

PRACTICE EXAM 15: PHR SIMULATION (115 QUESTIONS)

This standalone practice exam contains 115 multiple-choice questions. For realistic pacing, use the current PHR testing limit of two hours. Select the single best answer for each question. The current PHR exam contains 90 scored questions and 25 pretest questions; HRCI reports a passing scaled score of 500. This practice set is independently written and is not an official HRCI examination.

1. A company wants to reduce first-year turnover after rapid hiring. Which HR recommendation best demonstrates use of business metrics to support decision making?

- A. Ask managers to choose the recruiting channel they personally prefer.
- B. Increase recruiting advertising equally across every available channel.
- C. Link source-of-hire, time-to-fill, and 90-day retention data to identify which recruiting channels produce durable hires.
- D. Replace exit interviews with an annual employee-satisfaction contest.

2. In a large organization, which arrangement best describes a human resources center of excellence?

- A. A temporary committee that approves every employee expense request.
- B. A specialized team that develops expertise, standards, and consulting support for a particular HR discipline.
- C. A local administrative team that handles only payroll corrections.
- D. An outside vendor that replaces all HR business partners.

3. During an annual risk assessment, HR identifies a critical process with a high likelihood of failure and a high potential impact. What should HR do next?

- A. Prioritize the risk, assign an accountable owner, and document mitigation actions with review dates.
- B. Ignore it until an actual loss occurs.

- C. Transfer the entire responsibility to employees without guidance.
- D. Publish the risk publicly before confirming the underlying evidence.

4. What does an organization's span of control describe?

- A. The number of employees who report directly to a manager.
- B. The number of departments in the organization.
- C. The geographic distance between worksites.
- D. The number of policies a manager administers.

5. HR wants to evaluate whether a leadership-development program is creating business value. What is the best first step?

- A. Count only the number of employees who attend.
- B. Define the desired business outcomes, establish baseline measures, and decide how results will be tracked.
- C. Ask participants whether they enjoyed the instructor's presentation.
- D. Assume the program is effective because senior leaders approved it.

6. A change initiative affects a department whose vice president has high influence and high personal impact. Which stakeholder approach is most appropriate?

- A. Send a generic announcement after all decisions are final.
- B. Exclude the vice president so the change cannot be challenged.
- C. Provide only technical instructions and avoid discussing business effects.
- D. Engage the vice president early, understand concerns, and build active sponsorship for the change.

7. An organization lists respect as a core value, but supervisors routinely reward employees who interrupt and dismiss coworkers. What is HR's strongest culture intervention?

- A. Add the word respect to every job description.

- B. Publish a poster campaign without changing management practices.
- C. Align leader behavior, recognition, performance expectations, and consequences with the stated value.
- D. Ask employees to solve the inconsistency privately.

8. Which measure is most directly used to monitor voluntary turnover?

- A. Voluntary separations during a period compared with average headcount for that period.
- B. The number of open positions divided by recruiting expenses.
- C. The number of promotions divided by total employees.
- D. The number of training hours divided by scheduled work hours.

9. An HR professional learns that a preferred benefits vendor is owned by the professional's sibling. What is the most ethical response?

- A. Keep the relationship private if the vendor offers competitive pricing.
- B. Approve the vendor quickly so the relationship is not discovered.
- C. Ask the sibling to submit an informal proposal without documentation.
- D. Disclose the relationship, recuse from the decision, and use an independent review process.

10. A gap analysis in workforce capability primarily compares which two conditions?

- A. Current payroll costs with current recruiting costs.
- B. Employee satisfaction scores with customer satisfaction scores.
- C. The organization's current capabilities with the capabilities needed to achieve its future objectives.
- D. The organization's mission statement with its logo design.

11. A chief executive asks HR to justify a proposed talent program. Which response best reflects an operational business-partner role?

- A. Explain that the program is popular with HR professionals.

- B. Connect the program to a business objective, evidence, expected outcomes, cost, and implementation risks.
- C. Describe the program's activities without linking them to results.
- D. Recommend approval because a competitor recently adopted it.

12. When is scenario planning most useful to an HR function?

- A. When several plausible future conditions could require different workforce actions and trigger points.
- B. When the organization wants to avoid documenting assumptions.
- C. When leaders have already selected one outcome with no alternatives.
- D. When HR needs to replace all historical workforce data.

13. How should HR use external benchmarking data when reviewing a workforce metric?

- A. Copy the benchmark as an automatic internal target.
- B. Use the highest available benchmark regardless of industry.
- C. Select genuinely comparable organizations, examine definitions, and interpret the result in the organization's context.
- D. Reject all external data because internal data is always superior.

14. Which sequence correctly represents the Plan-Do-Check-Act continuous-improvement cycle?

- A. Act immediately, plan later, check only failures, and stop.
- B. Plan the change, test or implement it, check results, and act on what was learned.
- C. Check results, plan a response, act randomly, and document last.
- D. Do the same process repeatedly without measurement or adjustment.

15. An employer's brand is most credible when which condition exists?

- A. Recruiting advertisements make promises that managers are not expected to deliver.
- B. The organization uses the same slogan on every social-media platform.

- C. The company hires a marketing agency to conceal negative employee feedback.
- D. The organization's external employment promise matches the employee experience inside the organization.

16. Which practice best supports governance of an organization-wide HR policy?

- A. Allow each manager to change the policy whenever a situation arises.
- B. Store the policy in an employee's personal email account.
- C. Publish the policy once without assigning accountability for maintenance.
- D. Assign an owner, document approval and version history, define effective dates, and monitor exceptions.

17. Before approving additional headcount, what should workforce planning analyze first?

- A. Ask each department to request as many positions as possible.
- B. Translate the business forecast into workforce demand, compare it with current capacity, and identify the resulting gap.
- C. Use last year's headcount as the only staffing forecast.
- D. Post job advertisements before confirming role requirements.

18. Which activity provides the strongest foundation for writing an accurate job description?

- A. Copy the title and duties from the most attractive competitor posting.
- B. Ask a senior executive to describe the role without consulting the worksite.
- C. Conduct a job analysis using information from job incumbents, supervisors, observation, and relevant work outputs.
- D. List every skill that any employee in the department might possess.

19. Which interview design is most likely to improve consistency and defensibility across candidates?

- A. Ask all candidates the same job-related questions and use predetermined rating criteria.

- B. Let each interviewer choose questions based on personal rapport.
- C. Use informal conversation and select the candidate who feels most familiar.
- D. Allow interviewers to change standards after seeing each candidate.

20. A neutral screening requirement excludes applicants from one protected group at a substantially higher rate than others. Which concept best describes the concern?

- A. Disparate treatment, because the employer openly applies different rules to individuals.
- B. Disparate impact, because an apparently neutral practice produces a disproportionate effect on a protected group.
- C. Job enrichment, because the screening requirement expands employee responsibilities.
- D. Criterion contamination, because the job description contains too many duties.

21. Which group of characteristics is protected from employment discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act?

- A. Race, color, religion, sex, and national origin.
- B. Education level, personality type, commute distance, and preferred schedule.
- C. Job tenure, department, performance rating, and professional association.
- D. Credit score, residential neighborhood, hairstyle, and personal interests.

22. An applicant with a disability says a selection exercise does not allow the applicant to demonstrate a job-related ability. What should HR do first?

- A. Remove the applicant from consideration to avoid changing the process.
- B. Ask the applicant to disclose every medical condition before proceeding.
- C. Discuss the essential function and explore an effective reasonable accommodation through an individualized process.
- D. Lower the essential performance standard for every candidate automatically.

23. A nonexempt employee works more than 40 hours in one workweek. Which treatment is generally required by the Fair Labor Standards Act?

- A. Convert all overtime into unpaid administrative leave.
- B. Pay the employee only for the scheduled shift.
- C. Provide overtime only if the employee received advance written approval.
- D. Pay at least time-and-a-half for hours over 40 in the workweek.

24. Before obtaining a consumer report for an employment decision, which action is required under the Fair Credit Reporting Act?

- A. Provide a stand-alone written disclosure, obtain written permission, and certify compliance to the reporting company.
- B. Obtain verbal approval from the hiring manager only.
- C. Place a brief disclosure inside the application and skip authorization.
- D. Wait until after rejection to tell the applicant a report was used.

25. A referral program produces strong hiring results but almost no applicants from one demographic group. What should HR do?

- A. Keep the program unchanged because employee referrals are always neutral.
- B. Stop collecting demographic information so the pattern disappears.
- C. Review participation and selection data, investigate possible barriers, and revise the program using consistent job-related criteria.
- D. Reserve every referral hire for the underrepresented group regardless of qualifications.

26. Which sourcing approach is most appropriate for reaching qualified passive candidates for a specialized role?

- A. Rely exclusively on a general job board and wait for applications.
- B. Use targeted professional networks, direct outreach, and credible employee referrals tied to the role's requirements.
- C. Send the same mass message to every person in the company database.
- D. Remove the technical requirements so the candidate pool appears larger.

27. Which practice best supports fairness when an organization fills a position through internal recruiting?

- A. Tell only employees who are personally recommended by a manager.
- B. Allow the hiring manager to change eligibility after reviewing applications.
- C. Skip documentation because internal candidates already know the organization.
- D. Publish the opportunity consistently, state eligibility requirements, and apply the same process to qualified internal candidates.

28. What is the strongest evidence that a selection test is appropriate for a particular job?

- A. Candidates say the test looks professional and challenging.
- B. The vendor claims the test is popular with other employers.
- C. The test measures job-related knowledge or skills and is supported by appropriate validation evidence.
- D. The test produces different scores for applicants from different groups.

29. What is the primary purpose of a realistic job preview?

- A. Persuade every candidate to accept the offer regardless of fit.
- B. Give candidates balanced information about job demands so expectations are more accurate before acceptance.
- C. Replace the need for a job description and selection criteria.
- D. Reveal confidential performance information about current employees.

30. Which statement best distinguishes onboarding from orientation?

- A. Orientation introduces basic information, while onboarding continues the employee's integration, support, and role connection over time.
- B. Orientation and onboarding are identical names for a single first-day meeting.

- C. Onboarding applies only to executives, while orientation applies to all employees.
- D. Onboarding is limited to completing payroll forms before the start date.

31. Under current Form I-9 guidance, when should the employee generally complete Section 1?

- A. Within three business days after the first day of employment.
- B. Only after the employer completes Section 2.
- C. At the end of the first pay period.
- D. No later than the employee's first day of employment.

32. When creating a new position, which sequence best supports a defensible talent-acquisition process?

- A. Advertise first, define duties after the finalist is selected, and document only the offer.
- B. Analyze the work, define essential requirements, establish selection criteria, then source and assess candidates.
- C. Select a preferred candidate, then write requirements that match that person's background.
- D. Copy a prior posting, interview informally, and decide based on overall impression.

33. A training needs assessment reveals inconsistent customer-service performance. Which analysis should HR complete before selecting a course?

- A. Purchase the most highly rated course without reviewing the performance problem.
- B. Train every employee on the same topics regardless of role or need.
- C. Examine organizational goals, the tasks and standards involved, and the specific people or groups with capability gaps.
- D. Ask the instructor to decide what the organization should value.

34. In a four-level training evaluation model, which measure most directly reflects behavior transfer?

- A. Whether employees apply the trained skill on the job under normal work conditions.
- B. Whether participants liked the room, instructor, and refreshments.

- C. Whether participants passed a knowledge quiz immediately after class.
- D. Whether the organization's revenue changed without examining employee behavior.

35. Which learning objective is written most effectively?

- A. Supervisors will understand performance management better.
- B. Supervisors will become excellent communicators.
- C. Supervisors will learn everything necessary about coaching.
- D. Supervisors will document a performance conversation using five required steps.

36. Which information is most useful when management discusses succession readiness for a critical role?

- A. The employee's popularity and length of service alone.
- B. A single supervisor's informal preference without supporting evidence.
- C. Evidence of competencies, performance, development, and readiness timing.
- D. The employee's current title without examining future-role requirements.

37. Which statement best distinguishes mentoring from coaching?

- A. Mentoring commonly provides longer-term career guidance, while coaching focuses on improving a defined skill or performance area.
- B. Mentoring is always corrective discipline, while coaching is always informal socializing.
- C. Mentoring requires a manager-subordinate relationship, while coaching cannot involve a manager.
- D. Mentoring is limited to technical instruction, while coaching addresses only career planning.

38. Which evaluation design provides the strongest evidence that training contributed to a performance change?

- A. Ask only the instructor whether the course seemed successful.
- B. Count attendance and assume all attendees changed behavior.

- C. Measure satisfaction immediately and treat high ratings as proof of business impact.
- D. Compare pretraining and posttraining results with a comparable group when feasible.

39. A training program is well designed, but employees stop using the skill because supervisors reward old methods. What should HR address?

- A. Add more slides to the original course without changing workplace conditions.
- B. Strengthen the transfer climate by aligning supervisor support, workflow expectations, feedback, and rewards with the new behavior.
- C. Require employees to repeat the course until supervisors change their expectations.
- D. Measure only attendance so the program appears fully implemented.

40. Which approach best improves the effectiveness of mandatory compliance training?

- A. Send a policy attachment and record completion without checking understanding.
- B. Use the same generic lecture for every risk regardless of employee duties.
- C. Use realistic scenarios, explain required behaviors, provide practice, and follow up on application and questions.
- D. Allow employees to skip training if they have never reported a problem.

41. In the ADDIE instructional-design model, what is the primary purpose of the analysis phase?

- A. Define the performance problem, learner needs, context, constraints, and desired outcomes before designing instruction.
- B. Select fonts and animations for the final presentation.
- C. Deliver the finished course to all employees immediately.
- D. Evaluate learner reactions after the program has ended.

42. Which design choice best reflects adult-learning principles?

- A. Present abstract information for the full session without practice.

- B. Connect content to work problems and provide immediate opportunities to apply it.
- C. Assume every learner has identical experience and motivation.
- D. Delay all feedback until the annual performance review.

43. Which element is essential to an effective individual development plan?

- A. A general promise that the employee should improve someday.
- B. A list of courses selected without reference to the employee's role.
- C. A manager's private rating with no discussion or follow-up date.
- D. Specific growth goals linked to capabilities, actions, resources, milestones, and shared accountability.

44. What is the primary objective of a knowledge-management process?

- A. Keep expertise with a small group so others must request every answer.
- B. Replace all employee judgment with automated instructions.
- C. Store documents indefinitely without ownership, search, or review.
- D. Capture, organize, share, and update important organizational knowledge so people can use it when needed.

45. What does internal pay equity primarily address?

- A. Whether pay relationships among jobs within the organization are consistent with the relative value and requirements of the work.
- B. Whether the organization pays more than every employer in the labor market.
- C. Whether employees prefer cash compensation to development opportunities.
- D. Whether payroll is processed on the same date each month.

46. What is the primary purpose of external compensation benchmarking?

- A. Guarantee that every employee receives the highest wage in the market.

- B. Compare pay practices with relevant labor-market data to inform competitive positioning and recruiting decisions.
- C. Replace job evaluation with an unreviewed list of competitor salaries.
- D. Determine employee satisfaction without asking about work experience.

47. A compensation analyst calculates an employee's compa-ratio. What relationship is being examined?

- A. The employee's tenure compared with the organization's average tenure.
- B. The employee's bonus compared with the organization's annual revenue.
- C. The employee's pay compared with the midpoint of the applicable salary range.
- D. The employee's benefits cost compared with the payroll tax rate.

48. Which communication best supports employee understanding of a new salary-range framework?

- A. Announce that managers may set pay however they prefer.
- B. Share a single companywide midpoint without explaining job differences.
- C. Tell employees that compensation decisions are confidential and cannot be discussed.
- D. Explain the framework, range placement factors, progression expectations, and where employees can ask questions.

49. An internal pay-equity review finds a pay difference after controlling for legitimate job-related factors. What should HR do next?

- A. Dismiss the finding because averages can never inform HR decisions.
- B. Lower the higher-paid employees' wages immediately without reviewing the evidence.
- C. Investigate the remaining difference, document the analysis, and recommend a consistent corrective approach when warranted.
- D. Publish individual salaries before confirming accuracy and confidentiality requirements.

50. An employee's title is "manager," but the employee performs routine work and has little discretion. How should HR evaluate exempt status under the FLSA?

- A. Treat the employee as exempt because the word manager appears in the title.
- B. Review the employee's actual duties and pay under the applicable exemption tests; the title alone is not determinative.
- C. Treat every salaried employee as exempt from overtime automatically.
- D. Ask the employee to waive overtime rights in a signed agreement.

51. A nonexempt employee answers work messages from home after clocking out. What should HR recommend?

- A. Require accurate reporting of all time worked and address the practice through clear timekeeping and supervisor controls.
- B. Ignore the time because the work occurred outside the office.
- C. Delete the messages so the employee cannot claim additional time.
- D. Pay only if the supervisor had requested the messages in writing.

52. Which incentive-plan design is most likely to support the intended business behavior?

- A. Reward only the single highest output regardless of errors or customer harm.
- B. Use an unpublished formula that managers may change after results are known.
- C. Reward measurable results that employees can influence and balance speed, quality, risk, and collaboration where necessary.
- D. Pay the same incentive to everyone regardless of goals or contribution.

53. An employee reports a qualifying life event that may change benefit elections. What should HR provide?

- A. Tell the employee to wait until the next annual enrollment period without checking the plan.
- B. Prompt information about the applicable election process, deadlines, required documentation, and effective-date rules.
- C. Change every election immediately without confirming the event or plan terms.
- D. Ask the employee to negotiate a private exception with the payroll clerk.

54. Which practice best supports responsible administration of an employer-sponsored retirement plan subject to ERISA?

- A. Let each manager promise benefits that are not in the plan document.
- B. Change eligibility rules informally whenever a participant complains.
- C. Treat plan assets as general operating funds until employees request them.
- D. Follow the governing plan document, maintain required participant communications, and use a documented fiduciary review process.

55. What is the main value of a total-rewards statement for employees?

- A. It makes the full value of direct pay, benefits, recognition, and other rewards easier to understand.
- B. It replaces the need for accurate payroll and benefit records.
- C. It guarantees that every employee values each reward equally.
- D. It hides the cost of benefits so employees focus only on salary.

56. Which recognition practice is most likely to reinforce desired performance?

- A. Recognize only employees who are most visible to senior leaders.
- B. Use vague praise that never identifies what should be repeated.
- C. Give recognition only at year-end regardless of when performance occurs.
- D. Give timely, specific, and equitable recognition tied to an observable behavior or result that reflects organizational values.

57. What is a central feature of a flexible-benefits program?

- A. Employees may select any benefit from any provider without plan limits.
- B. Employees choose among permitted benefit options within the plan's rules and available contribution structure.
- C. The employer provides one identical benefit package to every employee.

D. Managers negotiate separate benefit terms with their preferred employees.

58. An employee loses employer-sponsored group health coverage after employment ends for a reason other than gross misconduct. What should HR do first?

A. Review whether a COBRA continuation event applies and provide the required notices and election information under the plan and law.

B. Cancel the employee's records and wait for the employee to ask about coverage.

C. Promise permanent employer-paid coverage without reviewing plan terms.

D. Tell the employee that continuation rights never apply after termination.

59. While an eligible employee is on approved FMLA leave, which benefits practice is generally appropriate for group health coverage?

A. Terminate coverage immediately because no hours are being worked.

B. Require the employee to reapply for the plan as a new hire after returning.

C. Maintain coverage on the same terms while following rules for the employee's premium share.

D. Provide enhanced coverage only to employees who use intermittent leave.

60. What compensation problem occurs when newly hired employees are paid nearly as much as experienced employees in the same job?

A. Pay compression, which can weaken retention and create concerns about progression and internal equity.

B. Pay inversion, which occurs only when benefits exceed wages.

C. Broadbanding, which always means eliminating every salary range.

D. Variable pay, which is compensation based entirely on a fixed salary.

61. Which consideration should anchor a total-rewards strategy?

A. A single benefit selected by the chief executive for personal preference.

- B. The highest salary reported in any unrelated labor market.
- C. The organization's business objectives, workforce segments, employee value proposition, affordability, and compliance requirements.
- D. An identical reward package that ignores role, workforce, and business differences.

62. A new-hire cohort has unusually high voluntary exits during its first 90 days. Which analysis is most useful?

- A. Assume all new hires lack commitment and increase probationary discipline.
- B. Compare only the organization's total annual turnover rate.
- C. Ask the most senior executive to select a single cause without reviewing data.
- D. Segment early exits by role, manager, location, source, and onboarding experience to identify patterns and likely intervention points.

63. Which practice best supports trust in an employee-engagement survey?

- A. Publish every employee's individual response so leaders can act quickly.
- B. Explain how responses will be used, report results in appropriate aggregates, and restrict access to identifiable data.
- C. Promise complete anonymity while retaining names and sharing raw comments widely.
- D. Delete unfavorable responses before reporting the organization's results.

64. An engagement survey shows that employees do not understand how managers use feedback. What should HR recommend next?

- A. Run the same survey immediately without discussing the prior results.
- B. Share key findings, assign owners to priority actions, communicate milestones, and measure whether conditions improve.
- C. Tell managers to improve engagement without defining behaviors or support.
- D. Stop surveying employees because negative feedback is uncomfortable.

65. What is a primary strength of an employee focus group?

- A. It produces a statistically representative result automatically.
- B. It guarantees that participants will agree with one another.
- C. It replaces the need to protect participant confidentiality.
- D. It explains attitudes and experiences that quantitative survey results alone may not reveal.

66. Which approach best supports an employee resource group?

- A. Provide a clear purpose, voluntary participation, leadership support, reasonable resources, and boundaries for organizational activity.
- B. Require employees to disclose personal identity information to join.
- C. Allow the group to make employment decisions for nonmembers.
- D. Treat the group as a replacement for formal HR policies and complaint channels.

67. Which onboarding practice is most likely to improve early employee engagement?

- A. Delay manager contact until the employee completes a year of service.
- B. Provide policies only and let the employee discover work processes independently.
- C. Give the employee role clarity, needed tools, relationship support, early feedback, and a realistic set of initial milestones.
- D. Assign a large workload immediately without explaining priorities or success measures.

68. Which performance-management approach best supports ongoing employee engagement?

- A. Discuss performance only during the annual rating meeting.
- B. Use regular, two-way check-ins that connect goals, feedback, development, recognition, and changing priorities.
- C. Reserve feedback for serious problems so routine work is not interrupted.
- D. Allow employees to set goals without reviewing resources or business priorities.

69. Which goal is written in the most useful performance-management form?

- A. By quarter-end, reduce unresolved cases 15 percent while maintaining the quality standard.
- B. Improve customer service as much as possible.
- C. Work harder on customer cases whenever time permits.
- D. Become the organization's best customer-service employee.

70. What is the primary purpose of a performance-rating calibration meeting?

- A. Allow managers to trade employees until every team has identical ratings.
- B. Replace documented performance evidence with the chief executive's opinion.
- C. Improve consistency by comparing rating standards and evidence across managers before final decisions are communicated.
- D. Guarantee that every employee receives the same rating regardless of results.

71. What should a well-designed performance improvement plan generally include?

- A. A general warning that the employee must do better immediately.
- B. A secret rating that the employee is not allowed to discuss.
- C. Only a termination date, without describing the performance problem.
- D. Specific performance gaps, expected standards, support or resources, review dates, and possible consequences if improvement does not occur.

72. An employee is struggling with a newly assigned technical skill, and no misconduct is involved. What is the best initial response?

- A. Issue final discipline immediately without discussing the skill gap.
- B. Ignore the problem until the annual appraisal documents it.
- C. Coach the employee with specific examples, practice opportunities, resources, and a scheduled follow-up.
- D. Remove the employee from all meaningful work without assessing support needs.

73. Which documentation is most appropriate before an involuntary separation for performance?

- A. A brief statement that the manager disliked the employee's attitude.
- B. Only anonymous rumors collected from coworkers.
- C. A retroactive performance summary created after the termination meeting.
- D. A factual record of expectations, prior feedback, support offered, response, decision rationale, and consistent treatment.

74. During a reduction in force, which selection process is most defensible?

- A. Select employees based primarily on who managers personally enjoy working with.
- B. Use documented business-related criteria, apply them consistently, and review the proposed results for adverse patterns before finalizing.
- C. Choose the highest-paid employees first so payroll savings are immediate.
- D. Allow each department to use different undocumented standards.

75. Which practice is most appropriate in an involuntary termination meeting?

- A. Communicate the decision clearly and respectfully, explain immediate logistics, and avoid debating a decision that has already been made.
- B. Invite the employee to negotiate the decision in front of coworkers.
- C. Provide no explanation or logistics so the meeting ends as quickly as possible.
- D. Blame another employee to make the manager appear uninvolved.

76. What is a primary purpose of an exit interview?

- A. Persuade every departing employee to reverse the decision.
- B. Collect structured information about employee experience and turnover causes for organizational learning.
- C. Create a public record of the employee's complaints.
- D. Replace investigation of a current employee's harassment complaint.

77. How does a stay interview differ from an exit interview?

- A. A stay interview is conducted only after the employee has resigned.
- B. A stay interview measures payroll accuracy rather than employee experience.
- C. A stay interview asks current employees what supports retention and what barriers should be addressed before they leave.
- D. A stay interview replaces all engagement surveys and performance conversations.

78. Which recognition practice best promotes employee trust?

- A. Use transparent criteria and multiple avenues for recognition so contributions are noticed consistently across roles and locations.
- B. Recognize only employees who work directly with senior leaders.
- C. Allow recognition awards to depend entirely on informal friendships.
- D. Limit recognition to revenue-producing roles even when other work supports results.

79. A high-performing employee receives a counteroffer after announcing an intention to resign. What should HR recommend?

- A. Match any outside offer immediately without asking questions.
- B. Reject the employee's concern because accepting a counteroffer is disloyal.
- C. Offer a permanent exception that is unavailable to comparable employees.
- D. Understand why the employee is leaving, assess equity, and address root causes.

80. Which measure best captures an employee's experience across multiple lifecycle touchpoints?

- A. The number of employees listed in the HRIS at month-end.
- B. The total number of policies in the employee handbook.
- C. A composite measure combining relevant feedback from onboarding, performance support, development, rewards, and exit or retention signals.
- D. A single annual revenue figure with no employee-experience context.

81. What is a strategic benefit of an employee-alumni program?

- A. Maintain respectful relationships with former employees who may provide referrals, future hires, or connections.
- B. Prevent former employees from discussing their work experience.
- C. Guarantee that every former employee will be rehired.
- D. Replace normal offboarding and final-pay processes.

82. An employee reports that a supervisor made repeated sexual comments. What should HR do first?

- A. Tell the employee to confront the supervisor alone before HR becomes involved.
- B. Acknowledge the report, assess immediate safety or retaliation concerns, preserve relevant information, and begin a prompt impartial response.
- C. Promise a particular outcome before gathering facts from the people involved.
- D. Move the reporting employee to a less desirable role without discussing options.

83. Which action is the clearest example of unlawful retaliation risk?

- A. A manager gives an employee routine feedback using the same documented standards applied to peers.
- B. HR interviews witnesses after receiving a complaint and keeps the investigation limited to relevant facts.
- C. An employee changes work schedules through a voluntary process unrelated to any complaint.
- D. A manager removes an employee from desirable assignments soon after the employee reports suspected discrimination.

84. An employee reports discrimination by a manager and asks HR not to tell anyone. Which response is most appropriate?

- A. Promise absolute secrecy even if the facts indicate a serious workplace risk.
- B. Dismiss the report because the employee does not want to file a formal charge.
- C. Tell the accused manager every detail immediately without planning the inquiry.

D. Explain confidentiality limits, document the concern, assess required action, and protect the employee from retaliation while investigating appropriately.

85. Where should HR generally store medical information received in connection with an accommodation request?

- A. In a confidential medical file separate from the employee's general personnel record, with access limited to those who need it.
- B. In the employee's open personnel file so every supervisor can review it.
- C. In a shared team folder labeled with the employee's diagnosis.
- D. In the employee's performance record with the medical details quoted verbatim.

86. The federal Age Discrimination in Employment Act generally protects which employees from age discrimination?

- A. Only employees who have worked for the employer for at least ten years.
- B. Individuals who are age 40 or older.
- C. All workers under age 25 regardless of the employment decision.
- D. Only applicants for executive positions in public agencies.

87. A pregnant employee requests a temporary change in lifting duties because of a pregnancy-related limitation. What should HR do?

- A. Deny the request because pregnancy can never affect job assignments.
- B. Require the employee to accept unpaid leave before discussing alternatives.
- C. Use the accommodation process, evaluate reasonable options, and avoid unnecessary leave.
- D. Ask coworkers to decide whether the limitation seems medically legitimate.

88. Which practice best reduces risk under the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act?

- A. Ask applicants about family medical history to predict future attendance.

- B. Use genetic information only for high-potential employees because it benefits succession planning.
- C. Store family medical history with performance ratings for easier manager access.
- D. Train decision makers not to use protected genetic information and restrict access to it.

89. Which situation most directly implicates OSHA's General Duty Clause?

- A. An employee requests a preferred office color that does not affect safety.
- B. A manager changes a meeting time without updating the calendar invitation.
- C. The employer knows of a serious unaddressed hazard and has a feasible way to reduce it.
- D. A department misses a discretionary sales target during a slow quarter.

90. Which practice supports an employer's hazard-communication program?

- A. Make safety data sheets accessible, label hazardous chemicals appropriately, and train employees about hazards and protective measures.
- B. Keep chemical information only in the safety manager's locked office.
- C. Train employees after an exposure occurs so the lesson is memorable.
- D. Remove labels from containers used by experienced employees.

91. Which element is most important in a workplace-violence prevention program?

- A. A rule requiring employees to resolve threats privately before reporting them.
- B. A documented risk-assessment process linked to reporting channels, emergency response, and follow-up controls.
- C. A single annual memo that lists no contacts or response steps.
- D. A policy that focuses only on discipline after an incident occurs.

92. How should HR administer a workplace substance-use policy?

- A. Ignore the policy for high performers so business results are protected.

- B. Apply the policy consistently, distinguish safety or performance facts from assumptions, and coordinate accommodation or legal review when needed.
- C. Treat any rumor as proof and disclose it to the entire work group.
- D. Allow each supervisor to create a different standard for similar conduct.

93. A supervisor asks HR to send an employee's medical documentation to the entire management team. What should HR do?

- A. Send the complete record because managers share responsibility for the employee.
- B. Post the documentation in the team's shared drive for transparency.
- C. Ask the employee's coworkers to vote on the appropriate accommodation.
- D. Decline broad disclosure and provide only the work-related information necessary for authorized decisions or implementation.

94. An employee requests leave for a serious health condition and provides enough information to suggest the request may be protected. What should HR do?

- A. Deny the request until the employee uses all available paid time off.
- B. Ask the employee's coworkers to decide whether the condition is serious.
- C. Provide the applicable notices and process information, assess eligibility and certification requirements, and administer the request consistently.
- D. Promise approval without reviewing eligibility, documentation, or the organization's leave process.

95. Which statement best describes the purpose of USERRA?

- A. Protect eligible service members from employment discrimination and support reemployment rights after qualifying military service.
- B. Allow employers to refuse military leave whenever business conditions are difficult.
- C. Require every employer to promote a returning service member to executive status.
- D. Replace all state and federal leave laws with one military scheduling rule.

96. Which activity is generally protected under Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act?

- A. Two nonunion employees jointly raise concerns with management about pay or workplace safety.
- B. A supervisor disciplines an employee for a personal disagreement unrelated to work conditions.
- C. An employee secretly damages company property after receiving routine feedback.
- D. A manager tells employees they may never discuss workplace conditions with one another.

97. A union-represented employee is asked questions in an investigatory interview and requests a union steward. What is the employer's lawful choice?

- A. Continue questioning and discipline the employee for requesting representation.
- B. Grant the request and delay the interview, end the interview, or let the employee choose whether to proceed without representation.
- C. Require the employee to answer first and allow a steward to review the answers later.
- D. Permit a private attorney with no union affiliation to replace the requested representative.

98. During a union-organizing campaign, which management practice creates the greatest risk of violating employee rights?

- A. Providing truthful information about existing policies through approved communications.
- B. Reminding managers to route questions to HR and avoid retaliation.
- C. Threatening job loss, interrogating employees about support, promising benefits for rejecting the union, or surveilling activity.
- D. Continuing normal operations while applying existing rules consistently.

99. What does good-faith collective bargaining generally require?

- A. Give the union every management decision without discussion.
- B. Refuse to meet until the union accepts the employer's first proposal.
- C. Require the parties to accept mediation's proposed terms automatically.
- D. Meet and bargain sincerely over mandatory subjects, exchange relevant proposals, and seek agreement without forcing a predetermined result.

100. An employee files a grievance under a collective-bargaining agreement. What should HR do first?

- A. Review the agreement's grievance steps and deadlines, acknowledge the filing, and coordinate a fact-based response with the appropriate parties.
- B. Ignore the grievance until the employee contacts the chief executive.
- C. Change the agreement's deadlines because the issue is inconvenient.
- D. Ask the employee to withdraw the grievance before HR reviews the facts.

101. What is the primary role of a mediator in an employee dispute?

- A. Decide which party is legally correct and issue a binding judgment.
- B. Help the parties communicate, clarify interests, and develop a voluntary resolution without imposing the outcome.
- C. Represent management and negotiate on its behalf against the employee.
- D. Replace the organization's investigation whenever a complaint is made.

102. Which complaint-investigation note is most useful?

- A. A conclusion that the complainant is probably exaggerating because of personality.
- B. A list of unverified rumors copied from social media.
- C. A dated, objective account identifying the source, observed facts, relevant documents, and actions taken.
- D. A note stating only that the matter was handled appropriately.

103. Which factor best supports a fair progressive-discipline decision?

- A. Notice, investigation, consistent treatment, and a proportionate response support the decision.
- B. The manager is angry and wants the most severe penalty available.
- C. The employee is unpopular even though no rule or evidence supports discipline.
- D. The organization applies a new penalty retroactively to make an example.

104. An HR manager discovers that an employee-handbook rule conflicts with applicable law. What is the best response?

- A. Enforce the rule until an employee challenges it in court.
- B. Delete the rule silently without assessing decisions already made under it.
- C. Ask supervisors to apply the rule only when they believe it is convenient.
- D. Stop relying on the conflicting rule, protect current decisions, and coordinate prompt legal review and policy correction.

105. Which practice best establishes an HRIS as a reliable source of workforce information?

- A. Allow each department to create its own employee identifiers and definitions.
- B. Define data ownership, standard definitions, controlled entry procedures, and reconciliation with authoritative records.
- C. Permit users to overwrite historical records without an audit trail.
- D. Rely on informal spreadsheets because system data is never complete.

106. Which control most directly improves accuracy when entering a salary change into an HRIS?

- A. Allow free-text entries with no format or range checks.
- B. Have the employee enter and approve the change without review.
- C. Use required fields, validation rules, authorized approvals, and a review of the transaction against supporting documentation.
- D. Post the change first and investigate errors only during an annual audit.

107. What does role-based access control accomplish in an HR information system?

- A. It gives every employee full access so information is transparent.
- B. It removes the need to review access after a transfer or termination.
- C. It allows managers to share credentials when workload increases.
- D. It grants role-based access and limits unnecessary data or actions.

108. Which control best supports segregation of duties in HR payroll administration?

- A. Allow one administrator to create, approve, and release every change.
- B. Separate the person who enters a payroll change from the person who approves or releases it.
- C. Give all payroll users identical permissions to improve convenience.
- D. Remove approval records after payroll is processed successfully.

109. An HR dashboard shows 12 terminations, but the source payroll report shows 15 for the same period. Which data-quality issue is most directly present?

- A. An accuracy or consistency problem requiring reconciliation between the systems and definitions.
- B. A complete data set that needs no further review.
- C. A confidentiality improvement caused by limiting the dashboard view.
- D. A leading indicator proving that retention has improved.

110. Which measure is a leading indicator of potential future turnover?

- A. The number of employees who already resigned last quarter.
- B. The final annual turnover rate after all departures are recorded.
- C. A sustained decline in manager check-in completion and employee-reported intent to stay.
- D. The number of exit interviews completed after employees leave.

111. Which practice best reflects data minimization in HR reporting?

- A. Export every available field so future questions can be answered more quickly.
- B. Share raw personnel data with all managers to encourage transparency.
- C. Keep sensitive fields in every dashboard even when they are not analyzed.
- D. Include only the employee fields necessary for the stated business purpose and restrict access to the intended audience.

112. What is the purpose of an HR records-retention schedule?

- A. Set retention periods, secure disposal rules, and exceptions for legal holds.
- B. Keep every record forever regardless of purpose or requirement.
- C. Permit employees to delete records whenever storage becomes expensive.
- D. Replace legal review with a single retention period for all information.

113. What is the primary value of an HRIS audit trail?

- A. It prevents every possible data error before a user saves a record.
- B. It records who changed data, what changed, and when, supporting accountability, investigation, and control testing.
- C. It allows users to conceal changes by overwriting the original entry.
- D. It replaces the need for access controls and approval procedures.

114. An analyst finds that higher training participation is associated with lower turnover. What is the most accurate conclusion?

- A. Training definitely caused the entire reduction in turnover.
- B. Turnover caused employees to attend more training sessions.
- C. The relationship is a hypothesis; additional analysis is needed before claiming causation.
- D. The two measures cannot be examined together because correlation is meaningless.

115. HR learns that an unauthorized person may have accessed employee records. What should HR do first?

- A. Delete the affected records immediately so no one can view them.
- B. Wait until the next audit to determine whether any information was exposed.
- C. Send the entire employee database to managers so they can check for changes.
- D. Activate the incident-response process, contain access, preserve evidence, and notify the designated security and privacy contacts.

Practice Exam 15: Answer Key and Explanations

- 1. C** - The recommendation connects recruiting activity to an outcome the business cares about: retention. Looking at source-of-hire alongside time-to-fill and early turnover can reveal whether a fast channel produces weak matches or whether a slower channel produces stronger retention. Manager preference, equal spending, and a contest do not establish evidence-based relationships between inputs and results.
- 2. B** - A center of excellence concentrates specialized knowledge, such as compensation, analytics, or talent management, and makes that expertise available through standards, tools, and consultation. It does not replace every HR role or function as a temporary approval committee. Payroll administration may be important, but it is not the defining feature of a center of excellence.
- 3. A** - A risk assessment becomes useful when prioritized findings lead to accountable action. A high-likelihood, high-impact risk warrants an owner, documented controls, deadlines, and follow-up review. Waiting for harm, shifting responsibility without support, or publishing unverified information fails to reduce exposure and may create additional operational or reputational risk. This turns risk identification into accountable mitigation.
- 4. A** - Span of control is the count of direct reports assigned to a manager. It helps HR evaluate organizational layers, workload, communication demands, and management capacity. Department count, physical distance, and policy volume may affect organizational design, but none defines span of control. The measure should be interpreted with job complexity and employee support needs.
- 5. B** - A meaningful evaluation begins with a clear outcome and a baseline. HR can then select indicators that show whether the program changed behavior, capability, or business results. Attendance and satisfaction are useful participation or reaction measures, but they do not demonstrate transfer or organizational value. Executive sponsorship alone is not evidence of effectiveness.
- 6. D** - A high-influence, high-impact stakeholder can materially affect adoption, resources, and employee confidence. Early engagement allows HR to surface concerns, adapt implementation, and develop visible sponsorship. A late generic announcement, deliberate exclusion, or purely technical message ignores the stakeholder's ability to shape outcomes and may turn manageable resistance into active opposition.
- 7. C** - Culture is reinforced by what leaders model, reward, tolerate, and measure. HR should translate respect into observable expectations, coach supervisors, review recognition and performance systems, and address repeated violations consistently. Job-description language and posters may support the message, but they cannot overcome incentives that reward contradictory behavior. Repeated systems are stronger than isolated reminders.
- 8. A** - Voluntary turnover focuses on employees who choose to leave, rather than positions, promotions, or training activity. Comparing voluntary separations with average headcount creates a rate that can be tracked over time and segmented by role, manager, tenure, or location. The other measures address staffing demand, advancement, or learning utilization. Segmenting the rate reveals actionable patterns.

9. D - A personal relationship creates an actual or perceived conflict of interest, even if the vendor may be qualified. Disclosure and recusal protect the decision, the organization, and the HR professional. An independent, documented review allows objective comparison of vendors. Competitive pricing does not eliminate the duty to avoid undisclosed influence.

10. C - Gap analysis identifies the difference between the current state and a desired future state. In HR, the comparison often concerns skills, staffing capacity, leadership readiness, or systems required by the business strategy. The other choices compare unrelated measures or communication assets and do not reveal capability requirements or development priorities.

11. B - An operational HR business partner translates people practices into business value. The response should identify the problem, connect the intervention to a strategic or operating objective, present evidence and expected outcomes, and describe cost and risk. Popularity, activities without results, or competitor imitation may inform discussion but do not establish a sound case.

12. A - Scenario planning helps leaders prepare for uncertainty by describing plausible conditions, workforce implications, leading indicators, and response options. It does not predict one certain future or eliminate the value of historical data. Its strength is making assumptions visible and linking trigger points to decisions before pressure forces an improvised response.

13. C - A benchmark is meaningful only when its population, definitions, time period, and calculation method are comparable. HR should use it as context, then consider strategy, labor market conditions, workforce mix, and operating model. Automatically copying a target or choosing the highest number can produce unrealistic actions; rejecting context loses useful perspective.

14. B - The PDCA cycle begins by defining the problem and planned change, then moves to implementation or testing, measurement of results, and adjustment based on evidence. The cycle is iterative, so learning informs the next plan. Immediate action without measurement and repetition without adjustment do not create controlled continuous improvement. Measurement makes the cycle evidence based.

15. D - Employer branding is strengthened when what candidates are promised is consistent with what employees experience. Alignment improves trust, realistic expectations, and retention. A repeated slogan cannot compensate for broken promises, and concealing feedback creates reputational and ethical risk. Marketing can communicate the employee value proposition, but operations must deliver it.

16. D - Policy governance requires accountability across the policy lifecycle. An owner maintains the content, approval records establish authority, version history prevents conflicting copies, effective dates clarify applicability, and exception monitoring reveals control weaknesses. Informal manager changes, personal storage, and one-time publication undermine consistency, accessibility, and the ability to demonstrate responsible oversight.

17. B - Workforce planning begins with business demand and the capabilities needed to meet it. Comparing projected work with current capacity reveals whether the gap concerns headcount, skills, timing, or deployment. Department requests, historical headcount, and early job postings may provide

inputs, but none replaces an evidence-based demand-and-supply analysis. That gap guides hiring, redeployment, or development.

18. C - Job analysis identifies the work actually performed, including duties, responsibilities, relationships, conditions, and required knowledge or skills. Incumbent and supervisor input, observation, and work outputs provide evidence that can be translated into essential functions and selection criteria. Competitor postings, executive assumptions, and exhaustive skill lists can distort the role. The result should describe work, not personality.

19. A - A structured interview improves comparability by giving candidates the same core questions and evaluating responses against job-related criteria. It also creates documentation for training, calibration, and later review. Informal rapport and changing standards invite inconsistent treatment and may allow irrelevant similarity or personal preference to influence selection. Structured scoring also supports interviewer calibration.

20. B - Disparate impact concerns an employment practice that appears neutral but disproportionately screens out members of a protected group. HR should examine the data, determine whether the practice is job-related and consistent with business necessity, and consider less discriminatory alternatives. Disparate treatment instead involves intentional differential treatment of individuals. The analysis should examine less discriminatory alternatives.

21. A - Title VII prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, and national origin. Other laws may protect additional characteristics, and state or local requirements may be broader. The key HR task is to identify the governing protection rather than treating every workplace preference or personal characteristic as a Title VII category.

22. C - The appropriate response focuses on essential job functions and an effective accommodation, not exclusion or broad medical disclosure. HR should engage with the applicant, understand the barrier, and evaluate a reasonable modification unless it would create undue hardship. Removing the applicant, demanding unrelated medical details, or lowering standards broadly is not required.

23. D - The FLSA generally requires covered, nonexempt employees to receive overtime pay at not less than one and one-half times the regular rate for hours worked over 40 in a workweek. Employer approval policies may control discipline, but they do not erase compensable time worked. HR should correct timekeeping and payroll practices promptly.

24. A - The FTC explains that employers using consumer reports must give a written, stand-alone disclosure, obtain written permission, and certify compliance before obtaining the report. If the report may support adverse action, additional pre-adverse and post-adverse notices apply. Manager approval or a buried disclosure does not satisfy the required process. The sequence protects both applicants and employers.

25. C - Referral programs can expand access, but their effects should be monitored like any other recruiting source. HR should analyze who receives information, who participates, and who advances,

then address barriers while preserving job-related standards. Ignoring the pattern hides risk; deleting data prevents diagnosis; automatic reservation can create a different fairness problem.

26. B - Passive candidates may not be actively searching, so targeted outreach and trusted networks can connect the organization with relevant expertise. Messages should explain the role and be based on documented requirements. A single general job board may miss qualified people, mass messaging damages candidate experience, and weakening requirements reduces selection quality.

27. D - Consistent communication and criteria give qualified employees a reasonable opportunity to compete and help HR demonstrate that access was not restricted informally. Managers may provide useful input, but undisclosed invitations, shifting standards, and undocumented decisions weaken trust and make it difficult to evaluate whether the process was job-related and equitable.

28. C - A selection test should measure attributes related to successful job performance and be supported by evidence appropriate to its intended use. Appearance, popularity, or group score differences do not establish validity. HR should document the connection to job requirements, monitor results, and review adverse effects rather than treating difficulty as proof of quality.

29. B - A realistic job preview communicates both attractive and challenging aspects of a role. Better information helps candidates self-select, prepares new hires for actual work, and may reduce early disappointment. It is not a sales script, a substitute for job analysis, or a vehicle for exposing confidential information about other employees.

30. A - Orientation commonly covers immediate information such as policies, logistics, and required forms. Onboarding is broader and supports the employee's transition through role clarity, relationships, resources, feedback, and early milestones. Treating onboarding as a first-day event or paperwork task misses the integration work that supports performance and retention. Effective onboarding continues beyond the first week.

31. D - USCIS guidance states that the employee must complete Section 1 of Form I-9 no later than the first day of employment. Section 2 is the employer's review and verification step and follows a different deadline. HR should use the current USCIS form and handbook, because immigration verification procedures can change.

32. B - A defensible process begins with the work, not with a favored person or an advertisement. Job analysis supports essential requirements; predetermined criteria support consistent assessment; sourcing and interviews then operate against those standards. Backfilling requirements after selection, copying stale postings, or relying on impressions invites bias and weakens the business rationale.

33. C - Needs assessment connects learning to the actual performance problem. Organizational analysis clarifies strategic priorities, task analysis identifies required behaviors and standards, and person analysis identifies who needs development. Buying a popular course or training everyone identically may waste resources when the gap is caused by process, tools, incentives, or a smaller target group.

34. A - Behavior evaluation examines whether learning is used in the workplace, not merely whether participants enjoyed training or remembered information immediately afterward. Reaction and learning

measures remain useful, while business results may show broader impact. Observing application, supervisor feedback, work samples, or process indicators provides stronger evidence of transfer. Behavior change is the bridge between learning and results.

35. D - An effective objective states an observable behavior and a meaningful standard or condition. Documenting a conversation using five required steps can be assessed through a work sample or rubric. Understand, become excellent, and learn everything are vague outcomes that do not identify what learners must do or how success will be determined.

36. C - Succession decisions should compare future-role requirements with evidence of performance, capability, development, and readiness timing. Tenure, popularity, title, and personal preference may be considered context, but they are not sufficient indicators. A disciplined review also identifies development actions and contingency coverage if the role becomes vacant unexpectedly. Readiness should be tied to the role, not labels.

37. A - Mentoring often supports career perspective, networks, confidence, and broader professional growth over time. Coaching is usually more focused on a specific behavior, capability, or performance objective and may be provided by a manager or another qualified person. The activities can overlap, but the purpose and time horizon commonly differ. Both relationships benefit from clear expectations.

38. D - Pretraining and posttraining measures show change over time, while a comparable group or control helps separate training effects from other influences. No design proves causation perfectly in every workplace, but stronger designs reduce alternative explanations. Instructor opinion, attendance, and satisfaction are useful process or reaction data, not sufficient impact evidence.

39. B - Transfer depends on the environment in which employees work. Supervisors, tools, time, feedback, peer norms, and rewards should reinforce the trained behavior. Repeating content cannot overcome contradictory incentives or unavailable resources. HR should diagnose the transfer barrier and adjust the system, then measure whether application improves in daily work. Transfer requires reinforcement after formal instruction.

40. C - Compliance training should help employees recognize risks and respond correctly in real situations. Scenarios, practice, clear expectations, and follow-up make the content usable and give HR evidence of implementation. A file attachment or generic lecture may document distribution, but it does not demonstrate understanding, role relevance, or sustained behavior. Follow-up also creates evidence of program effectiveness.

41. A - Analysis establishes why training may be needed, who needs it, what performance is expected, and which contextual factors may affect success. It precedes design, development, implementation, and evaluation. Visual production, delivery, and reaction measurement belong to later activities and cannot substitute for diagnosing the original performance need. Without analysis, training may address the wrong problem.

42. B - Adults generally engage more deeply when learning is relevant, practical, respectful of experience, and connected to problems they must solve. Participation and immediate application help

learners test understanding and receive feedback. A purely abstract lecture, identical assumptions, and delayed feedback reduce transfer and make it harder to adapt instruction to actual needs.

43. D - A development plan turns aspiration into coordinated action. Goals should identify the capability to build, actions such as practice or mentoring, resources, milestones, and evidence of progress. Employee and manager participation improves ownership and feasibility. Generic promises, unrelated courses, and private ratings do not create a measurable development path. Review dates make progress visible and actionable.

44. D - Knowledge management reduces avoidable loss and improves access to useful expertise. Effective processes identify critical knowledge, capture it in usable form, make it searchable, assign ownership, and review it for accuracy. Concentrating information, eliminating judgment, or storing unmaintained documents creates dependency, confusion, and stale guidance rather than organizational learning. Accessible knowledge reduces dependency on individual experts.

45. A - Internal equity concerns the fairness of pay relationships inside the organization. HR may compare job content, responsibility, skill, working conditions, and established pay structures to identify inconsistent treatment. External competitiveness addresses market positioning, while employee preferences and payroll timing may affect rewards administration but do not define internal equity. This supports consistent decisions across comparable jobs.

46. B - External benchmarking supplies market context for compensation decisions. HR should match jobs carefully, examine survey methodology and aging, and decide whether the organization intends to lead, match, or lag the market. Benchmarking does not require paying the highest rate, eliminate internal job evaluation, or measure satisfaction by itself. The result should inform judgment rather than dictate it.

47. C - A compa-ratio places an employee's pay in relation to the midpoint of the relevant salary range. It can help HR review market positioning, pay progression, and possible compression, but it is not a complete pay-equity analysis. Tenure, revenue, benefits cost, and tax rates are different measures with different purposes. Its meaning depends on a properly defined range.

48. D - Employees need enough context to understand how the framework operates and what actions influence progression. HR should explain job architecture, range placement, review practices, and available support while coordinating manager messages. A single number, unrestricted discretion, or blanket secrecy encourages speculation and makes it harder to identify and correct inconsistent decisions.

49. C - A controlled pay-equity finding warrants further review, not automatic dismissal or an unexamined pay cut. HR should validate data, investigate legitimate explanations, document the methodology, and recommend proportionate corrections when a gap is not supported. Individual salary disclosure may create privacy and employee-relations problems without improving the analysis. Remediation should be explainable, consistent, and monitored.

50. B - The Department of Labor explains that exempt status depends on the applicable duties and salary requirements, not a job title. HR should examine the actual work, decision-making, and pay structure

under current regulations. A title, salary alone, or employee waiver cannot substitute for the legal tests governing exemption. Actual work is the central evidence for classification.

51. A - Under the FLSA, work an employer suffers or permits can be compensable even when it was not formally requested. HR should correct records, reinforce reporting expectations, and ensure supervisors do not encourage off-the-clock work. Location, deletion of evidence, or a written-request condition does not determine whether time worked must be counted.

52. C - Incentives shape attention and behavior, so measures should be understandable, controllable, and tied to meaningful outcomes. Balancing quantity with quality, risk, and teamwork reduces gaming and unintended harm. A single output measure, retroactive formula changes, or identical payments regardless of contribution weakens motivation and undermines perceived fairness. Good design anticipates how people may game measures.

53. B - Benefit changes after life events are governed by plan terms and applicable law. HR should explain the process, verify what documentation is required, communicate deadlines, and confirm when changes become effective. Delaying automatically, changing elections without review, or creating private exceptions risks missed coverage, inconsistent treatment, and administrative errors. Prompt guidance prevents missed elections and coverage gaps.

54. D - ERISA plan administration depends on honoring the written plan, communicating required information, and making decisions through a documented process that protects participants' interests. Informal promises, ad hoc eligibility changes, and commingling plan assets create significant compliance and fiduciary risk. HR should coordinate with plan administrators and benefits counsel when questions exceed its authority.

55. A - A total-rewards statement helps employees see compensation as a broader package rather than salary alone. Showing direct and indirect rewards can improve understanding and support informed conversations about value. It does not replace payroll accuracy, eliminate individual preferences, or justify hiding costs. The statement must be accurate, timely, and understandable.

56. D - Effective recognition tells employees what behavior or result mattered and why it supports the organization. Timeliness strengthens the connection, specificity clarifies expectations, and equitable access reduces favoritism. Visibility, vague praise, and delayed annual recognition can leave employees unsure which actions were valued and may cause important contributions to be overlooked.

57. B - Flexible benefits provide a defined menu or contribution framework from which employees can choose permitted options. The plan still has eligibility, election, funding, and compliance rules. Unlimited provider choice, an identical package, or manager-negotiated terms does not describe a controlled flexible-benefits design and can create inconsistent treatment. Defined choices preserve administration and compliance controls.

58. A - Loss of group health coverage following certain employment events may trigger continuation rights under COBRA. HR should coordinate promptly with the plan administrator, confirm the event and

coverage status, and provide required notices and election information. Ignoring the issue, promising unapproved coverage, or denying all rights creates compliance and employee-support risks.

59. C - FMLA generally requires continuation of group health benefits during protected leave on the same terms as active employment. The employee remains responsible for the normal employee share under applicable procedures. Automatic termination, new-hire treatment, or preferential coverage for one leave pattern can violate the statutory framework and undermine consistent administration.

60. A - Pay compression occurs when market or hiring pressures bring new-hire pay close to the pay of experienced incumbents. Employees may question whether tenure and performance are recognized, increasing retention risk. HR should review ranges, hiring offers, progression, and equity rather than confusing compression with broadbanding or variable-pay design. A clear progression path helps restore perceived fairness.

61. C - A total-rewards strategy connects pay, benefits, recognition, development, flexibility, and experience to business and workforce needs. HR should consider different employee segments, affordability, market context, communication, and legal requirements. A leader's preference, an unrelated maximum salary, or a one-size-fits-all package cannot provide that strategic alignment. The strategy should be revisited as business and workforce conditions change.

62. D - Early turnover is most actionable when HR examines the employee lifecycle in segments. Patterns by manager, role, source, location, or onboarding experience can reveal mismatched expectations, weak integration, scheduling problems, or selection issues. An annual aggregate, a stereotype about commitment, or executive intuition alone cannot locate the intervention point. Segmented evidence points to a more precise response.

63. B - Employees are more likely to provide candid feedback when HR explains the purpose, limits access, and reports results in a way that protects reasonable confidentiality. HR should be precise about anonymity versus confidentiality and manage small-group risks. Publishing identities, making promises the process cannot support, or deleting criticism destroys credibility.

64. B - Feedback creates engagement only when employees can see a credible response. HR should prioritize findings, identify accountable owners, define actions and timing, communicate progress, and later evaluate movement. Repeating a survey without action, issuing vague instructions, or stopping measurement signals that participation has little value and can reduce future response quality.

65. D - Focus groups allow guided discussion, follow-up questions, and exploration of how employees interpret workplace experiences. They are useful for understanding reasons and language behind survey patterns, but participants may not represent the entire workforce. Confidentiality still matters, and disagreement can be informative rather than a flaw to eliminate. It is best used to explain, not estimate prevalence.

66. A - An employee resource group can build connection, insight, and community when participation is voluntary and its purpose is clear. Executive support and resources help the group operate, while boundaries preserve HR accountability and consistent employment decisions. Requiring identity

disclosure, granting decision authority, or replacing formal channels creates unnecessary risk. Clear boundaries also protect voluntary participation.

67. C - Early engagement grows when employees understand their role, can perform the work, and develop relationships with managers and peers. Clear milestones and feedback reduce uncertainty and support progress. Policies are necessary but insufficient; delayed contact, unsupported discovery, and unexplained workload can create avoidable frustration during a vulnerable transition. These supports make the employee's first successes attainable.

68. B - Regular check-ins make performance management a continuing dialogue rather than a single annual event. Connecting goals with feedback, development, recognition, resources, and priorities helps employees understand how to succeed and adapt. Waiting for annual reviews, discussing only failure, or ignoring constraints reduces clarity and limits the manager's ability to support performance.

69. A - The goal identifies a time frame, measurable result, and quality constraint. That combination clarifies expectations and allows manager and employee to review progress without rewarding speed at the expense of service. Vague aspirations and superlatives may express intent, but they do not provide a reliable basis for feedback or evaluation.

70. C - Calibration helps managers apply shared standards and identify inconsistencies, bias, or rating drift. Discussion should rely on documented performance and role expectations, not bargaining or executive preference. Calibration does not require identical ratings because employees and results differ; it seeks comparable standards and a more defensible decision process. The goal is comparable judgment, not identical outcomes.

71. D - A performance improvement plan should give the employee a fair opportunity to understand the gap and improve. Clear expectations, examples, support, timelines, review points, and consequences create accountability and documentation. Vague warnings, secret ratings, and a termination date without standards do not explain what successful improvement requires. The plan should be reviewed against documented results at each checkpoint.

72. C - A capability gap is initially addressed through clarification, coaching, resources, practice, and follow-up. The manager can then determine whether performance improves or whether a more formal process is needed. Immediate final discipline, delayed feedback, or removal from meaningful work avoids diagnosis and may prevent the employee from succeeding. That approach distinguishes coaching from punishment.

73. D - Good documentation records what was expected, what occurred, what feedback and support were provided, and why the decision follows policy and practice. Facts should be specific and relevant, with appropriate confidentiality. Vague dislike, rumors, or retroactive narratives are difficult to evaluate and may undermine consistency and credibility. Accurate records support consistency if the decision is later reviewed.

74. B - A reduction in force should be based on legitimate business needs and consistently applied criteria such as skills, role requirements, or documented performance. HR should review the outcome

for inconsistent treatment and adverse patterns before implementation. Personal preference, salary alone, and undocumented departmental standards create fairness and legal risk. It also supports a consistent explanation to affected employees.

75. A - A termination meeting should be brief, private, respectful, and organized. The manager or HR representative should state the decision, provide approved reasons at the appropriate level, explain pay, benefits, property, access, and next steps, and listen without making unauthorized promises. Public debate, silence, and blame increase distress and risk. Preparation reduces avoidable confusion during a difficult meeting.

76. B - Exit interviews can reveal patterns involving management, workload, rewards, career opportunity, inclusion, or process quality. HR should protect confidentiality appropriately, analyze information in aggregate, and route allegations requiring investigation through the proper process. The interview is not a pressure tactic, public forum, or substitute for an active complaint investigation. Aggregated themes can guide retention and process improvements.

77. C - Stay interviews are proactive conversations with current employees about what keeps them engaged, what may cause departure, and what support would help. They allow managers to address concerns before a resignation occurs. They complement, rather than replace, engagement surveys, performance dialogue, and other listening methods. Because the employee is still present, the organization can test and refine a response.

78. A - Trust improves when employees understand how recognition is earned and see that different kinds of contributions can be valued. Transparent criteria and broad access reduce visibility bias and favoritism. Senior exposure, friendships, and revenue-only attention can overlook essential support work and make recognition appear political rather than performance-based. Recognition should remain connected to contribution and values.

79. D - A counteroffer may solve pay dissatisfaction temporarily while leaving workload, management, growth, flexibility, or trust problems untouched. HR should diagnose the reasons, evaluate equity and precedent, and decide within the organization's rewards and retention framework. Immediate matching or a private exception can create compression, inequity, and recurring retention problems. Consistent decisions protect both retention and internal equity.

80. C - Employee experience is formed across the lifecycle, so a useful measure should combine relevant signals rather than rely on one administrative count. HR may use surveys, journey feedback, participation, service data, retention, and qualitative themes, with careful definitions. Headcount, policy volume, and revenue alone cannot explain how work is experienced.

81. A - An alumni program extends the relationship after departure without promising reemployment. Former employees may become referral sources, future hires, customers, partners, or advocates when the organization handles offboarding respectfully. The program should complement, not replace, accurate final pay, records, access removal, and other required offboarding controls. A respectful alumni relationship can preserve goodwill after employment ends.

82. B - HR should treat a harassment report seriously, protect against immediate harm or retaliation, preserve relevant evidence, and use the organization's established process. The response should be prompt, impartial, and appropriately confidential, without promising a result in advance. Informal confrontation, premature conclusions, or punitive transfer can worsen risk and discourage reporting.

83. D - Retaliation involves adverse treatment because an individual engaged in protected activity, such as reporting suspected discrimination or participating in an investigation. Timing alone does not prove retaliation, but a sudden loss of desirable assignments is a warning sign requiring review. Consistent feedback, fact gathering, and voluntary scheduling are not inherently retaliatory.

84. D - HR should respect the employee's concern while explaining that absolute confidentiality may not be possible if the organization must respond. The report should be documented, triaged, and investigated as appropriate, with information shared only with people who need it. Retaliation protection and a fair process remain important even without a formal external charge.

85. A - Medical information should be handled separately from ordinary personnel records and accessed only for legitimate work-related purposes. Separating it reduces unnecessary disclosure and helps HR control sensitive information. Open personnel files, shared diagnosis folders, and performance records containing medical details exceed what most supervisors need to manage work or an accommodation.

86. B - The ADEA protects individuals who are 40 or older from age-based employment discrimination. Coverage and specific legal questions depend on the facts and applicable requirements, so HR should not reduce the analysis to tenure, job level, or assumptions about younger workers. A neutral policy can still create risk if it disadvantages protected employees.

87. C - Pregnancy-related limitations should be handled through the applicable federal and state accommodation framework, with an individualized review of reasonable options. HR should not assume leave is the only solution or invite coworkers to judge medical information. The analysis should consider essential duties, effective accommodations, documentation needs, and any current legal updates.

88. D - GINA restricts employment decisions based on genetic information and limits how employers request, acquire, use, or disclose such information. HR should train decision makers, use lawful processes, and separate access to any information received through an exception. Family medical history is not a legitimate predictor to use in selection or succession.

89. C - The General Duty Clause addresses recognized workplace hazards likely to cause death or serious physical harm when a feasible means of abatement exists. HR should coordinate with safety professionals to assess the hazard, protect employees, and document corrective action. Office preferences, scheduling errors, and sales performance are not safety hazards under this principle.

90. A - Hazard communication is designed to help employees understand chemical risks and protective practices before exposure occurs. Accessible safety data sheets, labeling, and training support informed work. Restricting information, delaying training until after harm, or removing labels increases the chance that employees cannot identify hazards or respond safely. Training should be available before employees handle hazardous materials.

91. B - Prevention programs should identify hazards, make reporting accessible, define emergency roles, and connect incidents to investigation and corrective action. Employees need to know what to do before a crisis. Private resolution, an informational memo without procedures, and discipline-only responses miss prevention, response, and learning opportunities. Employees need clear options for reporting concerns and obtaining help during an emergency.

92. B - Consistent administration protects safety and fairness. HR should rely on documented behavior or policy criteria, preserve confidentiality, and consider whether disability, medical, leave, or other legal issues affect the response. Favoritism, rumor-based action, and inconsistent supervisor standards make outcomes difficult to defend and can discourage employees from seeking help. Documentation helps separate facts from assumptions.

93. D - Managers generally need to know work restrictions or approved arrangements, not an employee's complete medical history. HR should limit disclosure, protect the record, and explain the operational information required for implementation. Broad distribution and coworker voting expose sensitive information and can create stigma, inconsistent treatment, and additional privacy risk. Need-to-know access is narrower than general managerial interest.

94. C - A possible protected-leave request should trigger a consistent, timely process. HR should provide required information, evaluate eligibility and documentation under the applicable law and policy, coordinate benefits, and protect against retaliation. Automatic denial, coworker judgment, or an unreviewed promise can create inconsistent treatment and interfere with statutory rights. Early triage helps protect both rights and operations.

95. A - USERRA protects civilian employment interests of people who perform qualifying uniformed service, including protections against discrimination and obligations concerning reemployment when requirements are met. It does not guarantee an executive promotion or erase other laws. HR should use current Department of Labor guidance and review the facts of each service-related absence.

96. A - The NLRB explains that employees may engage in protected concerted activity concerning terms and conditions of employment, even without a union. Joint concerns about pay or safety can fall within that protection. Property damage and unrelated personal disputes are different issues, while a blanket ban on workplace discussions may interfere with protected rights.

97. B - Under current NLRB guidance, a union-represented employee who requests representation during an investigatory interview may have the request honored, or the employer may end the interview or allow the employee to choose whether to proceed without representation. Continuing to question after denying the request can create an unfair labor practice.

98. C - Employers must avoid conduct that coerces employees or interferes with protected organizing activity. Threats, interrogation, promises, and surveillance are classic risk areas. Neutral, truthful communication and consistent operations may be appropriate when they do not contain coercive messages. HR should train managers and coordinate communications carefully during organizing activity. Manager training reduces impulsive campaign conduct.

99. D - Good-faith bargaining requires sincere participation over subjects within the bargaining obligation, including meaningful exchange and consideration of proposals. It does not require either side to agree to a particular term or surrender all management decisions. Refusal to meet, a take-it-or-leave-it first proposal, or automatic imposed terms defeats the process. The parties may disagree while still bargaining in good faith.

100. A - A grievance procedure is a negotiated process, so HR should follow its defined steps, timelines, notice requirements, and decision roles. Prompt acknowledgment and objective fact gathering support credibility. Ignoring, changing, or pressuring withdrawal can breach the agreement and escalate the dispute. HR should preserve records and communicate consistently. Timely handling can prevent a procedural dispute from growing.

101. B - Mediation uses a neutral facilitator to improve communication and help participants explore options they may voluntarily accept. The mediator does not normally decide the dispute or act as one side's advocate. Mediation can complement an investigation or grievance process, but it should not be used to suppress allegations requiring formal review.

102. C - Investigation notes should allow a reviewer to understand what was reported, what evidence was considered, what actions occurred, and when. Objective descriptions are more useful than assumptions about credibility or personality. Rumors and conclusory statements do not create a reliable record and may bias later decisions or reviews. A clear record helps separate evidence from interpretation.

103. A - Fair discipline rests on notice, a reasonable rule, reliable facts, consistent treatment, and proportionality. The employee should have an opportunity to respond, and the response should fit the conduct and policy history. Anger, unpopularity, and retroactive penalties create arbitrary decision making and weaken employee trust and defensibility. The process should be explainable to the employee and reviewer.

104. D - Organizational policy cannot override applicable law. HR should prevent further reliance on a conflicting rule, identify potentially affected decisions, coordinate qualified legal review, and issue a controlled correction and communication. Silent deletion or discretionary enforcement leaves inconsistent treatment and unresolved exposure; waiting for litigation is not responsible compliance management. Controlled correction prevents the error from recurring.

105. B - An HRIS becomes reliable when data elements have owners, definitions, entry rules, and controls that support reconciliation. Consistent identifiers and authoritative sources reduce duplicate or conflicting records. Uncontrolled departmental definitions, overwritten history, and informal spreadsheets make reporting difficult to reproduce and weaken confidence in workforce decisions. These controls make reports reproducible when leaders need to act.

106. C - Salary changes affect payroll, reporting, and employee trust, so entry controls should prevent incomplete or implausible transactions and confirm authorization. Required fields, validation, approval, and supporting documentation create multiple opportunities to catch errors. Free text, self-approval, and

delayed annual review allow incorrect data to spread through dependent systems. Each control addresses a different failure point.

107. D - Role-based access applies least-privilege thinking by linking permissions to legitimate job responsibilities. It reduces unnecessary exposure and limits unauthorized changes while supporting operational work. Access must still be reviewed when roles change, and credentials should remain individual. Full access, unchecked permissions, and shared passwords weaken security and accountability. Least privilege also limits damage after an incident.

108. B - Segregation of duties reduces the opportunity for one person to make and conceal an unauthorized change. Separating entry from approval or release creates an independent check and preserves accountability. Convenience-based full access and deleted approvals may speed processing, but they weaken preventive and detective controls over sensitive payroll transactions. The control should be tested periodically, not merely documented.

109. A - Conflicting counts indicate that at least one system, definition, filter, or data-transfer process is not producing a consistent result. HR should reconcile the records, confirm the period and termination definition, and correct the source or transformation. A smaller number is not automatically more confidential or evidence of improved retention. Reconciliation should occur before the metric guides decisions.

110. C - Leading indicators provide signals before an outcome occurs. Declining check-ins and lower intent to stay may identify engagement or management problems that precede resignations. Actual resignations, final turnover, and completed exit interviews are lagging indicators because they describe events that have already happened. HR should monitor both types for action and learning.

111. D - Data minimization limits collection, use, and disclosure to what is necessary for a defined purpose. It reduces exposure, clarifies accountability, and makes access decisions easier to review. Broad exports and universal dashboards increase risk without necessarily improving analysis. HR should design reports around the decision and audience, not data availability alone.

112. A - A retention schedule creates controlled lifecycle rules based on record type, business need, and applicable requirements. Legal holds or investigations may suspend ordinary disposal, so the schedule must connect with hold procedures. Keeping everything forever increases exposure and cost; ad hoc deletion and one period for all records are also unsafe.

113. B - An audit trail provides evidence about the history of a transaction or record. That evidence helps HR identify unauthorized changes, investigate discrepancies, test controls, and demonstrate accountability. It is not a complete preventive control, and it cannot replace access restrictions or approvals. Overwriting history defeats the purpose of traceability. It also supports reliable reconstruction of a disputed transaction.

114. C - Correlation shows that two measures move together; it does not establish causation. Other factors, such as manager quality, job type, tenure, or selection into training, may explain the pattern. HR should examine timing, comparison groups, confounders, and plausible mechanisms before presenting

training as the cause of reduced turnover. A well-designed comparison can strengthen the causal inference.

115. D - A suspected access event requires a controlled response, not destruction, delay, or broader distribution. HR should follow the incident plan, limit further access, preserve logs and evidence, involve security and privacy owners, and support required notifications after facts are established. Prompt containment and documentation improve both protection and later decision making.