior issues/practices (for example: absenteeism and performance improvement)

55 Unfair labor practices

56 The collective bargaining process, strategies, and concepts (for example: contract negotiation, costing, and administration)

57 Legal disciplinary procedures

58 Positive employee relations strategies and non-monetary rewards

59 Techniques for conducting unbiased investigations

60 Legal termination procedures

FUNCTIONAL AREA 06: RISK MANAGEMENT (8% / 7%)

Developing, implementing/administering, and evaluating programs, procedures, and policies in order to provide a safe, secure working environment and to protect the organization from potential liability.

RESPONSIBILITIES

01 Ensure that workplace health, safety, security, and privacy activities are compliant with applicable federal laws and regulations.

02 Conduct a needs analysis to identify the organization's safety requirements.

03 Develop/select and implement/administer occupational injury and illness prevention programs (i.e., OSHA, workers' compensation). PHR only

04 Establish and administer a return-to-work process after illness or injury to ensure a safe workplace (for example: modified duty assignment, reasonable accommodations, independent medical exam).

05 Develop/select, implement, and evaluate plans and policies to protect employees and other individuals, and to minimize the organization's loss and liability (for example: emergency response, workplace violence, substance abuse).

06 Communicate and train the workforce on security plans and policies.

07 Develop, monitor, and test business continuity and disaster recovery plans.

08 Communicate and train the workforce on the business continuity and disaster recovery plans.

09 Develop policies and procedures to direct the appropriate use of electronic media and hardware (for example: e-mail, social media, and appropriate website access).

10 Develop and administer internal and external privacy policies (for example: identity theft, data protection, workplace monitoring).

61 Applicable federal laws and regulations related to workplace health, safety, security, and privacy (for example: OSHA, Drug-Free Workplace Act, ADA, HIPAA, Sarbanes-Oxley Act)

62 Occupational injury and illness prevention (safety) and compensation programs

63 Investigation procedures of workplace safety, health and security enforcement agencies

64 Return to work procedures (for example: interactive dialog, job modification, accommodations)

65 Workplace safety risks (for example: trip hazards, blood-borne pathogens)

66 Workplace security risks (for example: theft, corporate espionage, sabotage)

67 Potential violent behavior and workplace violence conditions

68 General health and safety practices (for example: evacuation, hazard communication, ergonomic evaluations)

69 Organizational incident and emergency response plans

70 Internal investigation, monitoring, and surveillance techniques

71 Employer/employee rights related to substance abuse

72 Business continuity and disaster recovery plans (for example: data storage and backup, alternative work locations, procedures)

73 Data integrity techniques and technology (for example: data sharing, password usage, social engineering)

74 Technology and applications (for example: social media, monitoring software, biometrics)

75 Financial management practices (for example: procurement policies, credit card policies and guidelines, expense policies)

CORE KNOWLEDGE

76 Needs assessment and analysis

77 Third-party or vendor selection, contract negotiation, and management, including development of requests for proposals (RFPs)

78 Communication skills and strategies (for example: presentation, collaboration, sensitivity)

79 Organizational documentation requirements to meet federal and state guidelines

80 Adult learning processes

81 Motivation concepts and applications

82 Training techniques (for example: virtual, classroom, on-the-job)

83 Leadership concepts and applications

84 Project management concepts and applications

85 Diversity concepts and applications (for example: generational, cultural competency, learning styles)

86 Human relations concepts and applications (for example: emotional intelligence, organizational behavior)

87 Ethical and professional standards

88 Technology to support HR activities (for example: HR Information Systems, employee self-service, e-learning, applicant tracking systems)

89 Qualitative and quantitative methods and tools for analysis, interpretation, and decision-making purposes (for example: metrics and measurements, cost/benefit analysis, financial statement analysis)

90 Change management theory, methods, and application

91 Job analysis and job description methods

92 Employee records management (for example: electronic/paper, retention, disposal)

93 Techniques for forecasting, planning, and predicting the impact of HR activities and programs across functional areas

94 Types of organizational structures (for example: matrix, hierarchy)

95 Environmental scanning concepts and applications (for example: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats [SWOT], and Political, Economic, Social, and Technological [PEST])

96 Methods for assessing employee attitudes, opinions, and satisfaction (for example: surveys, focus groups/panels)

97 Budgeting, accounting, and financial concepts

98 Risk-management techniques

WE BELIEVE IN THE DYNAMIC POWER OF HUMAN RESOURCES.

WE ARE A MISSION-DRIVEN ORGANIZATION COMMITTED TO THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF THE PROFESSION.

OUR VISION IS CLEAR: A GLOBAL HR PROFESSION, WHOSE MOST EFFECTIVE AND INFLUENTIAL PRACTITIONERS AND LEADERS PROUDLY MAINTAIN OUR CREDENTIALS.

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