HR Certification

Tips for Passing the Exam

HRCI – PHR & SPHR

SHRM – CP & SCP

Facilitated by

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Certification Providers

HRCI	SHRM
PHR PHR – CA SPHR SPHR – CA GPHR	SHRM – CP SHRM- SCP

Differences between HRCI and SHRM

HRCI	SHRM
• Requires exempt level experience	• Does not require exempt level experience
• Does not acknowledge HR degree	• Acknowledges HR degree
• Primarily tests knowledge	• Focuses on both knowledge and competencies
• Question Type – Multiple Choice	• Question Type – Situational Judgement Multiple Choice
• Body of knowledge is both historical and current	• Body of knowledge is updated, current and global

HRCI Exam

AREA	PHR (175 items)	SPHR (175 items)
Business Management & Strategy	11%	30%
Workforce Planning & Employment	24%	17%
Human Resource Development	18%	19%
Compensation & Benefits	19%	13%
Employee & Labor Relations	20%	14%
Risk Management	8%	7%

SHRM Exam

AREA	CP (130 items)	SPC (150 items)
Behavioral Competencies	35%	50%
Technical		
People	20%	10%
Organizational	20%	10%
Workplace	15%	10%
Strategy	10%	20%

SHRM Competencies

Behavioral	Technical
Leadership & Navigation **Business Acumen** **Ethical Practice** **Relationship Management** **Consultation** **Critical Evaluation** **Global & Cultural Effectiveness** **Communication**	**People:** **Talent Acquisition & Retention** **Employee Engagement** **Learning and Development** **Total Rewards** **Organizational:** **Structure of the HR function** **Organizational Effectiveness & Development** **Workforce Management** **Employee Relations** **Technology & Data** **Workplace:** **HR in the Global Context** **Diversity & Inclusion** **Risk Management** **Corporate Social Responsibility** **Employment Law & Regulations** **Strategy:** **The Role of Strategy** **Strategy Formulation** **Developing Strategy** **Implementing Strategy** **Evaluating Strategic Performance** **Providing Leadership**

Typical Questions

HRCI

1. The three historic HR roles are:
   a. Basic, confidential and strategic   c. Advisory, control and strategic
   b. Advisory, service and control*   d. Record keeping, staffing and training

2. The three current HR roles are:
   a. Administrative, operational & strategic*   c. Administrative, strategic & global
   b. Record keeping, staffing & training   d. Operational, legal compliance & strategic

3. Of the following, which is the **LEAST** useful strategy for increasing successful recruitment and retention:
   a. Offer tuition reimbursement to all employees
   b. Give sign-on bonuses for hard-to-recruit positions
   c. Give frequent salary increases to the most recently hired employees
   d. Place a greater emphasis on benefits than salary*

4. Employees do **NOT** join unions for the following reasons **EXCEPT** (two negatives):
   a. When arbitrary inequities are present in dealing with employees*
   b. When working conditions are favorable
   c. When management demonstrates they are concerned about employees
   d. Communication between employees and management is good

5. The Davis-Bacon Act (1931) **DOES** the following:
   a. Sets wage rates for employees of contractors with federal construction contracts*
   b. Sets wage rates for employees of contractors with any federal contract
   c. Sets overtime wage rates for employees of contractors with federal construction contracts
   d. Is enforced by the OFCCP (This tells what it **is** enforced by, not what it DOES!)

6. A company fires a minority employee who responds by filing a discrimination suit. Early in the litigation process, the employer discovers that the employee falsified information on the employment application. Assuming that discrimination has occurred, the court is MOST likely to:
   a. Free the employer from all liability in the discrimination case.
   b. Fine the employee for falsifying information.
   c. Require the employee to pay court costs.
   d. Consider the employee's misconduct when awarding damages or back pay.*

SHRM

1. Senior management at a company has determined it needs to speed up the production of its most popular product. Doing so will change some of the company's production processes. Why should HR conduct employee focus groups before a project plan is finalized?
   a. To present management's case that there is a need for dramatic change
   b. To encourage employees to ask questions and express their reactions*
   c. To influence those opposed to the tentative plan through peer pressure
   d. To present the plan orally before it is presented in writing

Use the following scenario to answer questions 2, 3 & 4.
A company has experienced a high degree of turnover during the past year. Senior leadership is concerned about the amount of turnover and worried that HR is not moving fast enough to fill these positions. The hiring managers say that the applicant pools have been weak lately and they have had trouble finding qualified applicants to hire from within the pools HR provides. HR has relied heavily on recruiting by word of mouth, which in the past has generated applicants that fit the company's culture. The award for referrals that result in hiring has also been popular with employees.

2. What would be the best way for HR to bring in more qualified applicants?
   a. Post job openings on Internet job sites and examine the effect on the applicant pool.*
   b. Talk to senior leaders to figure out which types of jobs are most difficult to fill.
   c. Investigate how other organizations are identifying quality applicants.
   d. Interview hiring managers to determine the specific gaps in knowledge and skill that need to be addressed. (next best)

3. What would be the best way for HR to address the senior leaders' concerns about turnover?
   a. Tell senior management that HR will ask the hiring managers why so many positions are open in order to determine the cause of the turnover.
   b. Tell senior management that HR will do an analysis of the current turnover rate across fiscal years to determine if the turnover rate has changed drastically.*
   c. Tell senior management that HR will meeting with hiring managers about projecting hiring needs more effectively.
   d. Tell senior management that HR will benchmark the company's experiences against those of similar companies to determine if its situation represents an industry-wide trend or is an isolated occurrence. (next best)

4. What would be the most effective step to avoid unwanted turnover in the future?
   a. Develop and administer an employee satisfaction survey that solicits candid feedback about employee perceptions.*
   b. Schedule meetings with senior leaders to discuss the impact turnover has on their business and create a strategy to prevent further turnover. (next best)
   c. Implement teambuilding activities to foster a collaborative work environment.
   d. Conduct interviews with senior leaders about why they think turnover at the organization is so high.

The Decision: Which one should you take?

The Case for HRCI

HRCI tests your body of HR knowledge. The body of knowledge is the complete set of concepts, tasks and the knowledge required to successfully understand and perform HR-related duties associated with each specific credential that the HR Certification Institute offers.   Their bodies of knowledge are: Business Management/Strategy, Workforce Planning and Employment, Human Resources Development, Compensation & Benefits, Employee & Labor Relations and Risk Management.

Each certification exam is built from the knowledge and competencies determined by these HR practitioners. Questions are peer reviewed for technical validity and applicability to current HR practice, and ensure that the examinations measure professional competency by requiring applicants to demonstrate their ability to apply knowledge on the job.

All questions are classified according to the following levels:
- knowledge/comprehension: recalling factual material, translation or interpretation of a concept
- application/problem solving: applying familiar principles or generalizations to solve real-life problems
- synthesis/evaluation: combining distantly related elements by making critical judgments that require accuracy or consistent logic

The Case for SHRM

SHRM certifications are based on a Body of Competency & Knowledge (BoCK) in the domains of people, organization, strategy and workplace. To further define how HR professionals apply HR knowledge, skills and abilities, the following competencies have been identified and fall within the HR knowledge domains: HR Expertise, Relationship Management, Consultation, Leadership & Navigation, Communication, Global & Cultural Effectiveness, Ethical Practice, Business Acumen and Critical Evaluation. The focus is teaching and testing practical, real-life information that HR professionals need to excel in their careers.

The exams contain two types of questions:
Knowledge Items, which cover the four Knowledge Domains (People, Organization, Workplace, and Strategy) associated with the SHRM BoCK's Technical Knowledge competency. Knowledge items assess candidates' understanding of factual information. Examinees are asked questions on particular subject areas.

Situational Judgment Items, which cover the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) associated with the SHRM BoCK's Behavioral Competencies. Situational judgment items assess candidates' competencies and decision-making skills, which are not easily measured using traditional knowledge-based questions. Examinees are presented with realistic work-related scenarios and asked to choose the best of several possible strategies to resolve or address them.

Pro HRCI
- Gold Standard in our profession since 1974 – widely recognized
- Covers a fundamental body of knowledge – helps you know the history as well as the current application
- Promotes strategic thinking

Con HRCI
- Too restrictive on who can take the exam – must be exempt level with X number of years of experience
- Questions are very tricky and often not relevant to actual HR practice
- Too heavy on text book knowledge and too light on current applied knowledge

Pro SHRM
- More relevant and up-to-date exam for today's HR professionals
- Questions are more straight forward and less tricky than HRCI
- More inclusive on who can take the exam

Con SHRM
- May be too broad/global for some – not everyone needs to be so global
- Not sure if SHRM certification will become as widely respected and recognized as HRCI
- May be too light on theory and history as some historical data and theory helps us better understand where we are today and why

Both
- Cover knowledge, although SHRM's coverage of knowledge is not focused on the historical.
- Cover competencies.
- Are pre-testing a portion of their questions, so not every question counts for or against you.
- Have similar costs.

Which is right for you?

CERTIFICATION EXAM STUDY TIPS

1. Go to each website and download their Certification Handbooks. Do your research.

2. With HRCI, buy the 80 minute, 75-question assessment exam for $45.00. You must choose the PHR or the SPHR - they are separate exams. They contain actual questions taken from a previous exam. While the questions will not be used again, the exam gives you an understanding of HOW HRIC words the questions. You can save a little money by buying 2 exams for $70 and take one at the beginning of your study time and take it again closer to the date of your exam, or take one PHR and one SPHR to assess yourself for which one you should take and/or use it/them as practice exams.

3. Study in more than one way.
   (1) Take a class; (2) Form Study Groups; (3) Use textbooks; (4) Use at least one prepared exam preparation resources (5) Attend HR programs, conferences and workshops when possible, (6) Use a seasoned HR professional as your expert Mentor. The more you hear and experience, the more you have stored in your brain for recall.

   Most certified professionals agree that you cannot pass the test by studying one way only.

   Note: Use an HR Management or Organizational Psychology textbook from your local university book store, or, order from Amazon.com.

   HRCI resources (obtainable on Amazon): ***PHR/SPHR: Professional in Human Resources Certification Study Guide* (Paperback)** by Anne Bogardus ($30 and up) – or, ***PHR/SPHR Professional in Human Resources Certification Total Test Prep*** by Sandra Reed ($70 and up). These resources are based on the previous year's exam and are possibly the most up-to-date materials available.

   SHRM resources: **SHRM Learning System** (self-study is $695 for members; $895 for non-members)

4. Take as many practice exams as you can find, and take them multiple times. Track your progress. Look at the words in the questions and understand their connection with the right answer.

5. Last, but not least, ask for help from experts in the field if you don't understand something. Let HR colleagues help you or hire a tutor! But don't focus on "war stories" or how it is done in any one particular company or organization. That will cause you to miss the question.

CERTIFICATION EXAM TAKING TIPS

1. Take the exam the first time as a practice exam. Many seasoned professionals do not pass the first time. Stressing about the exam can interfere with passing.
2. Practice relaxation techniques just before taking the exam. Research shows that recall is better when you are comfortable and relaxed.
3. Wear comfortable clothing and layer it to adjust for being too hot or too cold.
4. Eat a balanced, but not heavy, meal before taking the exam. Do not overload on carbohydrates, caffeine, or sugar and balance it with protein. Bring a fruit or light snack to eat if you need a boost in order to stay balanced and feeling well.
5. You are allowed to use a scratch pad. Write down what you **do** remember to trigger recall.
6. You may use the computer's calculator. Don't stress about doing math in your head.
7. Trust your first impressions **after** you are sure you understand the question.
8. Some questions are being pre-tested in each exam in order to reflect industry changes and will not count for or against you. It may be comforting to know that if there is a really bad question, chances are it is a pre-test question and won't hurt you! ☺
9. Avoid over analyzing. It can cause you to read too much into an answer.
10. Answer the questions in order. The easier questions are in the beginning.
11. If uncertain, skip it and return later. The online test will automatically allow you to review skipped questions.
12. Don't look for answer patterns, such as most answers are 'C'. This is not true for this test.
13. Length of an answer is a false clue.
14. Eliminate obvious distracter answers. Generally, there are two distracters. Eliminate them first. The remaining answer(s) will require you to analyze them further, but at least you have a better chance at choosing the right one.
15. Identify your answer before reading the all the choices. In other words, decide what you THINK the answer will be, and then read the choices.
16. Use "educated" guesses for those you just don't know. You'll get a few of these right!
17. Don't worry about what you don't know. Stress interferes with recall.
18. Many people feel that the HRCI exam is tricky. Accept this and go on. It just is.
19. At the end, go back and answer the questions you omitted the first time. Then review as time permits.
20. Don't rush. Work at a steady, even pace. Read the questions carefully.
21. If you take a break, make it short.
22. Many people don't have a clue how they did when finished. This is normal.
23. Relax after the exam. Don't be surprised if you feel like a zombie.
24. Remember: you have already become a better HR professional just by studying. Celebrate your achievement of sitting for the exam and realize you are a better person for it!

Senior Level
1. Questions are not as straightforward. 3 out of 4, or even all answers, may seem correct. You are looking for the **BEST** right answer, the one that is most strategic.

Learning to Read the Questions

There are several types of multiple choice questions. It helps to become familiar with the different types so you can identify the type of question before you try to answer it.

1. **Straight forward.** (Found in both HRCI and SHRM exams)
   You have to know the answer or memorize it. You may want to create pictures in your mind or use alliteration to help you remember.

   Example:
   Which of the following is a written statement of the necessary qualifications of the job incumbent?
   a. Job description   b. Job specification
   c. Job context   d. Job ranking

2. **Best, least, most, strongest, etc.** (Found in both HRCI and SHRM exams)
   More than one answer sounds right. You must use seasoned judgment to come up with the best, least, most, strongest, etc. "right" answer.

   Example:
   Of the following, which is the **LEAST** useful strategy for increasing successful recruitment and retention:
   a. Offer tuition reimbursement to all employees
   b. Give sign-on bonuses for hard-to-recruit positions
   c. Give frequent salary increases to the most recently hired employees
   d. Place a greater emphasis on benefits than salary

3. **Single negatively worded.** (This is primarily an HRCI format, but could be in both)
   Three answers will be right about the subject. One answer will be wrong about the subject. The <u>wrong or untrue</u> answer about the subject is the correct answer.

   Example:
   Which of the following situations **VIOLATES** the ERISA standards for pension funds?
   a. Employees are required to have a minimum of 15 months of service before they can participate in their employer's defined benefit plan
   b. Employees are allowed to transfer their accrued pension funds to another employer's plan
   c. An employer's plan excludes anyone under the age of 21, regardless of how long they have worked for the organization
   d. Employees become fully vested after 5 years of service

   Hint: Go through the answers by saying: Is 'A' true? If yes, go to 'B', so on and so forth until you find the one answer that is <u>NOT</u> true.

4. **Double negatively worded.** (I only found this in HRCI's format)
   Three answers are wrong about the subject. One answer will be right about the subject. The <u>right or true</u> answer about the subject is the correct answer. Make sure you count the number of negatives in this type of question.

   Example:
   Employees do **NOT** ① join unions for the following reasons **EXCEPT** ② (two negatives):
   a. When arbitrary inequities are present in dealing with employees
   b. When working conditions are favorable
   c. When management demonstrates they are concerned about employees
   d. Communication between employees and management is good

   Hint: You are trying to find out when employees DO join unions because of the double negative. This can be confusing and must be clearly understood in order to get it right.

5. **Multiple pieces of information.** (HRCI)
   These questions cover the key points in a law or aspect of HR forcing you to know the main points in order to answer the question correctly. Generally, several data points are correct, but watch out for the small data points in order to get it right.

   Example:
   65 employees work at an insurance company's corporate office in Chicago and they all live within the city limits. There are ten sales offices scattered around the state. Each sales office has between **2 and 10 employees**. The claims adjuster in the sales office in Springfield (**about 150 miles from Chicago**) has been a **full time employee** for the past **14 months**. He requests time off to care for a **seriously ill child**. Must the employer grant an FMLA leave?

   a. Yes, the employee meets the FMLA eligibility requirements, and the employer is a covered entity because there are more than 50 employees within the same state.
   b. No, although the employee eligibility requirement is met, there are not the required 50 employees at the Springfield sales office, so the sales office is not a covered entity.
   c. Yes, the employee meets the FMLA eligibility requirements, and the employer is a covered entity because there are more than 50 employees in the corporate office.
   d. No, the employee does not meet the FMLA eligibility requirement, and the employer is not a covered entity.

6. **Combination (**This is primarily used by HRCI)
   These type questions combine one or more of the other types. In this case, best, least, most is combined with a single negatively worded question.

   Example:
   To preserve a union-free workplace, the **BEST** practices include all of the following **EXCEPT**:
   a. Practice preventive employee relations, such as fair discipline, open communications, fair salaries, good benefits, etc.
   b. Recognize importance of location and demographics
   c. Do not touch, count or examine authorization cards
   d. Present your case to employees relentlessly

7. **Multiple Questions Grouped Together** (Both exams use this format)
   These questions begin with a scenario. You must answer two or more questions about the same information.

   Example: Use the following to answer the next two (2) questions:
   An organization must make labor reductions to reduce its costs. Several long-term employees have been offered early retirement packages. One employee has decided to decline the opportunity to take early retirement. The manager reassigns the employee to another job with a lower profile. The employee finds this intolerable and quits.

   What action could the employee claim in a lawsuit against the organization?
   a. The employee could claim an unemployment violation to the EEOC against the manager.
   b. The employee could claim organizational harassment in the workplace against the manager.
   c. The employee could claim the right to work due to the individual's long-term employment with the organization.
   d. The employee could claim that the organization's actions created a constructive discharge situation.

   What must the employee prove to prevail in this case?
   a. The employee must prove that a reasonable person in the employee's place would have felt forced to resign or that there was intent on the part of the employer to force the person to leave.
   b. The employee must prove that any employee working in the same department and working conditions would have felt forced to resign or a lack of concern for the well-being of the employee.
   c. The employee must prove that there was organizational harassment in the workplace that forced the resignation or that there was intent on the part of the employer to defame the person's reputation.
   d. The employee must prove that there were many employment-at-will exceptions that would have forced the resignation or that there was intent on the part of the employer to defame the person's reputation.

8. **Key words** (Both exams use this type of question)
   You must pay attention to key words <u>in all types</u> of questions in order to get them right.

   Example:
   The **==typical== ==functions==** of **==management==** in a **==small==** business include all of the following **==except==**:
   a. Accounting   b. Marketing
   c. Information Technology   d. Strategic Planning

Practice, Practice, Practice

First, state the type of question, then circle your answer. Underline or highlight key words. At this point, it is more important to recognize the type of question than to get it right. You may learn more from wrong answers than from right ones!

Type: _____

1. A company fires a minority employee who responds by filing a discrimination suit. Early in the litigation process, the employer discovers that the employee falsified information on the employment application. Assuming that discrimination has occurred, the court is MOST likely to:
   a. Free the employer from all liability in the discrimination case.
   b. Fine the employee for falsifying information.
   c. Require the employee to pay court costs.
   d. Consider the employee's misconduct when awarding damages or back pay.

Type: _____

2. Exceptions to ADEA include all of the following except:
   a. Teachers   c. Top executives
   b. Pilots   d. Police

Type: _____

3. According to the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection, there are three types of job-related validity. They include all of the following, except:
   a. Content validity   c. Performance validity
   b. Construct validity   d. Criterion-related validity

Type: _____

4. A personality test is an example of _____.
   a. Construct validity   c. Criterion-related validity
   b. Content validity   d. Concurrent validity

Type: _____

5. A company's CEO learns that a competitor has developed intranet training for its employees. The CEO wants the training director to develop the same kind of training system. What is the FIRST thing the training director should do?
   a. Ask the CEO to provide additional budget for the project.
   b. Detail the expenses associated with developing computer-based training.
   c. Explain why all training should not be computer-based.
   d. Ask for time to research the idea.

Type: _____

6. In *Griggs v. Duke Power Co.,* the Supreme Court established the principle that:
   a. Educational requirements are illegal   b. Discrimination must be intentional
   c. Discrimination can occur even if unintentional   d. Employment tests are illegal

   Type: _____

7. Sue applied for a position with your company but will not be offered the job. In the rejection letter you should tell her:
   a. That she does not have the necessary skills for the job
   b. That the company needed to hire a minority employee
   c. About the size and quality of the applicant pool
   d. That she should lower her career expectations

   Type: _____

8. **HR** is acting as a **strategic** partner when it:
   a. Works with the corporate lawyer to answer an EEO claim
   b. Determines the availability of qualified applicants in a city where the organization is considering opening a facility
   c. Trains managers to identify potential sexual harassment incidents
   d. Fills open positions in less time than anticipated

   Type: _____

9. An organization has grown quickly, and its culture has consequently changed. Its founders have directed HR to develop a skip-level interview policy. What concern most likely prompted this action?
   a. Fear of a disconnect between upper levels of management and lower-and entry-level employees
   b. Desire to manage the risk of employee litigation
   c. Desire to facilitate the process of filing and resolving grievances
   d. Belief in developing employees' skills and promoting from within

   Type: _____

10. Effective HR planning in an organization requires which of the following:
    a. Allocation of people to jobs over long periods of time
    b. Allocating personnel to specific roles, in the short term
    c. Utilizing experts to create structures for future use
    d. Careful consideration for all aspects in the organization

    Type: _____

11. Dissatisfaction among clerical staff is high, as measured by turnover and mistake rates. Exit interviews indicate boredom as a primary reason for leaving. What strategy would be MOST successful in addressing this problem?
    a. Increasing the complexity of the job
    b. Expanding the tasks to be performed
    c. Instituting job rotations so that employees can cross train in other departments
    d. Increasing the number of people performing the job

Type: _____

12. What is the difference between replacement planning and succession planning?
    a. Replacement planning focuses on developing backups for key positions; succession planning develops a pool of candidates capable of filling several assignments.
    b. Replacement planning is based on a formal development plan; succession planning is more informal and is usually based on oral discussions between manager and employee.
    c. Replacement planning focuses on mid-level positions; succession planning focuses on executive-level positions.
    d. Replacement planning has a long-term focus; succession planning has a short-term focus.

Type: _____

13. Which of the following represents the most distracting ethical dilemma for HR?
    a. Conducting polygraphs for all applicants for an armored car driver position
    b. Requiring drug tests periodically for all employees
    c. Terminating whistleblowers
    d. Disregarding corporate responsibility for individual responsibility

Type: _____

14. Personal credibility is an HR competency earned through all of the following except:
    a. Developing trust relationships with internal customers
    b. Demonstrating the values of the organization
    c. Developing leadership skills
    d. Being fair-minded when dealing with HR issues

Type: _____

Use the following information to answer questions 15 and 16.
A mid-sized software organization is preparing to acquire two smaller software firms. The organizations that are being acquired will work both individually and collaboratively on new product lines with multiple dual roles. All three organizations are currently competitors with strong opinions about their competitions' competencies.

15. Which theory should the HR director apply in selecting the right OD interventions for this group?
    a. Change process theory   b. Implementation theory
    c. Motivational-hygiene theory   d. Contingency theory

16. Which OD intervention strategy should be used to manage the change to dual reporting roles post-acquisition?
    a. Technological strategy   b. Interpersonal strategy
    c. Structural strategy   d. Strategic management strategy

17. What company is using a corporate strategy of differentiation? (Business & HR Strategy)
    a. A company sells in volume and offers discounts to its best customer
    b. The finished product is sold at a lower price than that of the competition
    c. A company develops a product that is uniquely easy to use and charges a premium price
    d. A company orders large quantities of parts to get the greatest discount

18. What type of learners acquire knowledge most effectively through a hands-on approach?
    a. Synthesis learners
    b. Kinesthetic learners
    c. Visual learners
    d. Auditory learners

19. What financial document lists the revenues, expenses and profits of an organization for a designated period of time?
    a. Balance sheet
    b. Income statement
    c. Financial statement
    d. Accounting entries

    Type: _____
    Use the following information to answer questions 20 and 21.
    An operations team is having problems with the IT support staff responsible for finishing their deliverables. According to operations, IT is not providing timely support, causing delays for operations. The operations team leader thinks HR should do something to get everyone to work together more effectively. However, the CEO is considering outsourcing IT to increase productivity. The IT manager insists that IT staff is doing everything they can. IT believes that the operations team is impossible to satisfy and asks for HR's help to change the CEO's mind about outsourcing.

20. What is the best way to handle the situation between the operations team and IT?
    a. Offer to work with the operations team leader and the IT support staff manager to develop organization-wide project management guidance.
    b. Offer to schedule meetings between the two groups to develop agreements on how to work better together.
    c. Implement team building activities for all employees
    d. Investigate whether time management issues are problematic throughout the company

21. What is the best method to address IT's fears about outsourcing?
    a. Tell IT that HR will ask for a meeting with the CEO to discuss his plans for outsourcing
    b. Tell IT that HR will work with the IT staff on comparing the productivity of outsourcing versus not outsourcing
    c. Determine whether outsourcing is one of the long-term strategic objectives of the organization
    d. Tell IT that HR will provide information to the CEO on how outsourcing will affect morale in IT

Review: things to be aware of when reading questions:
1. Straight forward questions: simply looking for the correct answer.
2. Single negatively worded questions: i.e. "except"; "what is not true"; or any other wording that makes you look for **what is NOT true**. If stuck, look first at what IS true.
3. Double negatively worded questions: i.e. "exception, except"; or any other wording that has two negative words that is asking for **what IS true**. If stuck, look first at what is NOT true to figure out what IS true.
4. Most, least, best, etc.: This implies that all answers are correct and you must decide which one is the most or least or best. To do this, "think like the HRCI." They want us at the "big table" being strategic partners with senior levels. A lot of SPHR questions use this method.
5. Functional or function vs. strategic or proactive: pay attention to which word is used and answer accordingly. Watch out for this one!
6. Line management vs. HR management: for whom you are answering the question!
7. Management vs. HR responsibilities of management: make sure whether or not the question is asking about the HR department or HR responsibilities of others.
8. Employ**ee** vs. employ**e**r: When you read a question too fast, you run the risk of answering for the wrong group. Is the question asking about employees or the company/management side of things?
9. Labor vs. management: same as above
10. Always think like HRCI. Do not answer from personal experience or how your company does things. Questions are not state or industry specific. The way your company does things often will cause you to get an answer wrong. Think broader than your company.

About the Facilitator: Lana Guess Thompson, PHR, SHRM-CP

Lana Guess Thompson is a certified Professional in Human Resources (PHR) who is an independent organizational consultant and trainer, facilitator and personal coach. She started her own consulting business in 1996 focusing on HR consulting, teamwork, communications, leadership, career development, customer service, diversity and personal effectiveness in the workplace. She delivers her services through one-on-one coaching, workshops, retreats, classroom training and/or HR consulting.

Lana has served over 175 clients, both nationally and internationally. She is a past president of the Greater Birmingham Chapter ASTD and former VP Membership and Certification Coordinator for BSHRM.

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