

PRACTICE EXAM 16: 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 leadership team asks HR to justify a proposed remote-work policy. Which evidence package is most useful?
 - A. A list of popular collaboration applications used by other employers.
 - B. A manager poll asking whether remote work feels convenient.
 - C. A promise that the policy will improve every employee outcome.
 - D. A business case linking workforce outcomes, operating costs, risks, and measures of success.

2. Which description best distinguishes a shared-services HR team from a center of excellence?
 - A. Shared services set corporate strategy, while a center of excellence processes every payroll transaction.
 - B. Shared services operate outside HR, while a center of excellence manages only employee complaints.
 - C. Shared services handle standardized transactions, while a center of excellence supplies specialized expertise and guidance.
 - D. Shared services replace managers, while a center of excellence approves all personnel actions.

3. A dashboard shows absence increasing while headcount remains stable. What should HR do before recommending a solution?
 - A. Immediately increase staffing because every absence trend proves understaffing.

B. Check metric definitions, time periods, data quality, and meaningful segments before interpreting the trend.

C. Remove the metric because absence is influenced by employee behavior.

D. Compare the result only with the highest-performing department.

4. A risk register identifies a high-impact threat to payroll continuity. Which response is strongest?

A. Record the threat but defer action until payroll actually fails.

B. Ask employees to report any problem after their pay is missing.

C. Transfer all responsibility to the vendor without reviewing its controls.

D. Assign an owner, document preventive and recovery controls, and test the response before the next payroll cycle.

5. A stakeholder has substantial authority over a change but little current interest in it. Which engagement approach is most appropriate?

A. Manage the stakeholder daily with every project detail and draft communication.

B. Keep the stakeholder satisfied with concise updates, decision points, and early notice of issues affecting priorities.

C. Ignore the stakeholder until resistance becomes visible among employees.

D. Ask the stakeholder to run the entire project without an implementation team.

6. Which HR activity most directly translates a business expansion plan into workforce action?

A. Estimate future role demand, compare it with available capability, and select hiring, development, or redeployment responses.

B. Publish all open positions immediately, regardless of the skills required.

C. Ask current employees to volunteer for additional work without capacity analysis.

D. Freeze development spending until the expansion is complete.

7. A vendor offers an HR manager expensive event tickets while bidding on a contract. What should the manager do?

- A. Accept the tickets because the vendor has not yet won the contract.
- B. Accept them privately but document the vendor's other qualifications.
- C. Decline or disclose the benefit under policy, and remove personal influence from the vendor decision.
- D. Ask the vendor to offer equivalent tickets to every manager involved.

8. Which approach gives HR the most credible picture of organizational culture?

- A. Use only the values printed on the organization's website.
- B. Ask senior leaders to describe the culture without employee input.
- C. Measure culture solely through the number of policy violations.
- D. Compare stated values with employee experiences, leader behavior, recognition patterns, and operational decisions.

9. A critical role has only one trained incumbent and a long replacement lead time. Which action best reduces continuity risk?

- A. Wait to recruit until the incumbent submits a resignation.
- B. Create a documented backup plan with cross-training, access coverage, and a timeline for building additional capability.
- C. Give the incumbent an informal promise that the role is secure.
- D. Move the role's responsibilities to the nearest manager without preparation.

10. When estimating the return on an HR technology investment, which practice improves credibility?

- A. Show expected benefits, implementation and operating costs, assumptions, risks, and the method for measuring results.
- B. Report only the vendor's projected savings without examining assumptions.
- C. Treat every avoided cost as immediate cash savings.
- D. Use the purchase price as the complete investment amount.

11. Employees show resistance after a new HR system is announced. Which response is most likely to improve adoption?

- A. Repeat the announcement more often without changing the implementation plan.
- B. Require immediate use and postpone questions until the launch is complete.
- C. Allow each department to invent an unrelated process for the same system.
- D. Use local change champions, targeted practice, feedback loops, and visible sponsor support to address specific barriers.

12. A business unit asks HR to approve a policy exception that would affect only one team. What should HR evaluate first?

- A. Whether the manager is senior enough to receive an exception automatically.
- B. Whether the exception can remain undocumented to avoid future requests.
- C. The documented business need, consistency with policy purpose, precedent, equity, compliance, and a controlled approval path.
- D. Whether the team has complained loudly enough to justify different treatment.

13. Two companies report different turnover rates, but one counts only resignations and the other counts all separations. What should HR do before benchmarking?

- A. Average the two percentages because both companies use the word turnover.
- B. Reconcile definitions, populations, periods, and calculation methods before comparing the rates.
- C. Choose the lower rate as the more favorable benchmark.
- D. Discard all external data because metrics can never be comparable.

14. A cross-functional HR project has repeated confusion about who approves, performs, and reviews each task. Which tool should HR introduce?

- A. A responsibility matrix that identifies accountable, responsible, consulted, and informed participants for each major activity.
- B. A general employee-satisfaction survey conducted after project completion.

- C. A longer email chain listing every person who attended the kickoff meeting.
- D. A performance ranking that assigns one overall score to the project team.

15. A workforce cost forecast changes substantially when sales volume falls by 10 percent. Which analysis should HR use?

- A. A single-point forecast based only on the most optimistic sales estimate.
- B. A hiring target that remains fixed regardless of business conditions.
- C. Sensitivity or scenario analysis showing how different business assumptions change staffing, cost, and capability decisions.
- D. A survey asking employees whether the forecast feels realistic.

16. A compliance review finds that managers approved salary changes without required documentation. What should HR recommend?

- A. Assign corrective actions, restore approval controls, review affected transactions, and monitor completion by a defined date.
- B. Delete the undocumented transactions so the audit finding disappears.
- C. Allow the practice to continue because managers know their employees best.
- D. Send a general reminder without identifying owners or follow-up checks.

17. A manufacturer expects demand to vary sharply by season. Which workforce-planning practice is strongest?

- A. Hire the maximum projected workforce before demand is confirmed.
- B. Use last year's staffing level without adjusting for the new forecast.
- C. Wait for service failures before considering capacity changes.
- D. Model several demand scenarios and define staffing triggers for hiring, scheduling, overtime, and temporary support.

18. Which source provides the strongest foundation for a competency model?

- A. Personality traits preferred by the current department manager.
- B. A generic list copied from a different industry's career website.
- C. Critical work outputs, job analysis, high-performing behaviors, and input from knowledgeable role stakeholders.
- D. The educational credentials of employees currently in the role.

19. An internal-mobility program is intended to fill hard-to-staff roles. Which first step is most useful?

- A. Invite every employee to apply for every opening without role information.
- B. Map current skills and interests against future role requirements, then identify development and movement pathways.
- C. Replace selection criteria with manager recommendations only.
- D. Limit mobility to employees already performing the target job.

20. An interviewer asks an applicant about plans to have children. What should HR do?

- A. Allow the question if the interviewer asks every applicant the same thing.
- B. Record the answer because family information may help predict attendance.
- C. Stop the question and redirect the discussion to job-related availability, requirements, and qualifications.
- D. Ask a follow-up question about the applicant's childcare arrangements.

21. Which evidence best supports the use of a structured selection test for a job?

- A. The test is popular with applicants and inexpensive to administer.
- B. Evidence that the test measures job-related capabilities and predicts relevant performance using an appropriate validation method.
- C. The vendor calls the test objective and uses attractive score reports.
- D. The highest-scoring candidates seem confident during interviews.

22. A background report may lead an employer to reject an applicant. What should HR do before final adverse action?

- A. Provide the required pre-adverse-action materials, allow a reasonable opportunity to respond, and review any dispute.
- B. Reject the applicant immediately to prevent the report from being challenged.
- C. Ask the reporting company to make the employment decision for the employer.
- D. Tell the hiring manager the report details without limiting access.

23. A recruiter wants to label a job advertisement for an experienced role as seeking a young, energetic worker. Which revision is best?

- A. Keep the wording because it is common in recruiting advertisements.
- B. Replace young with recent graduate even when graduation is not required.
- C. Use age-related wording only in advertisements for customer-facing roles.
- D. Describe the required skills, work pace, schedule, and physical or cognitive demands without age-coded language.

24. A candidate asks why a posted salary range is broad. What should the recruiter explain?

- A. That the range is broad so the company can negotiate differently with each person.
- B. That candidates should not ask about placement until after accepting the offer.
- C. The objective factors that influence placement, such as scope, experience, skills, location, and internal equity.
- D. That the hiring manager can choose any amount without using a framework.

25. Before posting a new hybrid role, what should HR clarify?

- A. Only whether the hiring manager personally prefers remote work.
- B. The number of applicants expected before defining the role's duties.
- C. A universal remote arrangement regardless of customer or operational needs.
- D. Expected work outputs, collaboration requirements, location or time-zone constraints, equipment, and information-security needs.

26. Which interview practice most improves the reliability of panel ratings?

- A. Use behaviorally anchored criteria, ask consistent questions, and require panelists to record evidence before discussing ratings.
- B. Let each panelist ask whatever questions seem interesting in the moment.
- C. Average first impressions before reviewing the candidate's examples.
- D. Allow the most senior interviewer to select the finalist alone.

27. A reference check reveals a discrepancy in a finalist's employment dates. Which response is most defensible?

- A. Reject the candidate immediately because any discrepancy proves dishonesty.
- B. Pause the decision, verify the information consistently, and give the candidate a fair opportunity to explain the discrepancy.
- C. Ignore the discrepancy because reference information is never useful.
- D. Ask only this candidate for extra documents that other finalists did not provide.

28. What is the employer deadline for completing Form I-9 Section 2 for a new employee?

- A. Before the employee accepts the job offer.
- B. Within three business days of the employee's first day of employment.
- C. By the end of the employee's first calendar month.
- D. Only after the employee becomes eligible for benefits.

29. Which onboarding practice best helps a new employee reach effective performance?

- A. Provide a packet on the first day and leave the employee to learn independently.
- B. Delay feedback until the first annual performance review.
- C. Sequence role clarity, access, relationships, early tasks, feedback, and milestones over the first several months.
- D. Assign complex work immediately so the employee can prove commitment.

30. A company uses contractors for a new project. What should HR confirm before the engagement begins?

- A. The intended deliverables, supervision model, payment arrangement, access needs, and worker-classification requirements.
- B. That every contractor can be managed exactly like an employee.
- C. That a contract title alone determines the worker's legal status.
- D. That the staffing plan can omit security and confidentiality controls.

31. A talent-acquisition team wants to improve candidate experience across several hiring stages. Which measure is most useful?

- A. Count only the number of job advertisements posted each month.
- B. Ask the recruiter whether the process feels efficient to administer.
- C. Compare the total applicant pool without separating hiring stages.
- D. Track stage-level delays, candidate feedback, withdrawal rates, and offer acceptance by role and source.

32. A new role will require skills that are scarce in the local labor market. Which workforce-planning response is strongest?

- A. Raise the job title without changing the work or sourcing strategy.
- B. Require the hiring manager to accept the first available applicant.
- C. Combine realistic supply analysis with build, buy, borrow, and redesign options before opening the requisition.
- D. Post the same description repeatedly until the market changes.

33. A department misses a quality target because its procedure is confusing, not because employees lack skill. What should HR recommend?

- A. Require a longer course for everyone, regardless of the process problem.
- B. Increase testing without changing the unclear procedure or instructions.

- C. Discipline employees before determining why the process fails or where it breaks.
- D. Fix the work aid first; train only for remaining skill gaps.

34. Which measure is most characteristic of the reaction level in a training evaluation model?

- A. Participants' ratings of relevance, usability, instructor quality, and perceived confidence after the session.
- B. The percentage of participants applying the skill three months later.
- C. The change in customer complaints after the program is implemented.
- D. The improvement in financial results attributed to the program.

35. Which learning objective is written with the clearest performance standard?

- A. Understand the approval process and appreciate its importance in routine work.
- B. Given a case file, the specialist will identify required approvals with 95 percent accuracy.
- C. Learn about approvals through an engaging presentation and group discussion.
- D. Become familiar with the purpose of case documentation and approval controls.

36. A company wants to develop successors for a role that requires judgment under pressure. Which development method is most appropriate?

- A. Use stretch assignments, guided practice, feedback, and observation of decisions in realistic situations.
- B. Send all potential successors the same general leadership newsletter.
- C. Promote the longest-serving employee without assessing readiness.
- D. Use a single personality inventory as the selection decision.

37. Which design best supports a blended learning program for a new HR procedure?

- A. Replace all practice with a longer slide presentation.
- B. Schedule a live lecture without access to the procedure afterward.

- C. Let employees choose whether to learn the required steps at all.
- D. Provide brief self-paced content before a live practice session and job support after employees return to work.

38. During a coaching conversation, an employee misses a goal but wants to improve. What should the coach do first?

- A. Deliver a long lecture about motivation before hearing the employee.
- B. Set a new goal without discussing what prevented the original result.
- C. Explore the employee's view of the barrier, review specific evidence, and agree on a focused next action.
- D. Compare the employee publicly with a higher-performing coworker.

39. An expert will retire in six months. Which knowledge-transfer plan is strongest?

- A. Ask the expert to email every past message before leaving.
- B. Capture critical procedures, use shadowing and practice, and verify that a successor can perform the work independently.
- C. Record one farewell presentation without testing the stored knowledge.
- D. Wait for the successor to learn through trial and error after retirement.

40. An LMS report shows that 98 percent of employees completed training, but errors have not changed. What should HR do next?

- A. Add measures of demonstrated skill and workplace performance rather than treating completion as effectiveness.
- B. Declare the program successful because completion exceeded its target.
- C. Require employees to repeat the same course without observing work.
- D. Delete the error metric because it does not reflect participation.

41. Which training design choice most improves access for learners with different needs?

- A. Use a single video format so every learner receives identical materials.
- B. Offer captions, readable materials, keyboard-accessible activities, alternative formats, and a clear support path.
- C. Require learners to request access only after the course is finished.
- D. Treat accessibility as optional when the topic is mandatory.

42. A manager claims that a training course is needed, but performance data are mixed. Which needs-assessment step is most useful?

- A. Purchase a course before identifying the performance outcome.
- B. Ask only the manager which vendor has the most attractive catalog.
- C. Compare organizational goals, required tasks, actual performance, available resources, and the employees or groups affected.
- D. Assume the lowest performers lack motivation rather than examining work conditions.

43. Which evaluation design gives HR stronger evidence that a program contributed to an improvement?

- A. Count only the number of employees who completed the course.
- B. Ask leaders whether they believe the program was valuable.
- C. Measure results only after the program with no baseline or comparison.
- D. Compare preprogram and postprogram results with a similar group or other credible comparison when feasible.

44. A new compliance rule changes required training content. What should the learning team do?

- A. Leave the old course active so employees can choose the version they prefer.
- B. Change the slides without recording which version each employee completed.
- C. Update the material, retire outdated versions, document the effective date, and confirm the correct audience and completion record.
- D. Wait for an audit before updating the course or communication.

45. Which factor should carry the greatest weight when evaluating the relative value of two internal jobs?

- A. Which job title sounds more senior to employees.
- B. Which incumbent negotiated more aggressively at hire.
- C. Which department has the larger office and more visible equipment.
- D. The jobs' responsibilities, required knowledge, problem-solving demands, impact, and working conditions.

46. What does salary-range penetration generally indicate?

- A. Where an employee's pay falls between the minimum and maximum of the assigned salary range.
- B. How many employees are eligible for a bonus in the business unit.
- C. The percentage of payroll spent on benefits instead of wages.
- D. The difference between an employee's pay and the external market median only.

47. How should HR recommend allocating a limited merit budget?

- A. Give the largest increases to employees who ask most often.
- B. Use documented performance, market position, internal equity, and approved pay philosophy rather than one factor alone.
- C. Divide the budget equally without reviewing role or performance differences.
- D. Allocate the entire budget to the most recently hired employees.

48. An incentive plan rewards speed, but error rates rise sharply. What design change is most appropriate?

- A. Increase the speed target so employees work even faster.
- B. Remove all measurement and pay the same incentive to everyone.
- C. Balance the speed measure with quality, safety, or customer outcomes that employees can influence.
- D. Keep the plan unchanged because errors are a management issue only.

49. Which communication is most useful during annual benefits enrollment?

- A. Explain plan differences, employee costs, eligibility, deadlines, decision tools, and where to get individualized help.
- B. Send only the name of the most popular plan and its monthly premium.
- C. Ask employees to rely on last year's election without reviewing changes.
- D. Publish a long legal document without a summary or contact point.

50. An employee's hours are reduced and group health coverage ends. What should HR do first?

- A. Assume continuation coverage never applies when employment continues.
- B. Cancel the employee's records and wait for a coverage complaint.
- C. Promise employer-paid coverage without reviewing the plan or applicable rules.
- D. Review whether a continuation-coverage event applies, confirm plan procedures, and issue required notices and election information.

51. What is generally required for group health coverage while an eligible employee is on approved FMLA leave?

- A. Terminate coverage immediately because the employee is not working full schedules.
- B. Maintain coverage on the same terms as if the employee were working, subject to the employee's normal premium obligations.
- C. Maintain coverage only if the employee pays the entire employer contribution.
- D. Provide enhanced coverage because the employee is using protected leave.

52. Which document should HR treat as the starting point when administering a retirement plan?

- A. The current governing plan document, together with applicable procedures and required participant communications.
- B. An informal summary remembered by the benefits coordinator.
- C. A competitor's plan document with similar contribution percentages.
- D. A manager's email promising a benefit that the plan does not describe.

53. Payroll discovers that an employee was underpaid because an approved rate change was not entered. What should HR recommend?

- A. Wait until the next annual review so the correction can be included in merit pay.
- B. Ask the employee to absorb the error because the approval was already signed.
- C. Change the current rate without reviewing the missed pay period or record.
- D. Correct the underpayment promptly, document the adjustment, and investigate the control failure that allowed the omission.

54. Which statement best describes a sound pay-transparency practice?

- A. Publish ranges but allow managers to hide them from selected applicants.
- B. Tell employees that pay decisions are confidential and cannot be explained.
- C. Communicate consistent salary information and explain objective factors that influence placement and progression.
- D. Use different placement explanations for employees in comparable roles.

55. What is the primary distinction between recognition and base pay?

- A. Recognition must always be larger than an employee's salary increase.
- B. Recognition acknowledges behavior; base pay is recurring job-related compensation.
- C. Base pay is informal praise that managers can provide without payroll controls.
- D. Recognition replaces the need for a consistent compensation framework.

56. Which nonmonetary reward is most likely to support employees seeking skill growth?

- A. A generic company poster describing growth without available opportunities.
- B. A private promise that the employee may receive a future promotion.
- C. A one-time celebration unrelated to the employee's interests or contribution.

D. A transparent opportunity for meaningful project work, learning resources, and feedback connected to career development.

57. A company wants different benefits emphases for early-career and late-career workforce segments. Which principle should guide the design?

- A. Give every segment identical benefits regardless of workforce needs or plan rules.
- B. Let each manager promise a different package to retain favored employees.
- C. Use segment-informed choices within consistent governance, affordability, legal, and employee-value principles.
- D. Use employee age as the only factor in assigning benefits.

58. Which structure makes an annual sales incentive easier to administer and evaluate?

- A. Allow each manager to calculate awards using personal judgment at year end.
- B. Define threshold, target, and maximum outcomes with clear measures, eligibility, timing, and treatment of exceptions.
- C. Publish only the maximum possible award and keep the formula confidential.
- D. Change the target after results are known to preserve the budget.

59. A benefits vendor requests a complete employee file to answer a narrow eligibility question. What should HR do?

- A. Share only the minimum necessary data after confirming authorization, security, contract, and retention requirements.
- B. Send the entire file because the vendor already supports the benefit program.
- C. Refuse every vendor data request even when the plan requires information sharing.
- D. Email the file to a personal account so the vendor can access it quickly.

60. An equity review finds that two comparable employees have different pay. What should HR analyze before recommending an adjustment?

- A. Which employee complained first and therefore deserves the larger adjustment.
- B. Only the employees' current titles, without examining actual work.
- C. Whether changing one salary will avoid discussing the broader pay structure.
- D. Job scope, experience, performance, legitimate pay factors, history, market position, and the consistency of prior decisions.

61. Which information should anchor a review of the total-rewards strategy?

- A. Business priorities, workforce needs, employee feedback, affordability, market conditions, and applicable requirements.
- B. The most expensive benefit available in the market.
- C. A single executive's preferred reward regardless of workforce data.
- D. An annual decision to copy the competitor with the largest workforce.

62. An engagement survey has a low response rate in one shift. What should HR examine first?

- A. Assume the shift is disengaged because fewer employees responded.
- B. Whether access, timing, language, manager communication, workload, or trust concerns prevented representative participation.
- C. Exclude the shift from the report so the overall response rate improves.
- D. Send identical reminders during the same high-workload period.

63. Which practice best reduces response bias when an engagement survey cannot reach every employee equally?

- A. Treat the first completed responses as representative of everyone.
- B. Ask managers to answer for employees who do not participate.
- C. Use multiple response channels, compare respondent characteristics with the workforce, and interpret gaps cautiously.
- D. Publish only the most positive comments to encourage participation.

64. A survey shows that employees do not know what happened after the last listening cycle. What should HR recommend?

- A. Run another survey immediately without discussing the earlier results.
- B. Share every individual comment so employees can identify colleagues.
- C. Publish priority findings, assign action owners, communicate milestones, and measure whether conditions change.
- D. Ask managers to solve all themes privately without common priorities.

65. An employee resource group requests funding for activities unrelated to its stated purpose. What should HR do?

- A. Approve every request because employee resource groups should have unlimited discretion.
- B. Deny all future requests because one proposal did not fit the purpose.
- C. Approve the request only if senior leaders personally attend the event.
- D. Clarify the group's purpose, apply the same funding criteria used for comparable groups, and document the decision.

66. Which measure most directly reflects progress during the employee lifecycle?

- A. The number of pages in the new-hire handbook.
- B. Time from hire to effective performance, supported by clear role expectations and an agreed performance indicator.
- C. The number of welcome emails sent during the first week.
- D. The number of employees who attended a social event.

67. A manager's weekly check-ins have become status reports with no employee input. What should HR coach the manager to do?

- A. Use the time for two-way discussion of priorities, barriers, feedback, development, and support needed.
- B. Cancel check-ins and rely on the annual review for meaningful dialogue.

- C. Increase the number of status questions until every task is reported.
- D. Use the meetings only to distribute policy reminders.

68. Which practice best reduces bias in promotion decisions?

- A. Promote the employee most visible to the decision maker.
- B. Rely on informal recommendations without recording the reasons.
- C. Use perceived cultural fit as the primary promotion standard.
- D. Use published criteria, evidence of results and competencies, and consistent review.

69. Which element is essential to a useful performance improvement plan?

- A. Specific gaps, measurable standards, support, review dates, and a clear explanation of possible consequences.
- B. A general statement that the employee must show more commitment.
- C. A promise that successful completion guarantees a promotion.
- D. A list of past frustrations without examples or expected results.

70. A reduction in force is required. Which selection practice best supports fairness?

- A. Select employees based on manager preference and explain the choices later.
- B. Use documented business-related criteria, apply them consistently, and review outcomes for unexplained adverse patterns.
- C. Use tenure alone even when the business needs different capabilities.
- D. Avoid reviewing demographic patterns to keep the process confidential.

71. What is the best practice for an involuntary termination meeting?

- A. Surprise the employee with a long list of unrelated historical complaints.
- B. Invite coworkers to attend so the employee understands the seriousness.

- C. State the decision clearly, explain immediate logistics, remain respectful, and avoid debating facts that were already reviewed.
- D. Delay all information about pay, benefits, and access until the employee asks.

72. How should HR use exit-interview data?

- A. Treat every departing employee's explanation as a complete diagnosis.
- B. Publish names with comments so managers know who created the concern.
- C. Use only the most recent interview because older data are irrelevant.
- D. Code recurring themes, segment results carefully, protect confidentiality, and connect findings to measurable retention actions.

73. Which question is most appropriate for a stay interview?

- A. Why did you decide to leave the organization last month?
- B. Which coworker should be disciplined for the team's problems?
- C. What parts of your work help you stay, and what change would most improve your experience here?
- D. Can you promise that you will never accept another job offer?

74. What is a strategic benefit of a well-managed employee-alumni program?

- A. It guarantees that former employees will return when invited.
- B. It can preserve goodwill and create future referral, rehire, and professional-network relationships.
- C. It removes the need for respectful offboarding because relationships continue automatically.
- D. It allows the employer to share former employees' information without consent.

75. A recognition audit shows that remote employees receive fewer awards than office-based employees. What should HR do?

- A. Examine access, criteria, manager practices, and contribution visibility, then improve equitable ways to recognize results.

- B. Give every remote employee an automatic award regardless of contribution.
- C. Stop all recognition so location cannot affect award counts.
- D. Assume remote employees are less engaged because their awards are lower.

76. Which practice best protects confidentiality in an engagement survey?

- A. Share raw comments with every manager so action can begin quickly.
- B. Promise absolute anonymity even when responses can be linked to employees.
- C. Report a separate score for every team regardless of group size.
- D. Use appropriate aggregation, limit access to identifiable data, explain the process, and avoid reporting tiny groups.

77. Employees say surveys produce no visible change. Which listening strategy is strongest?

- A. Increase survey frequency without committing to action.
- B. Combine surveys with targeted listening, publish what will change, assign owners, and report progress back to employees.
- C. Stop asking for feedback because employees are dissatisfied with the process.
- D. Let senior leaders review data privately without communicating decisions.

78. A team has strong individual performance ratings but a deteriorating climate. What should HR recommend?

- A. Combine climate evidence with manager coaching, behavior expectations, accountability, and follow-up measures.
- B. Ignore the climate because performance ratings are high.
- C. Lower every employee's rating immediately to signal concern.
- D. Replace the team without investigating the behaviors and conditions involved.

79. Business priorities change midway through a performance cycle. What should a manager do with existing goals?

- A. Keep the original goals unchanged so employees can be judged consistently.
- B. Wait until year end and explain that priorities changed after the rating.
- C. Discuss the change, reset priorities and measures collaboratively, and document the revised expectations and timing.
- D. Remove all goals and evaluate effort through general impressions.

80. Which offboarding control best protects the organization and the departing employee?

- A. Disable every account immediately without checking business continuity or records needs.
- B. Coordinate access removal, property return, knowledge transfer, final-pay and benefit information, and respectful communication.
- C. Leave access active until the next quarterly security review.
- D. Ask the departing employee to explain all logistics to coworkers without HR support.

81. An analyst finds that lower engagement scores occur in departments with higher absenteeism. What is the most accurate conclusion?

- A. Low engagement definitely caused every absence in the affected departments.
- B. Absenteeism cannot be analyzed with engagement because the measures are different.
- C. The pattern proves that changing survey questions will reduce absence.
- D. The pattern is an association that warrants further analysis of timing, causes, and other variables before drawing conclusions.

82. An employee reports repeated sexual comments by a customer-facing supervisor. What should HR do first?

- A. Tell the employee to confront the supervisor alone before HR takes action.
- B. Dismiss the concern because the comments were not made in writing.
- C. Acknowledge the report, assess safety and retaliation concerns, preserve information, and begin a prompt impartial response.
- D. Transfer the reporting employee immediately without examining the allegation.

83. A manager removes an employee from desirable assignments shortly after the employee reports suspected discrimination. What is HR's primary concern?

- A. Whether the change is retaliatory, and whether the manager can show a legitimate, consistently applied business reason.
- B. Whether desirable assignments should be reserved for managers only.
- C. Whether the employee should withdraw the original report before assignments return.
- D. Whether retaliation matters only if the employee's pay is reduced.

84. An applicant requests a screen reader for an online selection exercise. What should HR do?

- A. Reject the applicant because the standard exercise cannot be changed.
- B. Require the applicant to disclose a complete medical history first.
- C. Discuss the essential task and provide an effective reasonable accommodation unless it would create undue hardship.
- D. Offer an easier exercise that does not measure the same job-related ability.

85. The federal Age Discrimination in Employment Act generally protects which group from age discrimination?

- A. Only employees who are at least 55 years old.
- B. Individuals who are age 40 or older.
- C. All workers under age 40 whenever a younger applicant is selected.
- D. Only employees who have worked for the employer for ten years.

86. An employee asks for a schedule change to observe a sincerely held religious practice. What should HR do?

- A. Explore a reasonable accommodation and evaluate whether the proposed arrangement creates an undue hardship under applicable standards.
- B. Deny the request because schedules can never be changed for religious practice.
- C. Ask coworkers to vote on whether the practice deserves accommodation.

D. Approve any requested arrangement without considering operations or alternatives.

87. A pregnant employee requests temporary relief from heavy lifting because of a pregnancy-related limitation. What is the best HR response?

- A. Require the employee to take leave before considering any work adjustment.
- B. Deny the request unless every employee in the job receives the same change.
- C. Ask the employee to resign if the original lifting task cannot be performed.
- D. Use the accommodation process, evaluate reasonable temporary options, and avoid forcing leave when another effective option is available.

88. A supervisor asks whether the company may request a candidate's family medical history. Which practice best reduces GINA risk?

- A. Ask every applicant for a detailed family health history before interviews.
- B. Avoid requesting protected family medical information and train decision makers not to use or disclose it in employment decisions.
- C. Store genetic information in the regular personnel file for easy manager access.
- D. Use family medical history to identify employees most likely to need leave.

89. An employer knows about a serious workplace hazard and has a feasible way to reduce it but has taken no action. Which concern is most direct?

- A. Potential failure to address a recognized serious hazard under OSHA's general workplace-safety obligations.
- B. A payroll classification error that affects overtime calculations.
- C. A selection-validity problem caused by inconsistent interview questions.
- D. A benefits enrollment issue caused by a missed life-event deadline.

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

- A. Keep chemical information only in a confidential HR file.
- B. Rely on employees to research hazards after an exposure occurs.
- C. Remove labels from containers so the work area appears less alarming.
- D. Maintain accessible safety data sheets, label hazardous chemicals, and train employees about hazards and protective measures.

91. An employee reports a workplace injury. What should HR do first?

- A. Ask the employee to continue working until the investigation is complete.
- B. Promise that the incident will never be recorded if no one intended harm.
- C. Support immediate medical and safety needs, follow reporting procedures, and document facts without assigning blame.
- D. Question coworkers publicly until someone accepts responsibility.

92. An employee mentions a serious health condition and asks about time away from work. What should HR do?

- A. Tell the employee to return only after a manager approves the medical details.
- B. Wait for a formal legal complaint before discussing protected leave.
- C. Deny the request because the employee has not used all paid time first.
- D. Provide the applicable leave notices and process information, then assess eligibility, certification, and consistent administration.

93. Which practice best supports an employee returning after qualifying military service?

- A. Require the returning employee to compete for any available job from the beginning.
- B. Apply a consistent reemployment process, avoid service-based discrimination, and document the employee's position and benefits treatment.
- C. Hold the employee to a lower standard because military service interrupted work.
- D. Delay all benefits review until the employee completes a new probation period.

94. Two nonunion employees jointly ask management to address an unsafe staffing level. Which principle is most relevant?

- A. Only a union representative can raise a workplace safety concern.
- B. The concern is unprotected because it was raised during a work meeting.
- C. The employees may be engaging in protected concerted activity concerning their terms and conditions of employment.
- D. The employer may discipline the employees whenever a complaint is critical.

95. A union-represented employee requests a steward during an investigatory interview that may lead to discipline. What should the employer do?

- A. Grant and delay questioning, end the interview, or let the employee choose whether to proceed.
- B. Continue questioning while requiring the steward to remain silent throughout the interview.
- C. Discipline the employee for making the request before answering any substantive question.
- D. Require the employee to prove misconduct before allowing representation during questioning.

96. During a union campaign, which management action creates the clearest unfair-labor-practice risk?

- A. Providing accurate information about existing policies without threats or promises.
- B. Continuing normal operations while applying workplace rules consistently.
- C. Threatening job loss, interrogating employees about support, promising benefits for rejecting the union, or surveilling activity.
- D. Telling employees they may make their own decision about representation.

97. A grievance is filed under a collective-bargaining agreement. What should HR do first?

- A. Reject the grievance because the employee used an emotional description.
- B. Review the agreement's definitions, steps, timelines, and documentation requirements before coordinating the fact-based response.
- C. Skip contractual steps and move directly to a public management meeting.
- D. Promise the requested remedy before reviewing the facts or agreement.

98. What is the appropriate role of a mediator in a workplace dispute?

- A. Decide which party is legally correct and impose a binding penalty.
- B. Represent one party and argue for that party's preferred settlement.
- C. Investigate secretly and announce a final disciplinary decision.
- D. Facilitate communication, clarify interests, and help parties develop a voluntary resolution without imposing the outcome.

99. Which investigation practice most improves the reliability of witness information?

- A. Interview witnesses separately with open questions, distinguish firsthand facts from assumptions, and preserve contemporaneous notes.
- B. Bring all witnesses together so their memories become consistent.
- C. Tell the witness the expected conclusion before asking for details.
- D. Rely on anonymous rumors when they support the initial complaint.

100. Before issuing progressive discipline, which review most supports consistency?

- A. Compare only the manager's preferred consequence with the employee's job title.
- B. Compare the facts, policy, prior notice, investigation, employee response, and treatment of similar cases.
- C. Use the most severe available penalty to discourage future complaints.
- D. Avoid reviewing prior cases because each manager should have complete discretion.

101. An employee says a handbook rule conflicts with applicable law. What should HR do?

- A. Continue enforcing the rule until the next handbook printing.
- B. Delete the rule without reviewing decisions already made under it.
- C. Tell managers to interpret the rule differently until a complaint occurs.

D. Pause reliance on the conflicting rule, protect pending decisions, and coordinate prompt review and controlled correction.

102. An employee reports bullying but asks HR not to tell anyone. What is the best response?

- A. Promise absolute confidentiality and take no action unless the employee changes their mind.
- B. Tell the employee that informal concerns are never reviewed by HR.
- C. Explain confidentiality limits, assess immediate risk, document the concern, and determine an appropriate response without promising secrecy.
- D. Immediately identify the accused person publicly to demonstrate transparency.

103. A manager receives a credible threat of violence for the following day. What should HR prioritize?

- A. Activate the emergency response, protect people, preserve evidence, and coordinate with security or authorities.
- B. Wait for the manager to investigate privately before notifying security or other responders.
- C. Delete the threatening message to prevent employees from becoming alarmed or distracted.
- D. Transfer the manager without first assessing the threat, credibility, or immediate risk.

104. A supervisor reports that an employee may be impaired at work. What should HR recommend?

- A. Address immediate safety, document objective observations, apply the policy consistently, and evaluate accommodation or legal issues as needed.
- B. Announce the suspected impairment to coworkers so they can monitor the employee.
- C. Ignore the issue unless the employee admits using a substance.
- D. Terminate the employee immediately without checking facts or process requirements.

105. What is the main purpose of an HR data dictionary?

- A. Store employee passwords in a single location for easier access.
- B. Replace the need for source-system controls and approvals.

- C. Define fields, business meanings, ownership, allowed values, and calculation rules so reports use consistent data.
- D. Allow each analyst to define a metric differently for a preferred result.

106. Which workflow most directly improves control over an HRIS salary change?

- A. Allow anyone with system access to change pay and notify payroll later.
- B. Accept verbal requests when the manager is considered trustworthy.
- C. Let employees edit their own pay record to reduce HR workload.
- D. Require authorized initiation, supporting documentation, approval, validation, and a recorded effective date before release.

107. Which access principle should guide an HRIS user's permissions?

- A. Give every HR employee administrator rights so work moves faster.
- B. Give the user only the data access and actions necessary for the assigned role and approved business purpose.
- C. Keep access permanently after a transfer because permissions are difficult to change.
- D. Grant access based on curiosity about information rather than job need.

108. An HRIS contains duplicate records for the same employee. What is the best data-quality response?

- A. Use a unique identifier, reconcile duplicates through a controlled process, and preserve the audit trail.
- B. Delete the older record without checking related payroll, benefits, or history.
- C. Keep both records so no historical information is lost or changed.
- D. Ask the employee to choose which record the organization should use.

109. A workforce dashboard shows a sharp drop in turnover after a reporting-system change. What should HR verify first?

- A. Assume the dashboard proves retention improved because the line moved downward.

- B. Remove all pre-change data so the new trend is easier to read.
- C. Compare the result only with a different metric that increased.
- D. Whether the population, denominator, definitions, timing, and source feeds changed when the system was implemented.

110. Which governance tool tells HR when records may be securely disposed of?

- A. Keep every HR record permanently so information is always available.
- B. Allow employees to delete records whenever they believe they are outdated.
- C. Set retention periods, secure disposal rules, and exceptions for legal holds.
- D. Replace privacy and security controls with a single destruction date.

111. Which feature most improves the accountability of an HRIS transaction?

- A. A dashboard that displays only the current value without change history.
- B. An audit trail showing who changed the record, what changed, when it changed, and the relevant approval or source.
- C. A shared password used by the entire HR operations team.
- D. A policy that asks users to remember changes without recording them.

112. HR suspects an unauthorized person accessed employee records. What should HR do first?

- A. Activate incident response, contain access, preserve evidence, and notify designated security and privacy contacts.
- B. Delete the records immediately so no further access is possible.
- C. Wait for the annual audit before deciding whether exposure occurred.
- D. Send the records to managers so they can identify unauthorized changes.

113. Which practice best supports recurring review of HRIS access?

- A. Grant access indefinitely because role changes are uncommon.

- B. Review permissions against current roles, certify need, and remove obsolete access.
- C. Review permissions only after an employee reports a privacy concern.
- D. Let users decide whether their own permissions remain appropriate.

114. A manager requests a report containing full birth dates, medical details, and salary for an entire department. What should HR do?

- A. Send the complete report because the manager supervises the department.
- B. Provide the data through a personal email account to prevent system delays.
- C. Refuse all reporting requests so HR cannot be responsible for disclosure.
- D. Clarify the business purpose, minimize fields, restrict access, and provide only authorized information needed for the decision.

115. Payroll and the HRIS use different employee identifiers, causing headcount reports to disagree. What should HR do first?

- A. Average the two totals because both systems are official sources.
- B. Choose the system with the higher headcount so no employee is missed.
- C. Create a controlled crosswalk to authoritative identifiers, reconcile records, and document definitions before publishing the metric.
- D. Delete unmatched records until the reports produce the same total.

Practice Exam 16: Answer Key and Explanations

1. D - A useful business case connects the proposed policy to outcomes leaders can evaluate, such as productivity, retention, service coverage, cost, security, and compliance. It states assumptions and identifies how results will be measured. Technology lists, informal preference polls, and universal promises do not establish whether the policy fits this organization.

2. C - Shared services typically deliver repeatable administrative processes through common service standards and channels. A center of excellence concentrates deep expertise in an area such as compensation, analytics, or talent management and supports the broader function with methods and consultation. Neither arrangement replaces managers or eliminates the need for business-partner judgment.

3. B - A trend is useful only when its definitions and boundaries are understood. HR should verify whether absence categories, workdays, reporting periods, and source systems stayed consistent, then segment the result by location, role, shift, or manager. Immediate staffing, metric removal, or selective comparison could produce an inaccurate diagnosis. This prevents premature action.

4. D - High-impact operational risks need accountable ownership and practical controls. Preventive steps reduce the chance of failure, while recovery steps limit damage if it occurs. Testing the response exposes gaps before a live payroll event. Recording a risk, waiting for harm, or assuming a vendor owns every control does not demonstrate effective risk management.

5. B - A high-power, low-interest stakeholder can still accelerate or obstruct a decision. The goal is to maintain confidence without overwhelming the person with unnecessary detail. Focused updates, clear decision points, and early escalation preserve support. Daily minutiae, avoidance, or transferring the entire project misses the purpose of stakeholder planning. The approach should match the stakeholder's influence.

6. A - Workforce planning begins with the business direction and converts it into capability requirements. Comparing projected demand with current supply reveals gaps and surpluses, allowing HR to choose a mix of hiring, development, mobility, automation, or redeployment. Posting jobs without analysis and relying on goodwill can create cost, workload, and execution problems.

7. C - The offer creates an apparent conflict because it could influence, or appear to influence, a procurement decision. The manager should follow the gifts and conflicts policy, disclose the offer, and recuse when appropriate. Equal distribution does not remove the concern, and private acceptance undermines confidence in an impartial selection process.

8. D - Culture is reflected in repeated behavior and consequences, not only in formal statements. HR should triangulate employee experiences with leader conduct, recognition, promotion, workload, and decision patterns. Website language, executive descriptions, and violation counts each provide limited information and can miss the informal signals that shape daily behavior. This reveals signals that formal values miss.

9. B - Concentration of knowledge creates continuity risk even when the incumbent is performing well. Cross-training and documented procedures reduce dependency, while access coverage and a timeline make the plan operational. Waiting for resignation, offering reassurance, or shifting work without preparation does not create a reliable successor or recovery path. That makes the plan operational.

10. A - A credible return estimate distinguishes benefits from costs and makes assumptions visible. Implementation labor, integration, training, support, adoption, and risk can materially affect the result. Vendor projections may inform analysis, but HR should test them against local data. A purchase price alone is not the full investment or proof of value.

11. D - Resistance often signals uncertainty, workload concerns, or a mismatch between the design and actual work. Champions can translate the change locally, practice builds confidence, and feedback reveals fixable barriers. Repetition without response, forced use without support, and incompatible

departmental processes increase frustration and weaken adoption and data consistency. Support should address the specific adoption barrier.

12. C - An exception may be reasonable, but it should be evaluated against the policy's purpose and the organization's broader obligations. HR should consider precedent, consistency, equity, compliance, and how the decision will be governed and documented. Seniority, secrecy, and pressure are not reliable standards for administering a fair policy. The decision should be documented.

13. B - Benchmarking requires comparable definitions. HR should clarify whether turnover includes voluntary, involuntary, or total separations, then align population, period, exclusions, and denominator. Averaging incompatible percentages creates false precision. Choosing the lower number or rejecting all external data avoids the analytical work and may lead to poor decisions. This protects the comparison from false precision.

14. A - A responsibility matrix clarifies ownership at the activity level. Identifying who is accountable, responsible, consulted, and informed reduces duplication and prevents approval gaps. A survey, attendance list, or team score may provide other information, but none directly resolves the question of decision rights and task ownership. The record also supports later review.

15. C - Sensitivity analysis tests how decisions respond to changed assumptions. HR can show leaders the staffing, overtime, redeployment, and cost implications of several plausible scenarios. A single optimistic estimate hides uncertainty, a fixed hiring target ignores evidence, and employee opinion cannot replace an analysis of demand and capacity. This makes the forecast useful for planning.

16. A - A control finding requires both correction and prevention. HR should determine which transactions were affected, restore the required approval path, assign owners, and monitor completion. Deletion conceals evidence, managerial discretion does not replace a control, and a reminder without ownership or testing is unlikely to change behavior reliably. Follow-up confirms the control was restored.

17. D - Seasonal uncertainty calls for scenarios and trigger points. HR can connect demand levels to planned actions such as recruiting, flexible scheduling, overtime, training, or contingent support. Hiring to the maximum, repeating last year's plan, or waiting for failure creates avoidable cost and service risk when actual demand differs. Triggers help limit unnecessary fixed cost.

18. C - A competency model should describe behaviors, knowledge, and skills that contribute to successful work. Job analysis and output evidence keep the model connected to the role, while stakeholder input tests whether it is realistic. Manager preference, generic language, and credentials alone may reflect bias or fail to predict performance. The model should be reviewed periodically.

19. B - Internal mobility works when employees and the organization can see the relationship between current capability and future opportunity. A skills inventory, role requirements, and development pathways make that relationship visible. Open invitations without information, manager-only recommendations, and restricting mobility to current incumbents reduce fairness and limit the talent pool. The pathway should be visible to employees.

20. C - Personal family plans are not a valid basis for evaluating job qualifications. HR should stop the inquiry, redirect the interviewer to legitimate requirements, and document or address the training issue as appropriate. Asking everyone the same improper question does not make it job related and can create discrimination and privacy risk.

21. B - A selection tool should be connected to the work and supported by evidence that its scores relate to relevant performance. Popularity, low price, vendor branding, and interview impressions do not establish validity. HR should also monitor adverse patterns and ensure administration is consistent with the intended job requirements. The evidence should fit the intended use.

22. A - When an employment decision may be based on a consumer report, the employer must follow the applicable notice and review process. Providing the report and rights information gives the applicant a meaningful opportunity to identify errors before final action. Immediate rejection, outsourcing the decision, or broad disclosure undermines fair and controlled administration.

23. D - Recruiting language should communicate legitimate job requirements rather than age stereotypes. Describing schedule, pace, skills, and duties gives applicants useful information and supports consistent evaluation. Common usage does not remove risk, and substituting another age signal or limiting the practice to certain roles does not solve the underlying problem. Specific requirements improve applicant clarity.

24. C - Clear range communication helps candidates understand how pay decisions are made. HR should explain the factors that distinguish work or placement while avoiding promises beyond the approved framework. Negotiation without standards, withholding information, or allowing unstructured discretion can create inconsistent decisions and weaken trust in pay administration. Consistent explanations make decisions easier to defend.

25. D - Hybrid work is a job-design and operating question, not only a preference. HR should clarify outputs, coordination, customer coverage, equipment, location, and security requirements before sourcing. A manager preference or applicant estimate cannot substitute for role analysis, and a universal arrangement may conflict with legitimate operational needs. This keeps sourcing aligned with actual work.

26. A - Consistent questions and anchored criteria make ratings more comparable across candidates. Recording evidence before discussion reduces conformity and recency effects, while structured debriefs allow panelists to test interpretations. Improvised questioning, first impressions, and seniority-based selection increase subjectivity and make the process harder to explain or defend. Evidence should be recorded before discussion.

27. B - A discrepancy is a fact to verify, not an automatic conclusion about character. A consistent process should define what information is checked, allow the candidate to respond, and apply the same standard to comparable applicants. Immediate rejection or unequal documentation requests can create unfairness and weaken the decision record. The standard should be applied consistently.

28. B - Form I-9 Section 2 is the employer's employment-authorization and identity review. Current USCIS guidance generally requires the employer to complete it within three business days of the employee's first day of employment. It is not a benefits step, and completing it before acceptance or waiting a month does not follow the ordinary deadline.

29. C - Effective onboarding is a planned integration process rather than a single orientation event. New employees need tools, role expectations, relationships, manageable early work, feedback, and milestones that develop over time. A packet alone, delayed feedback, or overwhelming assignments can increase confusion and delay productivity and connection. Support should continue after initial orientation.

30. A - A sound contingent-workforce review starts with the actual relationship and work arrangement. Deliverables, control, payment, access, confidentiality, and classification obligations should be understood before work begins. A label or contract title cannot replace an analysis of the relationship, and omitting security or supervision details creates operational and compliance risk. Early clarity prevents later classification disputes.

31. D - Candidate experience is shaped by what applicants encounter throughout the process, not only by the existence of job advertisements. Stage-level timing, feedback, withdrawals, and acceptance patterns show where friction occurs and whether it varies by role or source. Recruiter opinion, posting volume, and an undifferentiated applicant count cannot locate the problem.

32. C - Scarce skills require a broader response than repeating a requisition. HR should assess labor supply and consider developing current employees, hiring externally, using contingent expertise, redesigning work, or improving tools. A title change, rushed acceptance, or repeated posting does not address the underlying capability gap or market constraint. That broadens feasible solutions.

33. D - Training is not the best response to every performance problem. If the process, tools, or instructions create the error, correcting the work system addresses the cause more directly. HR can then identify any remaining knowledge or skill gaps. More training, testing, or discipline without diagnosis may add burden while leaving the barrier intact.

34. A - Reaction measures capture how participants experienced the learning event, including relevance, usability, and perceived confidence. They can guide program improvement but do not prove that behavior changed or business results improved. Application, customer outcomes, and financial results require later measures and stronger attribution than an immediate reaction survey. This measure does not show workplace transfer.

35. B - A strong objective states the conditions, observable behavior, and standard for success. Identifying approvals in a case file can be observed and measured, while 95 percent accuracy defines the expected level. Understand, appreciate, learn, and become familiar describe intentions but do not provide a reliable basis for evaluation. The standard also supports fair evaluation.

36. A - Judgment develops through relevant experience and feedback, not exposure to generic information alone. Stretch assignments and realistic practice reveal how a person analyzes options, manages risk, and learns from outcomes. Tenure and personality data may inform a broader review, but

neither independently demonstrates readiness for a demanding role. Readiness should be reassessed after each assignment.

37. D - Blended learning uses different methods for different purposes. Self-paced preparation can introduce concepts, live practice can address scenarios and questions, and job aids or follow-up reinforce application. A longer lecture does not create practice, a session without support fades quickly, and optional learning is inappropriate for a required procedure. That supports transfer after the session.

38. C - Coaching is a two-way process that connects evidence to learning and action. Exploring the employee's perspective may reveal unclear priorities, skill gaps, resources, or competing demands. A focused next step creates accountability without humiliation. Lectures, unexplained goal changes, and public comparisons are less likely to produce insight or trust. The action should be specific and time bound.

39. B - Knowledge transfer requires more than collecting documents. HR should identify critical work, capture procedures and decisions, provide observation and practice, and verify performance before the expert leaves. A message archive or single presentation may omit tacit knowledge, while unplanned trial and error exposes the organization to avoidable disruption. Verification protects continuity after departure.

40. A - Completion confirms that a learning activity was recorded, not that employees can apply it. HR should use demonstrations, observation, assessments, quality measures, or other outcome evidence to test transfer. Repeating the course, deleting the performance metric, or declaring success from attendance alone fails to diagnose whether learning changed work. Completion alone cannot show behavior change.

41. B - Accessible design removes barriers before they prevent participation. Captions, readable documents, keyboard access, alternative formats, and support contacts help learners engage with the same objectives through usable methods. A single format may exclude people, and waiting until completion or treating access as optional undermines a mandatory program. Accessibility should be planned from the start.

42. C - A needs assessment tests whether a gap is organizational, task based, or individual and whether training can address it. Comparing goals, work standards, evidence, resources, and affected groups creates a clearer diagnosis. Purchasing first, relying on a catalog, or blaming motivation can produce an expensive intervention aimed at the wrong cause.

43. D - A baseline shows where performance started, and a comparison helps separate program effects from unrelated changes. The design may not prove causation perfectly, but it is stronger than completion counts, leader opinions, or a single postprogram measure. HR should also consider timing, implementation quality, and plausible alternative explanations. That strengthens attribution without overstating certainty.

44. C - Compliance learning needs controlled content and reliable completion records. The team should update the course, establish the effective version, retire obsolete material, identify the affected

population, and preserve evidence of completion. Multiple ungoverned versions and missing records make it difficult to know whether employees received the applicable requirement. Controlled versions support accurate records.

45. D - Internal job evaluation focuses on the work rather than the person currently performing it. Responsibilities, knowledge, problem solving, impact, and conditions help establish consistent relationships among jobs. Titles, negotiation skill, office visibility, and equipment may influence perception but are not reliable measures of relative job value. The method should be applied consistently.

46. A - Range penetration places an employee's pay within the approved range, helping HR discuss progression and internal consistency. It is not a bonus-eligibility measure or a benefits ratio, and it should not be confused with a market comparison. HR must interpret it with role requirements, performance, experience, and pay policy. The measure supports progression discussions.

47. B - A merit process should reflect the organization's pay philosophy and use evidence consistently. Performance, market position, internal equity, and budget constraints may all matter, with documented guidance for managers. Requests, equal division, or new-hire status alone can create inequity and fail to recognize meaningful differences in contribution or position. Managers need the same decision guidance.

48. C - Incentive measures shape behavior, so a speed-only design can encourage harmful shortcuts. Adding controllable quality, safety, or customer measures balances the objective and reduces gaming. Raising the speed target or ignoring the problem intensifies the risk, while removing every measure eliminates the connection between reward and intended results. Balance reduces pressure to game the measure.

49. A - Benefits decisions require understandable comparisons and timely action. HR should summarize changes, costs, eligibility, deadlines, and available tools while preserving access to complete plan information and support. Popularity, last year's election, or an unstructured legal document does not help employees evaluate tradeoffs or complete required elections. Clear tools reduce missed decisions.

50. D - A loss of group health coverage after a qualifying change may trigger continuation rights, even when the person remains employed. HR should analyze the event under the plan and applicable law, coordinate required notices, and communicate election information accurately. Assumptions, delayed action, and promises outside the plan can harm employees and the employer.

51. B - FMLA administration generally preserves group health coverage under the same conditions that would apply if the employee continued working. The employee remains responsible for the usual share of premiums under established procedures. Immediate termination, shifting the employer share entirely, or providing enhanced benefits misstates the ordinary continuation principle. HR should coordinate premium collection clearly.

52. A - The plan document establishes the terms that govern administration, while procedures and communications help implement and explain those terms. Informal memory, another employer's

document, or an unsupported promise cannot substitute for the governing plan. HR should escalate ambiguities and maintain controlled records of changes and decisions. The document should govern over informal promises.

53. D - A payroll error has both an employee-impact and a process-control dimension. HR should determine the affected period, correct the pay under applicable requirements, document the adjustment, and identify why the approved change failed. Waiting, shifting the loss to the employee, or changing only the current rate leaves the problem incomplete.

54. C - Transparency is more than posting a number. Employees and applicants need consistent information and an understandable explanation of how placement and progression work. Selective disclosure, unexplained confidentiality, and inconsistent rationales reduce trust and make it harder for HR to identify or correct inequitable pay practices. Employees need a consistent explanation.

55. B - Recognition is a timely signal about a valued contribution and may be monetary or nonmonetary. Base pay is a recurring compensation element governed by job, market, performance, and pay-structure decisions. Recognition does not replace fair wages, and base pay cannot be administered as informal praise without controls. The distinction informs the right reward tool.

56. D - Nonmonetary rewards can strengthen motivation when they provide genuine value and connect to what employees need. Meaningful work, learning resources, and feedback make growth actionable. Posters, vague promises, and unrelated celebrations may feel positive but do not create a credible development path or explain how progress will occur. Its value depends on meaningful opportunity.

57. C - Segmentation can make total rewards more relevant, but it must operate within consistent governance and applicable requirements. HR should consider workforce needs, affordability, plan terms, communication, and fairness rather than relying on manager promises or a single personal characteristic. Identical design is not the only fair approach, and unstructured variation is risky.

58. B - A well-designed incentive plan explains how performance translates into an award. Threshold, target, maximum, measures, eligibility, timing, and exception rules support consistent administration and allow employees to understand what they can influence. Manager discretion, hidden formulas, and post hoc target changes undermine credibility and invite disputes. Clear rules make awards auditable.

59. A - Vendor access should match the stated business purpose and authorized role. HR should identify the minimum fields needed, confirm contractual and security protections, use an approved transfer method, and retain evidence of the decision. Broad disclosure, blanket refusal, or personal email bypasses the controls that protect employee information. Access should match the purpose and role.

60. D - A pay-equity review needs a disciplined comparison of the work and legitimate factors that may explain differences. HR should examine actual scope, experience, performance, market position, history, and comparable decisions before proposing remediation. Complaint timing, titles alone, or an isolated adjustment may miss the cause and create new inconsistencies. The analysis should support repeatable remediation.

61. A - Total rewards should support the organization's strategy and the employee experience while remaining sustainable and compliant. HR should combine business goals, workforce segments, employee feedback, affordability, market information, and requirements. A costly benefit, executive preference, or competitor copy may be relevant evidence but cannot anchor the entire strategy. The strategy needs an accountable review cycle.

62. B - A low response rate may reflect access or process barriers rather than low engagement. HR should examine timing, language, work conditions, manager communication, confidentiality concerns, and whether the respondents represent the shift. Assuming disengagement or excluding the group can hide an important employee experience and weaken the usefulness of the results.

63. C - Response bias occurs when participants differ systematically from nonparticipants. Multiple channels can improve access, while comparing respondent and workforce characteristics helps HR identify coverage gaps. Managers cannot answer for employees' experiences, and selective comments distort findings. Interpretation should acknowledge limits rather than treating a convenient sample as universal. The limitation should appear in the report.

64. C - Listening builds trust when employees can see a responsible response. HR should summarize themes at an appropriate level, choose priorities, assign owners, communicate progress, and measure outcomes. Another survey without action, publicizing identifiable comments, or leaving every manager to improvise can increase skepticism and expose employees to unnecessary risk. Employees should be able to see progress.

65. D - A clear purpose and consistent funding criteria help employee resource groups operate credibly. HR should distinguish eligible activities from unrelated requests, apply the same standard across groups, and explain the decision. Unlimited discretion, blanket denial, or executive attendance is not a substitute for transparent governance and equitable support. Consistent criteria protect credibility.

66. B - Lifecycle measures should connect an employee experience to an outcome. Time to effective performance can show whether onboarding, tools, support, and role clarity are working when paired with a defined standard. Handbook pages, email counts, and social attendance may describe activity but do not directly show productive integration. The outcome should be defined before measurement.

67. A - Regular check-ins support engagement when employees can discuss work, obstacles, growth, and support rather than merely recite status. Two-way conversation helps managers adjust priorities and recognize needs early. Canceling the meetings, adding more reporting, or using them only for reminders removes the relationship and development value. Two-way dialogue makes support actionable.

68. D - Promotion decisions are more defensible when employees know the criteria and decision makers evaluate comparable evidence. Documented results and competencies support consistent comparison, while review can reveal unexplained patterns. Visibility, informal sponsorship, and vague cultural fit may reflect opportunity differences or bias rather than readiness. The criteria should be visible before decisions.

69. A - A performance improvement plan should tell the employee what must change and how progress will be assessed. Specific gaps, standards, support, dates, and possible consequences create a fair opportunity to improve and a reliable record. General frustration, guaranteed promotion promises, or unsupported history does not provide usable direction. Clear checkpoints make progress review fair.

70. B - A defensible reduction in force connects selections to documented business needs and applies the criteria consistently. Reviewing results for adverse patterns can identify unexplained effects before decisions are final. Manager preference, tenure alone, and avoiding review increase legal and employee-relations risk and weaken the decision record. The decision should include an explainable business rationale.

71. C - A termination meeting should communicate a completed decision with clarity and dignity. The manager or HR representative should explain logistics such as final pay, benefits, property, and access through the approved process. Humiliation, unrelated accusations, and withholding practical information increase confusion and can make a difficult interaction unnecessarily harmful. Practical information should be ready before the meeting.

72. D - Exit interviews provide perspectives, not automatic proof of a single cause. Coding themes and segmenting by role, manager, tenure, or location can reveal patterns while confidentiality protects candor. HR should connect credible findings to actions and measures instead of overgeneralizing one comment, exposing identities, or ignoring useful history. Patterns matter more than isolated comments.

73. C - A stay interview is a preventive conversation with a current employee. Asking what supports retention and what barriers should change can reveal actionable concerns while there is still time to respond. Exit questions, blame-seeking, and loyalty promises do not create the same forward-looking dialogue or psychological safety. The manager should record and revisit any commitment.

74. B - Former employees may become referral sources, future hires, clients, or professional connections when the relationship remains respectful. An alumni program supports that possibility but cannot guarantee rehire or replace good offboarding. Consent, appropriate communication, and clear data practices are necessary to preserve trust after employment ends. Consent helps preserve the relationship.

75. A - Unequal recognition may reflect unequal visibility or access rather than unequal contribution. HR should examine criteria, nomination channels, manager behavior, work location, and the kinds of results being noticed. Automatic awards, eliminating recognition, or assuming lower engagement avoids the underlying design question and may create a different fairness problem. The goal is equitable opportunity, not identical awards.

76. D - Employees are more likely to respond candidly when they understand how information is protected. Aggregation, limited access, careful small-group reporting, and honest communication reduce reidentification risk. Raw comments and tiny-team scores can reveal individuals, while an absolute anonymity promise is misleading if technical linkage remains possible. Small-group reporting requires particular care.

77. B - Engagement improves when listening is connected to action and communication. Surveys can identify broad patterns, while targeted conversations add context. HR should select priorities, assign owners, explain what will change or not change, and close the loop. More surveys, silence, or private review reinforces the belief that speaking up is pointless.

78. A - Individual output can coexist with harmful team behavior, so ratings alone do not describe the whole employee experience. HR should examine climate evidence, clarify behavior expectations, coach the manager, apply accountability, and follow up. Ignoring the issue, lowering ratings indiscriminately, or replacing people without diagnosis is not a sound intervention.

79. C - Performance expectations should remain connected to the work employees are asked to perform. When priorities change, a timely conversation can reset scope, measures, resources, and timing while preserving accountability. Keeping obsolete goals, waiting until year end, or replacing goals with impressions creates avoidable unfairness and weakens performance evidence. The record should explain the reset.

80. B - Offboarding combines security, continuity, employee experience, and legal administration. Access should be removed through a coordinated process, while records, property, knowledge, final pay, and benefits are handled accurately. Immediate uncoordinated action can disrupt work, delayed removal creates security risk, and unsupported communication increases confusion for everyone involved. Clear owners make the transition reliable.

81. D - Two measures moving together can identify a useful hypothesis but cannot establish which factor caused the other. HR should examine timing, job demands, manager practices, health or scheduling conditions, and other confounders. Treating an association as proof may send resources toward survey changes while leaving the actual absence drivers unaddressed.

82. C - A report of possible harassment requires a prompt, impartial, and appropriately documented response. HR should listen, assess immediate safety and retaliation risk, preserve relevant information, and determine the next investigative steps. Confrontation, dismissal based on format, or moving the reporter without analysis can worsen harm and compromise trust. The response should not prejudge the outcome.

83. A - A materially negative change soon after protected activity can create retaliation risk even when base pay does not change. HR should preserve the timing and decision evidence, assess the manager's stated reason, compare treatment of others, and protect the reporting process. Conditioning assignments on withdrawal would create additional risk. Timing warrants review but does not decide the result.

84. C - The goal of an accommodation is to allow an otherwise qualified applicant to demonstrate job-related ability. HR should understand the essential task, engage in an individualized process, and consider an effective option that preserves the assessment's purpose. Automatic rejection, excessive medical requests, or an easier unrelated test does not solve the access issue.

85. B - The federal ADEA protects individuals who are 40 or older from age-based employment discrimination. The rule is not limited to age 55, tenure, or a particular number of years with one

employer. State laws may provide additional protections, so HR should apply the relevant law and organizational process to the situation.

86. A - Religious accommodation requires an individualized review rather than an automatic yes or no. HR should understand the practice, explore reasonable options, assess operational effects under the applicable standard, and document the decision. Coworker votes are not a legal test, while automatic denial or approval ignores both employee rights and business realities.

87. D - A pregnancy-related limitation should be addressed through an individualized accommodation process. HR should consider temporary changes, reassignment of nonessential tasks, equipment, schedule, or other effective options while maintaining applicable standards. Automatically forcing leave or resignation can remove the employee from work when a reasonable adjustment may be available. Document options without unnecessary medical detail.

88. B - GINA risk is reduced when HR limits collection and access to protected genetic information and prevents its use in employment decisions. Broad requests, regular-file storage, and predictive use of family history create unnecessary exposure. Training and controlled handling help decision makers recognize and avoid inappropriate inquiries and disclosures. Need-to-know access remains important after collection.

89. A - The described facts point to a safety-control problem: a serious recognized hazard exists, and feasible abatement is available. HR should escalate the issue through safety leadership, document corrective actions, and protect employees while the hazard is addressed. Payroll, selection, and benefits concerns involve different control systems and do not answer the scenario.

90. D - Hazard communication depends on information being available before employees work with hazardous chemicals. Accessible safety data sheets, appropriate labels, and training help employees recognize risks and use protective measures. Confidential storage, after-the-fact research, and removing labels defeat the preventive purpose of the program and increase exposure risk. Prevention requires information before exposure occurs.

91. C - An injury response begins with care, safety, and accurate reporting. HR should follow the organization's emergency and incident procedures, preserve relevant facts, and coordinate required notifications or claims processes. Continuing unsafe work, promising no record, or publicly assigning blame can worsen the harm and compromise later analysis. Accurate facts support later corrective action.

92. D - A request may contain enough information to trigger notice and eligibility steps even when the employee does not name a specific law. HR should explain the process, evaluate applicable requirements, request only permitted documentation, and apply the same procedure consistently. Waiting, manager control of medical details, or automatic denial can delay rights and operations.

93. B - USERRA-related administration requires HR to handle returning service members consistently and avoid adverse treatment because of service. The process should evaluate reemployment rights, position, seniority, pay, benefits, and documentation under the applicable rules. Starting over

automatically or delaying review can undermine the protections and create inconsistent treatment. The process should consider position and benefits treatment.

94. C - The National Labor Relations Act can protect employees who act together about workplace conditions, including safety and staffing concerns, whether or not a union represents them. HR should distinguish protected group activity from unrelated misconduct and avoid retaliation. Nonunion status, meeting location, or criticism alone does not remove the protection.

95. A - Under the current Weingarten framework for union-represented employees, a clear request for representation gives the employer lawful choices: grant and delay, end the interview, or offer a clear choice to proceed without representation. Continuing compelled questioning after denying the request or punishing the request creates labor-relations risk. The representative does not decide the investigation.

96. C - Management must avoid conduct that interferes with employees' organizing rights. Threats, interrogation, promises, and surveillance can pressure employees or signal that participation will be punished or rewarded. Neutral information, consistent operations, and respect for employee choice are safer practices when HR coordinates communications and manager training. Manager training supports consistent communications.

97. B - A collective-bargaining agreement creates a process that HR must follow. Reviewing definitions, deadlines, steps, and evidence first helps preserve rights and prevent a procedural dispute. Emotional wording does not decide the merits, while skipping steps or promising a remedy before analysis undermines both the agreement and a fair response. Deadlines make prompt review important.

98. D - A mediator supports a voluntary process by helping participants communicate, identify interests, test options, and reach their own agreement. The mediator is not the adjudicator, advocate, or disciplinary decision maker. Keeping those roles distinct protects neutrality and allows the parties to consider solutions without confusing mediation with investigation or formal judgment.

99. A - Separate interviews reduce group influence, while open questions allow witnesses to describe what they observed rather than simply confirming an expected conclusion. Notes should distinguish firsthand information, hearsay, documents, and unresolved conflicts. Group questioning, leading statements, and untested rumors can contaminate the evidence and weaken the investigation. Notes should separate evidence from interpretation.

100. B - Progressive discipline should be grounded in facts, policy, notice, investigation, and proportionality. Comparing similar cases helps HR identify unexplained differences while still considering relevant distinctions. Manager preference, maximum penalties, and unrestricted discretion can create inconsistent treatment and make the decision difficult to explain if reviewed later. Proportionality remains important when cases differ.

101. D - A potentially unlawful policy should not continue to guide decisions while HR waits for a routine revision. HR should contain the risk, identify affected decisions, coordinate appropriate legal and policy review, communicate controlled interim guidance, and document the correction. Deletion without impact review or informal manager interpretation can leave inconsistent problems unresolved.

102. C - HR should respect privacy while explaining that it may need to act to address safety, policy, or legal obligations. Assessing risk, documenting the report, and identifying proportionate next steps avoids both inaction and unnecessary disclosure. Absolute secrecy promises are unsafe, while public identification can compromise fairness and create retaliation concerns.

103. A - A credible threat requires immediate safety planning and coordinated escalation. HR should follow the emergency process, involve security and appropriate authorities, preserve the message and other evidence, and communicate only what people need to stay safe. Private delay, deletion, or an unassessed transfer can leave the threat active and destroy useful information.

104. A - HR should separate observable safety or performance facts from assumptions about a medical condition or substance use. Immediate risk may require removing the employee from unsafe work, while a consistent policy and documented process guide next steps. Broad disclosure, inaction, or automatic termination can create safety, privacy, and fairness problems.

105. C - A data dictionary creates shared meaning for HR information. Definitions, owners, values, and calculation rules help analysts produce comparable reports and identify where a field originates. It does not store passwords, replace source controls, or permit flexible definitions designed to support a desired conclusion. Consistency improves decision quality and trust.

106. D - A controlled salary-change workflow separates request, approval, validation, and release while preserving evidence of the decision and effective date. Broad edit access, verbal requests, and employee self-editing bypass important checks. The workflow should be practical enough for timely administration but strong enough to prevent unauthorized or unsupported changes. Each stage should leave a traceable record.

107. B - Least privilege limits access to what a person needs for an authorized role and purpose. It reduces the opportunity for accidental or intentional misuse and narrows the impact of a compromised account. Administrator access for everyone, permanent permissions, and curiosity-based access undermine confidentiality and make accountability difficult. Review should follow role changes.

108. A - Duplicate records can distort headcount, pay, benefits, reporting, and history. HR should use authoritative identifiers and related systems to confirm the match, then correct the data through an approved process that preserves evidence. Deleting blindly, keeping duplicates, or asking the employee to decide can create new inconsistencies and control gaps.

109. D - A sudden change after a system implementation may reflect a data-definition or feed problem rather than a workforce outcome. HR should reconcile populations, denominators, event timing, exclusions, and source records before interpreting the trend. Assuming improvement or deleting historical data destroys the comparison needed to understand what changed. Definitions should be checked before interpreting the trend.

110. C - A retention schedule balances operational, legal, and privacy needs. It identifies categories, retention periods, secure disposal methods, and exceptions such as legal holds or investigations. Permanent retention increases exposure, employee-directed deletion can destroy evidence, and a date

alone does not address access, security, or preservation obligations. The schedule should be versioned with policy changes.

111. B - An audit trail supports reconstruction and accountability by preserving the history of a transaction. User, field, time, approval, and source information can help investigate discrepancies and test controls. A current-value dashboard, shared password, or memory-based process cannot reliably show how a disputed record reached its present state. History supports accountability when values are disputed.

112. A - A suspected access event requires controlled containment and investigation. 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. Destruction, delay, or broader distribution can increase harm and compromise the investigation. Containment should preserve evidence.

113. B - Access reviews test whether permissions still match business need. HR and system owners should compare roles with active access, certify appropriate permissions, investigate exceptions, and remove access after transfers or separations. Indefinite access, complaint-driven review, and self-certification leave the organization dependent on the control it is supposed to test. Certification should follow each role change.

114. D - Data minimization begins with a defined purpose and limits the fields and audience to what is necessary. HR should determine what decision is being made, remove unrelated sensitive fields, use approved access, and document the disclosure. Supervisory status does not create unlimited access, and blanket refusal prevents legitimate work. Sensitive fields should be excluded when unnecessary.

115. C - Different identifiers can prevent systems from referring to the same person consistently. HR should establish which source is authoritative for each field, create a controlled mapping, investigate unmatched records, and document the reconciliation. Averaging, choosing the larger number, or deleting exceptions can hide errors and distort downstream pay or benefits decisions.