



THE **SHRM** BODY OF COMPETENCY AND KNOWLEDGE

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Introduction to the SHRM Body of Competency and Knowledge	1
What Are Competencies?	3
Development of the SHRM BoCK	4
New Material in the 2017 BoCK	6
Organization of the SHRM BoCK Document	7
Section 1: Behavioral Competencies	7
Section 2: HR Expertise	7
Section 1: Behavioral Competencies	8
How to Read This Section	8
Leadership Cluster	11
Leadership & Navigation.....	12
Ethical Practice	14
Interpersonal Cluster	17
Relationship Management.....	18
Communication	20
Global & Cultural Effectiveness.....	22
Business Cluster	25
Business Acumen.....	26
Consultation.....	28
Critical Evaluation	30
Section 2: HR Expertise	32
How to Read This Section	32
People Knowledge Domain	35
Functional Area #1: HR Strategic Planning	36
Functional Area #2: Talent Acquisition.....	38
Functional Area #3: Employee Engagement & Retention.....	39
Functional Area #4: Learning & Development.....	41
Functional Area #5: Total Rewards	42
Organization Knowledge Domain	43
Functional Area #6: Structure of the HR Function.....	44
Functional Area #7: Organizational Effectiveness & Development	45
Functional Area #8: Workforce Management	46
Functional Area #9: Employee & Labor Relations.....	47
Functional Area #10: Technology Management	49
Workplace Knowledge Domain	51
Functional Area #11: HR in the Global Context.....	52
Functional Area #12: Diversity & Inclusion.....	53
Functional Area #13: Risk Management.....	54
Functional Area #14: Corporate Social Responsibility	56
Functional Area #15: U.S. Employment Law & Regulations.....	57
Appendix A: Glossary	59
Appendix B: Resources	69

Introduction to the SHRM Body of Competency and Knowledge™

For more than sixty-five years, the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) has served the human resources (HR) profession.

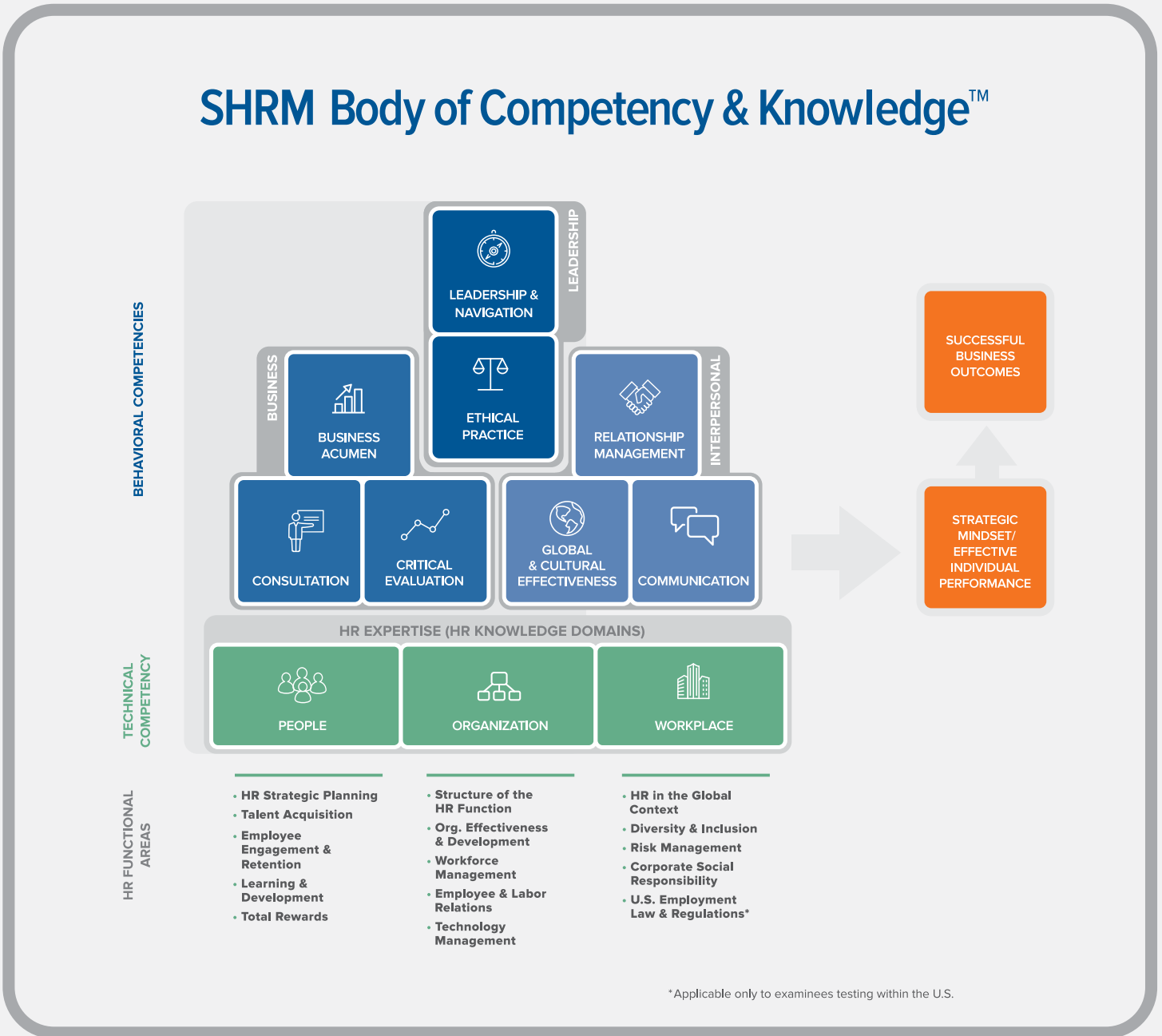
HR professionals worldwide look to SHRM for comprehensive information and tools to help them perform effectively at their jobs, to develop their careers, and to partner strategically with employers. SHRM also works to advance the HR profession as a whole, ensuring that as business changes, HR evolves to meet business needs. Increasingly, business leaders understand that effective people management is a strategic imperative. As a result, employers expect HR professionals to demonstrate, in addition to a thorough knowledge of HR concepts and requirements, the behavioral competencies required to effectively apply that knowledge in the modern workplace in support of organizational goals.

In 2011, SHRM began a program of research involving thousands of HR professionals to identify the critical competencies needed for success as an HR professional. This research led to the development of the SHRM Competency Model, which defines eight key behavioral competencies (*Ethical Practice, Leadership & Navigation, Business Acumen, Relationship Management, Communication, Consultation, Critical Evaluation* and *Global & Cultural Effectiveness*) and one technical competency (*HR Expertise*). The SHRM Competency Model provides HR professionals with a comprehensive roadmap for developing the capabilities they need to advance their careers and improve their effectiveness in the workplace.

The SHRM Body of Competency and Knowledge™ (SHRM BoCK™), which is based on the SHRM Competency Model and illustrated in Figure 1, outlines the content of SHRM's certification examinations, the SHRM Certified Professional (SHRM-CP®) exam for early-career and mid-level practitioners, and the SHRM Senior Certified Professional (SHRM-SCP®) exam for senior-level and executive practitioners. SHRM credentials provide reliable indicators to the global business community that the credential holder has the necessary capabilities in both aspects of HR practice—competencies and knowledge—that are required for effective job performance.

In addition to describing the behavioral competencies and technical knowledge tested on the SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP certification exams, the SHRM BoCK is also the common framework for individuals developing exam questions (item writers), as well as individuals and organizations developing exam preparation materials. SHRM's own operations for exam development are separate and independent from its operations for study material development. SHRM observes a strict firewall between these activities to protect the integrity and credibility of the certification exams.

FIGURE 1: SHRM Body of Competency and Knowledge (SHRM BoCK)



What Are Competencies?

A competency is a group of highly interrelated knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSAOs) that give rise to the behaviors needed to perform a given job effectively. For example, *Critical Evaluation*, one of the behavioral competencies in the SHRM Competency Model, describes a group of KSAOs that include knowledge of research design, critical thinking skills and deductive reasoning abilities. These highly interrelated KSAOs enable HR professionals to collect, compile, analyze and interpret job-relevant data and information for the purpose of supporting the HR function in their organizations.

A set of competencies that collectively defines the requirements for effective performance in a specific job, profession or organization may be called a competency model.

Competencies can be either technical or behavioral. Technical competencies reflect the knowledge specific to a given profession that is required for a professional in that field to perform a particular role. The *HR Expertise* competency in the SHRM Competency Model describes the technical knowledge specific to the HR field (such as that associated with talent management, recruiting, or compensation and benefits).

Behavioral competencies, on the other hand, describe the KSAOs that facilitate the application of technical knowledge to job-related behaviors. They are more general in their applicability than the profession-specific technical competency of *HR Expertise*. For example, the behavioral competency *Communication* describes the KSAOs needed to effectively communicate across a range of mediums (e.g., e-mail and oral presentations) and with a variety of audiences (e.g., internal and external stakeholders).

In sum, technical competencies reflect **what** knowledge HR professionals apply to their jobs, and behavioral competencies reflect **how** they apply this knowledge.

Knowledge + Behavior = Success

SHRM's incorporation of behavioral and technical competencies into its competency model and certification exams implicitly recognizes that a strategic mindset leading to HR success is a function of the successful application of both knowledge **and** behavior. In other words, success stems not only from what you **know** (knowledge) but also what you **do** (behavior). Neither is sufficient, however, in isolation.

SHRM's dual approach to understanding HR success is supported by empirical research. A study conducted by SHRM in partnership with several leading multinational

employers and universities, described below, found that both HR knowledge and behavior are related to HR professionals' job performance. Moreover, it found that both knowledge and behavior are uniquely related to job performance—that is, knowledge and behavior are related to job performance in non-redundant ways. These findings support the key contributions of knowledge and behavior to HR success, the relevance and applicability of the SHRM Competency Model to the HR profession, and the relevance of certification exams that test both behavioral and technical competencies.

Development of the SHRM BoCK

SHRM has been engaged in a systematic and rigorous program of research to develop the SHRM BoCK, as outlined in Figure 2. SHRM began this program with the development of the SHRM Competency Model in 2011, and it has continued through 2016 with further development and refinement of the BoCK. Comprehensive job analysis methods and the active engagement of the global HR community have been used consistently to identify, create and refine competencies that describe the attributes necessary for success as an HR professional.

Development of the SHRM Competency Model was initiated in 2011, when SHRM conducted 111 focus groups with nearly 1,200 HR practitioners, including professionals from 33 countries. Participants in these focus groups represented a diversity of characteristics, both personal (e.g., career level, tenure) and organizational (e.g., sector, industry, size). SHRM also conducted a survey of more than 600 Chief Human Resources Officers (CHROs) to identify the competencies that HR leaders believe are required for success in the HR profession. Following this extensive data collection, SHRM created a working competency model of eight behavioral competencies and one technical (knowledge-based) competency, which together describe the personal and professional attributes that HR professionals need for success and career advancement.

From 2012 to 2014, SHRM conducted a series of studies with HR professionals to confirm the content of the model and its relevance to HR professional success.

In 2012, SHRM conducted a survey of more than 32,000 HR professionals worldwide to confirm the importance and generalizability of the SHRM

Competency Model. The results of this study provided support for the relevance of the model in describing the personal and professional attributes needed for HR success, as well as its wide applicability. SHRM next conducted (also in 2012) a multi-organizational criterion validation study, involving a highly diverse sample of more than 800 HR professionals and their supervisors, to measure the link between the competency model and job performance. The results of this study established that proficiency in the SHRM-defined competencies is closely linked to successful job performance.

In 2014, SHRM conducted a knowledge specification exercise to further develop the *HR Expertise* technical competency in particular. First, SHRM performed an extensive review of the existing literature on HR knowledge, including textbooks, curricula, syllabi and other educator resources, to determine the universe of potential areas of knowledge that HR professionals need to perform their jobs. SHRM also consulted its own academic and employer surveys regarding the functional knowledge that HR professionals need to achieve success in the HR field. SHRM drew on this research to create a preliminary knowledge framework for the SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP exams.

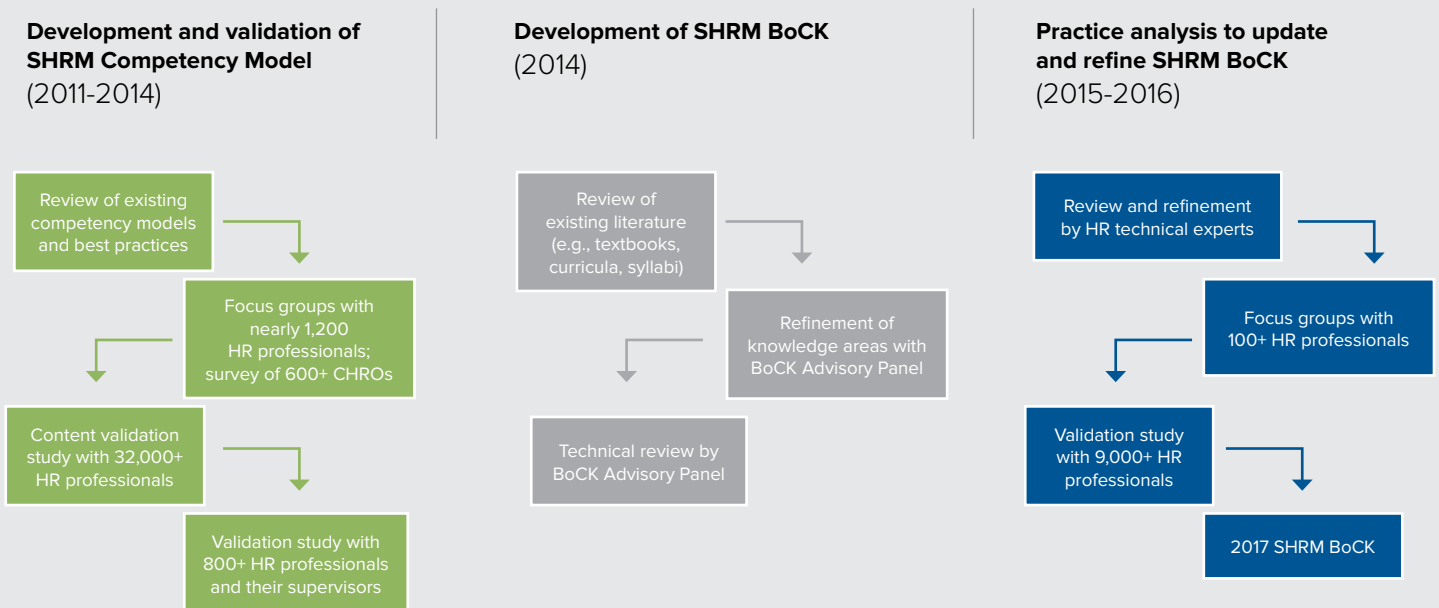
Second, SHRM established in 2014 a BoCK Advisory Panel of 19 HR and business leaders from various industries, including retail, research, consulting, health care and manufacturing. This panel reviewed the proposed content and framework of the *HR Expertise* competency to ensure its accuracy and comprehensiveness. The panel also defined, for each functional area, associated **key concepts** and **proficiency indicators**. Upon completion of these studies, SHRM adopted the framework as the basis for the *HR Expertise* technical competency.

More recently, SHRM undertook an extensive refinement of the SHRM BoCK, to clarify the competencies and functional areas. This effort was designed primarily to meet the needs of HR professionals studying for the SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP exams. Because the certification exams are based on the BoCK, the resulting clarifications also assist HR subject matter experts (SMEs) who write and refine exam items.

community with participants from North America, Europe, Africa and Asia, engaged in a series of focus groups. In 2015, following an extensive review and revision of each component of the BoCK, SHRM launched a validation survey to confirm and further refine its contents, collecting responses from more than 9,000 HR professionals around the world.

In conducting the refinement effort from 2015 through 2016, SHRM used a process mirroring the one used to develop and refine the SHRM Competency Model. More than 100 HR professionals, again representing the global HR

FIGURE 2: Development of the SHRM Competency Model and SHRM BoCK



New Material in the 2017 BoCK

The present document is the product of extensive review and expansion, based on the research conducted between 2015 and 2016 described above. The 2017 BoCK more clearly defines and describes the behavioral and technical knowledge requirements for HR professionals that will meet the current and future needs of employers. The revisions provide additional clarity and guidance to facilitate HR professionals' career development and advancement.

Enhancements to the 2017 BoCK include:

- Revised and expanded definitions of behavioral competencies and functional areas;
- Addition of subcompetencies to the behavioral competencies, clarifying the links between proficiency indicators and competency definitions;
- Increased parallelism between the two sets of proficiency indicators (“For All HR Professionals” and “For Advanced HR Professionals”);
- Addition of key concepts to the behavioral competencies, describing the foundational knowledge for each competency;
- Addition of a glossary defining selected HR terms used in the BoCK (see Appendix A); and
- A refined and expanded list of resources on the HR profession generally and on behavioral competencies and technical knowledge functional areas specifically (see Appendix B), designed to provide additional guidance to readers seeking career advancement, which includes SHRM certification.

Two major content modifications enhance the clarity and utility of the BoCK:

- To better demonstrate the interrelationships among the behavioral competencies, they have been grouped into three clusters: **Leadership, Interpersonal** and **Business**.
- Within the technical competency of *HR Expertise*, there are now three (not four) knowledge domains: **People, Organization** and **Workplace**. The original fourth domain, Strategy, has been absorbed into the first domain, People, and its original functional area, Business & HR Strategy, has been renamed *HR Strategic Planning*.

Organization of the SHRM BoCK Document

The HR competencies and knowledge that are assessed on the SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP exams are detailed in the SHRM BoCK, which consists of the following two sections:

Section 1 – Behavioral Competencies:

The eight behavioral competencies, which describe the behaviors and attributes necessary for HR professionals to perform effectively in the workplace and operate with a strategic mindset, are grouped into three clusters: **Leadership**, **Business** and **Interpersonal**.

This section of the BoCK is arranged by cluster, each of which is defined at the beginning of its subsection. For each competency within each cluster, the following information is provided:

- A **Definition** of the competency;
- **Key Concepts** describing the foundational knowledge for the competency;
- **Subcompetencies** applicable to the competency, with their definitions; and
- **Proficiency Indicators**, listed by applicability based on career level (i.e., applicable to all HR professionals or to advanced HR professionals).

Regarding the two sets of proficiency indicators listed for each competency, it is important to recognize that the indicators relevant to all HR professionals **also** apply to advanced HR professionals. While HR executives, for instance, may not be specifically proficient in certain transactional tasks required of early-career HR professionals, they should nonetheless understand the concepts behind those tasks, recognize their strategic importance, and be able to mentor junior employees in developing the behaviors to implement them. Such indicators of proficiency thus apply to all HR professionals, from early-career to senior levels.

Section 2 – HR Expertise (HR Knowledge):

The single technical competency of *HR Expertise* is grouped into three knowledge domains: **People**, **Organization** and **Workplace**, and further divided into 15 HR functional areas that describe the technical knowledge required to perform key HR activities.

This section of the BoCK is arranged by knowledge domain, each of which is defined at the beginning of its subsection. For each functional area within each domain, the following information is provided:

- A **Definition** of the functional area;
- **Key Concepts** describing the knowledge specific to the functional area; and
- **Proficiency Indicators**, listed by applicability based on career level (i.e., applicable to all HR professionals or to advanced HR professionals).

Regarding the two sets of proficiency indicators listed for each functional area, it is important to recognize that the indicators relevant to all HR professionals **also** apply to advanced HR professionals. While HR executives, for instance, may not be specifically proficient in certain functions required of early-career HR professionals, they should nonetheless understand the concepts behind those functions, recognize their strategic importance, and be able to mentor junior employees in developing the behaviors to perform them. Such indicators of proficiency thus apply to all HR professionals, from early-career to senior levels.

SECTION 1:

Behavioral Competencies

This section describes the important behavioral competencies that comprise one part of SHRM's dual approach to competencies. This approach, which is supported by SHRM research (see Introduction), emphasizes the critical roles played by technical HR knowledge (**what** you know) **and** by behavioral competencies (how you **apply** what you know) in contributing to effective HR practice.

Behavioral competencies describe the behaviors and attributes necessary for HR professionals to operate with a strategic mindset and perform effectively in the workplace. They facilitate the application of technical knowledge (i.e., *HR Expertise*), which may be defined as the principles, practices and functions of effective HR management (see Section 2). Successful HR professionals must understand the behavioral components of HR practice in addition to being in command of technical HR knowledge.

How to Read This Section

The eight SHRM-defined behavioral competencies are grouped into three clusters: **Leadership**, **Interpersonal** and **Business**. Each competency is further divided into several subcompetencies that more specifically describe its components. Each subcompetency is comprised of several **Proficiency Indicators**—specific behavioral statements that illustrate effective HR practice. Figure 3 provides an overview of this organizing framework.

An in-depth description is provided for each cluster. The following information is provided for each competency:

- A **Definition** of the competency;
- **Key Concepts** describing the foundational knowledge for the competency;
- **Subcompetencies** applicable to the competency, with their definitions; and
- **Proficiency Indicators**, listed by their applicability based on career level (i.e., applicable to all HR professionals or to advanced HR professionals.)

FIGURE 3: Organizing Framework of Behavioral Competency Clusters

CLUSTER	COMPETENCY	DEFINITION
Leadership	Leadership & Navigation	The knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs) needed to navigate the organization and accomplish HR goals, to create a compelling vision and mission for HR that aligns with the strategic direction and culture of the organization, to lead and promote organizational change, to manage the implementation and execution of HR initiatives, and to promote the role of HR as a key business partner.
	Ethical Practice	The KSAOs needed to maintain high levels of personal and professional integrity, and to act as an ethical agent who promotes core values, integrity and accountability throughout the organization.
Interpersonal	Relationship Management	The KSAOs needed to create and maintain a network of professional contacts within and outside of the organization, to build and maintain relationships, to work as an effective member of a team, and to manage conflict while supporting the organization.
	Communication	The KSAOs needed to effectively craft and deliver concise and informative communications, to listen to and address the concerns of others, and to transfer and translate information from one level or unit of the organization to another.
	Global & Cultural Effectiveness	The KSAOs needed to value and consider the perspectives and backgrounds of all parties, to interact with others in a global context, and to promote a diverse and inclusive workplace.
Business	Business Acumen	The KSAOs needed to understand the organization's operations, functions and external environment, and to apply business tools and analyses that inform HR initiatives and operations consistent with the overall strategic direction of the organization.
	Consultation	The KSAOs needed to work with organizational stakeholders in evaluating business challenges and identifying opportunities for the design, implementation and evaluation of change initiatives, and to build ongoing support for HR solutions that meet the changing needs of customers and the business.
	Critical Evaluation	The KSAOs needed to collect and analyze qualitative and quantitative data, and to interpret and promote findings that evaluate HR initiatives and inform business decisions and recommendations.

Leadership

CLUSTER

All effective HR professionals must display strong leadership skills with a strategic mindset, regardless of their career or experience level or job functions.

There are two behavioral competencies in the **Leadership** cluster: *Leadership & Navigation* and *Ethical Practice*. These competencies describe the behaviors, attributes and underlying knowledge necessary for HR professionals to develop, implement and evaluate strategic directives for HR teams in principled ways.

Key components of Leadership-cluster behavioral competencies include: setting and implementing a vision and direction for the HR function; managing or leading organizational initiatives; influencing and supporting other organizational members and leaders; driving an ethical organizational environment; and behaving in an ethical manner that promotes high standards of integrity and the organization's values.

Leadership & Navigation

Definition: *Leadership & Navigation* is defined as the knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSAOs) needed to navigate the organization and accomplish HR goals, to create a compelling vision and mission for HR that aligns with the strategic direction and culture of the organization, to lead and promote organizational change, to manage the implementation and execution of HR initiatives, and to promote the role of HR as a key business partner.

Leadership & Navigation is comprised of **four subcompetencies**:

- Navigating the organization
- Vision
- Managing HR initiatives
- Influence

Leadership behaviors are critical to HR practice. Effective leadership is associated with such positive outcomes as improved employee attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction, commitment, engagement), decreased turnover and increased performance. As business leaders, effective HR professionals set a direction and vision for the HR function, influence stakeholders, and motivate and guide followers to achieve organizational objectives.

HR professionals at every level are required to demonstrate proficiency in leadership. Early-career professionals can behave in ways consistent with organizational culture and foster collaboration with coworkers. Mid- and senior-level HR professionals can develop strategies to implement HR initiatives and support organizational initiatives. Executives can demonstrate positive leadership behaviors by establishing a vision for HR initiatives, working to obtain buy-in from relevant stakeholders, serving as transformational leaders to implement change, and leading the organization in the face of adversity.

Navigation, an essential and sometimes forgotten component of this competency, concerns the people and processes leveraged by an HR professional to get things done. The subcompetency “Navigating the organization” associated with *Leadership & Navigation* describes the behaviors necessary for HR professionals to work within the organization’s structure, processes and bureaucracy and achieve their objectives.

Key Concepts (foundational knowledge):

- Leadership theories (e.g., situational leadership, transformational leadership, participative leadership, inclusive leadership).
- People management techniques (e.g., directing, coaching, supporting, delegating).
- Motivation theories (e.g., goal-setting theory, expectancy theory, attribution theory, self-determination theory).
- Influence and persuasion techniques (e.g., personal appeal, forming coalitions, leading by example, rational persuasion).
- Trust- and relationship-building techniques (e.g., emotional and social intelligence).

SUBCOMPETENCIES	PROFICIENCY INDICATORS	
	For All HR Professionals	For Advanced HR Professionals
<p>Navigating the organization – Works within the parameters of the organization’s hierarchy, processes, systems and policies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Demonstrates an understanding of formal and informal work roles, leader goals and interests, and relationships among employees. » Facilitates communication and decision-making necessary to implement initiatives. » Uses an understanding of the organization’s processes, systems and policies to facilitate the successful implementation of HR initiatives. » Uses awareness and understanding of the organization’s political environment and culture to implement HR initiatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Demonstrates an understanding of formal and informal work roles, leader goals and interests, and relationships among executives. » Uses an understanding of the complex relationships among the organization’s formal and informal processes, systems and policies to facilitate the development and implementation of HR’s strategic direction. » Uses an understanding of the organization’s political environment to develop and implement HR’s strategic direction, implement needed changes, and resolve talent needs and issues. » Uses an understanding of complex relationships among organizational leaders to facilitate the design, implementation and maintenance of initiatives proposed by other executives.
<p>Vision – Defines and supports a coherent vision and long-term goals for HR that support the strategic direction of the organization.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Embraces and supports the business unit’s and/or organization’s culture, values, mission and goals. » Defines actionable goals for the development and implementation of HR programs, practices and policies that support the strategic vision of HR and the organization. » Identifies opportunities to improve HR operations that better align with and support the strategic vision of HR and the organization. » Supports the implementation of HR programs, practices and policies that uphold the strategic vision of HR and the organization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Envisions the current and ideal future states of the HR function, organization and culture, to identify gaps and areas for improvement. » Develops the long-term strategic direction, vision and goals of HR and the organization, to close the gap between the current and ideal states of the HR function and the organization. » Develops a broad plan to achieve the strategic direction, vision and goals of HR and the organization. » Solicits feedback from executive-level stakeholders on strategic direction, vision and goals.
<p>Managing HR initiatives – Executes the implementation and management of HR projects or initiatives that support HR and organizational objectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Defines and elaborates project requirements set forth by senior leadership. » Sets and monitors project goals and progress milestones. » Manages project budgets and resources. » Identifies and develops solutions for overcoming obstacles to the successful completion of projects. » Identifies and monitors the resources necessary to implement and maintain HR projects. » Identifies when resource allocation is inconsistent with project needs and makes adjustments as necessary. » Demonstrates agility and adaptability when project requirements, goals or constraints change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Translates HR’s vision, strategic direction and long-term goals into specific projects and initiatives with clear timelines and goals. » Monitors the progress of HR initiatives toward achievement of HR’s vision, strategic direction and long-term goals. » Collaborates with senior leadership to remove obstacles to the successful implementation of HR initiatives. » Obtains and deploys organizational resources and monitors their effectiveness. » Ensures accountability for the implementation of project plans and initiatives.
<p>Influence – Inspires colleagues to understand and pursue the strategic vision and goals of HR and the organization.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Builds credibility as an HR expert within and outside of the organization. » Promotes buy-in among organizational stakeholders for HR initiatives. » Motivates HR staff and other stakeholders to support HR’s vision and goals. » Serves as an advocate for the organization or employees, when appropriate, to ensure advancement of the organization’s strategic direction and goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Promotes the role of the HR function in achieving the organization’s mission, vision and goals. » Builds credibility for the organization regionally, nationally or internationally as an HR expert. » Serves as an influential voice for HR strategies, philosophies and initiatives within the organization. » Advocates for the implementation of evidence-based HR solutions. » Inspires HR staff, non-HR customers and executive-level organizational stakeholders to support and pursue the organization’s strategic direction, vision and long-term goals. » Builds consensus among senior leaders about the organization’s strategic direction and long-term goals.

Ethical Practice

Definition: *Ethical Practice* is defined as the knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSAOs) needed to maintain high levels of personal and professional integrity, and to act as an ethical agent who promotes core values, integrity and accountability throughout the organization.

Ethical Practice is comprised of **three subcompetencies:**

- Personal integrity
- Professional integrity
- Ethical agent

Organizations of all types and sizes place an emphasis on ethics in the workplace. *Ethical Practice* affects everything from recruiting a diverse workforce, to ensuring the confidentiality of sensitive employee data. HR professionals are often asked to make significant ethical decisions, and are tasked with navigating the ethical mazes that surround them. HR leaders are responsible for setting and contributing to a strong ethical climate. Such an environment can help protect an organization from adverse employee behaviors, and is associated with higher levels of organizational performance.

In recognition of cross-cultural differences in ethical standards, the *Ethical Practice* competency does **not** provide a single, universal list of ethical principles applicable to all HR professionals, and should not be interpreted as embodying one. Instead, this competency leaves room for individuals to define and apply appropriate ethical standards suitable to their cultures and organizations.

The “Personal integrity” subcompetency associated with *Ethical Practice* describes adherence to one’s own ethical principles, and recognizes the potential for bias. The “Professional integrity” subcompetency describes the ethical pressures of professional relationships, and encourages HR professionals to act ethically and perform their jobs in light of the core values of their organization. The “Ethical agent” subcompetency considers an HR professional a driver of the organization’s ethical environment—someone who ensures that organizational policies and practices reflect ethical and organizational values.

Key Concepts (foundational knowledge):

- Ethical business principles and practices (e.g., transparency, confidentiality, conflicts of interest).
- Anonymity, confidentiality, and privacy principles and policies.
- Codes of conduct.

SUBCOMPETENCIES	PROFICIENCY INDICATORS	
	For All HR Professionals	For Advanced HR Professionals
<p>Personal integrity – Demonstrates high levels of integrity in personal relationships and behaviors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Shows consistency between espoused and enacted values. » Acknowledges mistakes and demonstrates accountability for actions. » Recognizes personal biases and the biases of others, and takes steps to increase self-awareness. » Serves as a role model of personal integrity and high ethical standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Brings potential conflicts of interest or unethical behaviors to the attention of senior leaders and other executives. » Helps others to identify and understand their biases.
<p>Professional integrity – Demonstrates high levels of integrity in professional relationships and behaviors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Does not take adverse actions based on personal biases. » Maintains privacy, in compliance with laws and regulations mandating a duty to report unethical behavior. » Uses discretion appropriately when communicating sensitive information, and informs stakeholders of the limits of confidentiality and privacy. » Maintains current knowledge of ethics laws, standards, legislation and emerging trends that may affect organizational HR practice. » Leads HR investigations of employees in a thorough, timely and impartial manner. » Establishes oneself as credible and trustworthy. » Applies, and challenges when necessary, the organization's ethics and integrity policies. » Manages political and social pressures when making decisions and when implementing and enforcing HR programs, practices and policies. » Provides open, honest and constructive feedback to colleagues when situations involving questions of ethics arise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Withstands politically motivated pressure when developing or implementing strategy, initiatives or long-term goals. » Balances ethics, integrity, organizational success, employee advocacy and organizational mission and values when creating strategy, initiatives or long-term goals. » Establishes the HR team as a credible and trustworthy resource. » Promotes the alignment of HR and business practices with ethics laws and standards. » Makes difficult decisions that align with organizational values and ethics. » Applies power or authority appropriately.
<p>Ethical agent –Cultivates the organization's ethical environment, and ensures that policies and practices reflect ethical values.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Empowers all employees to report unethical behaviors and conflicts of interest without fear of reprisal. » Takes steps to mitigate the influence of bias in HR and business decisions. » Maintains appropriate levels of transparency for HR programs, practices and policies. » Identifies, evaluates and communicates to leadership potential ethical risks and conflicts of interest. » Ensures that staff members have access to and understand the organization's ethical standards and policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Advises senior management of organizational risks and conflicts of interest. » Collaborates with senior leaders to support internal ethics controls. » Develops and provides expertise for HR policies, standards, and other internal ethics controls (e.g., protection of employee confidentiality, standards for employee investigations) to minimize organizational risks from unethical practices. » Creates and oversees HR programs, practices and policies that drive an ethical culture, encourage employees to report unethical practices and behaviors, and protect the confidentiality of employees and data. » Communicates a vision for an organizational culture in which there is consistency between the organization's and employees' espoused and enacted values. » Develops HR programs, practices and policies that meet high standards of ethics and integrity. » Designs and oversees systems to ensure that all HR investigations are conducted in a thorough, timely and impartial manner. » Audits and monitors adherence to HR programs, practices and policies pertaining to ethics. » Designs and oversees learning and development programs covering ethics. » Implements and maintains a culture and organizational system that encourages all employees to report unethical practices and behaviors.

Interpersonal

CLUSTER

Successful HR professionals effectively build and manage a network of relationships with other employees, with organizational leaders, and with professional colleagues outside their organization.

There are three behavioral competencies in the *Interpersonal* cluster: *Relationship Management*, *Communication* and *Global & Cultural Effectiveness*. These competencies describe the behaviors, attributes and underlying knowledge necessary for HR professionals to perform the collaborative and interpersonal aspects of their jobs.

Key components of *Interpersonal* behavioral competencies include: networking; building and maintaining professional relationships; successfully managing conflict and negotiations; clearly and effectively communicating with stakeholders; and operating within a diverse and global workforce.

Relationship Management

Definition: *Relationship Management* is defined as the knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSAOs) needed to create and maintain a network of professional contacts within and outside of the organization, to build and maintain relationships, to work as an effective member of a team, and to manage conflict while supporting the organization.

Relationship Management is comprised of **five subcompetencies**:

- Networking
- Relationship building
- Teamwork
- Conflict management
- Negotiation

Effective HR professionals leverage a network of relationships with their HR colleagues, organizational stakeholders, and business contacts to advance the organization's practice of HR management. Relationship building can lead to both individual and organizational success. Positive employee-supervisor relationships, for example, are associated with higher salaries, increased promotions, greater career mobility and other rewards, and improved feelings of belonging and inclusion in the workplace. Similarly, positive relationships with coworkers are associated with greater job satisfaction, involvement, performance, team cohesion, organizational commitment, and decreased turnover intentions.

In team settings, HR professionals who are adept at using their relationship management skills foster collaboration and open communication among colleagues. They help to establish an organizational environment that values and promotes teamwork. Effective HR professionals are also able to identify potential sources of conflict, and encourage parties in conflict to stay positive, respectful and task-related. In the case of counterproductive conflict, competent HR professionals work to identify root causes and mediate disputes in an impartial and respectful manner.

In negotiations within and outside the organization, HR professionals serve as their organization's representative, working to understand the position of all negotiating parties to achieve a mutually acceptable resolution.

Key Concepts (foundational knowledge):

- Types of conflict (e.g., relationship, task, inter- and intra-organizational).
- Conflict resolution styles (e.g., avoidance, competition, cooperation, conciliation).
- Conflict resolution techniques (e.g., accommodate, avoid, collaborate).
- Negotiation, tactics, strategies and styles (e.g., perspective taking, principled bargainer, auction, interest-based bargaining).

SUBCOMPETENCIES	PROFICIENCY INDICATORS	
	For All HR Professionals	For Advanced HR Professionals
Networking – Effectively builds a network of professional contacts both within and outside of the organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Develops and maintains a network of professional contacts within the organization, including peers in both HR and non-HR roles, HR customers and stakeholders. » Develops and maintains a network of external partners (e.g., vendors). » Develops and maintains a network of professional colleagues in the HR community at large, for professional development and to fill business needs (e.g., identification of new talent). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Creates opportunities for HR employees to network and build relationships with higher-level leaders in the organization and in the HR community at large. » Develops and maintains a network of contacts within the organization (e.g., senior leaders from other business units) and outside of the organization (e.g., members of legislative bodies, community leaders, union heads, external HR leaders).
Relationship building – Effectively builds and maintains relationships both within and outside of the organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Develops and maintains mutual trust and respect with colleagues. » Develops and maintains a pattern of reciprocal exchanges of support, information and other valued resources with colleagues. » Demonstrates concern for the well-being of colleagues. » Establishes a strong and positive reputation, within and outside the organization, as an open and approachable HR professional. » Ensures that all stakeholder voices are heard and acknowledged. » Identifies and leverages areas of common interest among stakeholders, to foster the success of HR initiatives. » Develops working relationships with supervisors and HR leaders by promptly and effectively responding to work assignments, communicating goal progress and project needs, and managing work activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Develops HR's objectives and goals for relationship management. » Develops and maintains relationships in the HR community at large through leadership positions in other organizations. » Leverages relationships to learn about best practices for and new approaches to building competitive advantage.
Teamwork – Participates as an effective team member, and builds, promotes and leads effective teams.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Defines and elaborates project requirements set forth by senior leadership. » Sets and monitors project goals and progress milestones. » Manages project budgets and resources. » Identifies and develops solutions for overcoming obstacles to the successful completion of projects. » Identifies and monitors the resources necessary to implement and maintain HR projects. » Identifies when resource allocation is inconsistent with project needs and makes adjustments as necessary. » Demonstrates agility and adaptability when project requirements, goals or constraints change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Translates HR's vision, strategic direction and long-term goals into specific projects and initiatives with clear timelines and goals. » Monitors the progress of HR initiatives toward achievement of HR's vision, strategic direction and long-term goals. » Collaborates with senior leadership to remove obstacles to the successful implementation of HR initiatives. » Obtains and deploys organizational resources and monitors their effectiveness. » Ensures accountability for the implementation of project plans and initiatives.
Conflict management – Manages and resolves conflicts by identifying areas of common interest among the parties in conflict.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Resolves and/or mediates conflicts in a respectful, appropriate and impartial manner, and refers them to a higher level when warranted. » Identifies and addresses the underlying causes of conflict. » Facilitates difficult interactions among employees to achieve optimal outcomes. » Encourages productive and respectful task-related conflict, using it to facilitate change. » Serves as a positive role model for productive conflict. » Identifies and resolves conflict that is counterproductive or harmful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Designs and oversees conflict resolution strategies and processes throughout the organization. » Facilitates difficult interactions among senior leaders to achieve optimal outcomes. » Identifies and reduces potential sources of conflict when proposing new HR strategies or initiatives. » Mediates or resolves escalated conflicts.
Negotiation – Reaches mutually acceptable agreements with negotiating parties within and outside of the organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Maintains a professional demeanor during negotiation discussions. » Applies an understanding of the needs, interests, issues and bargaining position of all parties to negotiation discussions. » Offers appropriate concessions to promote progress toward an agreement. » Adheres to applicable negotiation- and bargaining-related laws and regulations. » Evaluates progress toward an agreement. » Identifies an ideal solution or end state for negotiations, monitors progress toward that end state, and ends negotiations when appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Negotiates with stakeholders within and outside of the organization in complex and high-stakes negotiations. » Defines the parameters of negotiating boundaries on behalf of the HR unit. » Achieves a mutually acceptable agreement in difficult and complex negotiations.

Communication

Definition: *Communication* is defined as the knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSAOs) needed to effectively craft and deliver concise and informative communications, to listen to and address the concerns of others, and to transfer and translate information from one level or unit of the organization to another.

Communication is comprised of **three subcompetencies**:

- Delivering messages
- Exchanging organizational information
- Listening

This competency describes the behavior and knowledge needed for effective two-way communication.

HR professionals often serve as the “voice of HR,” communicating related information (e.g., interpretation of HR policies) to employees and other stakeholders. In this capacity, they must know how to deliver clear and accurate messages across a variety of mediums (e.g., through oral presentations, in e-mails) to audiences of all sizes and backgrounds. Senior-level HR professionals may need to describe to employees or other organizational leaders the organization’s overall HR strategy, including how it supports the broader organization’s initiatives, goals and strategic direction.

The *Communication* competency also reflects the need for HR professionals to listen. Successful practitioners engage in active listening techniques, striving to understand the perspective and viewpoint of the communicator and clarifying information as necessary to better understand the message being conveyed.

The behaviors required of senior- and executive-level HR leaders also include facilitating effective organizational communication across departments, gathering input from key organizational stakeholders, and creating and maintaining an organizational culture that encourages and rewards constructive communication upward, from employees to leadership.

Key Concepts (foundational knowledge):

- Elements of communication (e.g., source, sender, receiver, message feedback).
- General communication techniques (e.g., planning communications, active listening).
- Communication techniques for specialized situations (e.g., giving feedback, facilitating focus groups, facilitating staff meetings).
- Communications media (e.g., phone, e-mail, face-to-face, report, presentation, social media).

SUBCOMPETENCIES	PROFICIENCY INDICATORS	
	For All HR Professionals	For Advanced HR Professionals
<p>Delivering messages – Develops and delivers, to a variety of audiences, communications that are clear, persuasive and appropriate to the topic and situation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Presents needed information to stakeholders and refrains from presenting unneeded information. » Uses an understanding of the audience to craft the content of communications (e.g., translates technical jargon), and chooses the best medium for communication. » Uses appropriate business terms and vocabulary. » Ensures that the delivered message is clear and understood by the listener. » Crafts clear, organized, effective and error-free messages. » Creates persuasive and compelling arguments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Demonstrates fluency in the business language of senior leaders. » Communicates difficult or negative messages in an honest, accurate, and respectful manner. » Comfortably presents to audiences of all sizes and backgrounds.
<p>Exchanging organizational information – Effectively translates and communicates messages among organizational levels or units.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Effectively communicates HR programs, practices and policies to both HR and non-HR employees. » Helps non-HR managers communicate HR issues. » Voices support for HR and organizational initiatives in communications with stakeholders. » Effectively communicates with senior HR leaders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Communicates HR's vision, strategy, goals and culture to senior leaders and HR staff. » Articulates to senior leaders the alignment of HR's strategies and goals with the organization's. » Implements policies and initiatives that create channels for open communication throughout the organization, across and within levels of responsibility. » Prepares and delivers to senior- and board-level audiences messages on important, high-visibility HR and organizational issues.
<p>Listening – Understands information provided by others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Listens actively and empathetically to others' views and concerns. » Welcomes the opportunity to hear competing points of view and does not take criticism personally. » Seeks further information to clarify ambiguity. » Promptly responds to and addresses stakeholder communications. » Interprets and understands the context of, motives for and reasoning in received communications. » Solicits feedback from senior leaders in other business units about the HR function. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Develops an organizational culture in which upward communication is encouraged and senior leaders are receptive to staff views and opinions. » Establishes processes to gather feedback from the entire organization about the HR function.

Global & Cultural Effectiveness

Definition: *Global & Cultural Effectiveness* is defined as the knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSAOs) needed to value and consider the perspectives and backgrounds of all parties, to interact with others in a global context, and to promote a diverse and inclusive workplace.

Global & Cultural Effectiveness is comprised of **three subcompetencies:**

- Operating in a diverse workplace
- Operating in a global environment
- Advocating for a diverse and inclusive workplace

Many HR professionals work in a global business environment, which today encompasses multinationals with offices abroad as well as domestic organizations with foreign suppliers. HR professionals are more frequently coming into contact with individuals from other cultures and with workers from other countries. According to the United States Census Bureau, as of 2010 approximately 40 million people living in the U.S. were foreign-born; according to a United Nations report in 2015, there were 244 million migrants worldwide. Both sources indicated that migration has increased dramatically and will continue to do so in the coming years.

In this light, the importance of the *Global & Cultural Effectiveness* behavioral competency is evident. Successful HR professionals understand how their organizations operate in a global context and how global events affect their organizations. They show openness and acceptance to people from other cultures. They help employees navigate differences in global laws, policies, values, traditions and customs. They create HR initiatives and policies that balance the cultural differences of diverse employees with the need for fair and consistent application—a particularly difficult task.

Most importantly, perhaps, is the responsibility of HR professionals to promote the value of cultural diversity by creating an open, inviting work environment and organizational culture that respects all employees' unique contributions. The most effective HR practitioner recognizes the cultural diversity that exists among the organization's employees—even one with domestic-only operations—and leverages that diversity for lasting competitive advantage.

Key Concepts (foundational knowledge):

- Cultural intelligence.
- Cultural norms, values and dimensions (e.g., Hall, Hofstede, Schein, Trompenaars models).
- Techniques for bridging individual differences and perceptions (e.g., barrier removal, assimilation).
- Best practices for managing globally diverse workforces.
- Interactions and conflicts of professional and cultural values.

SUBCOMPETENCIES	PROFICIENCY INDICATORS	
	For All HR Professionals	For Advanced HR Professionals
<p>Operating in a diverse workplace – Demonstrates openness and tolerance when working with people from different cultural traditions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Demonstrates a general awareness and understanding of and respect for cultural differences and issues. » Adapts behavior to navigate different cultural conditions, situations and people. » Demonstrates acceptance of colleagues from different cultures. » Promotes the benefits of a diverse and inclusive workforce. » Promotes inclusion in daily interactions with others. » Conducts business with an understanding of and respect for cross-cultural differences in customs and acceptable behaviors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Drives a culture that values diversity and inclusion. » Advocates for the strategic connection of diversity and inclusion practices to organizational success.
<p>Operating in a global environment – Effectively manages globally influenced workplace requirements to achieve organizational goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Demonstrates an understanding, from a global perspective, of the organization's line of business. » Tailors HR initiatives to local needs by applying an understanding of cultural differences. » Conducts business with an understanding of and respect for differences in rules, laws, regulations and accepted business operations and practices. » Applies knowledge of global trends when implementing or maintaining HR programs, practices and policies. » Operates with a global mindset while remaining sensitive to local issues and needs. » Manages contradictory or paradoxical practices, policies and cultural norms, to ensure harmony. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Creates an HR strategy that incorporates the organization's global competencies and perspectives on organizational success. » Uses expert knowledge about global HR trends, economic conditions, labor markets and legal environments to set HR's strategic direction and to inform development and implementation of HR initiatives. » Uses expert knowledge about global HR trends, economic conditions, labor markets and legal environments to evaluate the impact of diversity and inclusion on the organization's HR strategy.
<p>Advocating for a diverse and inclusive workplace – Designs, implements and promotes organizational policies and practices to ensure diversity and inclusion in the workplace.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Supports an organizational culture that values diversity and promotes inclusion. » Uses the organization's policies and philosophy toward diversity and inclusion to inform business decisions and implementation of HR programs, practices and policies. » Designs, recommends, implements, and/or audits HR programs, practices and policies intended to ensure diversity and inclusion. » Ensures that HR programs, practices and policies are applied consistently and respectfully to all staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Develops HR initiatives, programs and policies that support the organization's policies and philosophy toward diversity and inclusion. » Ensures that learning and development programs (or other appropriate interventions) about diversity and cultural sensitivity are provided to employees at all levels of the organization. » Develops HR initiatives that will be applied consistently and fairly to all staff. » Drives an HR strategy that leverages diversity, inclusion and cultural differences for organizational success.

Business

CLUSTER

There are three behavioral competencies in the *Business* cluster: *Business Acumen*, *Consultation* and *Critical Evaluation*. These competencies describe the behaviors, attributes and underlying knowledge necessary for HR professionals to identify, design, implement and evaluate HR solutions that meet business objectives.

Key components of *Business* behavioral competencies include: ensuring that HR contributes to the strategic direction of the organization; understanding the business and the environment in which it operates; designing and implementing business solutions to meet human capital needs; contributing to and leading change management initiatives; and gathering and analyzing data to inform business decisions.

Business Acumen

Definition: *Business Acumen* is defined as the knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSAOs) needed to understand the organization's operations, functions and external environment, and to apply business tools and analyses that inform HR initiatives and operations consistent with the overall strategic direction of the organization.

Business Acumen is comprised of **three subcompetencies**:

- Business and competitive awareness
- Business analysis
- Strategic alignment

HR can provide a critical and unique contribution to the organization's competitive advantage through effective management of human capital. This advantage is most pronounced when HR professionals develop human capital programs, policies and systems that align with and contribute to the organization's goals and strategic direction.

As they work with non-HR colleagues in other departments, HR professionals should be able to understand the organization's business as a whole and recognize what unique roles HR can play in organizational success.

Effective HR professionals have a well-developed proficiency in *Business Acumen*. They understand the core functions of the business, including how it operates and how HR practices contribute to those operations. They understand the organization's external environment, including the effects of external factors on competitive advantage. They master business analysis techniques, which enable them to design or modify initiatives that enhance HR's contributions to the overall business. Successful senior-level HR professionals create HR programs that they can ensure are in strategic alignment with the organization's goals, strategy and objectives.

Key Concepts (foundational knowledge):

- Business terms and concepts (e.g., return on investment [ROI]).
- Analyzing and interpreting business documents (e.g., balance sheets, budgets, cash flow statements, profit and loss statements).
- Elements of a business case.
- Business intelligence techniques and tools (e.g., online analytical processing, advanced analytics, business intelligence portals).
- Financial analysis and methods for assessing business health.

SUBCOMPETENCIES	PROFICIENCY INDICATORS	
	For All HR Professionals	For Advanced HR Professionals
<p>Business and competitive awareness – Understands the organization's operations, functions, products and services, and the competitive, economic, social and political environments in which the organization operates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Uses organizational and external resources to learn about the organization's business operations, functions, products and services. » Uses organizational and external resources to learn about the political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental (PESTLE) trends that influence the organization. » Applies knowledge of the organization's business operations, functions, products and services, in order to implement HR solutions and inform business decisions. » Applies knowledge of the organization's industry and PESTLE trends, in order to implement HR solutions and inform HR decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Gathers and applies business intelligence about PESTLE trends to define HR's strategic direction and long-term goals. » Applies expert knowledge of the organization's business operations, functions, products and services when setting HR's strategic direction and long-term goals. » Applies an understanding of the labor market when developing a strategy to manage and compete for talent. » Participates in advocacy activities involving government policy and proposed regulations related to the organization's HR strategies and long-term goals.
<p>Business analysis – Applies business metrics, principles and technologies to inform and address business needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Uses cost-benefit analysis, organizational metrics and key performance indicators to inform business decisions. » Applies principles of finance, marketing, economics, sales, technology, law and business systems to internal HR programs, practices and policies. » Uses HR information systems (HRIS) and business technology to solve problems and address needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Designs, implements and evaluates HR initiatives with consideration of value-added, ROI, utility, revenue, profit and loss statements and other business indicators. » Uses risk assessment to inform HR's and the organization's strategic direction and long-term goals. » Determines the budget and resource requirements of HR initiatives. » Develops HRIS and business technology to solve business problems and address needs. » Examines organizational problems and opportunities in terms of integrating HR solutions that maximize ROI and strategic effectiveness.
<p>Strategic alignment – Aligns HR strategy, communications, initiatives and operations with the organization's strategic direction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Demonstrates an understanding of the relationship between effective HR and effective core business functions. » Aligns decisions with HR's and the organization's strategic direction and goals. » Makes the business case, or provides the data to build the case, for HR initiatives and their influence on efficient and effective organizational functioning (e.g., ROI for HR initiatives). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Defines and communicates HR's and the organization's strategy, goals and challenges in terms of business results. » Aligns HR's strategic direction and long-term goals with the organization's overall business strategy and objectives. » Applies the perspective of systems thinking to make HR and business decisions. » Drives key business results by developing strategies and long-term goals that account for senior leaders' input. » Serves as a strategic contributor to organizational decision-making on fiscal issues, product/service lines, operations, human capital and technology. » Evaluates all proposed business cases for HR initiatives.

Consultation

Definition: *Consultation* is defined as the knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSAOs) needed to work with organizational stakeholders in evaluating business challenges and identifying opportunities for the design, implementation and evaluation of change initiatives, and to build ongoing support for HR solutions that meet the changing needs of customers and the business.

Consultation is comprised of **five subcompetencies**:

- Evaluating business challenges
- Designing HR solutions
- Implementing and supporting HR solutions
- Change management
- Customer interaction

Because HR professionals are expected to be key contributors to the achievement of organizational goals in alignment with the organization's strategic direction, a well-developed *Consultation* competency is important for effective HR practice.

HR professionals collaborate with other business professionals to create and implement HR solutions that meet the needs of their organizations. They apply their expertise in human capital issues to confront and deal with related challenges (in staffing, training and development, performance, employee relations, etc.).

HR professionals collaborate and partner with stakeholders by actively engaging them as participants in the job at hand, translating technical HR concepts and information into actionable recommendations. As business partners, HR professionals use their human capital expertise to generate creative, evidence-based solutions, and to provide accurate, timely guidance. Best practices form the basis for such guidance, as well as research that takes into account the organization's unique internal and external environments.

To support the implementation of HR solutions and changes, HR professionals integrate them into existing systems, recognize and resolve business constraints, and obtain buy-in by partnering with organizational leaders and colleagues. To provide

ongoing support for customers, HR professionals identify, define and resolve customer needs and contribute to a customer-centric organizational culture.

Key Concepts (foundational knowledge):

- Organizational change management theories, models (e.g., Lewin's change management model, McKinsey 7-S model, Kotter's 8-step change model), and processes (e.g., leadership buy-in, building a case for change, engaging employees, communicating change, removing barriers).
- Consulting processes and models (e.g., discovery, analysis and solution, recommendation, implementation), including the contributions of consulting to organizational systems and processes.
- Effective consulting techniques (e.g., understanding organizational culture, understanding areas and limits of one's own expertise, setting reasonable expectations, avoiding overpromising).
- Key components of successful client interactions (e.g., listening, empathy, communication, follow-up).
- Methods for design and delivery of HR service functions and processes (e.g., issue tracking, client service).

SUBCOMPETENCIES	PROFICIENCY INDICATORS	
	For All HR Professionals	For Advanced HR Professionals
<p>Evaluating business challenges – Works with business partners and leaders to identify business challenges and opportunities for HR solutions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Develops an understanding of the organization's current and future HR challenges, and helps to identify HR needs and opportunities for improvement. » Identifies current and future HR-related threats and liabilities. » Identifies existing HR programs, practices and policies that impede or support business success. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Works with senior leadership to identify how HR can improve business outcomes and support the organization's strategic direction and long-term goals.
<p>Designing HR solutions – Works with business partners and leaders to design HR solutions and initiatives that meet business needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Offers, in partnership with stakeholders, HR solutions for business needs that are creative, innovative, effective and based on best practices and/or research. » Provides guidance to non-HR managers regarding HR practices, compliance, laws, regulations and ethics. » Defines clear goals and outcomes for HR solutions, using them to drive solution design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Works with key internal customers to identify initiatives that minimize threats and liabilities. » Determines the strategic approach to remediation of HR-related threats and liabilities. » Works with business leaders to create innovative, evidence-based talent management strategies that align with and drive the organization's strategy. » Designs and oversees evidence-based long-term strategic HR and business solutions.
<p>Implementing and supporting HR solutions – Works with business partners and leaders to implement and support HR solutions and initiatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Provides guidance to non-HR managers and business unit teams on implementation of HR-related solutions. » Works with business partners to overcome obstacles to implementation of HR solutions. » Provides follow-up to and ongoing support for implementation of HR solutions, to ensure their continued effectiveness. » Ensures that implementation of HR solutions adheres to defined goals and outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Provides ongoing support and HR solutions to business unit leaders on the organization's strategic direction. » Encourages staff and other leaders to provide input on strategic HR and business decisions. » Works with senior leaders to overcome strategic obstacles to implementation of HR initiatives. » Integrates HR solutions with related organizational processes, systems and other business or management initiatives.
<p>Change management – Leads and supports maintenance of or changes in strategy, organization and/or operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Recommends ways to improve HR programs, practices and policies. » Promotes buy-in among organizational stakeholders when implementing change initiatives. » Builds buy-in among staff for organizational change. » Aligns and deploys HR programs to support change initiatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Works with other senior executives to identify when and where change is or is not needed. » Builds buy-in among senior leadership and staff at all levels for organizational change. » Defines change objectives and goals. » Oversees implementation of change initiatives across business units and throughout the organization. » Partners with other business leaders to achieve change objectives and goals. » Provides support to HR staff at all levels during change initiatives.
<p>Customer interaction – Provides high-quality customer service and contributes to a strong customer service culture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Identifies, defines and clarifies customer needs and requirements, and reports on the status of HR services provided and results achieved. » Responds promptly, courteously and openly to customer requests, and takes ownership of customer needs. » Identifies and resolves risks and early-stage problems in meeting customer needs. » Manages interactions with vendors and suppliers to maintain service quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Designs and oversees HR programs, practices and policies that ensure a strong, high-quality customer service culture in the HR function. » Oversees HR's customer service objectives and outcomes. » Identifies larger system needs and issues influencing market requirements, and engages outside stakeholders to help meet requirements that go beyond HR's functional assignment. » Develops and promotes an organizational culture that excels at meeting customer needs.

Critical Evaluation

Definition: *Critical Evaluation* is defined as the knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSAOs) needed to collect and analyze qualitative and quantitative data, and to interpret and promote findings that evaluate HR initiatives and inform business decisions and recommendations.

Critical Evaluation is comprised of **four subcompetencies**:

- Data advocate
- Data gathering
- Data analysis
- Evidence-based decision-making

In today's data-driven workplace, HR professionals rely on metrics and analytics to evaluate and enhance the effectiveness of human capital programs. (Examples of such data inquiries include: comparing the cost-per-hire of college recruiting fairs against online job ads; measuring the production-related efficiency gains associated with an employee training program; and identifying future workforce needs based on voluntary turnover rates.) By collecting and properly utilizing metrics, HR professionals add value to their role in the organization, and are seen by organizational leaders as reliable strategic partners.

An evidence-based approach to HR characterizes the *Critical Evaluation* behavioral competency. Effective HR professionals know how to identify key sources of data that are useful and relevant for informing HR actions and decisions. They can assess that data to evaluate its quality and limitations. They are skilled at analyzing and interpreting data. HR professionals should be familiar with various methods of data collection and basic statistical tests.

In the role of advocates for evidence-based practice, HR professionals embrace novel approaches for collecting and using data, encourage its systematic use in organizational decision-making, and contribute to a culture of evidence-driven HR practice.

Key Concepts (foundational knowledge):

- Survey and assessment tools (e.g., development, administration, validation of surveys and assessments).
- Sources of data (e.g., surveys, interviews, focus groups).
- Basic concepts in statistics (e.g., descriptive statistics, correlation) and measurement (e.g., reliability, validity).
- Interpretation of data and charts.
- Using data to support a business case (e.g., interpretation, visualization, graphical representation).

SUBCOMPETENCIES	PROFICIENCY INDICATORS	
	For All HR Professionals	For Advanced HR Professionals
<p>Data advocate – Understands and promotes the importance and utility of data.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Demonstrates an understanding of the importance of using data to inform business decisions and recommendations. » Promotes the importance of evidence-based decision-making. » Promotes the importance of validating HR programs, practices and policies to ensure that they achieve desired outcomes. » Identifies decision points that can be informed by data and evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Promotes the role of evidence in setting and validating HR's strategic direction and long-term goals. » Supports an organizational culture that promotes the collection and incorporation of data (e.g., risks, economic and environmental factors) into decision-making, and supports the organizational processes, policies and procedures to do so. » Promotes the utility of HR metrics for understanding organizational performance. » Ensures that the HR function uses data to inform decision-making and the development and evaluation of HR initiatives.
<p>Data gathering – Understands how to determine data utility, and identifies and gathers data to inform organizational decisions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Maintains working knowledge of data collection, research methods, benchmarks and HR metrics. » Identifies sources of the most relevant data for solving organizational problems and answering questions. » Gathers data using appropriate methods (e.g., surveys, focus groups) to inform and monitor organizational solutions. » Scans external sources for data relevant to the organization (e.g., risks, economic and environmental factors). » Benchmarks HR initiatives and outcomes against the organization's competition and other relevant comparison groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Ensures that resources and processes are in place to facilitate systematic collection of data, to inform HR's strategic direction and long-term goals. » Identifies new sources of data or new methods of data collection to inform and evaluate HR initiatives. » Interacts with senior leaders outside the organization to collect data relevant to HR.
<p>Data analysis – Analyzes data to evaluate HR initiatives and business challenges.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Maintains working knowledge of statistics and measurement concepts. » Identifies potentially misleading or flawed data. » Conducts analyses to identify evidence-based best practices, evaluate HR initiatives and determine critical findings. » Maintains objectivity when interpreting data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Maintains advanced knowledge of statistics and measurement concepts. » Oversees comprehensive and systematic evaluations of the organization's HR programs, practices and policies. » Critically reviews and interprets the results of analyses to identify evidence-based best practices, evaluate HR initiatives and determine critical findings.
<p>Evidence-based decision-making – Uses the results of data analysis to inform the best course of action.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Reports key findings to senior business and HR leaders. » Uses research findings to evaluate different courses of action and their impacts on the organization. » Applies data-driven knowledge and best practices from one situation to the next, as appropriate. » Ensures that HR programs, practices and policies reflect research findings and best practices. » Objectively examines HR programs, practices and policies in light of data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Communicates to other senior leaders in the organization critical data analysis findings and their implications for HR's strategic direction and goals. » Uses research findings to inform HR's strategic direction and long-term goals. » Develops best practices based on evidence from industry literature, peer-reviewed research and other sources, including experience. » Sponsors evidence-based initiatives for process improvement.

SECTION 2:

HR Expertise (HR Knowledge)

Technical HR knowledge (i.e., *HR Expertise*) is defined as the principles, practices and functions of effective HR management. Its application is facilitated by behavioral competencies (see Section 1). Successful HR professionals must be in command of both technical HR knowledge and the behavioral components of HR practice. This approach, which is supported by SHRM research (see Introduction), emphasizes the critical and integrated roles played by technical HR knowledge (**what** you know) **and** by behavioral competencies (how you **apply** what you know) in contributing to effective HR practice.

How to Read This Section

The technical competency of *HR Expertise* encompasses the core HR knowledge that an HR professional needs to effectively perform key HR activities. *HR Expertise* is grouped into three knowledge domains: **People, Organization** and **Workplace**. Each domain is further divided into functional areas, which more specifically describe the knowledge required to perform those functions. All together, *HR Expertise* covers 15 functional areas. Figure 4 provides an overview of this organizing framework.

An in-depth description is provided for each knowledge domain. The following information is provided for each functional area:

- A **Definition** of the functional area;
- **Key Concepts** describing the knowledge specific to the functional area; and
- **Proficiency Indicators**, listed by their applicability based on career level (i.e., applicable to all HR professionals or to advanced HR professionals).

FIGURE 4: Organizing Framework of the Technical Competency (*HR Expertise*) Knowledge Domains

DOMAIN	FUNCTIONAL AREA	DEFINITION
People	HR Strategic Planning	Involves the activities necessary for developing, implementing and managing the strategic direction required to achieve organizational success and to create value for stakeholders.
	Talent Acquisition	Encompasses the activities involved in building and maintaining a workforce that meets the needs of the organization.
	Employee Engagement & Retention	Refers to the activities aimed at retaining high-performing talent, solidifying and improving the relationship between employees and the organization, creating a thriving and energized workforce, and developing effective strategies to address appropriate performance expectations from employees at all levels.
	Learning & Development	The activities that enhance the knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSAOs) and competencies of the workforce in order to meet the organization's business needs.
	Total Rewards	Refers to the design and implementation of compensation systems and benefit packages, which employers use to attract and retain employees.
Organization	Structure of the HR Function	Encompasses the people, processes, theories and activities involved in the delivery of HR-related services that create and drive organizational effectiveness.
	Organizational Effectiveness & Development	Concerns the overall structure and functionality of the organization, and involves measurement of long- and short-term effectiveness and growth of people and processes, and implementation of necessary organizational change initiatives.
	Workforce Management	Refers to HR practices and initiatives that allow the organization to meet its talent needs (e.g., workforce planning, succession planning) and to close critical gaps in competencies.
	Employee & Labor Relations	Refers to any dealings between the organization and its employees regarding the terms and conditions of employment.
	Technology Management	Involves the use of existing, new and emerging technologies to support the HR function, and the development and implementation of policies and procedures governing the use of technologies in the workplace.
Workplace	HR in the Global Context	Focuses on the role of the HR professional in managing global workforces to achieve organizational objectives.
	Diversity & Inclusion	Encompasses activities that create opportunities for the organization to leverage the unique backgrounds and characteristics of all employees to contribute to its success.
	Risk Management	The identification, assessment and prioritization of risks, and the application of resources to minimize, monitor and control the probability and impact of those risks accordingly.
	Corporate Social Responsibility	Represents the organization's commitment to operate in an ethical and sustainable manner by engaging in activities that promote and support philanthropy, transparency, sustainability and ethically sound governance practices.
	U.S. Employment Law & Regulations	Refers to the knowledge and application of all relevant laws and regulations in the United States relating to employment—provisions that set the parameters and limitations for each HR functional area and for organizations overall.

People

KNOWLEDGE DOMAIN

This domain covers essential HR knowledge relating to people. Its functional areas include: *HR Strategic Planning, Talent Acquisition, Employee Engagement & Retention, Learning & Development, and Total Rewards.*

To perform their job functions effectively, HR professionals need to know how to: create and set the strategic direction of the HR function; acquire or develop the talent necessary for pursuing organizational goals; maintain a satisfied and engaged workforce while minimizing unwanted employee turnover; and develop a total rewards program that maximizes the effectiveness of the organization's compensation and benefits.

FUNCTIONAL AREA #1: HR Strategic Planning

Definition: *HR Strategic Planning* involves the activities necessary for developing, implementing and managing the strategic direction required to achieve organizational success and to create value for stakeholders.

HR professionals at all career levels are expected to support and contribute to the strategic role of HR and the strategic direction of the organization. To do so effectively, they need a solid grasp of systems thinking and theory, which explains how organizational systems—including HR—work together. Practitioners must be able to understand and identify the contributions of the organization's strategic direction to organizational decision-making, and the contributions of each organizational system to the organization's overall strategy.

When HR professionals work with other business leaders to engage in strategic planning and analysis, they do so with an understanding of the external environment. They incorporate the organization's mission and vision into goal setting, and they determine how HR can help the organization create and sustain competitive advantage.

HR professionals at all career levels can use project management skills (e.g., project planning, monitoring, reporting, leadership) to carry out key initiatives that contribute to the goals of the HR function, and that are based on the strategic direction of the organization. Such programs should be continually evaluated by HR professionals as to their impact on the organization, in order to maximize their positive contributions.

Key Concepts:

- Approaches to project management (e.g., traditional, Lean Six Sigma, agile, critical chain) and processes (e.g., initiating, planning and design, launching/executing, monitoring and controlling, closing).
- Concepts of systems thinking (e.g., related parts, input-process-output) and components of an organizational system (e.g., interdependence, necessity of feedback, differentiation of units).
- Organizational mission, vision and values, and their relation to strategic management and planning.
- Project planning, monitoring and reporting methods and tools (e.g., critical path analysis, Gantt charts, variance analysis, outcome monitoring).
- Project leadership, governance and structures (e.g., team roles, team management, work breakdown structures).
- Role of strategic management and planning in creating and sustaining competitive advantage.
- Strategic planning analysis frameworks (e.g., PESTLE analysis, SWOT analysis, industry analysis, scenario planning, growth-share matrix).
- Strategic planning process (e.g., formulation, goal-setting, implementation, evaluation).
- Systems theory and input-process-output models.

PROFICIENCY INDICATORS

For All HR Professionals

- » Uses the perspective of systems thinking to understand how the organization operates.
- » Informs business decisions with knowledge of the strategy and goals of HR and the organization.
- » Develops and implements an individual action plan for executing HR's strategy and goals.
- » Uses benchmarks, industry metrics and workforce trends to understand the organization's market position and competitive advantage.
- » Informs HR leadership of new or overlooked opportunities to align HR's strategy with the organization's.
- » Provides HR leadership with timely and accurate information required for strategic decision-making.

For Advanced HR Professionals

- » Identifies the ways in which the HR function can support the organization's strategy and goals.
- » Engages other business leaders in strategic analysis and planning.
- » Evaluates HR's critical activities in terms of value added, impact and utility, using cost-benefit analysis, revenue, profit-and-loss estimates and other leading or lagging indicators.
- » Provides HR-focused expertise to other business leaders when formulating the organization's strategy and goals.
- » Develops and implements HR strategy, vision and goals that align with and support the organization's strategy and goals.
- » Ensures that HR strategy creates and sustains the organization's competitive advantage.

FUNCTIONAL AREA #2: Talent Acquisition

Definition: *Talent Acquisition* encompasses the activities involved in building and maintaining a workforce that meets the needs of the organization.

Attracting, recruiting and selecting talent to meet organizational staffing needs is a key responsibility of the HR function. HR professionals carry out these functions effectively by analyzing and understanding the organization's workforce requirements and staffing levels, which enables them to accurately assess its current and future talent needs.

To create and maintain a workforce that meets organizational goals, HR professionals identify the best and most efficient sources of talent. Then they use a variety of methods, from employer branding to social media, to recruit or attract that talent to the organization. HR professionals use high-quality, valid, cost-effective methods to evaluate each candidate, identifying those who will best meet the organization's labor requirements and facilitate achievement of strategic goals.

To ensure the continuous improvement of the organization's approach to talent acquisition, HR professionals regularly evaluate it to identify areas that can be improved.

Key Concepts:

- Approaches to employee onboarding.
- Approaches to sourcing (e.g., external talent pipelines).
- Employment categories (e.g., exempt/non-exempt, contract, temporary, interns).
- Job analysis and identification of job requirements (e.g., bona fide occupational qualification [BFOQ]).
- Job offer contingencies (e.g., background investigations, credit checks).
- Job offer negotiations (e.g., salary).
- Methods for creating and maintaining a positive employer value proposition (EVP) and employment brand.
- Methods for external and internal employee recruitment (e.g., job ads, career fairs).
- Methods for selection assessment (e.g., ability, job knowledge, non-cognitive tests, assessment centers, interviews).
- Talent acquisition metrics (e.g., cost per hire, time to fill).

PROFICIENCY INDICATORS

For All HR Professionals	For Advanced HR Professionals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Understands the talent needs of the organization or business unit. » Uses a wide variety of talent sources and recruiting methods to attract qualified applicants. » Uses technology (e.g., social media, applicant tracking software [ATS]) to support effective and efficient approaches to sourcing and recruiting employees. » Promotes and uses the EVP and employment brand for sourcing and recruiting applicants. » Uses the most appropriate hiring methods to best evaluate a candidate's technical skills, organizational fit and alignment with the organization's competencies needs. » Conducts appropriate pre-employment screening. » Implements effective onboarding and orientation programs for new employees. » Designs job descriptions to meet the organization's resource needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Analyzes staffing levels and projections, to forecast workforce needs. » Develops strategies for sourcing and acquiring a workforce that meets the organization's needs. » Establishes an EVP and employment brand that supports recruitment of high-quality job applicants. » Designs and oversees effective strategies for sourcing, recruiting and evaluating qualified job candidates. » Designs and oversees employee onboarding and assimilation processes. » Designs and oversees valid and systematic programs for assessing the effectiveness of talent acquisition activities that meet the organization's needs.

FUNCTIONAL AREA #3: Employee Engagement & Retention

Definition: *Employee Engagement & Retention* refers to activities aimed at retaining high-performing talent, solidifying and improving the relationship between employees and the organization, creating a thriving and energized workforce, and developing effective strategies to address appropriate performance expectations from employees at all levels.

Employee turnover and poor performance can be extremely costly and disruptive to organizations. HR practices that create and maintain an engaged, satisfied workforce and a positive organizational culture, however, can mitigate these problems, by improving organizational performance and the retention of high-performing talent.

This can be accomplished by HR professionals who comprehend the theories and concepts behind job attitudes (e.g., satisfaction, engagement), the causes of turnover, and the most effective ways of measuring both. HR professionals should understand best practices relating to such data, including analysis, identification of key findings and their communication to senior leadership.

HR professionals should know how to design and create HR systems and interventions that apply these data to improve job attitudes and build a positive organizational culture, and how to use the appropriate metrics to evaluate such improvement.

Key Concepts:

- Approaches to developing and maintaining a positive organizational culture (e.g., learning strategies, communication strategies, building values).
- Approaches to recognition (e.g., performance or service awards).
- Creation, administration, analysis and interpretation of employee attitude surveys.
- Creation, planning and management of employee engagement activities.
- Employee lifecycle phases (e.g., recruitment, integration, development, departure).
- Employee retention concepts (e.g., causes of turnover) and best practices (e.g., realistic job previews [RJP]).
- Influence of culture on organizational outcomes (e.g., organizational performance, organizational learning, innovation).
- Interventions for improving job attitudes.
- Job attitude theories and basic principles (e.g., engagement, satisfaction, commitment).
- Job enrichment/enlargement principles and techniques.
- Key components of, and best practices associated with, performance management systems.
- Methods for assessing employee attitudes (e.g., focus groups, stay interviews, surveys).
- Principles of effective performance appraisal (e.g., goal setting, giving feedback).
- Retention and turnover metrics (e.g., voluntary turnover rate).
- Types of organizational cultures (e.g., authoritarian, mechanistic, participative, learning, high performance).
- Workplace flexibility programs (e.g., telecommuting, alternative work schedules).

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FUNCTIONAL AREA #3: **Employee Engagement & Retention**

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PROFICIENCY INDICATORS	
For All HR Professionals	For Advanced HR Professionals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Designs, administers, analyzes and interprets surveys of employee attitudes (e.g., engagement, job satisfaction) and culture. » Administers and supports HR and organizational programs designed to improve employee attitudes and culture (e.g., social events, telecommuting policies, recognition, job enlargement/enrichment, workplace flexibility). » Identifies program opportunities to create more engaging or motivating jobs (e.g., job enrichment/enlargement). » Monitors changes in turnover and retention metrics, and ensures that leadership is aware of such changes. » Coaches supervisors on creating positive working relationships with their employees. » Trains stakeholders on use of organization's performance management systems (e.g., how to enter performance goals, make ratings). » Helps stakeholders understand the elements of satisfactory employee performance and performance management. » Implements and monitors processes that measure effectiveness of performance management systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » In collaboration with other leaders, defines an organizational strategy to create an engaged workforce. » Implements best practices for employee retention in HR programs, practices and policies (e.g., RJP, career development programs, employee socialization). » Communicates to other senior leaders the results of surveys of employee attitudes and culture. » Designs and oversees an action plan to address the findings of employee attitude surveys. » Designs and oversees HR and organizational programs designed to improve employee attitudes (e.g., social events, telecommuting policies, recognition, job enlargement/enrichment, workplace flexibility). » Holistically monitors the organization's metrics on employee attitudes, turnover and retention, and other information about employee engagement and retention. » Designs and oversees best practices-based employee performance management systems that meet the organization's talent management needs. » Designs and oversees processes to measure the effectiveness of performance management systems.

FUNCTIONAL AREA #4: Learning & Development

Definition: *Learning & Development* activities enhance the knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSAOs) and competencies of the workforce in order to meet the organization's business needs.

Learning and development is a key function of HR, and HR professionals play a vital role in enhancing the capabilities of employees to advance organizational goals. Using their understanding of learning theories and approaches, HR professionals design and implement a variety of learning and development activities (e.g., training programs, coaching and mentoring programs, developmental assignments).

HR professionals should develop and implement structures for sharing and ensuring the retention of key knowledge and skills throughout the organization. Learning and development programs should be evaluated for their effectiveness and impact on employees' day-to-day work behaviors.

Key Concepts:

- Approaches to coaching and mentoring (e.g., formal, informal mentorship programs).
- Career development.
- Developmental assessments (e.g., 360s).
- Knowledge-sharing techniques and facilitation.
- Learning and development approaches and techniques (e.g., e-learning, leader development).
- Learning and development program design and implementation (e.g., ADDIE model).
- Learning evaluation (e.g., Kirkpatrick 4-level model).
- Learning theories (e.g., adult learning theory).
- Needs analysis types (e.g., person, organizational, training, cost-benefit) and techniques (e.g., surveys, observations, interviews).
- Organizational analysis (e.g., performance analysis).
- Techniques for career development (e.g., career pathing, career mapping).

PROFICIENCY INDICATORS

For All HR Professionals	For Advanced HR Professionals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Uses best practices to evaluate data on gaps in competencies. » Creates individual development plans (IDPs) in collaboration with supervisors and employees. » Uses best practices to develop and deliver learning and development activities that close gaps in employees' competencies and skills. » Uses all available resources (e.g., vendors) to develop and deliver effective learning and development programs. » Creates internal social networks to facilitate knowledge-sharing among employees. » Administers and supports programs to promote knowledge transfer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Designs and oversees efforts to collect data on critical gaps in competencies. » Provides guidance to identify and develop critical competencies that meet the organization's talent needs. » Monitors the effectiveness of programs for emerging leaders and leadership development. » Creates long-term organizational strategies to develop talent. » Creates strategies to ensure the retention of organizational knowledge.

FUNCTIONAL AREA #5: Total Rewards

Definition: *Total Rewards* refers to the design and implementation of compensation systems and benefit packages, which employers use to attract and retain employees.

By creating compensation and benefits plans that attract and retain talent, HR professionals play a key role in maintaining the organization's most valuable resource—its employees.

HR professionals are responsible for developing, understanding and consistently applying the organization's compensation and benefits philosophy. The process by which they do so includes such actions as: determining appropriate total rewards levels to meet organizational needs through job evaluation; benchmarking against other organizations; conducting remuneration surveys; and analyzing labor market data.

Total rewards plans, including those for special groups (e.g., executives), should fully integrate and maximize the effectiveness of monetary compensation (i.e., salary, bonuses), employee benefits (e.g., health care, paid leave), and other forms of compensation (e.g., deferred compensation). HR professionals should continually evaluate and revise the organization's compensation philosophy and approach to ensure that organizational needs are met.

Key Concepts:

- Approaches to gathering compensation- and benefits-related market and competitive intelligence (e.g., remuneration surveys).

- Basic accounting and financial knowledge for managing payroll (e.g., total compensation statements).
- Compensation philosophies.
- Compensation plans for common and special workforce groups (e.g., domestic, global/expatriate, executive, sales).
- Job evaluation for determining compensation and benefits.
- Leave plans and approaches (e.g., vacation, holiday, sick, paid/unpaid leave).
- Other benefits (e.g., disability, unemployment insurance, employee assistance programs, family, flex, wellness programs).
- Other compensation (e.g., deferred compensation, direct/indirect compensation, stock options).
- Pay practices and issues (e.g., pay increases, base pay, pay levels, banding, variable pay).
- Remuneration and labor market data collection and interpretation.
- Remuneration data analysis (e.g., comparable worth, determining compensation, internal alignment, external competitiveness).
- Retirement planning and benefits (e.g., pension plans).
- Total rewards metrics and benchmarks.

PROFICIENCY INDICATORS

For All HR Professionals

- » Collects, compiles and interprets compensation and benefits data from various sources (e.g., remuneration surveys, labor market trends).
- » Implements appropriate pay, benefit, incentive, separation and severance systems and programs.
- » Complies with best practices for and laws and regulations governing compensation and benefits.
- » Differentiates between government-mandated, government-provided and voluntary benefit approaches.
- » Performs accurate job evaluations to determine appropriate compensation.

For Advanced HR Professionals

- » Designs and oversees organizational compensation and benefits philosophies, strategies and plans that align with the organization's strategic direction and talent needs.
- » Designs and oversees executive compensation approaches that directly connect individual performance to organizational success.
- » Ensures the internal equity of compensation systems.

Organization

KNOWLEDGE DOMAIN

This domain covers critical HR knowledge relating to the organization. Its functional areas include: *Structure of the HR Function, Organizational Effectiveness & Development, Workforce Management, Employee & Labor Relations, and Technology Management.*

To carry out their job responsibilities effectively, HR professionals need to know how to: create an effective HR function fully aligned to organizational strategy; enhance the effectiveness of the organization at large; ensure that the organization's talent pool has the skills and capabilities to achieve organizational goals; promote positive relationships with employees; and leverage technology to improve HR functioning.

FUNCTIONAL AREA #6: Structure of the HR Function

Definition: *Structure of the HR Function* encompasses the people, processes, theories and activities involved in the delivery of HR-related services that create and drive organizational effectiveness.

Effective HR functions, whether executed by a department with hundreds of employees or by a single person, must be structured to meet the needs of organizational stakeholders. How these functions are structured is highly dependent on their complexity, the organization's characteristics (e.g., size, sector, unionization), and HR's role.

To ensure that the HR function is optimally structured and integrated with the rest of the organization, HR professionals should know about the different types of HR service models, and should understand how various HR services are integrated, aligned and/or appropriately outsourced.

Ongoing data collection enables HR professionals to evaluate HR's effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. To accomplish this, they gather feedback from stakeholders and calculate appropriate metrics for determining HR-related performance and satisfaction.

When necessary, HR professionals should be able to recognize opportunities to improve HR operations or structure in response to such factors as changes in the workforce, globalization and organizational restructuring.

Key Concepts:

- Approaches to HR operational integration (i.e., how HR structures work together).
- Approaches to HR function/service models (e.g., centralized vs. decentralized).
- Approaches to HR structural models (e.g., Center of Excellence [COE], shared services).
- Elements of the HR function (e.g. recruiting, talent management, compensation, benefits).
- HR-function metrics (e.g., HR staff per full-time employee, customer satisfaction, key performance indicators, balanced scorecard).
- HR staff roles, responsibilities and functions (e.g., generalists, specialists, HR business partners).
- Outsourcing of HR functions.

PROFICIENCY INDICATORS

For All HR Professionals

- » Adapts work style to fit the organization's HR service model (e.g., centralized vs. decentralized), to ensure timely and consistent delivery of services to stakeholders.
- » Seeks feedback from stakeholders to identify opportunities for HR function improvements.
- » Acts as HR point-of-service contact for key stakeholders within a division or group.
- » Provides consultation on HR issues to all levels of leadership and management.
- » Coordinates with other HR functions to ensure timely and consistent delivery of services to stakeholders.
- » Ensures that outsourced and/or automated HR functions are integrated with other HR activities.
- » Analyzes and interprets key performance indicators to understand the effectiveness of the HR function.

For Advanced HR Professionals

- » Designs and implements the appropriate HR service model for the organization (e.g., centralized vs. decentralized), to ensure efficient and effective delivery of services to stakeholders.
- » Creates long-term goals that address feedback from stakeholders identifying opportunities for HR function improvements.
- » Ensures that all elements of the HR function (e.g., recruiting, talent management, compensation and benefits, learning and development) are aligned and integrated, and provide timely and consistent delivery of services to stakeholders.
- » Identifies opportunities to improve HR operations by outsourcing work or implementing technologies that automate HR functions (e.g., time, payroll).
- » Designs and oversees programs to collect, analyze and interpret key performance indicators (e.g., balanced scorecard) to evaluate the effectiveness of HR activities in supporting organizational success.

FUNCTIONAL AREA #7: Organizational Effectiveness & Development

Definition: *Organizational Effectiveness & Development* concerns the overall structure and functionality of the organization, and involves measurement of long- and short-term effectiveness and growth of people and processes, and implementation of necessary organizational change initiatives.

Organizational effectiveness describes the extent to which an organization is able to achieve its desired goals. Organizational development describes the ongoing maintenance of a workforce capable of accomplishing these goals. HR functions for human capital management play a key role in organizational effectiveness and development.

HR ensures that key documents are accurate and reflective of critical workforce activities, so that all stakeholders have a common and accurate understanding of employees' roles and responsibilities. HR professionals use their in-depth knowledge and understanding of organizational design principles, organizational performance theories, and inter- and intra-group dynamics to recommend ways to remove barriers that impede organizational functioning.

HR professionals collect and evaluate data on the performance of HR and the contributions of HR initiatives to the organization. They establish measurable goals for continuous improvement and instill a culture of accountability.

Key Concepts:

- Application of behavioral assessments (e.g., personality assessments).
- Intergroup dynamics (e.g., intergroup conflict).
- Intragroup dynamics (e.g., group formation, identity, cohesion, structure, influence on behavior).
- Organizational design structures and approaches (e.g., customer, functional, geographic, matrix, program).
- Organizational performance theories, structures, and approaches.

PROFICIENCY INDICATORS

For All HR Professionals	For Advanced HR Professionals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Ensures that key documents and systems (e.g., job postings and descriptions, performance management systems) accurately reflect workforce activities. » Supports change initiatives to increase the effectiveness of HR systems and processes. » Identifies areas in the organization's structures, processes and procedures that need change. » Provides recommendations for eliminating barriers to organizational effectiveness and development. » Collects and analyzes data on the value of HR initiatives to the organization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Aligns HR's strategy and activities with the organization's mission, vision, values and strategy. » Regularly monitors results against performance standards and goals in support of the organization's strategy. » Establishes measurable goals and objectives to create a culture of accountability. » Consults on, plans and designs organizational structures that align with the effective delivery of activities in support of the organization's strategy. » Assesses organizational needs to identify critical competencies for operational effectiveness. » Designs and oversees change initiatives to increase the effectiveness of HR systems and processes. » Ensures that HR initiatives demonstrate measurable value to the organization.

FUNCTIONAL AREA #8: Workforce Management

Definition: *Workforce Management* refers to HR practices and initiatives that allow the organization to meet its talent needs (e.g., workforce planning, succession planning) and close critical gaps in competencies.

Workforce management describes an integrated set of practices designed to optimize staffing and productivity of employees, and effectiveness of the organization as a whole. HR professionals continually evaluate the ability of the organization’s workforce to meet the organization’s strategic goals. Where competency gaps are identified, HR professionals develop comprehensive plans to meet the organization’s competency and talent needs.

To ensure continuity of leadership, HR professionals work with other organizational leaders to develop and implement leadership development initiatives (e.g., succession planning, development of high-potential employees).

Key Concepts:

- Analysis of labor supply and demand.
- Approaches to restructuring (e.g., mergers and acquisitions, downsizing).
- Best practices and techniques for knowledge management, retention and transfer.
- Leadership development and planning (e.g., high-potential development programs).
- Succession planning programs and techniques.
- Techniques for organizational need-gap analysis (e.g., examination of HR records, interviews, focus groups).
- Workforce planning approaches, techniques and analyses (e.g., attrition, gap and solution, implementation and evaluation, reduction in force, supply and demand, workforce profile).

PROFICIENCY INDICATORS

For All HR Professionals

- » Identifies gaps in workforce competencies and misalignment of staffing levels.
- » Implements approaches (e.g., buy or build) to ensure that appropriate workforce staffing levels and competencies exist to meet the organization’s goals and objectives.
- » Plans short-term strategies to develop workforce competencies that support the organization’s goals and objectives.
- » Administers and supports approaches (e.g., succession plans, high-potential development programs) to ensure that the organization’s leadership needs are met.
- » Supports strategies for restructuring the organization’s workforce (e.g., mergers and acquisitions, downsizing).

For Advanced HR Professionals

- » Evaluates how the organization’s strategy and goals align with future and current staffing levels and workforce competencies.
- » Develops strategies to maintain a robust workforce that has the talent to carry out the organization’s current and future strategy and goals.
- » Coordinates with business leaders to create strategies (e.g., succession planning, leadership development, training) that address the organization’s leadership needs.
- » Develops strategies for restructuring the organization’s workforce (e.g., mergers and acquisitions, downsizing).

FUNCTIONAL AREA #9: **Employee & Labor Relations**

Definition: *Employee & Labor Relations* refers to any dealings between the organization and its employees regarding the terms and conditions of employment.

When interacting with employees or their representatives (e.g., union representatives), HR professionals serve as the voice of the organization. In this role, they may lead negotiations with labor unions (e.g., supporting or leading the organization's efforts during the collective bargaining process) or with other parties. Because they are responsible for ensuring that employees are treated fairly, HR professionals must maintain expert-level knowledge of employment rights, standards and unfair labor practices. They may lead employee investigations, establish disciplinary procedures and address employee grievances and complaints.

By developing and implementing workplace policies, handbooks and codes of conduct, HR professionals serve as a resource for employees. To ensure positive employee-organization relationships, HR professionals educate non-HR employees about operating within the bounds of labor agreements or policies, help non-HR managers deal with difficult employees, and work to prevent retaliation.

Key Concepts:

- Approaches to retaliation prevention.
- Approaches to union-organization relations (e.g., collective bargaining, contract negotiation, contract administration process).
- Causes of and methods for preventing and addressing strikes, boycotts and work stoppages.
- Disciplinary procedures and approaches.
- Employment rights, standards and concepts (e.g., labor rights, living wage and fair wage concepts, standard workday), according to the International Labor Organization (ILO).
- Techniques for disciplinary investigations.
- Techniques for grievance and complaint resolution.
- Types and development of compliance and ethics programs (e.g., design, implementation, performance measures).
- Types and structures of organized labor (e.g., unions, works councils, trade union federations, other employee collectives).
- Types of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) (e.g., mediation, arbitration) and their advantages and disadvantages.
- Unfair labor practices, according to the ILO.
- Unionization approaches, methods and management (e.g., acceptance, avoidance strategies).

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FUNCTIONAL AREA #9: **Employee & Labor Relations**

(CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE)

PROFICIENCY INDICATORS	
For All HR Professionals	For Advanced HR Professionals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Supports interactions with union and other employee representatives. » Supports the organization's interests in union-management activities. » Assists and supports the organization in the collective bargaining process. » Participates in or facilitates ADR processes (e.g., arbitration, mediation). » Makes recommendations for addressing other types of employee representation (e.g., governmental, legal). » Develops and implements workplace policies, handbooks and codes of conduct. » Provides guidance to employees on the terms and implications of their employment agreement and the organization's policies and procedures (e.g., employee handbook). » Consults managers on how to supervise difficult employees, handle disruptive behaviors and respond with the appropriate level of corrective action. » Conducts investigations into employee misconduct and suggests disciplinary action when necessary. » Manages employee grievance and discipline processes. » Resolves workplace labor disputes internally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Manages interactions and negotiations with union and other employee representatives (e.g., governmental, legal). » Serves as the primary representative of the organization's interests in union-management activities (e.g., negotiations, dispute resolution). » Manages the collective bargaining process. » Consults on and develops an effective organized labor strategy (e.g., avoidance, acceptance, adaptation) to achieve the organization's desired impact on itself and its workforce. » Educates employees, managers and leaders at all levels about the organization's labor strategy (e.g., avoidance, acceptance, adaptation) and its impact on the achievement of goals and objectives. » Educates employees at all levels about changes in the organization's policies. » Coaches and counsels managers on how to operate within the parameters of organizational policy, labor agreements and employment agreements. » Oversees employee investigations and discipline.

FUNCTIONAL AREA #10: Technology Management

Definition: *Technology Management* involves the use of existing, new and emerging technologies to support the HR function, and the development and implementation of policies and procedures governing the use of technologies in the workplace.

HR uses technology (e.g., HR information systems [HRIS]) to enhance the effectiveness of the HR function. HR has traditionally used technology to automate routine and administrative tasks (e.g., benefits enrollment, applicant tracking), which freed up HR professionals to focus on more strategic tasks. More recently, HR has embraced technology to enhance the performance of core HR functions (e.g., use of social media for recruiting, software that facilitates Big Data analytics).

HR professionals should understand common HR-related technology applications (e.g., electronic self-service for basic HR functions). They should be able to assess the potential value and ability of new HR-related technology to support the organization's strategic direction, vision and goals. HR professionals may also be responsible for developing and implementing technology-related policies (e.g., social media usage, employee use of company-provided phones for personal use).

Key Concepts:

- Approaches to electronic self-service for basic HR and people management functions (e.g., scheduling, timekeeping, benefit enrollment).
- Data and information management (e.g., data integrity, confidentiality, security, disclosure).
- HRIS capabilities and use.
- Policies and procedures for procurement.
- Policies and practices for technology and social media use (e.g., bring-your-own-device, websites, computers for personal activity).
- Software for recruiting and applicant tracking.

PROFICIENCY INDICATORS

For All HR Professionals

- » Implements and uses technology solutions that support or facilitate delivery of effective HR services and storage of critical employee data.
- » Implements HRIS that integrate with and complement other enterprise information systems.
- » Develops and implements organizational standards and policies for maintaining confidentiality of employee data.
- » Uses technologies in a manner that protects workforce data.
- » Provides guidance to stakeholders on effective standards and policies for use of technologies in the workplace (e.g., social media, corporate and personal e-mail, internet messaging).
- » Coordinates and manages vendors implementing HR technology solutions.
- » Uses technologies that collect, access and analyze data and information, in order to understand business challenges and recommend evidence-based solutions.

For Advanced HR Professionals

- » Evaluates and implements technology solutions that support the achievement of HR's strategic direction, vision and goals.
- » Evaluates and selects vendors to provide HR technology solutions.
- » Designs and implements technology systems that optimize and integrate HR functional areas.
- » Develops and implements technology-driven self-service approaches that enable managers and employees to perform basic people-related transactions (e.g., scheduling, timekeeping, compensation administration, benefit enrollment, information changes).

Workplace

KNOWLEDGE DOMAIN

This domain covers crucial HR knowledge related to the workplace. Its functional areas include: *HR in the Global Context, Diversity & Inclusion, Risk Management, Corporate & Social Responsibility, and U.S. Employment Law & Regulations.*

To be successful at their jobs, HR professionals need to know how to: foster a diverse and inclusive workforce; manage organizational risks and threats to the safety and security of employees; contribute to the well-being and betterment of the community; and comply with applicable laws and regulations.

FUNCTIONAL AREA #11: HR in the Global Context

Definition: *HR in the Global Context* focuses on the role of the HR professional in managing global workforces to achieve organizational objectives.

Many HR professionals work in multinational organizations or in organizations that are moving toward a globally dispersed workforce. HR professionals in these organizations are responsible for understanding the global environment and global HR trends and issues, which may have an impact on the organization and its employees. Within that context, HR professionals must know how to manage global workforces, administer overseas assignments, and foster a workplace culture that reinforces organizational values while demonstrating respect for local norms.

Key Concepts:

- Best practices for international assignments (e.g., approaches and trends, effective performance, health and safety, compensation adjustments, employee repatriation, socialization).
- Requirements for moving work (e.g., co-sourcing, near-shoring, offshoring, on-shoring).

PROFICIENCY INDICATORS	
For All HR Professionals	For Advanced HR Professionals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Addresses global issues that influence day-to-day HR activities and makes recommendations for business solutions. » Maintains up-to-date knowledge of global political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental (PESTLE) factors and their influence on the organization's workforce. » Administers and supports HR activities associated with a global workforce. » Implements and conducts audits of global HR practices. » Maintains knowledge of global HR trends and best practices. » Balances with local needs the organization's desire for standardization of HR programs, practices and policies. » Builds relationships with global stakeholders. » Manages the day-to-day activities associated with international (i.e., expatriate) assignments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Recognizes and responds to global issues that influence the organization's human capital strategy. » Consults with business leaders on global PESTLE factors and their influence on the organization's workforce. » Develops a comprehensive organizational strategy that addresses global workforce issues. » Consults with business leaders to define global competencies and embed them throughout the organization. » Identifies opportunities to achieve efficiencies and cost savings by moving work (e.g., offshoring, on-shoring, near-shoring). » Designs and oversees programs for international (i.e., expatriate) assignments that support the organization's human capital strategy.

FUNCTIONAL AREA #12: Diversity & Inclusion

Definition: *Diversity & Inclusion* encompasses activities that create opportunities for the organization to leverage the unique backgrounds and characteristics of all employees to contribute to its success.

Diversity can facilitate organizational success by fostering creativity through expression of divergent opinions and perspectives, promoting healthy working relationships, and giving the organization an opportunity to connect with a wider audience.

HR professionals play a key role in an organization's diversity and inclusion (D&I) efforts in several ways: they consult with non-HR managers on diversity issues and policies; create and maintain an organizational culture of D&I; and identify and implement workplace accommodations.

Senior- and executive-level HR professionals may, in addition to developing and implementing HR plans and strategies to create and maintain a diverse and inclusive workforce, incorporate D&I into the organization's goals and strategic plan. At all career levels, HR professionals should recognize that diversity goes beyond readily observable differences (e.g., race), be proficient in D&I best practices, and leverage this knowledge to identify ways in which to improve the fairness of organizational policies and procedures.

Key Concepts:

- Approaches to developing an inclusive workplace (e.g., best practices for diversity training).
- Approaches to managing a multi-generational/aging workforce.
- Demographic barriers to success (e.g., glass ceiling).
- Issues related to acceptance of diversity, including international differences (i.e., its acceptance in foreign nations or by employees from foreign nations).
- Workplace accommodations (e.g., disability, religious, transgender, veteran, active-duty military).

PROFICIENCY INDICATORS

For All HR Professionals

- » Provides mentoring, training, guidance and coaching on cultural differences and practices to employees at all levels of the organization.
- » Consults with managers about distinctions between performance issues and cultural differences.
- » Develops and maintains knowledge of current trends and HR management best practices relating to D&I.
- » Contributes to development and maintenance of an organizational culture that values a diverse and inclusive workforce (e.g., conducts diversity training).
- » Identifies opportunities to enhance the fairness of organizational policies and procedures to all employees (e.g., removes demographic barriers to success).
- » Identifies and implements workplace accommodations.
- » Demonstrates support to internal and external stakeholders for the organization's D&I efforts.

For Advanced HR Professionals

- » Incorporates D&I goals into all HR programs, practices and policies.
- » Advocates for incorporation of diversity goals into the organization's strategic plan.
- » Develops, implements and oversees, in conjunction with other business leaders, enterprise-wide programs, practices and policies that lead to a diverse workforce.
- » Designs and oversees HR programs, practices and policies supporting the development and maintenance of an organizational culture that values and promotes a diverse and inclusive workforce.
- » Designs and oversees HR programs, practices and policies that encourage employees to take advantage of opportunities for working with those who possess a diverse set of experiences and backgrounds.
- » Ensures that HR staff members have up-to-date knowledge of current trends and HR management best practices relating to D&I.

FUNCTIONAL AREA #13: Risk Management

Definition: *Risk Management* is the identification, assessment and prioritization of risks, and the application of resources to minimize, monitor and control the probability and impact of those risks accordingly.

Organizations constantly face a variety of internal and external risks. In response, HR develops and implements strategies to prevent and reduce the occurrence of risks and adverse events, and to minimize associated harm to the organization and its employees.

As part of this process, HR engages in inward- and outward-facing risk analysis, which enables HR professionals to understand potential sources of risk (and prioritize them by importance), their likelihood of occurrence, and their impact on employees and the organization. Once risks have been identified and evaluated, HR professionals may lead efforts to develop preventive policies and procedures (e.g., drug and alcohol abuse policies, sexual harassment prevention, security procedures, employee injury or illness prevention protocols).

Regarding adverse events that actually occur, HR professionals play a key role in developing organization-wide procedures to address them (e.g., business recovery and continuity plans, emergency and disaster response). HR professionals also lead risk and safety audits and investigations to ensure compliance with related organizational policies, laws and regulations.

Key Concepts:

- Approaches to a drug-free workplace (e.g., testing, treatment of substance abuse).
- Approaches to qualitative and quantitative risk assessment (e.g., single loss expectancy, annualized loss expectancy).
- Business recovery and continuity-of-operations planning.
- Emergency and disaster (e.g., communicable disease, natural disaster, severe weather, terrorism) preparation and response planning.
- Enterprise risk management processes and best practices (e.g., understand context, identify risks, analyze risks, prioritize risks) and risk treatments (e.g., avoidance, reduction, sharing, retention).
- Legal and regulatory compliance auditing and investigation techniques.
- Quality assurance techniques and methods.
- Risk sources (e.g., project failures) and types (e.g., hazard, financial, operational, strategic).
- Security concerns (e.g., workplace violence, theft, fraud, corporate espionage, sabotage, kidnapping and ransom) and prevention.
- Workplace/occupational injury and illness prevention (e.g., identification of hazards), investigations and accommodations.

PROFICIENCY INDICATORS

For All HR Professionals

- » Monitors political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental (PESTLE) factors and their influence on the organization.
- » Administers and supports HR programs, practices and policies that identify and/or mitigate workplace risk.
- » Implements crisis management, contingency and business continuity plans for the HR function and the organization.
- » Communicates critical information about risks (e.g., safety and security) and risk mitigation to employees at all levels.
- » Conducts due diligence investigations to evaluate risks and ensure legal and regulatory compliance.
- » Conducts workplace safety- and health-related investigations (e.g., investigates workplace injuries).
- » Audits risk management activities and plans.
- » Maintains and ensures accurate reporting of internationally accepted workplace health and safety standards.
- » Incorporates into business cases the anticipated level of risk.

For Advanced HR Professionals

- » Develops, implements and oversees formal and routinized processes for monitoring the organization's internal and external environments, to identify potential risks.
- » Monitors and evaluates macro-level labor market, industry and global trends for their impact on the organization.
- » Examines potential threats to the organization and guides senior leadership accordingly.
- » Develops, implements and oversees a comprehensive enterprise risk management strategy.
- » Develops crisis management, contingency, and business continuity plans for the HR function and the organization.
- » Communicates critical information about risks (e.g., safety and security) and risk mitigation to senior-level employees and external stakeholders.
- » Ensures that risk management activities and plans are audited and that the results inform risk mitigation strategies.
- » Oversees workplace safety- and health-related investigations and reporting.
- » Establishes strategies to address workplace retaliation and violence.
- » Leads after-action debriefs following significant workplace incidents (e.g., those involving employee safety and security).
- » Evaluates the anticipated level of risk associated with strategic opportunities.

FUNCTIONAL AREA #14: Corporate Social Responsibility

Definition: *Corporate Social Responsibility* represents the organization's commitment to operate in an ethical and sustainable manner by engaging in activities that promote and support philanthropy, transparency, sustainability and ethically sound governance practices.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) reflects the organization's role in assisting the community in achieving or sustaining economic prosperity, social equity and environmental protection.

HR professionals help the organization integrate into its business operations CSR activities that align with business goals. HR professionals may collaborate with organizational leaders to identify CSR opportunities that deliver value to both the organization and the community. HR professionals also play a key role in helping employees understand the value of CSR programs.

Key Concepts:

- Approaches to community inclusion and engagement (e.g., representation on community boards, joint community projects, employee volunteerism).
- Creating shared value (e.g., definition, best practices).
- Developing CSR-related volunteer programs (e.g., recruiting and organizing participants).
- Organizational philosophies and policies (e.g., development, integration into the organization).
- Principles of corporate citizenship and governance.
- Steps for corporate philanthropy and charitable giving (e.g., selecting recipients, types, donation amounts).

PROFICIENCY INDICATORS

For All HR Professionals

- » Acts as a professional role model and representative of the organization when interacting with the community.
- » Engages in community-based volunteer and philanthropic activities.
- » Identifies and promotes opportunities for HR and the organization to engage in CSR activities.
- » Helps staff at all levels understand the societal impact of business decisions and the role of the organization's CSR activities in improving the community.
- » Maintains transparency of HR programs, practices and policies, where appropriate.
- » Coaches managers to achieve an appropriate level of transparency in organizational practices and decisions.
- » Identifies opportunities for incorporation of environmentally responsible business practices, and shares them with leadership.

For Advanced HR Professionals

- » Serves as a leader in community-based volunteer and philanthropic organizations.
- » Develops CSR strategies that reflect the organization's mission and values.
- » Ensures that the organization's CSR programs enhance the employee value proposition and have a beneficial impact on HR programs (e.g., recruitment and retention) and/or contribute to the organization's competitive advantage.
- » Creates CSR program activities that engage the organization's workforce and the community at large.
- » Coordinates with other business leaders to integrate CSR objectives throughout the organization.
- » Coordinates with other business leaders to develop and implement appropriate levels of corporate self-governance and transparency.
- » Develops, with other business leaders, strategies that encourage and support environmentally responsible business decisions.

FUNCTIONAL AREA #15: U.S. Employment Law & Regulations

Important note: Only examinees residing within the United States will be tested on these topics; examinees residing outside the U.S. will not be tested on it. All laws and regulations referenced are subject to change.

Definition: *U.S. Employment Law & Regulations* refers to the knowledge and application of all relevant laws and regulations in the United States relating to employment—provisions that set the parameters and limitations for each HR functional area and for organizations overall.

HR professionals are responsible for maintaining the compliance and alignment of human capital programs and policies with relevant employment laws and regulations. Related activities that HR professionals may engage in include: educating other employees, including senior executives, on the legality of HR-related programs; establishing metrics or other criteria to measure and track compliance; and ensuring that organizational systems and processes facilitate the collection, analysis and reporting of relevant data.

Key Concepts:

Below are six broad categories of U.S. laws, regulations and Supreme Court cases relating to employment, with selected examples. (Please note that this is **not** an exhaustive list of categories or examples.) State, municipal and other local-level laws, regulations and cases are not included.

- **COMPENSATION**

EXAMPLES: Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA); Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (FLSA; Wage-Hour Bill; Wagner-Connery Wages and Hours Act) and amendments; Equal Pay Act of 1963 (amending FLSA); Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009; *Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.* (2007).

- **EMPLOYEE RELATIONS**

EXAMPLES: Labor Management Relations Act of 1947 (LMRA; Taft-Hartley Act); National Labor Relations Act of 1935 (NLRA; Wagner Act; Wagner-Connery Labor Relations Act); *NLRB v. Weingarten* (1975); *Lechmere, Inc. v. NLRB* (1992).

- **JOB SAFETY AND HEALTH**

EXAMPLES: Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988; Guidelines on Sexual Harassment; Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970.

- **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

EXAMPLES: Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) and amendments; Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and amendments; Civil Rights Acts; Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972; Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures (1978) (29 CFR Part 1607); *Griggs v. Duke Power Co.* (1971); *Phillips v. Martin Marietta Corp.* (1971).

- **LEAVE AND BENEFITS**

EXAMPLES: Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA; expanded 2008, 2010); Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA; “Obamacare”); *National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius* (2012).

- **MISCELLANEOUS PROTECTION LAWS**

EXAMPLES: Employee Polygraph Protection Act of 1988; Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA).

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

FUNCTIONAL AREA #15: **U.S. Employment Law & Regulations***(CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE)*

PROFICIENCY INDICATORS	
For All HR Professionals	For Advanced HR Professionals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Maintains a current working knowledge of relevant domestic and global employment laws. » Ensures that HR programs, practices and policies align and comply with laws and regulations. » Coaches employees at all levels in understanding and avoiding illegal and noncompliant HR-related behaviors (e.g., illegal terminations or discipline, unfair labor practices). » Brokers internal or external legal services for interpretation of employment laws. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Maintains current, expert knowledge of relevant domestic and global employment laws. » Establishes and monitors criteria for organizational compliance with laws and regulations. » Educates and advises senior leadership on HR-related legal and regulatory compliance issues. » Oversees fulfillment of compliance requirements for HR programs, practices and policies. » Ensures that HR technologies facilitate compliance and reporting requirements (e.g., tracking employee accidents, safety reports).

Appendix A: Glossary

Below is a list of key terms from this document and their definitions.

TERM	DEFINITION
ADDIE (analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation) model	Instructional systems design (ISD) framework consisting of five steps that guide the design and development of learning programs.
Alternative dispute resolution (ADR)	Umbrella term for the various approaches and techniques, other than litigation, that can be used to resolve a dispute (e.g., arbitration, conciliation, mediation).
Analytics	Tools that add context or sub-classifying comparison groups to data so that the data can be used for decision support.
Applicant	Person who has applied for or formally expressed interest in a position.
Applicant tracking system (ATS)	Software application that automates organizations' management of the recruiting process (e.g., accepting application materials, screening applicants).
Arbitration	Method of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) by which disputing parties agree to be bound by the decision of one or more impartial persons to whom they submit their dispute for final determination.
Assessment center	Process by which job candidates or employees are evaluated to determine their suitability and/or readiness for employment, training, promotion or an assignment.
Balance sheet	Statement of an organization's financial position at a specific point in time, showing assets, liabilities and shareholder equity.
Balanced scorecard	Performance management tool that depicts an organization's overall performance, as measured against goals, lagging indicators and leading indicators.
Benchmarking	Process by which an organization identifies performance gaps and sets goals for performance improvement, by comparing its data, performance levels and/or processes against those of other organizations.
Benefits	Mandatory or voluntary payments or services provided to employees, typically covering retirement, health care, sick pay/disability, life insurance and paid time off (PTO).

TERM	DEFINITION
Bias	Conscious or unconscious beliefs that influence a person's perceptions or actions, which may cause that person to become partial or prejudiced.
Bona fide occupational qualification (BFOQ)	Factor (e.g., gender, religion, national origin) that is reasonably necessary, in the normal operations of an organization, to carry out a particular job function.
Business case	Tool or document that defines a specific problem, proposes a solution, and provides justifications for the proposal in terms of time, cost efficiency and probability of success.
Business intelligence	Raw data, internal and external to an organization, that is translated into meaningful information for decision makers to use in taking strategic action.
Business unit	Element or segment of an organization that represents a specific business function (e.g., accounting, marketing, production); also may be called department, division, group, cost center or functional area.
Buy-in	Process by which a person or group provides a sustained commitment in support of a decision, approach, solution or course of action.
Career development	Progression through a series of employment stages characterized by relatively unique issues, themes and tasks.
Career mapping	Process by which organizations use visual tools or guides to depict prototypical or exemplary career possibilities and paths, in terms of sequential positions, roles and stages.
Career pathing	Process by which employers provide employees with a clear outline for moving from a current to a desired position.
Cash flow statement	Statement of an organization's ability to meet its current and short-term obligations, showing incoming and outgoing cash and cash reserves in operations, investments and financing.
Center of excellence (COE)	Team or structure that provides expertise, best practices, support and/or knowledge transfer in a focused area.
Change initiative	Transition in an organization's technology, culture or behavior of its employees and managers.
Change management	Principles and practices for managing a change initiative so that it is more likely to be accepted and provided with the resources (financial, human, physical, etc.) necessary to reshape the organization and its people.
Coaching	Focused, interactive communication and guidance intended to develop and enhance on-the-job performance, knowledge or behavior.

TERM	DEFINITION
Collective bargaining	Process by which management and union representatives negotiate the employment conditions for a particular bargaining unit for a designated period of time.
Comparable worth	Concept that jobs primarily filled by women, which require skills, effort, responsibility and working conditions comparable to similar jobs primarily filled by men, should have the same classifications and salaries.
Competencies	Clusters of highly interrelated attributes, including knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSAOs), that give rise to the behaviors needed to perform a given job effectively.
Compliance	State of being in accordance with all national, federal, regional and/or local laws, regulations and/or other government authorities and requirements applicable to the places in which an organization operates.
Conciliation	Method of nonbinding alternative dispute resolution (ADR) by which a neutral third party tries to help disputing parties reach a mutually agreeable decision (i.e., mediation).
Conflict of interest	Situation in which a person or organization may potentially benefit, directly or indirectly, from undue influence, due to involvement in outside activities, relationships or investments that conflict with or have an impact on the employment relationship or its outcomes.
Corporate social responsibility (CSR)	Concept that a corporation has an impact on the lives of its stakeholders and the environment, encompassing such areas as corporate governance, philanthropy, sustainability, employee rights, social change, volunteerism, corporate-sponsored community programs and workplace safety.
Cost-benefit analysis (CBA)	Approach to determining the financial impact of an organization's activities and programs on profitability, through a process of data or calculation comparing value created against the cost of creating that value.
Critical path	Amount of time needed to complete all required elements or components of a task, determined by taking into account all project-task relationships.
Culture	Basic beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviors and customs shared and followed by members of a group, which give rise to the group's sense of identity.
Disability	Physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one's major life activities.
Diversity	Differences in people's characteristics (e.g., age, beliefs, education, ethnicity, gender, job function, personality, race, religion, socioeconomic status, thought processes, work style).

TERM	DEFINITION
Due diligence	Requirement to thoroughly investigate an action before it is taken, through diligent research and evaluation.
E-learning	Electronic media delivery of educational and training materials, processes and programs.
Emotional intelligence (EI)	Ability to be sensitive to and understand one's own and others' emotions and impulses.
Employee engagement	Employees' emotional commitment to an organization, demonstrated by their willingness to put in discretionary effort to promote the organization's effective functioning.
Employee surveys	Instruments that collect and assess information on employees' attitudes and perceptions (e.g., engagement, job satisfaction) of the work environment or employment conditions.
Employee value proposition (EVP)	Employees' perceived value of the total rewards and tangible and intangible benefits they receive from the organization as part of employment, which drives unique and compelling organizational strategies for talent acquisition, retention and engagement.
Employees	Persons who exchange their work for wages or salary.
Ethics	Set of behavioral guidelines that an organization expects all of its directors, managers and employees to follow, in order to ensure appropriate moral and ethical business standards.
Evidence-based	Approach to evaluation and decision-making that utilizes data and research findings to drive business outcomes.
Focus group	Small group of invited persons (typically six to twelve) who actively participate in a structured discussion, led by a facilitator, for the purpose of eliciting their input on a specific product, process, policy or program.
Gap analysis	Method of assessing a current state in order to determine what is needed to move to a desired future state.
Global mindset	Ability to have an international perspective, inclusive of other cultures' views.
Globalization	Status of growing interconnectedness and interdependency among countries, people, markets and organizations worldwide.
Governance	System of rules and processes set up by an organization to ensure its compliance with local and international laws, accounting rules, ethical norms, internal codes of conduct and other standards.

TERM	DEFINITION
Hazard	Potential harm, often associated with a condition or activity that, if left uncontrolled, can result in injury or damage to persons or property.
HR business partner	HR professional who advises an organization's leaders in developing and implementing a human capital strategy that closely aligns with overall organizational mission, vision and goals.
HR service model	Approach to structuring and delivering an organization's HR services to support organizational success.
Human resource information system (HRIS)	Information technology (IT) framework and tools for gathering, storing, maintaining, retrieving, revising and reporting relevant HR data.
Inclusion	Extent to which each person in an organization feels welcomed, respected, supported and valued as a team member.
Individual development plan (IDP)	Document that guides employees toward their goals for professional development and growth.
Information management (IM)	Use of technology to collect, process and condense information, for the purpose of managing the information efficiently as an organizational resource.
Integrity	Adherence to a set of ethical standards, reflecting strong moral principles, honesty and consistency in behavior.
Internal equity	Extent to which employees perceive that monetary and other rewards are distributed equitably, based on effort, skill and/or relevant outcomes.
Job analysis	Process of systematically studying a job in order to identify the activities/tasks and responsibilities it includes, the personal qualifications necessary to perform it, and the conditions under which it is performed.
Job description	Document that describes a job and its essential functions and requirements (e.g., knowledge, skills, abilities, tasks, reporting structure, responsibilities).
Job enlargement	Process of broadening a job's scope by adding different tasks to the job.
Job enrichment	Process of increasing a job's depth by adding responsibilities to the job.
Job evaluation	Process of determining a job's value and price in order to attract and retain employees, by comparing the job against other jobs within the organization or against similar jobs in competing organizations.

TERM	DEFINITION
Key performance indicators (KPIs)	Quantifiable measures of performance that gauge an organization's progress toward strategic objectives or other agreed-upon performance standards.
KSAOs	Knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics.
Labor union	Group of workers who formally organize and coordinate their activities to achieve common goals in their relationship with an employer or group of employers (i.e., trade union).
Lagging indicator	Type of metric describing an activity or change in performance that has already occurred.
Leader development	Professional program that helps management- and executive-level employees develop knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSAOs) related to leadership.
Leadership	Ability to influence, guide, inspire or motivate a group or person to achieve their goals.
Leading indicator	Type of metric describing an activity that can change future performance and predict success in the achievement of strategic goals.
Liabilities	Organization's debts and other financial obligations.
Measurement	Process of collecting, quantifying and evaluating data.
Mediation	Method of nonbinding alternative dispute resolution (ADR) by which a neutral third party tries to help disputing parties reach a mutually agreeable decision (i.e., conciliation).
Mentoring	Relationship in which one person helps guide another's development.
Merger & acquisition (M&A)	Process by which two separate organizations combine, either by joining together as relative equals (merger) or by one procuring the other (acquisition).
Mission statement	Concise outline of an organization's strategy, specifying the activities it intends to pursue and the course its management has charted for the future.
Motivation	Factors that initiate, direct and sustain human behavior over time.
Negotiation	Process by which two or more parties work together to reach agreement on a matter.
Offshoring	Method by which an organization relocates its processes or production to an international location through subsidiaries or third-party affiliates.

TERM	DEFINITION
Onboarding	Process of assimilating new employees into an organization through orientation programs to help them. New employees' experiences in their first months of employment.
Organizational effectiveness	Degree to which an organization is successful in executing its strategic objectives and mission.
Organizational learning	Acquisition and/or transfer of knowledge within an organization through activities or processes that may occur at several organizational levels. Ability of an organization to learn from its mistakes and adjust its strategy accordingly.
Organizational values	Beliefs and principles defined by an organization to direct and govern its employees' behavior.
Orientation	Process by which new employees become familiar with the organization and with their specific department, coworkers and job.
Outsourcing	Process by which an organization contracts with third-party vendors to provide selected services/activities, instead of hiring new employees.
Performance appraisal	Process of measuring and evaluating an employee's adherence to performance standards and providing feedback to the employee.
Performance management	Tools, activities and processes that an organization uses to manage, maintain and/or improve the job performance of employees.
Performance measures	Data or calculations comparing current performance against key performance indicators (KPIs).
Performance standards	Behaviors and results defined by an organization to communicate the expectations of management.
Pluralism	Type of labor environment in which multiple forces are at work in an organization, each with its own agenda, and in which conflict is overcome through negotiation.
Position	Scope of work roles and responsibilities associated with one or more persons.
Radicalism	Concept that management-labor conflict is an inherent characteristic of capitalism and can be resolved only with a change in the economic system.
Realistic job preview (RJP)	Tool used in the staffing/selection process to provide an applicant with honest, complete information about the job and work environment.

TERM	DEFINITION
Recruitment	Process by which an organization seeks out candidates and encourages them to apply for job openings.
Regulation	Rule or order issued by an administrative agency of government, which usually has the force of law.
Reliability	Extent to which a measurement instrument provides consistent results.
Remediation	Process by which an unacceptable action or behavior is corrected.
Remuneration	Total pay in the form of salary and wages received in exchange for employment (e.g., allowances, benefits, bonuses, cash incentives, monetary value of non-cash incentives).
Remuneration surveys	Instruments that collect information on prevailing market compensation and benefits practices (e.g., base pay, pay ranges, starting wage rates, statutory and market cash payments, paid time off [PTO], variable compensation).
Repatriation	Process by which employees returning from international assignments reintegrate into their home country's culture, conditions and employment.
Restructuring	Act of reorganizing the legal, ownership, operational or other structures of an organization.
Retention	Ability of an organization to keep its employees.
Return on investment (ROI)	Data or calculation comparing an investment's monetary or intrinsic value against expended resources.
Risk	Uncertainty that has an effect on an objective, where effect outcomes may include opportunities, losses and threats.
Risk management	System for identifying, evaluating and controlling actual and potential risks to an organization, and which typically incorporate mitigation and/or response strategies, including the use of insurance.
Selection	Process of evaluating the most suitable candidates for a position.
Six Sigma/Lean Six Sigma	A set of techniques and tools for process improvement, aimed at increasing quality by decreasing defects in processes. Lean Six Sigma also aims at increasing speed by eliminating waste.
Social media	Internet technology platforms and communities that people and organizations use to communicate and share information, opinions and resources.

TERM	DEFINITION
Socialization	Process by which persons learn the knowledge, language, social skills, culture and values required for assimilating into a group or organization.
Sourcing	Process by which an organization generates a pool of qualified job applicants.
Stakeholders	Those affected by an organization's social, environmental and economic impact (e.g., customers, employees, local communities, regulators, shareholders, suppliers).
Stay interviews	Structured conversations with employees for the purpose of determining which aspects of a job (e.g., culture, engagement, leadership, organization, satisfaction) encourage employee retention, or may be improved to do so.
Strategic management	System of actions that leaders take to drive an organization toward its goals and objectives.
Strategic planning	Process of setting goals and designing a path toward organizational success.
Strategy	Plan of action for accomplishing an organization's overall and long-range goals.
Succession planning	Process of implementing a talent management strategy to identify and foster the development of high-potential employees or other job candidates who, over time, may move into leadership positions of increased responsibility.
Sustainability	Practice of purchasing and using resources wisely by balancing economic, social and environmental concerns, toward the goal of securing present and future generations' interests.
SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunity and threat) analysis	Method for assessing an organization's strategic capabilities through the environmental scanning process, which identifies and considers the internal and external factors that affect the achievement of organizational goals and objectives.
Systems thinking	Process for understanding how seemingly independent units within a larger entity interact with and influence one another.
Talent management	System of integrated HR processes for attracting, developing, engaging and retaining employees who have the knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSAOs) to meet current and future business needs.
Totalization agreements	Bilateral agreements between countries, entered into for the purpose of eliminating double taxation of employees on international assignments.
Trade union	Group of workers who formally organize and coordinate their activities to achieve common goals in their relationship with an employer or group of employers (i.e., labor union).

TERM	DEFINITION
Training	Process by which employees are provided with the knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSOAs) specific to a task or job.
Transformational leadership	Leadership style that focuses on challenging and developing members of an organization to attain long-range results through continuous evolution, improvement or change, based on the leader's vision and strategy.
Transparency	Extent to which an organization's agreements, dealings, information, practices and transactions are open to disclosure and review by relevant persons.
Turnover	Act of replacing employees who are leaving an organization. Attrition or loss of employees.
Unfair labor practice (ULP)	Violation of employee rights. Action prohibited under labor-relations statutes.
Unitarism	Concept that employers and employees can act together for their common good.
Validity	Extent to which a measurement instrument measures what it is intended to measure.
Value	Measure of usefulness, worth or importance.
Variance analysis	Statistical method for identifying the degree of difference between planned and actual performance or outcomes.
Vision	Description of what an organization hopes to attain and accomplish in the future, which guides it toward that defined direction.
Workforce planning	Strategic process by which an organization analyzes its current workforce and determines the steps required for it to prepare for future needs.
Workplace accommodation	Modification of a job, job site, or way of doing a job, so that persons with disabilities can have equal access to opportunity in all aspects of work and can perform the essential functions of their positions.
Works councils	Groups that represent employees, generally on a local or organizational level, for the primary purpose of receiving from employers and conveying to employees information about the workforce and the health of the enterprise.

Appendix B: Resources

The following resources provide additional guidance to readers seeking career advancement, which includes SHRM certification. They were selected for their usefulness to individuals studying for the SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP exams. There are three sections:

- **Section 1: General Resources** – broad coverage of the HR profession.
- **Section 2: Competency Resources** – focus on behavioral competencies; eight subsections, arranged in order of SHRM-defined behavioral competency.
- **Section 3: HR Expertise Resources** – focus on technical knowledge; 15 subsections, arranged in order of SHRM-defined functional area.

Download Appendix B: Resources at shrmcertification.org/SHRMBOCK/Resources.

Questions

Contact the SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP Exam Team

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For more information

shrmcertification.org/SHRMBOCK

WHAT IS SHRM?

The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) is the world's largest HR membership organization, representing 285,000 members in more than 165 countries. For nearly seven decades, the Society has been the leading provider of resources to serve the needs of HR professionals and advance the practice of human resource management. SHRM has more than 575 affiliated chapters within the United States and subsidiary offices in China, India and United Arab Emirates.

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