

BUSINESS CREDITS: ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW



WHAT ARE BUSINESS CREDITS?

Business Credits are earned by SPHR® and SPHRi™ certification holders who complete programs or activities that enhance their knowledge of their organization's operations and its industry.

WHY BUSINESS CREDITS?

When asked how HR can take on greater roles in driving their organization's growth, CEOs most frequently cite the need for HR professionals to develop a more thorough understanding of their organization's operations and their industry. For this reason, SPHR and SPHRi certified professionals must earn 15 credit hours (out of the total 60 required to recertify) through activities that qualify for business credits.

WHAT QUALIFIES FOR BUSINESS CREDIT?

The types of activities that qualify for business credits are those that fall outside of HR's primary responsibility, but require HR to work with other departments. They support the certified professional's knowledge of the business, such as finance, marketing, and specific organizational operations.

The responsibilities in the "Business Management and Strategy" functional area in the SPHR Exam Content Outline and in the "HR as Business Leader" functional area in the SPHRi Exam Content Outline have a direct impact on the organization's bottom line results and affect its mission, vision and goals. The activities must align with these responsibilities.

In general, activities that qualify for business credits are those that:

- Are nontraditional HR and not specifically covered in the other five areas of the SPHR and SPHRi ECOs.
- Require certification holders to learn about a different business function or enter into a partnership with another department for the activity.
- Have an impact on the organization's mission, vision, values, bottom line, policies or strategic goals and objectives.
- Develop certification holders' skills in strategic planning, critical thinking, influencing, negotiation and leadership.

BUSINESS CREDITS VS. HR CREDITS

Certain topics qualify for either HR or Business credit hours. Which of the two they fall under will depend on whether they are part of a larger organizational strategy. If they are part of a larger organizational strategy, they fall under Business Credits. The following table outlines topics that could fall under both and shows examples of how those topics are addressed in order to qualify for either Business Credits or HR Credits.

TOPIC	FOR BUSINESS CREDITS	FOR HR CREDITS
Diversity	Diversity as a Business Strategy: Calculating return on investment (ROI) and developing a business case for diversity or developing an integrated diversity strategy and implementing it throughout organizational operations	Diversity as HR Development: Raising awareness of principles of inclusion and diversity; the development of a diversity program.
Legislative Activity	Legislative Activity as Advocacy: Monitoring the regulatory environment and responding appropriately to proposed legislation that could affect one's industry or operations	Legislative Activity as Compliance with Enacted Laws and Regulations: Legal updates covered under Employee and Labor Relations
Talent Management	Talent Management as an Integrated Organizational Strategy: Identifying specific leadership competencies integrated with organizational strategy and the acquisition, identification and development of key talent	Talent Management as Part of Process: Employee development activities or succession planning. These are under HR Development or Workforce Planning & Employment
Organizational Redesign	Organizational Redesign as a Leadership Initiative: Participating in due diligence and decision-making regarding mergers, restructuring, divestitures, etc.	Organizational Redesign as Part of a Process: Carrying out an activity planned by others, such as a workforce reduction or redeployment. This is covered under Employee and Labor Relations
Leadership	Leadership as Business Strategy: Creating and implementing leadership development initiatives linked to business strategy	Leadership as a Management Skill: Identifying leadership styles and strategies; determining effectiveness of various approaches. This is core HR Knowledge
Change Management	Change Management as an Integrated Organizational Strategy: Developing/implementing a change management strategy addressing a specific organizational need	Change Management as a Technique: Analyzing various change management methods, models and applications. This is core HR knowledge
Labor Relations	Labor Relations as a Business Strategy: Participating as a member of the senior management team setting objectives for contract negotiations, researching alternatives and establishing and measuring goals achieved as a result of negotiations	Labor Relations as a Management Skill: Serving as a member of the negotiating team, providing HR-related data needed for negotiations (headcount projections, benefits costs, etc.), administering labor contract. These are covered under Employee Labor Relations

BUSINESS CREDIT PRE-APPROVED PROGRAMS

To see a list of programs that qualify for Business Credit and for HR and Global recertification credits, please go to: www.hrci.org/businesscredit

ACTIVITIES THAT QUALIFY FOR BUSINESS CREDIT

SPHRs and SPHRIs can earn business credit through the following categories and their activities:

CATEGORIES	ACTIVITIES	WHAT YOU GAIN
On-the-Job (First-Time Work Experience)	<p>Helping develop your organization's strategic plan</p> <p>Helping to define the organization's mission, vision and values</p> <p>Helping to develop the organization's overall budget</p> <p>Developing metrics, such as Key Performance Indicators or Leadership competencies that are applied across the organization</p> <p>Projects or programs that require you to work in a cross-functional team or to partner with other business leaders</p>	<p>Knowledge of overall operations</p> <p>A deeper understanding of the organization's purpose</p> <p>Exposure to how to manage the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization's operations</p> <p>Knowledge of what is critical to an organization's mission</p> <p>Knowledge of how different departments operate together</p>
Continuing Education	<p>Industry-specific courses or events</p> <p>Training in or coursework on business topics, such as Finance for the Non-Financial Manager, Marketing Strategies, Technology Developments, etc.</p> <p>Courses or training that covers such topics as performing business-related tasks or utilizing tools, such as strategic planning, business analytics and budgeting.</p>	<p>Deeper industry knowledge</p> <p>Knowledge of other business disciplines</p> <p>Knowledge of other business disciplines</p>
Training/Instruction	<p>Developing/delivering training on topics mentioned under "Continuing Education"</p> <p>Delivering a presentation at an industry conference</p>	<p>Broader/deeper knowledge of business disciplines outside of HR</p> <p>Develop greater expertise in your industry</p>
Research and Publishing	<p>Authoring/co-authoring a published article on your industry or organization's operations</p>	<p>Develop greater expertise in your industry or in your organization's operations</p>

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 HRCI Voices