



CERTIFICATIONS IN  
HUMAN RESOURCES

PHR®  
Professional in  
Human Resources®

# PHR® Exam Content Outline



# PHR® Exam Content Outline At-a-Glance:

## PHR Exam Weighting by Functional Area:

Functional Area 01 | Business Management (20%)

Functional Area 02 | Talent Planning and Acquisition (16%)

Functional Area 03 | Learning and Development (10%)

Functional Area 04 | Total Rewards (15%)

Functional Area 05 | Employee and Labor Relations (39%)

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### IF LAWS CHANGE

We realize that employment laws change constantly. Candidates are responsible for knowing the HR laws and regulations that are in effect at the time of their exam. This exam content outline took effect in 2018.

The Professional in Human Resources (PHR®) exam is created using the PHR EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE, which details the responsibilities of and knowledge needed by today's HR professional. The PHR EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE is created by HR subject matter experts through a rigorous practice analysis study conducted by HRCI. It is updated periodically to ensure it is consistent with current practices in the HR profession.

HRCI developed the HRCI Capability Model™ in 2021 to support the interplay between evidence-based knowledge, stakeholder-relevant capabilities and results-oriented outcomes. It serves as a roadmap designed to support and guide HR's diverse community of professionals as they pursue learning and assessment opportunities. For more information about the Capability Model, please visit our [website](#).

## Functional Area 01 | Business Management (20%)

Using information about the organization and business environment to reinforce expectations, influence decision making, and avoid risk.

### Responsibilities:

- 01 Interpret and apply information related to general business environment and industry best practices
- 02 Reinforce the organization's core values, ethical and behavioral expectations through modeling, communication, and coaching
- 03 Understand the role of cross-functional stakeholders in the organization and establish relationships to influence decision making
- 04 Recommend and implement best practices to mitigate risk (for example: lawsuits, internal/external threats)
- 05 Determine the significance of data for recommending organizational strategies (for example: attrition rates, diversity in hiring, time to hire, time to fill, ROI, success of training)



### Knowledge of:

- 01 Vision, mission, values, and structure of the organization
- 02 Legislative and regulatory knowledge and procedures
- 03 Corporate governance procedures and compliance
- 04 Employee communications
- 05 Ethical and professional standards
- 06 Business elements of an organization (for example: other functions and departments, products, competition, customers, technology, demographics, culture, processes, safety and security)
- 07 Existing HRIS, reporting tools, and other systems for effective data reporting and analysis
- 08 Change management theory, methods, and application

- 09 Risk management
- 10 Qualitative and quantitative methods and tools for analytics
- 11 Dealing with situations that are uncertain, unclear, or chaotic

## Functional Area 02 | Talent Planning and Acquisition (16%)

Identifying, attracting, and employing talent while following all federal laws related to the hiring process.

### Responsibilities:

- 01 Understand federal laws and organizational policies to adhere to legal and ethical requirements in hiring (for example: Title VII, nepotism, disparate impact, FLSA, independent contractors)
- 02 Develop and implement sourcing methods and techniques (for example: employee referrals, diversity groups, social media)
- 03 Execute the talent acquisition lifecycle (for example: interviews, extending offers, background checks, negotiation).



### Knowledge of:

- 12 Applicable federal laws and regulations related to talent planning and acquisition activities
- 13 Planning concepts and terms (for example: succession planning, forecasting)
- 14 Current market situation and talent pool availability
- 15 Staffing alternatives (for example: outsourcing, temporary employment)
- 16 Interviewing and selection techniques, concepts, and terms
- 17 Applicant tracking systems and/or methods
- 18 Impact of total rewards on recruitment and retention
- 19 Candidate/employee testing processes and procedures
- 20 Verbal and written offers/contract techniques
- 21 New hire employee orientation processes and procedures
- 22 Internal workforce assessments (for example: skills testing, workforce demographics, analysis)

- 23** Transition techniques for corporate restructuring, mergers and acquisitions, due diligence process, offshoring, and divestitures
  
- 24** Metrics to assess past and future staffing effectiveness (for example: cost per hire, selection ratios, adverse impact)

## Functional Area 03 | Learning and Development (10%)

Contributing to the organization's learning and development activities by implementing and evaluating programs, providing internal consultation, and providing data.

### Responsibilities:

- 01 Provide consultation to managers and employees on professional growth and development opportunities
- 02 Implement and evaluate career development and training programs (for example: career pathing, management training, mentorship)
- 03 Contribute to succession planning discussions with management by providing relevant data




### Knowledge of:

- 25 Applicable federal laws and regulations related to learning and development activities
- 26 Learning and development theories and applications
- 27 Training program facilitation, techniques, and delivery
- 28 Adult learning processes
- 29 Instructional design principles and processes (for example: needs analysis, process flow mapping)
- 30 Techniques to assess training program effectiveness, including use of applicable metrics
- 31 Organizational development (OD) methods, motivation methods, and problem-solving techniques
- 32 Task/process analysis
- 33 Coaching and mentoring techniques
- 34 Employee retention concepts and applications
- 35 Techniques to encourage creativity and innovation

## Functional Area 04 | **Total Rewards (15%)**

Implementing, promoting, and managing compensation and benefit programs in compliance with federal laws.

### **Responsibilities:**

- 01 Manage compensation-related information and support payroll issue resolution
  - 02 Implement and promote awareness of non-cash rewards (for example: paid volunteer time, tuition assistance, workplace amenities, and employee recognition programs)
  - 03 Implement benefit programs (for example: health plan, retirement plan, employee assistance plan, other insurance)
  - 04 Administer federally compliant compensation and benefit programs
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### **Knowledge of:**

- 36 Applicable federal laws and regulations related to total rewards
- 37 Compensation policies, processes, and analysis
- 38 Budgeting, payroll, and accounting practices related to compensation and benefits
- 39 Job analysis and evaluation concepts and methods
- 40 Job pricing and pay structures
- 41 Non-cash compensation
- 42 Methods to align and benchmark compensation and benefits
- 43 Benefits programs policies, processes, and analysis



## Functional Area 05 | **Employee and Labor Relations (39%)**

Manage, monitor, and/or promote legally compliant programs and policies that impact the employee experience throughout the employee lifecycle.

### **Responsibilities:**

- 01 Analyze functional effectiveness at each stage of the employee lifecycle (for example: hiring, onboarding, development, retention, exit process, alumni program) and identify alternate approaches as needed
- 02 Collect, analyze, summarize, and communicate employee engagement data
- 03 Understand organizational culture, theories, and practices; identify opportunities and make recommendations
- 04 Understand and apply knowledge of programs, federal laws, and regulations to promote outreach, diversity and inclusion (for example: affirmative action, employee resource groups, community outreach, corporate responsibility)
- 05 Implement and support workplace programs relative to health, safety, security, and privacy following federal laws and regulations (for example: OSHA, workers' compensation, emergency response, workplace violence, substance abuse, legal postings)
- 06 Promote organizational policies and procedures (for example: employee handbook, SOPs, time and attendance, expenses)
- 07 Manage complaints or concerns involving employment practices, behavior, or working conditions, and escalate by providing information to appropriate stakeholders
- 08 Promote techniques and tools for facilitating positive employee and labor relations with knowledge of applicable federal laws affecting union and nonunion workplaces (for example: dispute/conflict resolution, anti-discrimination policies, sexual harassment)
- 09 Support and consult with management in performance management process (for example: employee reviews, promotions, recognition programs)
- 10 Support performance activities (for example: coaching, performance improvement plans, involuntary separations) and employment activities (for example: job eliminations, reductions in force) by managing corresponding legal risks



**Knowledge of:**

- 44 General employee relations activities and analysis (for example, conducting investigations, researching grievances, working conditions, reports, etc.)
- 45 Applicable federal laws and procedures affecting employment, labor relations, safety, and security
- 46 Human relations, culture and values concepts, and applications to employees and organizations
- 47 Review and analysis process for assessing employee attitudes, opinions, and satisfaction
- 48 Diversity and inclusion
- 49 Recordkeeping requirements
- 50 Occupational injury and illness prevention techniques
- 51 Workplace safety and security risks
- 52 Emergency response, business continuity, and disaster recovery process
- 53 Internal investigation, monitoring, and surveillance techniques
- 54 Data security and privacy
- 55 The collective bargaining process, terms, and concepts (for example: contract negotiation, costing, administration)
- 56 Performance management process, procedures, and analysis
- 57 Termination approaches, concepts, and terms

**HRCI**

1725 Duke Street, Suite 400  
Alexandria, VA 22314 USA

[info@hrci.org](mailto:info@hrci.org)

[www.hrci.org](http://www.hrci.org)

+1.866.898.4724 (U.S. only)

+1.571.551.6700

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