

PRACTICE EXAM 8: PHR SIMULATION (115 QUESTIONS)

This standalone practice exam contains 115 questions. Use a 2-hour 15-minute study target for a timed session, but verify the current HRCI handbook for official timing and policies. HRCI reports results on a scaled score with a passing score of 500; this practice set is scored by the number of correct answers. Questions are distributed across the five PHR functional areas using the current HRCI weighting. Answer every item before reviewing the key.

1. A company is entering two new states and expects rapid hiring. What should HR do first to support the growth plan?

- A. Publish job advertisements before identifying the work or required capabilities
- B. Ask each manager to hire independently without a shared workforce assumption
- C. Use last year's staffing levels as the expansion plan without testing demand
- D. Translate the business plan into workforce, capability, compliance, and cost assumptions

2. Which design feature best supports an HR operating model that serves both enterprise consistency and business-unit needs?

- A. A completely decentralized model with no common policies or data definitions
- B. Central standards with defined local decision rights and service expectations
- C. A central team that makes every people decision regardless of business context
- D. A vendor model that removes internal ownership for sensitive employee matters

3. Which metric is most useful for detecting an emerging onboarding problem before it appears in annual turnover?

- A. The previous year's companywide turnover percentage
- B. The total number of employees at the end of the fiscal year
- C. Thirty-day role-clarity scores and early voluntary exits by manager
- D. Last year's aggregate replacement-cost estimate

4. An HR service center spent \$2,400,000 serving 80 employees. What was the cost per employee served?

- A. \$30,000
- B. \$27,000
- C. \$32,000
- D. \$40,000

5. An organization recorded 27 voluntary separations and an average workforce of 360. What was the voluntary turnover rate?

- A. 6%
- B. 9%
- C. 7.5%
- D. 12%

6. What feature makes an HR dashboard more useful to a senior operating leader?

- A. Every available HR field displayed without interpretation or prioritization
- B. A small set of defined measures tied to decisions, trends, and accountable owners
- C. A single favorable metric displayed without its denominator or comparison period
- D. Color-coded results with no definitions, source notes, or decision connection

7. A PESTLE review is being prepared for a new employee-monitoring technology. Which item is a social factor?

- A. A proposed state privacy statute affecting monitoring data
- B. The technology's integration cost with the payroll platform
- C. A competitor's decision to purchase the same software
- D. Employees' expectations about privacy, trust, and acceptable workplace monitoring

8. Before recommending an HR information-system replacement, what evidence is most persuasive in a business case?

- A. A quantified problem, options, implementation risks, expected benefits, and measures of success
- B. A vendor demonstration selected before requirements are documented
- C. The most attractive interface shown without a cost or risk analysis
- D. A promise that the new system will solve every current process issue

9. A project may expose employee medical information if a vendor configuration fails. How should HR prioritize the risk?

- A. Ignore the issue until a confirmed disclosure occurs
- B. Rank it only by the vendor's confidence that the system is secure
- C. Transfer all responsibility to the vendor without reviewing contract controls
- D. Assess likelihood and impact, assign an owner, and implement preventive and response controls

10. An HR team scheduled 96 absence days across 4,800 scheduled workdays. What was the absence rate?

- A. 1.5%
- B. 2.5%
- C. 2.0%
- D. 4.0%

11. When redesigning a slow employee-transfer process, what should HR use to locate avoidable delay?

- A. A list of employees who completed transfers during the last quarter
- B. A process map showing handoffs, inputs, approvals, rework, and cycle time
- C. A new service-level target chosen before the current process is understood
- D. A manager survey that asks only whether the process feels efficient

12. Which practice best reflects data minimization in an employee survey?

- A. Request every demographic field available in the HR system for possible future use
- B. Collect only information necessary for the stated purpose and restrict access to it
- C. Publish raw responses to demonstrate that survey analysis is transparent
- D. Keep identifiable responses permanently because future questions may arise

13. A restructuring will change reporting lines and decision rights. Which readiness activity should HR conduct before launch?

- A. Send the final organization chart without explaining the business reason
- B. Measure readiness only by whether leaders attended a planning meeting
- C. Wait for employee complaints to identify all implementation risks
- D. Assess stakeholder impact, leadership alignment, capability gaps, and likely resistance

14. What is the most useful output of a succession-risk review for a role with one retirement-eligible incumbent?

- A. A documented risk assessment with readiness levels, development actions, and contingency coverage
- B. A confidential replacement name selected without comparing readiness or business needs
- C. A guarantee that the incumbent will remain until a successor is fully ready
- D. A list of high performers unrelated to the role's future capabilities

15. A development program costs \$24,000 and produces measurable benefits of \$96,000. What is the simple ROI?

- A. 200%
- B. 400%
- C. 300%
- D. 25%

16. When an HR audit identifies a missing approval in 4 of 40 sampled transactions, what should HR do next?

- A. Determine the control's scope and cause, assess risk, and assign corrective action
- B. Conclude that all transactions are invalid without examining the population or control
- C. Delete the four records so the sample reflects compliant transactions
- D. Ignore the exceptions because most sampled transactions had approvals

17. Which governance practice best prevents outdated HR policies from remaining in force?

- A. Store policies in one folder without recording who maintains them
- B. Ask employees to report outdated language after they rely on it
- C. Assign policy owners, review dates, approval authority, version control, and change communication
- D. Revise policies whenever a manager requests a change without central review

18. What is the best way for HR to brief executives on a workforce problem that requires a decision?

- A. Begin with every research detail and postpone the requested decision until the end
- B. Lead with the decision, evidence, options, risks, recommendation, and requested next step
- C. Present only the preferred option and omit assumptions that could affect it
- D. Describe the problem generally without quantifying impact or identifying ownership

19. A leader wants to prepare for uncertain demand over the next year. Which planning technique is most appropriate?

- A. Choose the most optimistic forecast and staff to it immediately
- B. Use a single historical average without testing what could change
- C. Wait until demand is known before considering capability or staffing options
- D. Build multiple plausible scenarios with assumptions, workforce implications, and trigger points

20. What should an HR project charter establish before a cross-functional initiative begins?

- A. Purpose, scope, deliverables, roles, milestones, constraints, risks, and decision rights
- B. Only a launch date and a list of participating departments
- C. A detailed task list without a business purpose or success measure
- D. The project manager's preferred solution before stakeholders define requirements

21. An employee reports that a supervisor is accepting gifts from vendors. What is HR's best initial response?

- A. Tell the employee to confront the supervisor privately before HR becomes involved
- B. Close the report if the supervisor says the gifts had no effect on decisions
- C. Protect the report, assess the allegation under the conflict policy, and preserve relevant facts
- D. Publicize the allegation immediately so other employees can investigate it

22. Which control most reduces the risk that an HR predictive model will reproduce historical bias?

- A. Allow the model to use every historical field because more data is always better
- B. Validate relevant variables, test outcomes across groups, document limitations, and retain human review
- C. Treat a high accuracy score as proof that the model is fair
- D. Remove all human oversight after the model is placed in production

23. During a major weather disruption, what should HR include in an employee continuity plan?

- A. A plan focused only on restoring equipment and facilities
- B. Accountability methods, tested communication channels, role priorities, and support for affected employees
- C. An assumption that remote employees need no coordinated instructions
- D. Separate departmental messages that are issued without a shared source of truth

24. What is the primary purpose of a job analysis before a new position is posted?

- A. Select the incumbent before defining the work to be performed
- B. Choose a salary by copying the title of a different position
- C. Write a personality profile without observing tasks or outcomes
- D. Identify essential duties, responsibilities, and knowledge, skills, and abilities

25. Which feature belongs in a competency model designed for several related supervisory roles?

- A. A list of preferred hobbies that managers believe builds team spirit
- B. Only the current incumbents' personal career histories and achievements
- C. A universal personality label that replaces job-specific performance evidence
- D. Observable behaviors and capabilities linked to effective performance across the roles

26. A hard-to-fill engineering role has few active applicants. Which recruiting approach is most appropriate?

- A. Wait for applicants to find the posting without changing the sourcing strategy
- B. Send the same generic message to every professional in the database
- C. Use targeted outreach that explains the work, value proposition, and credible reasons to consider a move
- D. Lower essential requirements without reviewing the job or business need

27. Which interview design most improves consistency when several candidates are being compared for the same role?

- A. Ask the same job-related questions and use anchored scoring criteria for each candidate
- B. Let each interviewer ask whatever questions seem interesting in the moment
- C. Allow the most senior interviewer to choose the candidate before scores are reviewed
- D. Use informal conversation because experienced interviewers need no structure

28. Why is a work-sample exercise often useful in selection?

- A. It provides direct evidence of how candidates perform a representative job task
- B. It proves that a candidate will remain with the organization for many years
- C. It eliminates the need to define requirements or scoring standards
- D. It measures general popularity more accurately than job-related capability

29. Group A had 30 selected from 120 applicants. Group B had 18 selected from 120. What is Group B's selection-rate ratio compared with Group A?

- A. 0.75, showing no need for additional review
- B. 0.80, which automatically proves unlawful discrimination
- C. 1.25, indicating that Group B was selected more often
- D. 0.60, indicating a potential adverse-impact signal

30. What evidence most directly supports the validity of a structured selection test?

- A. The vendor's claim that the assessment is popular with applicants
- B. A documented relationship between test results and important job-performance criteria
- C. A high pass rate that makes the hiring process faster
- D. A manager's belief that successful employees usually enjoy the test

31. What is a likely benefit of providing a realistic job preview to applicants?

- A. It guarantees that every selected employee will meet all future performance goals
- B. It permits HR to omit essential duties that might discourage applicants
- C. It helps candidates make informed choices and can reduce avoidable early turnover
- D. It replaces reference checks, selection standards, and manager onboarding

32. Before a requisition is released, what should the approval workflow confirm?

- A. Only that the manager prefers a particular candidate
- B. That the job title matches a prior posting even if the work has changed
- C. The business need, approved budget, position scope, reporting relationship, and hiring authority
- D. That the recruiter can begin sourcing before the organization confirms funding

33. Which safeguard best supports an employee referral program?

- A. Guarantee interviews to referrals even when minimum requirements are not met
- B. Pay a referral reward only when the referrer is a senior manager
- C. Allow employees to bypass documented requisition and selection controls
- D. Apply the same job-related selection standards to referred and nonreferred applicants

34. An employer uses a third party for a consumer report. What should HR do before taking adverse action based on the report?

- A. Tell the candidate only that another applicant was more qualified
- B. Provide required notices and a response opportunity before final adverse action
- C. Use the report without obtaining authorization because the vendor supplied it
- D. Delete the report immediately so no record of the decision remains

35. What is the soundest recordkeeping practice for a competitive hiring process?

- A. Retain consistent selection records and the job-related basis for decisions under applicable requirements
- B. Keep only the selected candidate's application and discard comparison records
- C. Save informal notes only when they support the final decision
- D. Allow each interviewer to retain records privately using different retention periods

36. Which onboarding activity is most likely to accelerate a new employee's early effectiveness?

- A. Send a welcome message and postpone role clarification until the first review
- B. Provide general company history without connecting it to the employee's work
- C. Confirm role expectations, access, relationships, resources, and scheduled check-ins
- D. Assign independent work immediately and ask the employee to discover processes

37. A business wants to classify a delivery worker as an independent contractor. What should HR recommend?

- A. Accept the label because the worker signed an independent-contractor agreement
- B. Classify every worker who chooses a flexible schedule as a contractor
- C. Use the worker's preferred title without reviewing control, dependence, or work context
- D. Assess the actual economic relationship and applicable tests rather than relying on the contract label

38. Which practice makes an internal-mobility program more credible to employees?

- A. Reserve attractive roles for informal manager recommendations before posting them
- B. Publish openings, requirements, process steps, and selection standards that apply consistently
- C. Allow current employees to apply without knowing the role's requirements or process timing
- D. Move employees into roles based only on tenure and manager preference

39. What should interview-panel members do before discussing a candidate's overall fit?

- A. Reach consensus informally before writing any individual observations
- B. Let the panel chair announce a preferred candidate before others score
- C. Use personality impressions as the primary record of the interview
- D. Record independent, evidence-based ratings against the defined criteria

40. Which recruiting metric best reveals where qualified candidates are being lost?

- A. Stage-by-stage conversion rates segmented by source, role, and candidate group
- B. Total applications received without showing movement through the funnel
- C. Average recruiter workload without considering quality or stage outcomes
- D. The number of open requisitions counted at the end of the quarter

41. What should a succession pool for a critical role prioritize?

- A. Popularity among current leaders regardless of role requirements
- B. A single replacement chosen without considering timing or development needs
- C. Readiness and development against the role's future-critical capabilities
- D. Employees with the longest tenure even when capability evidence is limited

42. A customer-service error rate has increased after a software change. What should a learning needs assessment examine first?

- A. Organizational conditions, task requirements, and individual capability gaps
- B. Enroll every employee in the longest available course before diagnosing the issue
- C. Ask only the department head which training topic seems most interesting
- D. Measure attendance at prior classes and treat attendance as proof of capability

43. Which learning objective is written most effectively?

- A. Participants will understand the importance of good investigations
- B. After practice, participants will complete a documented investigation intake using all required fields
- C. Participants will learn about the investigation process and its value
- D. Participants will appreciate why accurate records matter to HR

44. A follow-up survey asks whether supervisors used a new feedback model during team meetings. Which evaluation level is being examined?

- A. Reaction to the training experience
- B. Learning demonstrated immediately after instruction
- C. Organizational results such as retention or productivity
- D. Behavior or on-the-job application

45. Why might spaced retrieval practice be preferable to one long review session for a procedural skill?

- A. It eliminates the need for practice in the actual work context
- B. It guarantees mastery without feedback or performance measurement
- C. It reinforces recall over time and gives learners repeated opportunities to correct errors
- D. It works only when learners memorize policy language word for word

46. A manager asks HR to exclude an employee who uses a screen reader from a required online course. What should HR do?

- A. Review accessibility and reasonable-accommodation needs and provide an effective way to complete the training
- B. Exclude the employee because uniform delivery is easier to administer
- C. Require the employee to locate and pay for an alternative course independently
- D. Delay the training indefinitely without exploring accessible formats or support

47. A capable employee repeatedly misses a documentation step but has not been coached on the standard. What should the manager do first?

- A. Issue final discipline immediately without confirming the standard or prior feedback
- B. Clarify the expectation, discuss the gap, and provide coaching and an opportunity to improve
- C. Ignore the issue because the employee performs other parts of the job well
- D. Move the employee to another role before identifying whether training or resources are needed

48. Which evaluation design gives the strongest practical indication that training affected a new process outcome?

- A. Ask participants immediately whether they enjoyed the training
- B. Compare pretraining and posttraining results with a relevant comparison group when feasible
- C. Count completed registrations and certificates without measuring job performance
- D. Compare posttraining results only with an unrelated department's average

49. What is the best first step when experienced facilitators are asked to train other facilitators?

- A. Define facilitator competencies, observe current practice, and build a calibrated train-the-trainer plan
- B. Give every facilitator the same slide deck and assume delivery quality will match
- C. Select trainers solely by tenure without examining presentation or coaching capability
- D. Allow each new facilitator to change content and standards independently

50. A subject-matter expert is retiring with knowledge that is difficult to document. Which intervention is most appropriate?

- A. Ask the expert to send a final email containing every important detail
- B. Wait until the successor encounters a problem and then request help
- C. Pair structured knowledge capture with shadowing, demonstrations, and transfer to named successors
- D. Store the expert's job title and years of service as a substitute for process knowledge

51. An employee wants to become a team lead but lacks experience handling conflict. What should an individual development plan include?

- A. A promise of promotion on a fixed date regardless of demonstrated readiness
- B. A general list of courses without a capability target or application opportunity
- C. A personality label used instead of observable leadership behaviors
- D. A targeted development objective, practice assignment, support, timeline, and evidence of progress

52. A call-center agent frequently forgets a rare escalation step. What performance-support tool is most suitable?

- A. A concise job aid available at the moment the escalation decision is made
- B. A year-end lecture that reviews every call-center policy in sequence
- C. A new performance rating category with no process reminder or practice
- D. A general motivational poster that does not describe the escalation criteria

53. What evidence best demonstrates that mandatory ethics training achieved more than attendance?

- A. All employees clicked through the assigned modules before the deadline
- B. The training vendor received favorable satisfaction ratings from participants
- C. Managers confirmed that the course was easy to schedule
- D. Learners pass an application-based assessment and demonstrate the expected behavior in work or follow-up checks

54. What is the best description of a total-rewards strategy?

- A. A salary table used without considering benefits or work experience
- B. A bonus formula designed only to reduce the current payroll budget
- C. An integrated approach to pay, benefits, wellbeing, development, recognition, and the employee experience
- D. A benefits brochure that excludes manager practices and career opportunity

55. Which factor is most important when determining whether a role should be treated as exempt under the FLSA?

- A. The job title selected by the hiring manager
- B. The employee's actual duties and applicable salary-basis and salary-level requirements
- C. The employee's preference for receiving a fixed paycheck
- D. The fact that the employee works independently without direct supervision

56. An employee earns \$59,000 while the midpoint of the salary range is \$62,000. What is the employee's compa-ratio?

- A. 88.0%
- B. 100.0%
- C. 95.16%
- D. 105.5%

57. What does range penetration help HR understand?

- A. Whether the employee's pay is automatically equal to the external market median
- B. Where an employee's pay falls between the minimum and maximum of an established range
- C. Whether an incentive plan has produced the intended business results
- D. Whether a job is legally exempt from overtime based on its position in the range

58. What is the most defensible approach when an internal pay-equity review finds a difference between two employee groups?

- A. Assume every difference is lawful because managers made the decisions
- B. Raise every lower-paid employee to the highest salary immediately without reviewing the data
- C. Remove group identifiers so that the difference cannot be analyzed further
- D. Control for legitimate job-related factors, investigate unexplained differences, and document corrective options

59. Which design feature gives employees the clearest line of sight in an incentive plan?

- A. A visible connection between defined individual or team actions, results, and the payout formula
- B. A discretionary award whose criteria are communicated only after the performance period
- C. A target that employees cannot influence and that is changed without notice
- D. A complex scorecard that combines measures without explaining weights or thresholds

60. Which practice best supports overtime compliance for nonexempt employees?

- A. Pay overtime only when an employee obtained written permission in advance
- B. Treat work completed remotely as unpaid because the manager did not observe it
- C. Use a fixed salary to avoid recording hours for employees classified as nonexempt
- D. Capture all hours worked, prohibit off-the-clock work, and apply required overtime rules consistently

61. What makes an open-enrollment communication most useful to employees?

- A. Plain-language comparisons, decision deadlines, eligibility information, and accessible help
- B. A long plan document sent once without highlighting elections or deadlines
- C. A message that emphasizes cost while omitting coverage limits and employee actions
- D. A promise that every employee will receive the same recommendation regardless of needs

62. Which statement best distinguishes a health savings account from an employer-established health flexible spending arrangement?

- A. An HSA can be used only for dependent-care expenses, while an FSA is limited to retirement savings
- B. An FSA is always individually owned and portable, while an HSA must be forfeited when employment ends
- C. An HSA is generally individually owned and portable, while an FSA is generally established through an employer plan with plan-specific carryover rules
- D. HSAs and FSAs are identical accounts with the same eligibility, ownership, and contribution rules

63. An employer changes its retirement-plan match formula. What communication practice is most important?

- A. Announce only that the match is changing and ask employees to infer the effect
- B. Explain the effective date, formula, eligibility, examples, and where employees can review governing plan information
- C. Rely on informal manager summaries instead of the approved plan communication
- D. Delay communication until after payroll reflects the new formula

64. Which evidence should HR use when assessing whether a benefit design meets workforce needs?

- A. The most popular benefit at a different employer regardless of workforce context
- B. The total premium alone without examining coverage, use, or employee value
- C. Utilization, employee needs, workforce demographics, cost, legal requirements, and strategic objectives
- D. A single employee comment treated as representative of the entire workforce

65. A payroll team processed 1,200 checks and found 48 errors. What was the payroll error rate?

- A. 2%
- B. 3%
- C. 5%
- D. 4%

66. How should HR select benchmark jobs for an external compensation comparison?

- A. Match jobs by content, responsibilities, scope, and requirements rather than title alone
- B. Select jobs with identical titles even when duties and scope differ substantially
- C. Use only the highest-paid role in each department as the benchmark
- D. Choose roles based on incumbent popularity and manager preference

67. Which recognition practice is most likely to reinforce a desired behavior?

- A. Give the same generic praise to everyone regardless of contribution or timing
- B. Give timely, specific recognition that connects the behavior to stated values or results
- C. Use recognition to substitute for competitive pay and adequate working conditions
- D. Recognize only highly visible employees whose work is already known to executives

68. What is a useful control in a variable-pay plan?

- A. A payout promise that cannot be adjusted when material misconduct occurs
- B. A documented performance gate that prevents payouts when defined financial, safety, or compliance conditions are not met
- C. A formula that rewards volume without considering quality, safety, or compliance
- D. A manager's private discretion to change results after employees complete the work

69. A benefits plan has 312 enrolled employees among 480 eligible employees. What is the participation rate?

- A. 52%
- B. 60%
- C. 75%
- D. 65%

70. What should HR do when an employee survey shows that employees value flexibility but managers apply it inconsistently?

- A. Clarify the policy, train managers, examine access patterns, and monitor whether practice becomes more consistent
- B. Remove flexibility for everyone so no manager can apply different judgment
- C. Promise every employee the same arrangement regardless of job requirements
- D. Ignore the finding because flexibility is an informal rather than financial reward

71. Employees meet on their own time to discuss schedules and pay and submit a group request for changes. What should HR recognize?

- A. It is automatically misconduct because employees discussed work outside a manager's meeting
- B. It is protected only if a union has already been certified at the workplace
- C. The activity may be protected concerted activity concerning terms and conditions of employment
- D. It is unprotected whenever employees criticize a workplace practice

72. During a union-organizing campaign, what instruction should HR give frontline supervisors?

- A. Avoid threats, interrogation, promises, and surveillance, and refer questions to the designated response team
- B. Ask employees privately which coworkers support the union so leaders can address concerns
- C. Promise improved benefits if employees reject union representation
- D. Monitor organizing conversations and report the names of participating employees

73. A union-represented employee asks for a representative during an investigatory interview the employee reasonably believes could lead to discipline. What should HR do?

- A. Continue immediately because the employee has no right to representation in any interview
- B. Pause the interview and either provide a representative, end the interview, or choose another lawful option
- C. Require the employee to explain the entire case before considering the request
- D. Allow the supervisor to decide privately whether the employee's concern is credible

74. A collective-bargaining agreement requires a written response to a grievance within ten days. What should HR do after receiving it?

- A. Reject it immediately if the supervisor believes the employee is difficult
- B. Wait until the next bargaining session even though the agreement sets a deadline
- C. Acknowledge the grievance, investigate the facts and agreement, and meet the contractual response deadline
- D. Resolve it informally without checking the clause or documenting the outcome

75. An employee files a discrimination complaint and receives a sudden negative schedule change from the subject manager. What should HR assess first?

- A. Whether the manager believes the schedule change was deserved, without reviewing timing or comparators
- B. Whether the complaint should be closed before the schedule decision is examined
- C. Whether all schedule changes should be prohibited permanently after any complaint
- D. Whether the change may be retaliatory, inconsistent, unsupported, or otherwise adverse in light of the complaint

76. An employee requests a schedule adjustment to observe a sincerely held religious practice. What should HR recommend?

- A. Engage in the accommodation process and provide a reasonable accommodation unless it creates undue hardship under applicable law
- B. Deny the request because all employees must work identical schedules in every circumstance
- C. Ask coworkers to vote on whether the employee's religious practice is legitimate
- D. Require the employee to choose between the practice and continued employment before discussing options

77. An employee tells HR that a back condition limits lifting and asks for help continuing to work. What is HR's best next step?

- A. Demand a complete medical diagnosis before discussing any workplace option
- B. Tell the employee that accommodation is unavailable until performance declines
- C. Engage in an interactive process to understand functional limitations and evaluate effective accommodations
- D. Move the employee to unpaid leave without considering work modifications or other options

78. A pregnant employee requests a temporary lifting limit and more frequent water breaks. What should HR do under the PWFA framework?

- A. Require the employee to accept leave before discussing temporary workplace adjustments
- B. Deny the request because the employee has not yet missed work
- C. Require the employee to find a coworker willing to exchange duties permanently
- D. Consider the requested reasonable accommodation for a known pregnancy-related limitation and avoid forcing leave when another effective option exists

79. Before designating an absence as FMLA leave, what should HR verify?

- A. Only whether the employee has used all vacation before requesting leave
- B. Employer coverage, employee eligibility, qualifying reason, notice, and available certification information
- C. That the employee has worked at least one day, regardless of tenure or hours
- D. That the manager personally approves the medical reason before HR reviews eligibility

80. A supervisor tells an employee not to request intermittent FMLA leave because it will hurt the department. What issue should HR investigate?

- A. A normal coaching conversation that has no relationship to leave rights
- B. A benefits choice that can be resolved by changing the employee's health plan
- C. Potential interference with the employee's exercise of FMLA rights
- D. A scheduling preference that is never relevant to protected leave administration

81. An employee returns from qualifying military service and seeks prompt restoration to the prior career track. What principle should guide HR?

- A. Apply USERRA reemployment and escalator principles, subject to the statute's conditions and exceptions
- B. Place the employee in any open job because military leave ends the prior employment relationship
- C. Require the employee to compete anew for the former role regardless of applicable rights
- D. Delay consideration until the employee proves that military service improved job skills

82. An employee reports an unguarded machine and says a supervisor threatened to cut hours for raising it. What should HR do?

- A. Tell the employee to repair the machine personally before reporting it again
- B. Wait for an injury before involving the safety function or reviewing the threat
- C. Close the matter if the supervisor says the threat was only a joke
- D. Escalate the hazard through safety procedures, protect the report, and assess possible retaliation

83. An employee returning after an injury has written restrictions from a treating provider. What should HR do before assigning regular duties?

- A. Ask the supervisor to decide whether the restrictions seem medically necessary
- B. Follow the restrictions, coordinate the return-to-work process, and evaluate applicable workers' compensation and accommodation requirements
- C. Ignore the restrictions if the employee says the work feels manageable
- D. Require the employee to sign a waiver accepting any risk from unrestricted duties

84. A harassment complaint names a senior executive as the alleged harasser. What investigation design is most appropriate?

- A. Let the executive's direct report investigate privately to preserve the executive's reputation
- B. Ask the complainant to resolve the matter directly before collecting other evidence
- C. Use a prompt, impartial investigator with authority, protected evidence, and a defined scope
- D. Delay investigation until another complaint is filed so the pattern is clearer

85. Which practice best supports consistent progressive discipline?

- A. Apply the same final penalty to every violation regardless of seriousness or history
- B. Allow each manager to create a different discipline sequence for similar conduct
- C. Skip documentation when the manager believes the employee already understands the issue
- D. Use clear standards, proportional responses, comparable treatment, documentation, and an opportunity to improve

86. Before approving a termination, which review is most important when the employee recently requested medical leave?

- A. Ask only whether the manager is confident the termination is justified
- B. Check protected activity, leave and accommodation status, evidence, comparators, timing, and decision consistency
- C. Delay every termination indefinitely whenever an employee has used any leave
- D. Remove the employee's records so the decision cannot be questioned later

87. What should a well-constructed final written warning contain?

- A. Specific facts, the applicable expectation, required improvement, support, timeframe, and potential consequences
- B. A general statement that the employee has a bad attitude and should do better
- C. Only the final consequence, without describing the conduct or standard involved
- D. A promise that no further action will occur if the employee apologizes

88. Which documentation practice gives a performance discussion the greatest evidentiary value?

- A. Use broad personality descriptions collected months after the events
- B. Document only the manager's conclusion and omit examples to protect brevity
- C. Record contemporaneous, specific examples tied to expectations, impact, employee response, and follow-up
- D. Copy prior language into every review even when the employee's work has changed

89. An attendance policy counts all absences alike, including approved FMLA days and jury duty. What should HR do?

- A. Separate protected or legally required absences from ordinary attendance events before applying discipline
- B. Apply the point equally because a single rule is always fair
- C. Delete the attendance policy so managers can decide case by case
- D. Discipline only employees who have complained about the policy

90. An employee posts with coworkers about unsafe staffing and asks the group to support a joint request. How should HR approach the post?

- A. Remove the post automatically because workplace criticism is never protected
- B. Assess whether it is protected concerted activity and avoid applying a policy more harshly because of the workplace concern
- C. Discipline the employee for mentioning staffing before reviewing the context or policy
- D. Require the employee to identify every coworker who agreed before considering protection

91. A plant closure may affect 70 employees at one facility. What should HR assess before communicating a final date?

- A. Only whether the plant manager wants the announcement made quickly
- B. Whether individual employees prefer email or a meeting, without analyzing legal thresholds
- C. Whether severance payments automatically replace any required notice
- D. Coverage, employment-loss thresholds, timing, exceptions, and notice obligations under the applicable WARN requirements

92. An employee loses employer health coverage after a qualifying employment event. What should benefits administration prioritize?

- A. Tell the employee to contact the insurer without confirming eligibility or timing
- B. Terminate access immediately without sending required information about continuation options
- C. Accurate continuation-coverage notices, election deadlines, plan information, and a reliable contact route
- D. Provide only the premium amount and omit election procedures or coverage dates

93. After an agency charge triggers a preservation notice, which records-control action should HR take?

- A. Continue deletion to reduce storage costs
- B. Preserve relevant records, suspend routine deletion, and document custodians and systems
- C. Preserve only records that support the employer's position
- D. Edit informal notes before saving them

94. When is paid administrative leave the most defensible interim measure during an investigation?

- A. Whenever an employee is accused, regardless of evidence or operational impact
- B. As a permanent substitute for investigating facts and making a decision
- C. Only when the employee agrees that the leave is deserved
- D. When a documented, limited purpose requires temporary separation and HR reviews pay, duration, alternatives, and consistency

95. What should an employee handbook acknowledgment generally establish?

- A. That the employee received or accessed the handbook and understands how to seek clarification
- B. That the employee waived all statutory rights described outside the handbook
- C. That every handbook provision is a contract that cannot be changed
- D. That the employee agrees never to report conduct inconsistent with the handbook

96. An employee resigns in a state with specific final-pay timing rules. What should HR do before setting the payment date?

- A. Use the employer's ordinary payday in every state without checking local requirements
- B. Delay payment until all exit interviews and equipment returns are complete
- C. Let the manager choose a date based on the employee's reason for leaving
- D. Verify the applicable state rule, policy, agreement, deductions, and payroll facts before communicating the date

97. A company has 110 full-time employees and plans to close one facility, affecting 70 full-time employees. What should HR do before issuing notices?

- A. Assume the federal WARN Act applies solely because 70 employees are affected
- B. Analyze WARN coverage and employment-loss facts, including thresholds, timing, and possible exceptions
- C. Assume no notice is needed because the company will offer severance payments
- D. Issue a generic announcement first and determine coverage after employees respond

98. An employee makes a credible threat against a coworker. What should HR prioritize?

- A. Immediate safety assessment, emergency response, threat-management coordination, and clear interim protections
- B. Promise absolute confidentiality and postpone action until the next scheduled meeting
- C. Ask the threatened coworker to investigate the employee's intent independently
- D. Delete the message after reading it so fewer people learn about the threat

99. A manager requests an exception to a discipline policy for a high performer. What should HR require?

- A. Approve it because high performance makes policy exceptions harmless
- B. Deny every exception without considering facts or policy purpose
- C. Document objective criteria, approval authority, business rationale, duration, and consistency impact
- D. Keep the exception verbal so other employees cannot compare treatment

100. How should an investigator prepare for interviews in a complex employee-relations case?

- A. Write the conclusion first and ask questions only to confirm it
- B. Set a factual scope, sequence witnesses, prepare open questions, explain confidentiality limits, and preserve notes
- C. Tell each witness that absolute secrecy is guaranteed regardless of need to know
- D. Interview only the complainant because additional accounts may complicate the case

101. An employee who filed a complaint will remain under the same manager for six months. What is the best retaliation-control practice?

- A. Tell the employee to report only if the manager admits retaliatory intent
- B. Transfer the employee automatically regardless of preference or business impact
- C. Schedule documented follow-ups, monitor relevant decisions and comparators, and provide a channel for new concerns
- D. Close monitoring once the investigation ends because retaliation can occur only during it

102. A manager asks why an employee received a modified schedule as an accommodation. What information should HR share?

- A. Only the functional need and work restrictions necessary for implementation, while protecting confidential medical details
- B. The employee's diagnosis and complete medical history so the manager understands the situation
- C. Nothing at all, including the work change needed to implement the accommodation
- D. The employee's medical records to coworkers so scheduling appears transparent

103. A union-represented employee asks for a steward during a qualifying investigatory interview. What should the employer do next?

- A. Continue questioning because the steward's presence could slow the investigation
- B. Tell the employee that requesting a steward proves guilt
- C. Require the employee to answer one more question before pausing
- D. Pause the interview and either provide a steward, end the interview, or choose another lawful option

104. An employee returns an incomplete FMLA medical certification. What should HR generally do?

- A. Deny leave immediately without explaining what information is missing
- B. Ask the employee's manager to diagnose the condition and complete the form
- C. Notify the employee of the deficiency and provide the applicable opportunity to cure or clarify the certification
- D. Accept every incomplete certification because medical forms cannot be reviewed

105. Which practice best reflects USERRA's nondiscrimination protection?

- A. Consider military service only when deciding whether the employee deserves fewer opportunities
- B. Require service members to disclose protected obligations to every coworker
- C. Treat service-related absence as evidence of lower commitment in promotion decisions
- D. Avoid adverse employment action because of military service, service obligations, or an exercise of protected rights

106. What is the strongest control for a workplace drug-testing program?

- A. Test only employees whose managers personally suspect them, without written criteria
- B. Use a clear, consistently applied policy with lawful procedures, privacy safeguards, and defined response steps
- C. Announce testing after collecting a sample so employees cannot prepare questions
- D. Allow different departments to use different standards for the same job

107. A reduction in force will affect 20 employees in one job family. Which selection approach is most defensible?

- A. Use documented, job-related criteria, review consistency and potential disparate impact, and preserve the decision record
- B. Select employees based on who earns the least without reviewing job needs or protected factors
- C. Ask each manager to choose a favorite employee using an undocumented process
- D. Use seniority automatically even when an agreement or business criteria require another method

108. When is mediation an appropriate option for an employee-relations dispute?

- A. When HR wants to avoid investigating a credible safety or harassment allegation
- B. When one party is compelled to accept the other party's proposed outcome
- C. When participants can engage voluntarily with a neutral facilitator and have authority to reach an informed resolution
- D. When the facilitator has already decided which participant is at fault

109. A collective-bargaining agreement contains a management-rights clause, but a new scheduling practice changes established shifts. What should HR do?

- A. Implement the change immediately because management rights always eliminate bargaining duties
- B. Review the agreement, past practice, and bargaining obligations before implementing the material change
- C. Ignore the agreement because past practice has no relevance once management changes
- D. Ask employees to vote individually and treat the vote as a substitute for the labor process

110. An employee reports repeated inappropriate comments but is unsure whether to file a formal complaint. What should HR do at intake?

- A. Listen, document the concern, explain process and confidentiality limits, and assess immediate safety or retaliation risks
- B. Require the employee to use legal terminology before HR will record the concern
- C. Tell the employee that no action is possible without a signed formal complaint
- D. Promise the employee that the information will never be shared with anyone

111. What should an employer do after an employee reports a possible recordable workplace injury?

- A. Discourage the employee from reporting so the site's metrics remain favorable
- B. Wait for the employee to prove the injury occurred at work before offering assistance
- C. Change the employee's duties permanently without examining the incident or restrictions
- D. Provide appropriate care and reporting, preserve facts, investigate the hazard, and avoid retaliation

112. How should HR structure voluntary exit interviews to produce useful employee-relations evidence?

- A. Use consistent questions, explain confidentiality limits, protect participation, and analyze themes with other data
- B. Require departing employees to identify coworkers before recording any feedback
- C. Treat every comment as proven causation without examining other evidence
- D. Discard criticism of a manager because negative feedback is inherently unreliable

113. After a pulse survey, what should leaders communicate to rebuild confidence in follow-through?

- A. Publish identifiable comments to prove transparency
- B. Share themes, actions, owners, timing, and limits while protecting respondent confidentiality
- C. Promise that every requested change will be adopted immediately
- D. Say nothing until the next annual survey is complete

114. Which evidence package is most reliable for evaluating the employee-relations climate?

- A. Formal complaint counts considered without other employee data
- B. The annual turnover rate viewed without context or comparison
- C. Triangulate complaints, turnover, absence, surveys, cases, and outcomes
- D. One favorable employee story treated as evidence of success

115. What approach best integrates employee-relations risk with a business decision?

- A. Choose the fastest option without documenting assumptions or decision ownership
- B. Treat legal risk and employee experience as unrelated topics handled by separate teams
- C. Rely on one manager's anecdote instead of broader evidence and comparable outcomes
- D. Connect employee experience, legal requirements, evidence, stakeholder impact, controls, and follow-through

Practice Exam 8: Answer Key and Explanations

1. D — Strategic workforce planning begins by translating business direction into the people, capabilities, costs, and constraints needed to execute it. Posting jobs, delegating disconnected hiring, or reusing historical staffing levels can create gaps, duplicated effort, and unplanned exposure. HR should clarify demand, locations, skills, timing, labor-market conditions, and legal requirements, then present scenarios leaders can evaluate. This supports a defensible decision.

2. B — An effective operating model clarifies what should be standardized and what requires local judgment, while assigning ownership and service expectations. Total decentralization creates inconsistency; total centralization can ignore operating realities; outsourcing does not eliminate the employer's accountability. HR should map services, decision rights, escalation routes, measures, and capabilities so users know where work belongs and how quality is governed.

3. C — Short-cycle role-clarity and early-exit measures can reveal onboarding or manager problems while the organization still has time to intervene. Annual turnover, ending headcount, and replacement cost are lagging or broad measures that may conceal where the emerging issue originates. HR should segment early indicators by cohort and manager, inspect onboarding practices, and connect findings to later retention outcomes.

4. A — Cost per employee served equals service cost divided by 80: \$2,400,000 divided by 80 equals \$30,000. The other figures result from using an incorrect divisor or arithmetic step, so they do not measure the cost associated with each employee served. HR should confirm the population and included costs, then use consistent definitions before comparing service efficiency.

5. C — Voluntary turnover equals voluntary separations divided by average workforce: 27 divided by 360 equals 0.075, or 7.5 percent. Six, nine, and twelve percent arise from changing the denominator or misapplying the relationship between separations and average headcount. HR should state the period, separation definitions, and average-headcount method before comparing rates across units or making retention decisions.

6. B — A decision-oriented dashboard connects carefully defined measures to trends, thresholds, owners, and choices leaders must make. Displaying everything, omitting denominators, or relying on colors without definitions can overwhelm users and encourage inaccurate conclusions. HR should document calculations, segment appropriately, highlight material changes, and pair each measure with an action or accountable owner. This supports a defensible decision.

7. D — Social analysis considers attitudes, expectations, norms, and workforce reactions that may affect whether a practice is accepted. A statute is a legal factor, integration cost is technological or economic, and a competitor's purchase is a competitive or market observation. HR should evaluate all relevant PESTLE dimensions, test employee concerns, and use the findings to shape safeguards and communication.

8. A — A business case is stronger when it links a defined problem to alternatives, costs, benefits, risks, assumptions, and measurable outcomes. A demo, attractive interface, or unlimited promise does not show fit, affordability, implementation feasibility, or realized value. HR should document requirements, compare options, identify dependencies, assign benefit owners, and propose a review point after implementation. This supports a defensible decision.

9. D — Risk prioritization considers likelihood, impact, existing controls, ownership, and response readiness rather than waiting for harm to occur. A vendor's assurance, delayed action, or contract handoff does not independently establish that sensitive information is protected. HR should assess

access, configuration, monitoring, notification, contract, and contingency controls, then escalate residual exposure appropriately. This supports a defensible decision.

10. C — The absence rate is absence days divided by scheduled workdays: 96 divided by 4,800 equals 0.02, or 2.0 percent. The other percentages reflect different numerators, denominators, or decimal placement and do not describe the stated absence relationship. HR should define whether hours or days are used, apply the same rules across groups, and interpret the rate with workload and leave.

11. B — Process mapping makes work visible by showing sequence, handoffs, decision points, rework, inputs, outputs, and time spent. Completion lists, ungrounded targets, and general impressions cannot reliably show where work waits or returns for correction. HR should map the current state with process participants, measure delay, identify control needs, and test a redesigned future state. This supports a defensible decision.

12. B — Data minimization limits collection and access to information reasonably needed for a defined purpose, reducing unnecessary privacy exposure. Collecting everything, publishing raw responses, and indefinite retention exceed the stated need and can discourage candid participation. HR should define purpose, fields, access, retention, and reporting safeguards before launch, then remove information no longer needed. This supports a defensible decision.

13. D — Change readiness depends on understanding affected groups, leadership alignment, capability needs, communication, and sources of resistance. An organization chart, attendance record, or complaint-driven approach provides incomplete evidence about comprehension, commitment, and ability to act. HR should establish a readiness baseline, tailor interventions, identify sponsors, and monitor adoption indicators after the change begins. This supports a defensible decision.

14. A — Succession risk is reduced by identifying business exposure, successor readiness, development needs, and interim coverage for critical work. A single name, an incumbent guarantee, or unrelated high performers does not establish capability, timing, or continuity protection. HR should protect confidentiality, validate role requirements, develop multiple options where feasible, and revisit the plan as conditions change. This supports a defensible decision.

15. C — Simple ROI is net benefit divided by cost: \$96,000 minus \$24,000 equals \$72,000, and \$72,000 divided by \$24,000 equals 300 percent. Two hundred or four hundred percent uses an incorrect numerator, while 25 percent reverses the relationship and understates the result. HR should state how benefits were measured, identify excluded costs, test assumptions, and compare ROI with strategic objectives.

16. A — Exceptions require an assessment of control design, operating effectiveness, population exposure, root cause, and corrective ownership. Extrapolating without evidence, deleting records, or dismissing exceptions prevents HR from knowing whether the control reliably works. HR should preserve evidence, expand testing when warranted, document findings, fix the cause, and verify that remediation operates effectively. This supports a defensible decision.

17. C — Policy governance requires ownership, review cadence, controlled approval, version history, and communication so requirements remain accurate. Unowned folders, employee discovery after reliance, and ad hoc edits permit conflicting language and untracked risk to persist. HR should maintain a policy register, route changes through accountable reviewers, archive prior versions, and confirm publication channels. This supports a defensible decision.

18. B — Executive communication should make the decision path visible by connecting evidence, alternatives, risk, recommendation, and a specific ask. An exhaustive preamble, hidden assumptions, or an unquantified problem can delay action and prevent leaders from evaluating tradeoffs. HR should tailor detail to the audience, disclose uncertainty, identify decision rights, and document the agreed action and owner. This supports a defensible decision.

19. D — Scenario planning prepares leaders for uncertainty by testing plausible futures, assumptions, workforce consequences, and response triggers. Optimistic forecasts, historical averages, and delayed planning can leave the organization overstaffed, understaffed, or unable to respond quickly. HR should define scenarios, estimate capability and cost effects, identify leading signals, and agree on decisions linked to each trigger. This supports a defensible decision.

20. A — A charter creates a shared frame for the work by defining why it exists, what it includes, who decides, and how progress will be judged. A date, task list, or predetermined solution does not control scope, accountability, requirements, risk, or meaningful success criteria. HR should confirm the charter with sponsors and stakeholders, then manage changes, dependencies, escalation, and closure.

21. C — A possible conflict requires a fair intake, protection against retaliation, policy-based assessment, and preservation of information relevant to the facts. Private confrontation, an unsupported denial, or public disclosure can compromise evidence, chill reporting, and unfairly affect those involved. HR should document the report, set confidentiality expectations, identify conflicts, assign an impartial reviewer, and take proportionate interim steps.

22. B — Responsible model governance examines variable relevance, data quality, disparate outcomes, explainability, monitoring, and human accountability. More historical data, aggregate accuracy, and no oversight can preserve biased patterns or hide unequal effects on protected groups. HR should test before deployment, monitor by group and outcome, document limitations, and provide a process for review and correction. This supports a defensible decision.

23. B — Continuity planning protects people and operations through accountability, communication, priority roles, access considerations, and coordinated support. Equipment-only plans, remote-work assumptions, and conflicting messages do not establish employee safety or dependable operational direction. HR should maintain contact methods, test responsibilities, define support resources, and update the plan after exercises or actual disruptions. This supports a defensible decision.

24. D — Job analysis establishes what the work requires by examining duties, responsibilities, outputs, conditions, and the capabilities needed. Choosing a person, copying a title, or relying on personality language does not establish valid job-related requirements or selection criteria. HR should document

essential functions, consult knowledgeable stakeholders, distinguish requirements from preferences, and review the analysis periodically. This supports a defensible decision.

25. D — A competency model describes knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors that can be observed and linked to effective performance. Hobbies, incumbent biographies, and broad personality labels do not reliably define transferable, job-related expectations. HR should validate competencies with subject-matter experts, use behavioral examples, and connect them to selection, development, and performance processes. This supports a defensible decision.

26. C — Passive-candidate recruiting requires targeted outreach that connects the opportunity to relevant expertise, motivators, and credible value. A static posting, generic message, or unexamined reduction in requirements may not reach qualified people or preserve job-related standards. HR should segment the talent market, equip recruiters with accurate role information, and measure response and quality by source. This supports a defensible decision.

27. A — Structured interviews improve comparability by using consistent job-related questions, scoring standards, and documented evidence. Unplanned questions, premature senior influence, and informal conversation increase subjectivity and make candidate comparisons less reliable. HR should train interviewers, define acceptable evidence, monitor scoring patterns, and preserve records supporting the selection decision. This supports a defensible decision.

28. A — A work sample asks candidates to perform a representative task, producing observable evidence related to the job's requirements. It cannot prove future tenure, replace job analysis, or validly measure popularity when the decision concerns capability. HR should keep the exercise job-related, provide consistent instructions, score defined criteria, and review accessibility needs. This supports a defensible decision.

29. D — Group A's rate is 25 percent and Group B's rate is 15 percent; dividing 15 by 25 produces a selection-rate ratio of 0.60. A ratio below four-fifths can signal potential adverse impact, but it is not automatic proof of unlawful discrimination or a complete analysis. HR should examine job-relatedness, sample size, consistency, alternatives, and legal guidance before drawing a conclusion.

30. B — Validity evidence asks whether a selection procedure meaningfully relates to job requirements or performance criteria for the intended use. Popularity, speed, and a manager's impression do not establish that scores measure a job-related capability or predict performance. HR should review job analysis, validation evidence, administration, adverse-impact results, and documentation before relying on the tool. This supports a defensible decision.

31. C — A realistic preview sets accurate expectations about duties, conditions, and tradeoffs, helping applicants self-select and prepare. It cannot guarantee future performance, justify hiding duties, or replace other valid selection and onboarding practices. HR should present material realities consistently, train recruiters to answer questions, and compare early retention with preview practices. This supports a defensible decision.

32. C — Requisition approval tests whether the role is needed, funded, scoped, placed appropriately, and authorized before recruiting resources are committed. Candidate preference, copied titles, and premature sourcing do not establish a legitimate need, budget, reporting line, or decision authority. HR should retain approvals, reconcile the description with job analysis, and stop or revise the search when material assumptions change.

33. D — Referrals can expand sourcing, but every applicant must still be evaluated through consistent, job-related standards and controls. Guaranteed interviews, status-based rewards, and bypassed controls can create favoritism, inconsistent treatment, and recordkeeping problems. HR should publish eligibility rules, monitor referral outcomes, train employees on conflicts, and test selection patterns across sources. This supports a defensible decision.

34. B — Background-check decisions require transparent notices, authorization and disclosure practices, and an opportunity to review or dispute information before final action. A vague explanation, vendor assumption, or deleted record does not satisfy a controlled process for potentially inaccurate consumer-report information. HR should coordinate disclosures, permissions, notices, timing, dispute handling, and record retention with the process owner and counsel.

35. A — Consistent records help demonstrate how requirements, evidence, scores, and decisions were applied and support later review. Selective retention, favorable-only notes, and uncoordinated storage can create gaps, inconsistent evidence, and avoidable compliance risk. HR should define retention rules, train interviewers on factual notes, protect access, and apply the same process across candidates. This supports a defensible decision.

36. C — Early effectiveness improves when employees understand outcomes, have needed access and relationships, and receive timely feedback and support. Welcome messages, history lessons, or unsupported independence do not ensure role clarity, resources, process knowledge, or connection. HR and managers should use a role-specific plan, confirm access, schedule check-ins, and adjust support based on early evidence. This supports a defensible decision.

37. D — Worker classification depends on the actual relationship and applicable legal tests, including control, economic dependence, and work circumstances. A contract label, flexible schedule, or preferred title alone cannot resolve classification when the working relationship points elsewhere. HR should gather facts, apply the relevant jurisdictional standards, document the analysis, and obtain specialized review when uncertainty remains. This supports a defensible decision.

38. B — Transparent internal mobility gives employees a fair opportunity to understand roles, prepare, apply, and be evaluated against known standards. Hidden openings, unknown requirements, and preference-only decisions can create favoritism perceptions and reduce trust in career processes. HR should establish eligibility, posting, application, interview, feedback, and appeal practices while monitoring access and outcomes. This supports a defensible decision.

39. D — Independent ratings preserve each interviewer's evidence before group influence can shape judgments or erase contrary observations. Premature consensus, authority effects, and personality impressions can amplify bias and make the job-related basis difficult to defend. HR should require

criteria-based notes, collect ratings before discussion, facilitate evidence review, and document the final rationale. This supports a defensible decision.

40. A — Funnel conversion shows how candidates move from source through screening, interviews, offers, and acceptance, revealing points of loss. Application volume, recruiter workload, and open requisitions do not show whether qualified candidates advance or where the process discourages them. HR should define stages, segment responsibly, investigate disparities, and connect conversion results to quality, time, and candidate experience.

41. C — A succession pool should reflect critical capabilities, potential readiness, development actions, and coverage for the role's likely future. Popularity, one untested replacement, and tenure alone do not demonstrate capability, timing, or continuity for a critical position. HR should use calibrated evidence, protect confidentiality, create development plans, and revisit readiness as business needs evolve. This supports a defensible decision.

42. A — A needs assessment examines organizational goals and conditions, task demands, and individual capability to locate the actual performance gap. A universal course, one opinion, or attendance data alone may miss system design, process, workload, or capability causes. HR should observe work, review performance evidence, interview stakeholders, separate training from nontraining needs, and target the intervention. This supports a defensible decision.

43. B — An effective objective states an observable action and a meaningful performance condition or standard that can be assessed. Understand, learn, and appreciate describe internal states without specifying what participants must do or how performance will be judged. HR should align objectives with job tasks, practice opportunities, assessment criteria, and the evidence leaders need after training. This supports a defensible decision.

44. D — A question about supervisors using a model at work examines behavior, because it focuses on transfer and application after instruction. Reaction concerns participant satisfaction, learning concerns knowledge or skill acquisition, and results concern broader organizational outcomes. HR should define the target behavior, timing, observation method, and context before interpreting the follow-up response. This supports a defensible decision.

45. C — Spaced practice revisits material over intervals, strengthening retrieval and revealing misunderstandings while there is time to correct them. It does not replace contextual practice, feedback, or measurement, and procedural competence is not the same as memorizing policy wording. HR should sequence short practice opportunities, provide feedback, and evaluate whether the skill transfers to real work. This supports a defensible decision.

46. A — Training processes should be accessible, and HR should assess reasonable accommodation so a qualified employee can complete required learning. Exclusion, shifting the cost to the employee, or indefinite delay avoids the access issue instead of exploring effective solutions. HR should engage the employee, review the platform and materials, coordinate an effective accommodation, and protect confidential information.

47. B — When the gap may reflect unclear expectations or an unaddressed skill need, coaching establishes the standard and supports improvement. Immediate final discipline, ignoring the issue, or reassignment without diagnosis can be disproportionate and fail to correct the cause. The manager should document the conversation, provide practice or resources, set a review date, and escalate consistently if the gap persists.

48. B — A pre/post comparison with a relevant group helps separate training effects from time, seasonality, technology, or broader business changes. Enjoyment, completion, and an unrelated average may describe participation or general movement but do not isolate a meaningful performance effect. HR should define the outcome, protect data quality, note design limitations, and combine quantitative results with implementation evidence.

49. A — Train-the-trainer design requires clear facilitator competencies, observed practice, feedback, and controls that protect content quality. A slide deck, tenure, or uncoordinated customization does not ensure accurate delivery, facilitation skill, or consistent learner experience. HR should certify practice, provide coaching, control core content, and monitor learner outcomes across facilitators. This supports a defensible decision.

50. C — Tacit knowledge transfers more reliably through observation, demonstration, practice, questions, and captured artifacts than through a single summary. One email, reactive help, or biographical information cannot reveal judgment, exceptions, relationships, or sequence embedded in the work. HR should identify critical knowledge, schedule transfer activities, assign recipients, capture reusable resources, and verify independent performance. This supports a defensible decision.

51. D — An individual development plan links an aspiration to a specific capability, development method, support, timing, and evidence of growth. A guaranteed promotion, course list, or personality label does not establish readiness, practice, accountability, or a measurable outcome. The manager and employee should agree on conflict practice, feedback, milestones, and a later readiness review based on evidence.

52. A — Performance support reduces memory burden by placing concise, accurate guidance where and when the employee must make the decision. A distant lecture, rating label, or motivational poster does not provide usable criteria at the moment of task performance. HR should test the job aid with users, keep it current, align it with policy, and monitor whether escalation accuracy improves.

53. D — Attendance proves exposure, not competence; application-based assessment and follow-up behavior provide stronger evidence of understanding and transfer. Completion, satisfaction, and scheduling ease may matter operationally but do not show that employees can apply ethical decision standards. HR should define required behaviors, assess realistic scenarios, monitor reporting and decision patterns, and remediate gaps promptly. This supports a defensible decision.

54. C — Total rewards combines financial and nonfinancial elements that influence attraction, motivation, retention, and the employee experience. Salary alone, a cost-only bonus formula, or a benefits brochure omits important parts of the value proposition employees experience. HR should

connect reward choices to business and talent goals, affordability, fairness, communication, and evidence of employee value. This supports a defensible decision.

55. B — FLSA exemption analysis depends on applicable duties and compensation tests, not a title or an employee's preferred pay arrangement. Titles, fixed-pay preferences, and independent work habits alone do not establish that a statutory exemption applies. HR should review the actual work and current requirements, document the analysis, and correct classifications when facts change. This supports a defensible decision.

56. C — Compa-ratio equals salary divided by range midpoint: \$59,000 divided by \$62,000 is approximately 0.9516, or 95.16 percent. The other percentages result from comparing salary with the wrong range reference or reversing the relationship between pay and midpoint. HR should interpret the ratio with market position, experience, performance, internal equity, and the organization's documented pay practices. This supports a defensible decision.

57. B — Range penetration places current pay within the boundaries of a salary range and supports internal pay-management discussions. It does not automatically establish market position, incentive effectiveness, or overtime status; those questions require separate evidence. HR should interpret penetration with job level, capability, performance, equity, market data, and policy rather than using it alone. This supports a defensible decision.

58. D — Pay-equity analysis separates legitimate explanatory factors from unexplained patterns and uses evidence to determine appropriate action. Automatic assumptions, across-the-board adjustments, or removing identifiers can either overlook discrimination or create poorly targeted changes. HR should validate data, protect confidentiality, involve appropriate reviewers, address causes, and monitor results after remediation. This supports a defensible decision.

59. A — Line of sight exists when employees understand how controllable actions and measured results connect to a stated incentive outcome. After-the-fact discretion, uncontrollable targets, and unexplained scorecards weaken motivation and make perceived fairness difficult to evaluate. HR should define measures, weights, thresholds, timing, governance, and communication before launch and review unintended behaviors. This supports a defensible decision.

60. D — Nonexempt overtime compliance requires accurate hours, payment under applicable rules, and controls that prevent or correct off-the-clock work. Prior permission, remote location, or a fixed salary does not erase recorded work or change a valid nonexempt classification. HR should train managers, provide reporting channels, audit time records, investigate corrections, and escalate repeated control failures. This supports a defensible decision.

61. A — Employees make better benefit decisions when communications explain choices, costs, limits, deadlines, eligibility, and where to obtain help. A dense document, cost-only message, or universal recommendation can leave employees unable to compare options or act correctly. HR should segment communications, provide examples and tools, protect personal information, and track questions and enrollment errors. This supports a defensible decision.

62. C — HSAs and FSAs are distinct arrangements with different eligibility, ownership, contribution, and carryover features under applicable rules. The alternatives reverse ownership or invent identical rules; dependent care and retirement accounts are not interchangeable with these arrangements. HR should communicate the current plan terms, eligibility, contribution limits, claims rules, and tax guidance without overgeneralizing. This supports a defensible decision.

63. B — Retirement-plan communications should make the change, timing, eligibility, and practical effect understandable while directing employees to governing information. A vague announcement, informal summary, or delayed notice can create confusion about elections, expectations, and the plan's operation. HR should coordinate with plan administrators, use accurate examples, provide a contact route, and retain the approved communication record. This supports a defensible decision.

64. C — Benefit design should balance employee needs, use, affordability, workforce characteristics, compliance, and the organization's reward strategy. External popularity, premium alone, or one comment cannot show whether a plan is valuable, accessible, affordable, or fit for purpose. HR should analyze multiple evidence sources, consult stakeholders, model cost and impact, and review results after implementation. This supports a defensible decision.

65. D — The payroll error rate equals errors divided by checks: 48 divided by 1,200 equals 0.04, or 4 percent. Two, three, and five percent use different numerators, denominators, or rounding and do not represent the stated error relationship. HR should define what counts as an error, segment causes and severity, correct affected employees, and monitor the rate after controls change.

66. A — Reliable benchmarking compares substantially similar work, including responsibilities, scope, requirements, and sometimes market relevance. Titles, highest pay, popularity, and preference can obscure meaningful differences in work and distort external comparisons. HR should document matching logic, assess survey quality, adjust for job and market differences, and explain limitations to leaders. This supports a defensible decision.

67. B — Recognition is more meaningful when it identifies the behavior or result, occurs close to the event, and connects to shared expectations. Generic praise, reward substitution, and visibility bias can weaken credibility and leave important contributions unrecognized. HR should provide inclusive guidance, monitor access and patterns, and ensure recognition complements rather than replaces sound reward practices. This supports a defensible decision.

68. B — Performance gates align incentives with broader organizational requirements and reduce the risk that rewards encourage harmful behavior. Unconditional promises, volume-only formulas, and private after-the-fact discretion can undermine compliance, trust, and plan governance. HR should define gates, measures, authority, exceptions, documentation, and communications before the plan period begins. This supports a defensible decision.

69. D — Participation equals enrolled employees divided by eligible employees: 312 divided by 480 equals 0.65, or 65 percent. The other percentages result from using an incorrect denominator or rounding the enrollment relationship too early. HR should define eligibility and enrollment consistently, examine

nonparticipation reasons, and use the result to improve benefit communication. This supports a defensible decision.

70. A — Total rewards includes the work experience, so flexibility must be governed with clear expectations, feasible choices, and consistent application. Eliminating flexibility, making unconditional promises, or dismissing it as nonfinancial avoids the equity and operational questions raised. HR should define decision criteria, support manager judgment, review outcomes, accommodate job realities, and communicate how concerns are raised. This supports a defensible decision.

71. C — Employees may have protected rights when acting together about wages, schedules, or other employment conditions, even without a union. Off-site discussion, lack of union certification, or criticism alone does not determine whether the conduct falls within protected activity. HR should preserve facts, avoid retaliation, assess the activity under applicable labor law, and coordinate careful manager guidance.

72. A — Supervisors can create serious labor-law risk through threats, interrogation, promises, or surveillance during organizing activity. Private questioning, conditional promises, and monitoring employees' organizing activity can interfere with protected employee choice. HR should train supervisors on approved communications, route questions consistently, and document concerns without targeting participants. This supports a defensible decision.

73. B — Under Weingarten principles, a union-represented employee may request representation in a qualifying investigatory interview. Continuing over the request or making the employee prove credibility can create an unfair-labor-practice risk and undermine the right. HR should stop the interview, confirm the request, follow the available lawful option, and document the process without coercion. This supports a defensible decision.

74. C — Grievance administration requires timely adherence to the agreement, fact development, consistent interpretation, and a documented response. Personal judgments, delayed handling, or undocumented resolution can breach the agreement and make later review or escalation harder. HR should track deadlines, preserve evidence, consult the appropriate labor representatives, and communicate the decision through the defined process. This supports a defensible decision.

75. D — Retaliation analysis considers protected activity, materially adverse treatment, timing, comparators, explanations, and evidence of causation. Manager belief alone, closing the complaint, or a blanket prohibition does not fairly test whether the action was retaliatory or legitimate. HR should preserve records, separate investigative roles when feasible, protect the employee, and review the decision under consistent standards. This supports a defensible decision.

76. A — Title VII requires consideration of reasonable accommodation for sincerely held religious practices unless the accommodation creates undue hardship. Identical scheduling, coworker voting, and an ultimatum avoid the individualized assessment and interactive discussion the request requires. HR should clarify the need, explore effective options, assess operational impact, document the analysis, and communicate the decision respectfully. This supports a defensible decision.

77. C — The ADA accommodation process focuses on functional limitations, essential functions, effective options, and undue hardship rather than unnecessary diagnosis details. Demanding diagnosis, waiting for failure, or imposing leave prematurely can bypass the interactive process and remove a workable solution. HR should obtain appropriate information, protect medical confidentiality, involve the employee and manager, and document the evaluated alternatives.

78. D — The PWFA addresses reasonable accommodations for known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Mandatory leave, denial before absence, or an employee-funded permanent workaround can ignore a feasible accommodation and the statute's protections. HR should assess the limitation, consult the employee, evaluate temporary options, document the response, and protect against retaliation. This supports a defensible decision.

79. B — FMLA administration requires checking employer coverage, employee eligibility, qualifying circumstances, notice, and applicable certification steps. Vacation exhaustion, one day of work, or manager approval does not establish the statutory conditions or replace HR's controlled review. HR should use the applicable notices and timelines, protect medical information, track leave accurately, and explain rights and responsibilities. This supports a defensible decision.

80. C — Discouraging an employee from using qualifying leave can interfere with protected FMLA rights even if the supervisor intended to protect staffing. Operational pressure, benefit selection, or labeling the request a preference does not remove employer obligations to administer protected leave. HR should preserve the statement, correct the supervisor's guidance, review the leave request, and assess whether the employee suffered harm.

81. A — USERRA generally protects reemployment and the position the employee would have attained absent service, subject to statutory requirements. A random vacancy, mandatory recompetition, or service-based proof requirement can disregard reemployment and seniority-related protections. HR should verify notice, service, timeliness, qualification, and exceptions, then document the placement and required benefits treatment. This supports a defensible decision.

82. D — A reported hazard requires prompt safety attention, and a threat tied to reporting may raise a separate retaliation concern. Employee repair, delayed response, or a supervisor's characterization does not establish that the hazard or retaliatory impact is resolved. HR should document the report, involve safety professionals, preserve evidence, protect the employee, and track corrective action to completion.

83. B — Return-to-work decisions should follow medical restrictions and coordinate applicable state, workers' compensation, safety, and accommodation processes. Supervisor judgment, employee optimism, or a waiver does not replace required restrictions or remove the employer's responsibility for a safe process. HR should confirm functional limits, identify suitable duties, involve the right specialists, document decisions, and review changes promptly. This supports a defensible decision.

84. C — An investigation must be credible and impartial, especially when the allegation involves a powerful person or potential conflicts. A subordinate investigator, direct confrontation, or waiting for more complaints can compromise independence, evidence, and employee trust. HR should define

allegations, preserve records, interview relevant witnesses, limit retaliation, and reach findings from the evidence. This supports a defensible decision.

85. D — Progressive discipline is strengthened by notice, proportionality, consistent treatment, factual documentation, and a meaningful chance to improve. Identical penalties, manager-by-manager sequences, and undocumented expectations can be arbitrary and difficult to defend. HR should review policy, comparators, severity, history, mitigating factors, and decision authority before confirming the response. This supports a defensible decision.

86. B — Termination review should test whether protected rights, inconsistent treatment, timing, documentation, and legitimate reasons intersect. Manager confidence, an indefinite moratorium, or deleted records does not establish a lawful, consistent, evidence-based decision. HR should separate protected activity from performance evidence, verify comparators, document the rationale, and obtain required approvals. This supports a defensible decision.

87. A — A final warning should give clear notice of the conduct, standard, improvement required, support available, timing, and possible consequences. Vague labels, consequence-only notices, and conditional promises do not establish what must change or how the process will proceed. HR should verify facts, use respectful language, invite the employee's response, and apply the same documentation standard to comparable cases.

88. C — Useful performance documentation links observed facts to expectations, impact, response, support, and next steps close to the event. Late personality labels, conclusions without examples, and copied language can be subjective, incomplete, or disconnected from current work. Managers should use factual notes, give the employee a chance to respond, set measurable follow-up, and consult HR on difficult cases.

89. A — Attendance administration must distinguish protected or legally required time from ordinary absences before a policy consequence is applied. Mechanical equality, policy deletion, or complaint-based discipline can create inconsistent treatment and interfere with protected rights. HR should audit the rule, define exclusions, train managers, correct records, and review prior decisions for potential impact. This supports a defensible decision.

90. B — Employee discussion with coworkers about staffing or safety may concern terms and conditions and receive labor-law protection. Automatic removal, context-free discipline, or forced identification can chill protected activity and produce inconsistent enforcement. HR should preserve the post, assess the conduct and policy neutrally, consult labor guidance, and train leaders on protected expression. This supports a defensible decision.

91. D — WARN analysis depends on employer and facility coverage, the type and scale of employment loss, timing, exceptions, and notice rules. Manager preference, communication format, or severance alone cannot resolve statutory coverage or notice obligations. HR should gather workforce and event facts, coordinate with counsel, preserve the decision record, and align communication with required timing. This supports a defensible decision.

92. C — Continuation administration depends on accurate event processing, notices, deadlines, election instructions, coverage dates, and assistance. An insurer referral, immediate termination, or premium-only message can leave the individual unable to understand or exercise available rights. HR should coordinate with the plan administrator, verify event data, track notices, protect personal information, and resolve errors promptly. This supports a defensible decision.

93. B — A legal hold preserves potentially relevant information by stopping routine deletion and identifying custodians, systems, and responsibilities. Cost concerns, selective preservation, and edited notes can damage evidence and create additional legal or credibility problems. HR should coordinate with counsel, communicate the hold, monitor compliance, and release it only through authorized direction. This supports a defensible decision.

94. D — Administrative leave should serve a defined interim purpose, be proportionate, and receive periodic review for duration, pay, and alternatives. Automatic leave, permanent delay, or employee agreement alone can make the measure arbitrary and create inconsistent treatment. HR should document the rationale, set review points, protect confidentiality, consider less restrictive options, and communicate status clearly. This supports a defensible decision.

95. A — An acknowledgment documents receipt or access and can direct employees to questions, reporting channels, and policy updates. It should not be used to waive statutory rights, create unintended contractual promises, or block good-faith reporting. HR should use accurate disclaimers where appropriate, track versions, explain policy changes, and retain acknowledgments securely. This supports a defensible decision.

96. D — Final-pay timing can depend on jurisdiction, separation type, wage rules, agreements, deductions, and payroll facts. A universal payday, an indefinite hold, or manager discretion may conflict with applicable requirements or create inconsistent treatment. HR should verify the controlling rule, coordinate payroll, document deductions, communicate accurately, and obtain jurisdiction-specific review when needed. This supports a defensible decision.

97. B — WARN coverage depends on employer size, facility and employment-loss facts, timing, and statutory definitions and exceptions. The number affected alone, severance alone, or a post-announcement analysis cannot establish whether notice duties apply. HR should gather precise facts, coordinate with counsel, evaluate federal and state requirements, and align notices with the analysis. This supports a defensible decision.

98. A — A credible threat requires proportionate steps to protect people, preserve evidence, and coordinate trained safety or emergency resources. Absolute secrecy, employee-led investigation, or deleted evidence can increase danger and prevent appropriate assessment. HR should follow emergency protocols, limit information to those who need it, document decisions, and review ongoing protective measures. This supports a defensible decision.

99. C — A controlled exception process tests whether deviation is justified, authorized, time-limited, documented, and consistent with policy purpose. Automatic approval, blanket denial, or secrecy can create favoritism, undermine controls, and prevent consistent treatment. HR should assess comparators,

record the rationale, define review or expiration, and monitor whether exceptions create broader risk. This supports a defensible decision.

100. B — Interview planning supports a fair investigation by defining issues, ordering evidence, asking neutral questions, and setting accurate expectations. Predetermined conclusions, absolute secrecy promises, and one-sided interviews can bias findings and weaken evidence quality. HR should identify relevant witnesses and records, document responses, protect against retaliation, and revise scope when credible facts emerge. This supports a defensible decision.

101. C — Retaliation controls continue after an initial complaint by checking treatment, timing, decisions, comparators, and employee access to help. Admission, automatic transfer, or ending oversight at investigation closure does not reliably identify subtle or later adverse treatment. HR should set proportionate check-ins, coordinate with the manager's leader, review data, and escalate credible concerns promptly. This supports a defensible decision.

102. A — Accommodation administration generally requires sharing enough functional information to implement the adjustment while maintaining medical confidentiality. Diagnosis details, total silence about implementation, or coworker disclosure exceeds need-to-know boundaries and can harm privacy. HR should coordinate limited information, confirm operational responsibilities, secure records, and address questions without revealing unnecessary details. This supports a defensible decision.

103. D — A timely request for representation in a qualifying interview requires the employer to respect the employee's protected choice. Delay for convenience, an accusation of guilt, or one more question can undermine the right and taint the interview. HR should pause, document the request, follow the lawful available option, and brief supervisors on the boundary before resuming any process.

104. C — FMLA administration includes controlled review of certification sufficiency and a process for addressing missing or unclear information. Immediate denial, manager diagnosis, or automatic acceptance can produce inconsistent decisions and mishandle protected medical information. HR should use the applicable notice and cure process, protect confidentiality, track deadlines, and document the designation decision. This supports a defensible decision.

105. D — USERRA protects employees and applicants from discrimination or retaliation based on military service and related protected activity. Using service as a negative factor, broad disclosure, or commitment assumptions can penalize the very status and rights the law protects. HR should train decision-makers, review hiring and promotion evidence, protect records, and investigate concerns promptly and neutrally. This supports a defensible decision.

106. B — Drug-testing programs require clear standards, consistent application, lawful process, privacy protection, and controlled handling of results. Manager suspicion alone, surprise procedures, and departmental variations can create inconsistency, privacy concerns, and legal exposure. HR should review jurisdictional rules, notice, chain of custody, confidentiality, accommodations, and consequences before implementation. This supports a defensible decision.

107. A — Layoff selection should be based on defined business and job-related criteria, applied consistently and reviewed for disproportionate impact. Lowest pay, manager preference, or automatic seniority may be improper when they ignore role needs, agreements, or protected-group effects. HR should model alternatives, check comparators, document approvals, communicate respectfully, and coordinate required notice and support. This supports a defensible decision.

108. C — Mediation can help resolve suitable disputes when participation is informed, voluntary, neutral, and supported by realistic authority. It should not replace necessary safety or harassment response, forced agreement, or a process led by a prejudged facilitator. HR should screen the matter, explain limits, select a qualified neutral, protect against retaliation, and document any agreed commitments. This supports a defensible decision.

109. B — Contract language, past practice, and the nature of a material change can affect management authority and bargaining obligations. A clause alone, dismissal of past practice, or individual voting does not resolve the labor relationship or required process. HR should consult labor counsel and representatives as appropriate, document the analysis, and communicate any lawful implementation plan. This supports a defensible decision.

110. A — Effective intake captures the concern without demanding labels, explains realistic process limits, and identifies urgent protection needs. Legal terminology, a signed form, or an absolute secrecy promise can discourage reporting and prevent timely risk assessment. HR should preserve the account, clarify desired support, route the matter appropriately, and follow up without promising a predetermined result. This supports a defensible decision.

111. D — Safety response should protect the employee, meet reporting requirements, investigate contributing conditions, and correct hazards without retaliation. Metric protection, delayed care, or unexamined permanent reassignment can worsen harm and obscure the cause or required response. HR should coordinate with safety and benefits specialists, document the event, preserve evidence, and track corrective actions. This supports a defensible decision.

112. A — Exit interviews can reveal patterns in management, workload, pay, or career experience when participation and questions are handled consistently. Compelled naming, anecdotal certainty, and discarded criticism create biased evidence and can chill candid participation. HR should code themes, compare turnover and survey evidence, protect confidentiality limits, and use findings to target improvements. This supports a defensible decision.

113. B — Survey credibility improves when employees hear what was learned, which actions will follow, who owns them, and when progress will be reviewed. Identifiable comments, unlimited promises, and silence can reduce trust and make employees less willing to participate honestly. HR should prioritize manageable actions, communicate updates, protect confidentiality, and track both implementation and outcome measures. This supports a defensible decision.

114. C — Triangulation combines related measures so HR can examine patterns, timing, differences across groups, and effects of an intervention. A single count, rate, or story can be distorted by reporting behavior, workforce mix, business conditions, or unusual experience. HR should define measures,

establish a baseline, protect confidentiality, and reassess results after the intervention. This supports a defensible decision.

115. D — Integrated HR decisions connect employee experience, business objectives, applicable requirements, evidence, stakeholder impact, and follow-through. Speed without assumptions, separated risk categories, and one anecdote can obscure consequences and weaken the organization's response. HR should define the decision, gather relevant data, compare options, document controls, and measure whether the action achieved its purpose. This supports a defensible decision.