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%)

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

**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
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