

PRACTICE EXAM 9: PHR SIMULATION (115 QUESTIONS)

This standalone practice exam contains 115 questions, representing a 90-question scored framework and 25 pretest-style items for study practice. Allow two hours for testing plus 30 minutes for administrative review. Select the best answer for each item and review the answer key and explanations after completing the exam. Verify the current HRCI handbook for official timing, policies, laws, and scoring; 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.

1. A merger will combine two HR teams with different policies and systems. What should HR do first?
 - A. Announce one team's policies as the immediate company standard
 - B. Inventory obligations, processes, systems, capabilities, and integration risks before selecting a future design
 - C. Move all employees into one system before mapping data and process dependencies
 - D. Choose a new logo and title structure before reviewing workforce obligations

2. Which result best demonstrates that HR has aligned its annual priorities with the organization's strategy?
 - A. A long activity list that names projects but not expected organizational results
 - B. A calendar of HR events that is identical across all business conditions
 - C. A budget request based only on last year's spending and headcount
 - D. Each priority identifies a business outcome, workforce contribution, measure, owner, and review point

3. A shared-services team completed 1,300 HR transactions at a total cost of \$156,000. What was the average cost per transaction?

- A. \$100
- B. \$130
- C. \$120
- D. \$150

4. What is the strongest use of a SWOT analysis in HR planning?

- A. Rank employees by performance without considering market or organizational conditions
- B. Replace workforce data with a list of leaders' general impressions
- C. Connect internal strengths and weaknesses with external opportunities and threats to frame choices
- D. Guarantee that the opportunity with the largest headline value is selected

5. What is the principal limitation of using a single engagement score to guide HR action?

- A. It can conceal response patterns, subgroup differences, causes, and changes that require deeper analysis
- B. It is always invalid because employee surveys cannot provide useful evidence
- C. It proves that every low-scoring manager has violated a policy
- D. It removes the need to communicate results or assign follow-up actions

6. What should an HR analyst verify before comparing turnover rates between two business units?

- A. Use the higher rate as evidence that the unit has weaker leadership
- B. Compare percentages without checking whether temporary workers are included consistently
- C. Exclude the unit with fewer employees because small groups cannot provide any information
- D. Confirm matching definitions, time periods, populations, denominators, and relevant workforce context

7. A new HR policy will affect payroll, IT access, managers, and employees. What stakeholder practice is most effective?

- A. Send one identical message to all groups regardless of their role or information needs
- B. Map influence and impact, tailor engagement, assign decision rights, and communicate dependencies
- C. Consult only the executive sponsor because other stakeholders cannot approve the policy
- D. Wait until launch to discover which groups must change their processes

8. A business leader asks HR to approve an expensive initiative based only on an anecdote from one department. What should HR request?

- A. A larger anecdote from the same department without checking other data
- B. Immediate approval because a senior leader identified the issue
- C. A vendor proposal that assumes the solution without testing the problem
- D. A defined problem supported by representative evidence, options, assumptions, risks, and success measures

9. A company has six HR managers supervising 24 shared-services specialists. What is the average span of control?

- A. 3 specialists per manager
- B. 6 specialists per manager
- C. 4 specialists per manager
- D. 8 specialists per manager

10. Which control is most useful when HR grants a vendor access to employee records?

- A. Limit access by role and purpose, monitor use, define retention, and require secure handling obligations
- B. Provide full-system access because the vendor needs efficient service delivery
- C. Rely on the vendor's reputation instead of documenting access or monitoring expectations
- D. Keep vendor access active indefinitely so future requests can be handled quickly

11. Which action best converts an HR risk assessment into a usable management control?

- A. Record the risk in meeting notes without assigning responsibility
- B. Set a risk owner, response, trigger, due date, and monitoring measure
- C. Rank every risk as high so leadership will pay attention to the list
- D. Remove uncertain risks from reporting until their consequences are proven

12. An HR analyst is asked to predict resignations using employee data. What governance question should come first?

- A. Whether the proposed variables and use are relevant, authorized, secure, and subject to bias monitoring
- B. Whether the model can produce a prediction for every employee regardless of purpose
- C. Whether historical outcomes should be copied exactly because past patterns are objective
- D. Whether managers can receive all model details without access restrictions

13. A company plans to open a distribution center in a region with different labor-market conditions. What should HR analyze?

- A. Only the number of people who applied to the company's current jobs
- B. Availability, skill supply, wage pressure, competition, transportation, demographics, and operating constraints
- C. A national average that ignores regional labor supply and job requirements
- D. The competitor with the most visible recruiting advertisement

14. An employee raises a concern that a manager is steering work to a friend-owned supplier. What should HR preserve first?

- A. Only the manager's explanation because it is the fastest account to obtain
- B. A public statement naming the manager before facts are reviewed
- C. The report, relevant procurement records, conflict disclosures, communications, and decision criteria
- D. The employee's personal opinion while deleting routine business records

15. What is the best reason to pilot a new employee-self-service process before full implementation?

- A. A pilot guarantees that all future implementation problems have been eliminated
- B. A pilot allows HR to avoid defining ownership until the process is widely used
- C. A pilot is useful only for collecting favorable employee comments
- D. A pilot exposes usability, control, communication, accessibility, and workflow problems while changes are still manageable

16. An HR team wants to know whether a manager-training program produced financial value. What should it do?

- A. Use attendance as the financial benefit because every attendee received the training
- B. Report the largest favorable change without considering other business influences
- C. Define the outcome, measure baseline and postprogram results, estimate attributable benefit, and compare program cost
- D. Count participant satisfaction as dollars saved without defining a conversion method

17. Which practice most improves the reliability of an HR audit sample?

- A. Choose only records that are easy to retrieve and appear complete
- B. Define the population and criteria, select a representative sample, and document selection and exceptions
- C. Change the sample after reviewing results so the findings look cleaner
- D. Use one exceptional transaction as proof that the entire control works

18. What should HR include in an annual policy-review calendar?

- A. Policy owner, review date, legal or operational triggers, approval route, version record, and communication plan
- B. A list of policies sorted by length without accountability or timing
- C. A promise to review policies only after an employee challenges them
- D. A manager's informal reminder that replaces controlled review and approval

19. Which message is most appropriate when HR reports a workforce risk to the executive team?

- A. Use alarming language without quantifying the risk or explaining what leaders can do
- B. Present a single recommendation without identifying assumptions or alternatives
- C. Wait to report the risk until every uncertainty has been eliminated
- D. State the exposure, evidence, uncertainty, options, recommendation, owner, and decision requested

20. A company expects demand could be stable, higher, or sharply lower next year. Which workforce-planning output is most useful?

- A. A single headcount number presented as certain regardless of demand changes
- B. A hiring freeze that applies to every scenario without testing business consequences
- C. A list of job titles without timing, skills, location, or financial assumptions
- D. Scenario-based staffing options with assumptions, trigger indicators, capability needs, and cost implications

21. What is the main purpose of a project change-control process?

- A. Prevent every project change even when evidence shows the original plan is no longer viable
- B. Evaluate scope, time, cost, risk, and outcomes before approving a material change
- C. Allow the project sponsor to change requirements privately without updating the team
- D. Record changes only after implementation so the original schedule remains unchanged

22. An HR leader discovers that a dashboard definition changed between quarters. What should happen before trend conclusions are published?

- A. Publish the trend because a changing definition makes the recent result more interesting
- B. Choose whichever definition produces the most favorable leadership narrative
- C. Reconcile the definitions, disclose the break in comparability, and restate or qualify the trend
- D. Delete the earlier data so the dashboard appears internally consistent

23. Which action best reinforces ethical behavior when leaders face pressure to meet an aggressive target?

- A. Model the standard, explain tradeoffs, protect reporting, and reward compliant results rather than outcomes alone
- B. Signal that the target matters more than how employees achieve it
- C. Discourage questions so the team stays focused on execution
- D. Delay ethics communication until after the target has been reached

24. Which crisis-communication practice best supports employees during a rapidly changing disruption?

- A. Send every department's interpretation separately so employees receive more information
- B. Wait for complete certainty before communicating any operational or safety direction
- C. Use a single initial message and avoid updates to prevent confusion
- D. Use a trusted source, confirm what is known, state actions and uncertainties, and provide updates on a set cadence

25. A business expects its product mix to change within eighteen months. What should workforce planning emphasize?

- A. Current job titles only, because future work cannot be estimated
- B. Immediate hiring volume without considering capability development or redeployment
- C. Future skills, role changes, timing, build-or-buy options, and transition risks
- D. A promise to retain every existing role regardless of changing business demand

26. Which item belongs in a job description because it defines a fundamental requirement of the role?

- A. A preferred personality style that the manager finds pleasant
- B. An essential function that describes the work outcome and conditions under which it is performed
- C. A career aspiration that the future incumbent may have
- D. A list of every occasional task ever performed by prior incumbents

27. A recruiter wants to improve outreach to a specialized talent community. Which measure best evaluates the new sourcing channel?

- A. Qualified-candidate conversion and eventual hiring outcomes by source
- B. The number of messages sent without tracking response or qualification
- C. The total size of the talent community's online membership
- D. The number of recruiter hours spent regardless of candidate progress

28. An offer acceptance rate has dropped even though candidate volume is stable. What should HR examine first?

- A. Increase application advertising before reviewing why selected candidates decline
- B. Stop collecting decline reasons because candidates may not provide perfect information
- C. Assume all declines reflect salary and remove noncash rewards from the analysis
- D. Offer competitiveness, process timing, candidate concerns, manager behavior, and the accuracy of job expectations

29. Which selection method is most useful for observing how candidates handle several related job simulations?

- A. A casual conversation in which each candidate receives different prompts
- B. An assessment center using standardized exercises, trained observers, and defined scoring criteria
- C. A single unstructured reference call conducted by the hiring manager
- D. A popularity poll completed by employees who will not supervise the role

30. Department A selected 36 of 120 applicants, while Department B selected 21 of 140 applicants. What is Department B's selection rate?

- A. 15%
- B. 17.5%
- C. 20%
- D. 25%

31. What should HR do when a background report contains information that may belong to another person?

- A. Reject the candidate immediately because a reporting vendor supplied the information
- B. Ask the hiring manager to decide whether the report seems believable
- C. Follow the required notice and dispute process and verify the information before making a final decision
- D. Remove the report from the file and continue without documenting the decision

32. An employee refers a sibling for a position that the employee's spouse will help interview. What should HR recommend?

- A. Allow the family members to decide because they know the candidate's strengths
- B. Ban the candidate automatically even if the candidate meets job requirements
- C. Keep the relationships private if every interviewer promises to be fair
- D. Disclose the relationships, manage conflicts, and keep the candidate in the standard selection process

33. Which practice most strengthens an internal talent marketplace?

- A. Use transparent opportunity descriptions, verified skills, consistent eligibility, and feedback after selection
- B. Offer projects only to employees already known personally by senior leaders
- C. List assignments without describing skills, time commitment, or selection method
- D. Select participants by tenure alone regardless of the project's capability needs

34. A critical role has only one possible successor with limited readiness. What should the succession plan include?

- A. A confidential promise that the successor will receive the role on a fixed date
- B. A list of high performers from unrelated functions without capability comparison
- C. A readiness assessment, targeted development, interim coverage, and additional succession options
- D. No action until the incumbent announces a confirmed departure date

35. A company uses temporary workers during a seasonal surge. Which onboarding control is most important?

- A. Assume the staffing agency's orientation covers every employer-specific requirement
- B. Provide role, safety, conduct, access, reporting, and assignment-specific instructions before work begins
- C. Give temporary workers the full employee handbook but no role or safety briefing
- D. Delay access and instructions until a temporary worker has made an error

36. A sourcing algorithm favors applicants who resemble prior hires. What should HR do before using it broadly?

- A. Deploy it because similarity to successful prior hires proves objectivity
- B. Remove all protected-group fields and assume indirect effects cannot occur
- C. Use the algorithm only for finalists so any impact is too small to matter
- D. Test job-relatedness and selection outcomes across groups, document limitations, and retain human oversight

37. Which element is most useful in a manager's 30-60-90-day onboarding plan?

- A. Sequenced outcomes, relationships, resources, learning, check-ins, and evidence of increasing independence
- B. A single orientation meeting followed by unrestricted independent work
- C. A list of company traditions with no role-specific expectations or timing
- D. A promise that the manager will receive a favorable rating after ninety days

38. A finalist asks whether the offer can include a different start date and a professional-development allowance. What should HR do?

- A. Promise both requests immediately so the candidate does not consider other offers
- B. Clarify approved flexibility, assess internal equity and budget, document terms, and obtain authorized approval
- C. Reject the requests because every offer must use identical terms in every situation
- D. Let the hiring manager agree informally without recording the final conditions

39. What is a useful way to assess candidate experience during a lengthy hiring process?

- A. Ask only successful hires whether the process felt positive after they start
- B. Use application volume as a substitute for candidate experience evidence
- C. Collect timely feedback at key stages and compare it with cycle time, withdrawal, and acceptance patterns
- D. Avoid collecting feedback because dissatisfied candidates may be biased

40. Which employment-branding message is most credible to applicants?

- A. A universal claim that the organization is perfect for every applicant
- B. A slogan focused on awards without explaining the day-to-day work
- C. A specific, evidence-supported description of work, leadership practices, development, and employee experience
- D. A promise of rapid advancement that is not supported by career data

41. A hiring manager repeatedly misses the approved requisition-response deadline. What should HR do?

- A. Accept the delay because manager response time cannot be influenced
- B. Clarify the service standard, identify the barrier, assign accountability, and monitor future cycle time
- C. Close the requisition without checking demand, ownership, or process constraints
- D. Escalate every delay as misconduct before examining workload and decision dependencies

42. A quality problem appears after employees begin using a new workflow. What should HR investigate before ordering training?

- A. Whether the gap comes from knowledge, process design, tools, workload, incentives, or unclear expectations
- B. Whether the organization can fill every classroom seat in the next month
- C. Which course has the highest number of modules and discussion questions
- D. Whether employees attended the previous annual training regardless of current performance

43. Which learning practice best reflects adult learners' need for relevance and autonomy?

- A. Require identical memorization activities without explaining their workplace value
- B. Deliver all content through lecture and postpone questions until the final assessment
- C. Assume experienced employees need no learning support because they already know the organization
- D. Connect learning to a real work problem, invite participation, and provide choices for practice or application

44. Which learning objective is most measurable for a new investigation-intake course?

- A. Participants will appreciate the importance of complete investigation records
- B. Participants will understand how investigations support a fair workplace
- C. Participants will learn about several ways HR can respond to concerns
- D. After practice, participants will record all required intake fields and route the case using the defined procedure

45. An employee with strong technical skills struggles to give useful feedback. Which development approach is most appropriate?

- A. Assign a compliance course that does not include feedback practice or observation
- B. Wait for the annual review so the employee receives one formal conversation about the issue
- C. Use coaching with observation, specific feedback, practice, and follow-up on the target behavior
- D. Promote the employee to a higher role to create more opportunities to learn by trial and error

46. Which evaluation evidence best shows that a leadership program influenced business results?

- A. Participants report that the facilitator was engaging immediately after class
- B. A defined outcome improves after training with credible comparison evidence and a documented attribution approach
- C. All registered leaders complete the required modules and receive certificates
- D. The training room receives positive ratings for technology and refreshments

47. A required virtual course cannot be completed by an employee using keyboard navigation. What should HR do?

- A. Review accessibility, engage the employee, and provide an effective accessible way to complete the requirement
- B. Excuse the employee from the course because the platform is already selected
- C. Require the employee to find and pay for a different course independently
- D. Postpone completion indefinitely without evaluating the platform or alternative format

48. A new supervisor learned a scheduling process but does not apply it consistently. What transfer intervention should HR recommend?

- A. Send the supervisor the original slide deck again without involving the manager
- B. Treat the issue as a knowledge failure without observing work or checking process conditions
- C. Close the program because the supervisor passed the end-of-course quiz
- D. Manager reinforcement through job aids, practice, observation, feedback, and consequences for missed standards

49. A learning team is asked to train facilitators who will deliver the same safety module at multiple sites. What control is best?

- A. Allow each facilitator to rewrite the core safety content for personal teaching style
- B. Select facilitators based only on seniority and assume delivery quality will be equivalent
- C. Certify facilitators through standard content, practice observation, feedback, and periodic quality checks
- D. Use participant attendance as the sole measure of facilitator effectiveness

50. A retiring engineer holds critical troubleshooting knowledge that is rarely written down. Which transfer method is strongest?

- A. Use interviews, shadowing, demonstrations, practice, and documented decision rules with named recipients
- B. Ask the engineer to prepare one final presentation without identifying who will apply it
- C. Store the engineer's performance reviews as a substitute for process knowledge
- D. Wait until a failure occurs and then ask whoever is available to reconstruct the method

51. A customer-support representative needs a rare policy exception during live calls. What support is most useful?

- A. A quarterly lecture covering every policy even when no customer is waiting
- B. A searchable, current decision aid that states eligibility, escalation triggers, and required documentation
- C. A motivational message that encourages judgment without describing the exception rules
- D. A performance rating label that records errors but provides no decision guidance

52. An employee wants to move into a project-management career path. What should a development discussion produce?

- A. A capability gap analysis, realistic experiences, support, milestones, and evidence for a future readiness review
- B. A guaranteed promotion date without examining role requirements or demonstrated capability
- C. A list of optional courses with no application opportunity or manager accountability
- D. A promise that career movement depends only on the employee's personal enthusiasm

53. What should HR examine when mandatory training completion is high but related policy violations continue?

- A. Add more slides to the course without testing its objective or workplace application
- B. Conclude that employees intentionally violate policy because completion records are high
- C. Learning transfer, assessment quality, manager reinforcement, process barriers, and whether the course addresses the actual risk
- D. Stop measuring violations because completion already demonstrates program success

54. A total-rewards survey shows employees value development but do not understand available opportunities. What should HR do?

- A. Add a new benefit without explaining current development resources or access rules
- B. Clarify the rewards proposition, connect opportunities to career goals, and make access and eligibility understandable
- C. Publish a long catalog of programs without showing how employees can use them
- D. Assume employees who want development will find the information without manager support

55. A nonexempt employee works remotely and answers messages after recording the day's hours. What should HR recommend?

- A. Ignore the extra time because the employee was outside the workplace
- B. Pay the employee only if the manager had approved the messages in advance
- C. Convert the employee to exempt status so future message time need not be tracked
- D. Record all time worked, correct the record, and reinforce controls against off-the-clock work

56. Which job-evaluation practice best supports a defensible internal pay structure?

- A. Compare jobs using consistent factors such as responsibility, knowledge, effort, and working conditions
- B. Place jobs into grades by title prestige and executive preference
- C. Use incumbent salary history as the primary measure of job value
- D. Assign value based only on the number of employees who hold the job

57. An employee earns \$64,000 and the salary-range midpoint is \$60,000. What is the employee's compa-ratio?

- A. 95%
- B. 100%
- C. 106.67%
- D. 115%

58. Which feature most improves the credibility of a sales-incentive plan?

- A. A discretionary award with criteria disclosed only after results are known
- B. An easy-to-measure volume target that ignores quality and customer outcomes
- C. A complex formula that managers may interpret differently across teams
- D. Defined measures, thresholds, weights, timing, governance, and a documented process for correcting errors

59. An internal pay review finds a group difference after controlling for job level and tenure. What should HR do next?

- A. Assume the remaining difference is harmless because two factors were controlled
- B. Investigate remaining legitimate factors and unexplained patterns, then evaluate targeted corrective action
- C. Raise every salary to the highest observed amount without reviewing the cause
- D. Remove group information so leaders cannot see whether the pattern persists

60. A manager asks whether a salaried employee is automatically exempt from overtime. What should HR explain?

- A. Any salaried employee is exempt because salary replaces time records
- B. The employee is exempt if the manager believes the role is professional
- C. Exemption is determined only by the employee's job title and reporting level
- D. Exemption depends on applicable salary and duties requirements, not salary label alone

61. What should HR verify before an employee is enrolled in a benefit plan?

- A. Only the employee's job title because titles determine every benefit rule
- B. That the employee has selected the most expensive option available
- C. Eligibility, effective date, election, dependent information, required notices, and plan-specific documentation
- D. The manager's preference for which coverage the employee should receive

62. Which statement best describes a common distinction between an HSA and a health FSA?

- A. An HSA is generally individually owned, while an FSA is generally established through an employer plan with plan-specific carryover rules
- B. An HSA is a retirement account, while an FSA can be used only for dependent care
- C. An FSA is always portable after employment ends, while an HSA must be forfeited
- D. Both accounts have identical eligibility, ownership, contribution, and carryover rules

63. A health plan costs \$540,000 annually for 900 enrolled participants. What is the average annual cost per participant?

- A. \$450
- B. \$600
- C. \$675
- D. \$900

64. An employer changes a retirement-plan contribution formula. What should HR communicate before the change takes effect?

- A. Only the new contribution percentage, leaving employees to infer its practical effect
- B. The effective date, eligibility, formula, examples, employee actions, and source for governing plan information
- C. A manager's informal explanation that may differ from the approved plan notice
- D. The change after payroll is processed so employees can see the result first

65. Which recognition practice most effectively reinforces a stated organizational value?

- A. Give identical praise to all employees regardless of behavior or timing
- B. Recognize only contributions visible to senior executives
- C. Recognize a specific behavior promptly and explain how it reflected the value or produced a meaningful result
- D. Use recognition awards to replace competitive pay and adequate working conditions

66. How should HR benchmark compensation for a specialized technical role?

- A. Match substantially similar work by responsibilities, scope, requirements, market, and reliable survey methodology
- B. Use the same job title from any survey even when the work differs
- C. Select the highest reported salary to make the offer competitive
- D. Compare only the manager's preferred peer organization regardless of data quality

67. Which safeguard is most useful in a variable-pay plan that rewards production volume?

- A. Pay on volume alone because it is the easiest measure to verify
- B. Allow managers to waive quality concerns for top producers without documentation
- C. Change performance definitions after the period to reduce unexpected payouts
- D. Add quality, safety, compliance, and customer measures or gates before determining the final payout

68. A wellness initiative cost \$72,000 and had 160 participating employees. What was the cost per participant?

- A. \$360
- B. \$450
- C. \$480
- D. \$600

69. How should HR evaluate flexibility as part of total rewards?

- A. Offer the same arrangement to every role regardless of work requirements
- B. Remove flexibility because noncash rewards cannot be measured or governed
- C. Let managers decide privately without criteria, documentation, or review
- D. Assess employee value, job feasibility, manager consistency, access patterns, and effects on performance and retention

70. A payroll audit finds repeated corrections after pay files are transmitted. What control should HR prioritize?

- A. Fix each employee's payment without investigating the process that creates repeated errors
- B. Ask managers to approve final payroll totals without reviewing individual changes
- C. Reconcile payroll inputs and outputs, segregate review, document corrections, and analyze recurring causes
- D. Stop retaining payroll correction records once the employee is paid

71. Employees compare their wages in a group chat and jointly ask for a schedule change. What should HR assess?

- A. Whether the discussion and joint request concern protected concerted activity about working conditions
- B. Whether the employees used company time, without reviewing the purpose or surrounding conduct
- C. Whether a union has been certified before any employee discussion can be protected
- D. Whether criticism is protected only when employees use respectful language

72. During a union representation campaign, which supervisor response is safest when employees ask how management feels?

- A. Ask each employee privately whether they support the union so concerns can be addressed
- B. Promise better schedules if employees reject representation
- C. Refer employees to approved factual information without threats, interrogation, promises, or surveillance
- D. Tell employees that management will track who attends organizing meetings

73. A union-represented employee requests a steward before answering questions in an investigatory meeting that could result in discipline. What should HR do?

- A. Continue because representation is never available in an employer investigation
- B. Pause the meeting and either provide representation, end the interview, or choose another lawful option
- C. Require the employee to prove that discipline is likely before pausing
- D. Allow the supervisor to decide whether the request was made sincerely

74. A grievance alleges that a scheduling practice violates a specific bargaining-agreement clause. What should HR do first?

- A. Review the clause and past practice, gather facts, track deadlines, and respond through the agreed process
- B. Deny the grievance because the manager says the schedule is operationally convenient
- C. Ignore the deadline until the next contract negotiation
- D. Ask the employee to withdraw it before HR reviews the agreement

75. An employee reports unsafe equipment and then loses desirable shifts from the supervisor who received the report. What should HR assess?

- A. Whether the supervisor says the shift decision was necessary, without reviewing timing or comparators
- B. Whether the safety report should be closed before the schedule decision is examined
- C. Whether all schedule changes should be frozen permanently after any safety concern
- D. Whether the schedule change is retaliatory, inconsistent, unsupported, or otherwise adverse

76. An employee asks to swap a recurring shift for a religious observance. What should HR recommend?

- A. Deny the request because every employee must follow the same schedule without exception
- B. Ask coworkers to decide whether the observance is sufficiently important
- C. Evaluate a reasonable accommodation through individualized discussion unless it creates undue hardship
- D. Require resignation if the employee cannot accept the original schedule

77. An employee discloses a disability-related limitation and asks to change how an essential task is performed. What should HR do?

- A. Demand a complete diagnosis before discussing any possible adjustment
- B. Begin an interactive process focused on functional limits, essential functions, and effective accommodations
- C. Tell the employee that only the requested accommodation can be considered
- D. Wait until the employee fails the task before discussing workplace options

78. A pregnant employee asks for a temporary lifting restriction and additional restroom breaks. What should HR do?

- A. Require leave before discussing temporary changes to the work
- B. Deny the request because the employee has not missed a scheduled shift
- C. Require the employee to find a permanent coworker replacement
- D. Consider a reasonable accommodation for the known limitation and avoid requiring leave when another effective option exists

79. An employee requests leave for a serious health condition. What should HR verify before designating the absence as FMLA leave?

- A. Employer coverage, employee eligibility, qualifying reason, notice, and applicable certification requirements
- B. Only whether the employee has used all vacation before making the request
- C. That one day of work is enough to establish eligibility at any covered employer
- D. That the employee's manager personally approves the medical reason

80. A manager tells an employee that using intermittent FMLA leave will damage promotion prospects. What should HR investigate?

- A. A routine career conversation unrelated to the employee's leave request
- B. Potential interference and retaliation connected to the employee's protected leave rights
- C. A health-plan election issue that can be fixed by changing coverage
- D. A personal scheduling preference with no protected-leave implications

81. An employee returns from qualifying military service and asks to resume the career progression that would likely have occurred during service. What should guide HR?

- A. Place the employee in any available role because service ended the prior employment relationship
- B. Require a new competition for the former position in every case
- C. Give service credit only if the employee can prove new skills were learned
- D. USERRA reemployment and escalator principles, subject to the statute's conditions and exceptions

82. A worker reports a blocked emergency exit and asks whether the concern will affect the worker's hours. What should HR do?

- A. Ask the worker to clear the exit personally before involving safety staff
- B. Wait until an incident occurs before investigating the condition
- C. Escalate the hazard promptly, protect the report, and assess possible retaliation
- D. Close the concern if a supervisor says the exit is usually unused

83. An employee returns after an injury with written restrictions on standing and lifting. What should HR do before scheduling regular duties?

- A. Follow the restrictions and coordinate workers' compensation, safety, and accommodation processes as applicable
- B. Let the supervisor decide whether the restrictions seem necessary
- C. Ignore them if the employee says the work feels manageable
- D. Require a waiver accepting any risk from unrestricted assignments

84. A harassment complaint names a high-ranking executive whose direct reports are potential witnesses. What investigation design is best?

- A. Assign the executive's direct report so the investigation remains within the department
- B. Ask the complainant to confront the executive before collecting other accounts
- C. Use an impartial investigator with authority, a defined scope, protected evidence, and appropriate witness access
- D. Wait for another complaint before deciding whether the matter warrants review

85. A manager wants to skip a written warning because the employee's conduct is embarrassing to the department. What should HR advise?

- A. Apply the policy consistently, document facts, consider proportionality, and give clear notice of required improvement
- B. Skip documentation because embarrassment makes the conduct self-evident
- C. Use the most severe penalty so the issue cannot recur
- D. Let the manager create a private discipline process for this employee

86. A manager recommends termination soon after an employee reports discrimination. What should HR review before approving it?

- A. Only whether the manager sounds confident about the recommendation
- B. Every performance decision made after a complaint, regardless of evidence or timing
- C. The employee's complaint history without reviewing the stated performance record
- D. Protected activity, timing, evidence, comparators, legitimate reasons, and consistency of the decision process

87. What should a final written warning communicate to an employee?

- A. A broad label such as poor attitude without examples or an expected change
- B. Specific conduct, the applicable standard, required improvement, support, timeframe, and possible consequences
- C. Only the penalty, without describing the conduct or standard involved
- D. A promise that further action will never occur if the employee apologizes

88. Which performance note is most useful if a later employment decision is challenged?

- A. A personality description written months later without a dated example
- B. A timely factual example linked to expectations, impact, employee response, and follow-up
- C. A conclusion that omits the behavior so the note remains brief
- D. A copied comment from a prior review even though the job has changed

89. An attendance system counts approved jury duty and protected medical leave as ordinary points. What should HR do?

- A. Apply the points equally because identical treatment is always lawful
- B. Delete the policy and let each supervisor decide which absences matter
- C. Discipline only employees who have raised concerns about the system
- D. Remove protected or legally required absences from ordinary attendance consequences before applying the policy

90. An employee posts with coworkers about unsafe staffing and invites them to sign a joint request. How should HR assess the post?

- A. Remove it automatically because workplace criticism is never protected
- B. Discipline the author for mentioning staffing before reviewing context and policy
- C. Determine whether it is protected concerted activity and apply workplace rules neutrally
- D. Require the employee to identify every coworker who agreed before assessing protection

91. A facility closure may eliminate 65 positions. What should HR determine before announcing the closure date?

- A. Applicable coverage, employment-loss thresholds, timing, exceptions, and notice obligations
- B. Only whether the site leader prefers an immediate announcement
- C. Which communication format employees prefer, without analyzing statutory requirements
- D. Whether severance payments automatically replace any notice obligation

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

- A. Tell the employee to call the insurer without checking eligibility or timing
- B. End access immediately without explaining available continuation options
- C. Accurate continuation notices, election deadlines, coverage information, and a dependable contact process
- D. Provide only the premium and omit election procedures or coverage dates

93. A preservation notice is issued after an employment charge. Which records-control step should HR take?

- A. Continue deletion because storage costs are increasing
- B. Keep only records that support the employer's preferred position
- C. Edit informal notes before placing them in the case file
- D. Suspend routine deletion, preserve potentially relevant records, and identify custodians and systems

94. When can paid administrative leave be a defensible interim investigation measure?

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

95. What should a handbook acknowledgment primarily document?

- A. That the employee received or accessed the handbook and knows where to ask questions or report concerns
- B. That the employee waived statutory rights by signing the acknowledgment
- C. That every policy is a permanent employment contract
- D. That the employee cannot challenge conduct inconsistent with the handbook

96. An employee resigns in a jurisdiction with special final-pay rules. What should HR verify before instructing payroll?

- A. The employer's ordinary payday, because it applies everywhere
- B. Completion of every exit task before any wages are released
- C. The manager's preferred payment date based on the resignation reason
- D. The applicable jurisdictional rule, separation type, policy, deductions, and payroll facts

97. A company with 115 full-time employees plans a facility closure affecting 68 full-time employees. What should HR do before notices are drafted?

- A. Assume coverage solely because 68 employees are affected
- B. Analyze applicable WARN coverage, employment-loss facts, timing, thresholds, and exceptions
- C. Assume severance automatically replaces any required notice
- D. Announce the closure first and assess coverage after employee reactions

98. An employee sends a credible threat naming a specific coworker and time. What should HR prioritize?

- A. Promise absolute secrecy and wait for the next routine HR meeting
- B. Ask the named coworker to determine whether the threat is serious
- C. Immediate safety assessment, emergency or threat-management coordination, evidence preservation, and interim protection
- D. Delete the message after reading it to limit workplace anxiety

99. A high-performing manager asks for an exception to a conduct policy. What should HR require before approving it?

- A. Objective criteria, documented rationale, authorized approval, duration, and review of consistency impact
- B. Approval because high performance makes policy exceptions harmless
- C. Automatic denial without considering the policy purpose or facts
- D. A verbal arrangement so other employees cannot compare treatment

100. How should an investigator organize a complicated complaint involving several witnesses and documents?

- A. Define allegations and scope, sequence evidence, prepare neutral questions, and explain confidentiality limits
- B. Decide the outcome first and interview only witnesses who support it
- C. Promise every participant that no information will ever be shared
- D. Interview the complainant alone to avoid adding complexity to the case

101. An employee who reported discrimination remains under the accused manager. Which control best monitors retaliation risk?

- A. Ask the employee to report only if the manager admits retaliatory intent
- B. Transfer the employee automatically regardless of preferences or business impact
- C. End monitoring when the initial investigation closes
- D. Use scheduled follow-ups, review relevant decisions and comparators, and provide a channel for new concerns

102. A manager needs to implement an accommodation but asks for the employee's diagnosis. What should HR explain?

- A. Provide the full diagnosis so the manager can judge the employee's limitations
- B. Share no implementation information, including the work change required
- C. Share only functional information necessary to implement the accommodation and protect medical confidentiality
- D. Tell coworkers the medical details so the schedule appears fair

103. A union-represented employee requests a steward before a disciplinary investigation continues. What should HR do?

- A. Continue questioning because a steward could delay the investigation
- B. Pause the interview and either provide representation, end the interview, or choose another lawful option
- C. Tell the employee the request demonstrates guilt
- D. Ask one additional question before honoring the request

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

- A. Notify the employee of the deficiency and provide the applicable opportunity to cure or clarify it
- B. Deny the leave immediately without identifying missing information
- C. Ask the employee's supervisor to diagnose the condition and finish the form
- D. Accept every incomplete form because HR cannot review medical information

105. Which practice best reflects USERRA's protection against discrimination?

- A. Treat service-related absence as evidence of reduced promotion commitment
- B. Require service members to disclose protected obligations to coworkers
- C. Do not use military service, service obligations, or protected rights as a negative employment factor
- D. Limit assignments when military duties may interrupt the employee's schedule

106. What safeguard should HR prioritize before launching a workplace drug-testing program?

- A. Test only employees whom individual managers suspect without written standards
- B. Announce testing after samples are collected so employees cannot ask questions
- C. Let each department choose different standards for the same job
- D. Clear criteria, lawful procedures, privacy controls, consistent administration, and defined response steps

107. A reduction in force will remove 18 jobs from one function. Which selection method is most defensible?

- A. Select the lowest-paid employees without reviewing role needs or protected-group effects
- B. Use documented job-related criteria, check consistency and potential disparate impact, and preserve approvals
- C. Let each manager choose a preferred employee without a common process
- D. Use tenure automatically even when an agreement or business criteria require another method

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

- A. When HR wants to avoid investigating a credible harassment or safety allegation
- B. When one party must accept the other party's proposed outcome
- C. When participation is voluntary, the facilitator is neutral, and participants have authority to reach an informed resolution
- D. When the facilitator has already decided who is responsible

109. A collective-bargaining agreement contains a management-rights clause, but a proposed schedule change conflicts with past practice. What should HR do?

- A. Implement immediately because management rights always remove bargaining duties
- B. Ignore past practice because only written contract language matters
- C. Ask employees to vote individually instead of following the labor process
- D. Review contract language, past practice, and bargaining obligations before implementing the change

110. An employee describes repeated inappropriate comments but does not use legal terms or request a formal investigation. What should HR do?

- A. Refuse to record it until the employee uses the correct legal label
- B. Record the concern, explain process and confidentiality limits, and assess safety, retaliation, and escalation needs
- C. Take no action without a signed complaint form
- D. Promise that the information will never be shared with anyone

111. An employee reports a possible recordable injury involving a machine guard. What should the employer do?

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

112. How should HR design voluntary exit interviews to produce useful retention evidence?

- A. Require departing employees to name coworkers before recording feedback
- B. Treat every comment as proof of causation without checking other evidence
- C. Use consistent questions, explain confidentiality limits, protect participation, and compare themes with other data
- D. Discard criticism of a manager because negative feedback cannot be useful

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

- A. Identifiable comments published to demonstrate transparency
- B. Themes, prioritized actions, owners, timing, and limits while protecting respondent confidentiality
- C. A promise to adopt every requested change immediately
- D. No response until the next annual survey is completed

114. Which evidence combination gives the clearest view of employee-relations climate?

- A. Use formal complaint counts without considering reporting behavior or other measures
- B. Use annual turnover alone without comparison or workforce context
- C. Use one positive employee story as proof that conditions are healthy
- D. Triangulate complaints, turnover, absence, surveys, cases, and outcomes with context

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

- A. Connect employee experience, law, evidence, stakeholder impact, controls, and follow-through
- B. Select the fastest option without documenting assumptions or ownership
- C. Handle legal risk and employee experience as unrelated workstreams
- D. Rely on one manager's anecdote instead of broader evidence and comparison

Practice Exam 9: Answer Key and Explanations

1. B — Merger planning begins with due diligence because policies, systems, obligations, capabilities, and data dependencies shape integration choices. Premature standardization, system migration, or branding can hide liabilities and disrupt essential employee services. HR should map the current states, identify legal and operational gaps, rank risks, and sequence decisions with accountable sponsors. This supports a defensible decision.

2. D — Strategic alignment is visible when HR work explains how people actions contribute to business outcomes and how progress will be evaluated. Activities, calendars, and historical budgets may be useful inputs but do not establish contribution, accountability, or changing business relevance. HR should connect priorities to strategy, define measures and owners, review assumptions, and stop work no longer serving the objective.

3. C — Average cost per transaction equals total cost divided by transactions: \$156,000 divided by 1,300 equals \$120. The other amounts use a different divisor or arithmetic result and therefore do not represent the average cost for the stated work. HR should define which transactions and costs are included, use the same period, and interpret efficiency with service quality and complexity.

4. C — SWOT organizes internal capabilities and limitations alongside external conditions so leaders can compare strategic options. Employee rankings, impressions, and headline value alone do not reveal dependencies, feasibility, exposure, or strategic fit. HR should support each quadrant with evidence,

identify implications, and translate the analysis into choices, owners, and measures. This supports a defensible decision.

5. A — An aggregate score summarizes sentiment but can hide variation by team, item, demographic, timing, response rate, and underlying cause. Rejecting all survey evidence, assuming misconduct, or skipping follow-up ignores how a measure should inform rather than replace analysis. HR should review distributions, comments, response quality, trends, and related outcomes before selecting targeted interventions. This supports a defensible decision.

6. D — Turnover comparisons are meaningful only when numerator, denominator, period, population, and context are defined consistently. A higher rate, inconsistent temporary-worker treatment, or automatic exclusion can produce misleading conclusions about causes or performance. HR should document definitions, examine stability and segmentation, investigate causes, and explain limits before recommending action. This supports a defensible decision.

7. B — Stakeholder planning improves adoption by identifying influence, impact, information needs, dependencies, and the right engagement method. Uniform messaging, sponsor-only consultation, and launch-time discovery leave affected groups unprepared and decision gaps unresolved. HR should involve process owners early, define escalation routes, test communications, and update the map as implementation evidence changes. This supports a defensible decision.

8. D — Evidence-informed recommendations test whether a problem is material, representative, solvable, and worth the proposed investment. More anecdotes, seniority, or an assumed vendor solution does not establish scale, root cause, cost, feasibility, or expected value. HR should triangulate data, compare alternatives, document uncertainty, and define how leaders will judge the initiative's results. This supports a defensible decision.

9. C — Average span of control equals specialists divided by managers: 24 divided by 6 equals 4 specialists per manager. Three, six, and eight result from using the wrong numerator, denominator, or arithmetic relationship for the stated structure. HR should treat the average as a starting point and also examine complexity, manager capability, service demands, and employee support needs.

10. A — Access governance reduces exposure by limiting information to a defined need and creating accountability for use, monitoring, retention, and security. Full access, reputation, and indefinite permissions increase privacy and security risk without proving appropriate handling. HR should document the purpose, role permissions, contract controls, review cadence, incident process, and access termination steps. This supports a defensible decision.

11. B — A risk becomes manageable when ownership, response, timing, triggers, and monitoring make it possible to act before exposure grows. Unassigned notes, universal high ratings, and delayed reporting do not prioritize action or create accountability. HR should review controls and residual exposure regularly, escalate material changes, and close risks only with documented evidence. This supports a defensible decision.

12. A — Workforce analytics should test purpose, relevance, authorization, data quality, security, fairness, and how decisions will use predictions. Universal prediction, unexamined historical patterns, and unrestricted access can amplify bias or expose sensitive employee information. HR should define permissible use, validate variables, monitor outcomes, protect access, and retain human review of consequential decisions. This supports a defensible decision.

13. B — Location planning requires a local view of talent availability, skills, compensation pressure, competition, demographics, and practical constraints. Current applicants, national averages, and advertising visibility are incomplete indicators of the actual labor market and operating feasibility. HR should gather local evidence, model scenarios, identify sourcing and retention risks, and update assumptions as the site plan develops. This supports a defensible decision.

14. C — Preserving a neutral evidence set supports fair assessment of a possible conflict, including the decision, relationship, process, and impact. One explanation, public accusation, or selective deletion can bias the review and damage credibility or evidence. HR should secure records, set confidentiality expectations, coordinate an impartial review, and protect participants from retaliation. This supports a defensible decision.

15. D — Piloting creates a controlled opportunity to test the process with real users, evidence, controls, and support requirements. It cannot guarantee perfection, replace ownership, or serve only as a search for favorable comments. HR should define pilot criteria, collect diverse feedback, correct defects, and document the evidence supporting scale-up. This supports a defensible decision.

16. C — A value analysis requires a defined outcome, credible comparison, benefit assumptions, cost boundary, and a transparent attribution method. Attendance, a favorable change, or satisfaction alone does not show causation or convert an experience into a financial benefit. HR should document the method, test sensitivity, state limitations, and use the result with strategic and nonfinancial evidence. This supports a defensible decision.

17. B — Audit reliability depends on a defined population, objective criteria, appropriate sampling, traceable evidence, and consistent exception handling. Convenience selection, changing the sample, and one transaction can create selection bias and unsupported conclusions. HR should preserve the sampling method, investigate exceptions, assess exposure, assign remediation, and retest the control. This supports a defensible decision.

18. A — A review calendar makes policy maintenance accountable and responsive to legal changes, operational triggers, approvals, versions, and communication. Length, post-challenge review, and informal reminders do not ensure that important policies are current or consistently published. HR should prioritize high-risk policies, record decisions, archive prior versions, and verify that affected users receive changes. This supports a defensible decision.

19. D — Executives need a decision-ready view that distinguishes facts, uncertainty, alternatives, recommended controls, ownership, and the requested action. Alarm, hidden assumptions, or indefinite delay can distort urgency and prevent proportionate decisions. HR should tailor the message to the

audience, invite challenge, document the decision, and set a follow-up measure and date. This supports a defensible decision.

20. D — Scenario planning converts uncertainty into choices by showing workforce, capability, timing, cost, and trigger implications for plausible futures. One forecast, universal freeze, or title list cannot help leaders act when demand or operating conditions change. HR should agree on signals and decision thresholds, then update scenarios as evidence changes and maintain continuity options. This supports a defensible decision.

21. B — Change control protects project objectives by assessing how a proposed change affects scope, resources, timing, risk, and benefits. Blanket prevention, private changes, and late recording can create hidden work, conflicting expectations, and uncontrolled risk. HR should document the request, impact analysis, approval, revised baseline, communication, and postchange outcome. This supports a defensible decision.

22. C — Trend interpretation requires stable definitions or transparent adjustment because a measurement change can mimic a real workforce change. Interest, favorable storytelling, and deleted history undermine analytical integrity and can mislead decision-makers. HR should document the change, rebuild comparable periods when feasible, label limitations, and establish governance for future revisions. This supports a defensible decision.

23. A — Ethical culture is reinforced when leaders model standards, make safe reporting possible, and recognize how results are achieved. Outcome-only pressure, silenced questions, and delayed communication can encourage misconduct and hide emerging risks. HR should coach leaders, review incentive signals, monitor concerns, and align consequences with both conduct and performance. This supports a defensible decision.

24. D — Crisis communication builds trust through a reliable source, clear facts, transparent uncertainty, practical actions, and predictable updates. Conflicting messages, silence until certainty, or one static message can increase anxiety and produce unsafe or inconsistent behavior. HR should coordinate with safety and leadership, maintain accessible channels, track questions, and revise guidance as facts develop. This supports a defensible decision.

25. C — Workforce planning connects anticipated business changes to future skills, roles, timing, sourcing, development, redeployment, and risk. Titles, immediate volume, or unconditional role guarantees do not prepare leaders for changing work or capability requirements. HR should model scenarios, identify critical skills, compare build and buy options, and sequence transitions with affected leaders. This supports a defensible decision.

26. B — A job description should communicate essential functions, responsibilities, outcomes, and relevant conditions that define the position. Personality preference, career aspiration, and every historical task can distract from what is truly required for the job. HR should validate essential functions with knowledgeable stakeholders, distinguish requirements from preferences, and review the description when work changes. This supports a defensible decision.

27. A — A sourcing channel should be evaluated by how it produces qualified candidates and hires, not by activity or audience size alone. Messages, membership, and recruiter hours measure effort or potential reach but do not show quality, progression, or hiring value. HR should define source stages, compare quality and speed, monitor subgroup outcomes, and refine outreach using evidence.

28. D — Offer acceptance reflects the full candidate experience, including value, timing, trust, manager interaction, expectations, and alternatives. More applications, discarded feedback, or a salary-only assumption can miss process, role, leadership, or flexibility concerns. HR should analyze decline reasons by role and recruiter, review competing offers, and test targeted changes with follow-up measures. This supports a defensible decision.

29. B — Assessment centers combine job-related exercises with trained observation and defined scoring to evaluate multiple competencies. Casual conversation, one unstructured reference, or popularity does not provide consistent evidence across candidates or tasks. HR should validate exercises, train observers, document evidence, provide accessibility support, and monitor selection outcomes. This supports a defensible decision.

30. A — Department B's selection rate equals selections divided by applicants: 21 divided by 140 equals 0.15, or 15 percent. The other percentages result from using Department A's numerator, a different denominator, or a miscalculated percentage. HR should calculate each group's rate consistently, examine selection stages and sample size, and investigate potential impact rather than relying on one figure.

31. C — Potentially inaccurate background information requires a controlled review, notice, opportunity to dispute, and verification before final action. Vendor reliance, manager intuition, or deletion does not protect against an inaccurate report or create a transparent decision record. HR should coordinate authorization, disclosure, notices, timing, dispute handling, and retention with the responsible process owner. This supports a defensible decision.

32. D — Disclosure and recusal help protect an objective process when family relationships could influence or appear to influence selection. Personal knowledge, automatic exclusion, or private assurances do not provide transparent conflict management or consistent opportunity. HR should apply the conflict policy, use independent evaluators, document job-related evidence, and monitor the decision for consistency. This supports a defensible decision.

33. A — An internal marketplace works when employees can understand opportunities, present relevant skills, and access a consistent process. Leader familiarity, incomplete listings, and tenure-only decisions can restrict access and disconnect assignments from capability needs. HR should govern data, protect employee choice, train managers, and review participation and outcomes across workforce groups. This supports a defensible decision.

34. C — Succession risk is reduced through evidence of readiness, development, continuity coverage, and more than one feasible option. Promises, unrelated high performers, and delayed action do not protect critical work when timing or business conditions change. HR should validate future role requirements, assign development owners, document contingencies, and revisit the pool periodically. This supports a defensible decision.

35. B — Temporary workers need employer-specific information about duties, safety, conduct, access, supervision, reporting, and assignment limits. Agency orientation, a handbook alone, or error-driven instruction may leave important local requirements and hazards unaddressed. HR should coordinate responsibilities with the agency, document completion, confirm supervision, and monitor the assignment's actual conditions. This supports a defensible decision.

36. D — Historical hiring data can encode prior bias, so algorithm governance requires relevance, outcome testing, monitoring, and accountability. Similarity, field removal, or limiting use does not eliminate proxy variables or unequal effects on protected groups. HR should validate the tool, monitor selection patterns, preserve an alternative review route, and stop use when risks are unresolved. This supports a defensible decision.

37. A — A staged plan supports early effectiveness by connecting role outcomes, relationships, resources, learning, feedback, and increasing responsibility. One meeting, traditions, or a rating promise does not establish the support or evidence needed for a successful transition. HR should provide a reusable framework while allowing managers to tailor milestones, access, check-ins, and development to the role. This supports a defensible decision.

38. B — Offer negotiation should balance candidate needs with budget, internal equity, policy, approval authority, and accurate written terms. Immediate promises, blanket refusal, or informal agreement can create inconsistency, unmet expectations, and unauthorized commitments. HR should establish boundaries, compare relevant employees, document approved terms, and ensure the final offer accurately reflects the agreement. This supports a defensible decision.

39. C — Candidate experience evidence is stronger when gathered at relevant moments and connected to timing, communication, withdrawals, and acceptance. Successful hires, application volume, and discarded criticism omit the experience of people who leave or decline. HR should protect feedback confidentiality, segment results, identify process friction, and test improvements with follow-up measures. This supports a defensible decision.

40. C — Credible employment branding connects the promise to observable work, leadership, development, culture, and evidence. Universal claims, awards alone, and unsupported advancement promises create expectations the employee experience may not meet. HR should validate messages with employees, disclose material realities, segment audiences, and monitor attraction and retention results. This supports a defensible decision.

41. B — Service-level performance improves when expectations, barriers, ownership, escalation, and measurement are explicit. Unchangeable assumptions, closure without diagnosis, and automatic discipline do not correct workload, approval, or process causes. HR should map the handoff, remove avoidable friction, set a review cadence, and escalate repeated failures proportionately. This supports a defensible decision.

42. A — Performance problems can reflect capability, process, tools, workload, incentives, or expectations, so diagnosis should precede intervention. Class capacity, module count, and prior attendance do not reveal why the new workflow is failing or whether training is the remedy. HR should

observe the task, review evidence, consult users and managers, and separate training needs from system or process fixes.

43. D — Adults engage more readily when learning is relevant, connected to experience, participatory, and usable in a real work context. Memorization without purpose, lecture-only delivery, and assumptions about experience can reduce engagement and transfer. HR should explain the business problem, use authentic practice, respect learner experience, and offer support that matches capability. This supports a defensible decision.

44. D — A measurable objective names an observable behavior, relevant conditions, and a standard that an assessment can evaluate. Appreciate, understand, and learn describe intentions or internal states without showing what participants must do or how quality is judged. HR should align practice and assessment with the actual task, required fields, routing rules, and performance evidence. This supports a defensible decision.

45. C — Coaching addresses a specific performance capability through observation, dialogue, practice, feedback, and repeated application. A disconnected course, delayed review, or promotion by trial and error does not provide timely, targeted skill development. The manager should define effective feedback, practice realistic conversations, observe application, and set a follow-up checkpoint. This supports a defensible decision.

46. B — Results-level evaluation requires a defined business outcome, credible comparison, timing, and a reasoned approach to attribution. Reaction, completion, and logistics evidence matter for program management but do not demonstrate changed organizational results. HR should measure a baseline, identify other influences, state limitations, and review both quantitative results and implementation evidence. This supports a defensible decision.

47. A — Accessible learning requires HR to address barriers and consider reasonable accommodation so a qualified employee can complete required work. Exclusion, shifting the burden to the employee, or indefinite delay avoids the barrier instead of evaluating an effective solution. HR should test the platform, discuss the need with the employee, coordinate an effective option, and protect confidential information.

48. D — Transfer improves when the work environment reinforces learning through tools, practice, observation, feedback, and accountability. A slide deck, untested diagnosis, or quiz score alone does not show that the behavior occurs reliably in the job. HR should partner with the manager, define observation points, remove barriers, and measure application after the intervention. This supports a defensible decision.

49. C — Facilitator certification protects consistency through controlled content, demonstrated skill, feedback, and monitoring after qualification. Personal rewrites, seniority, and attendance do not establish accurate delivery, effective facilitation, or learner competence. HR should define certification criteria, observe practice, control revisions, and use learner and outcome evidence to recalibrate. This supports a defensible decision.

50. A — Tacit knowledge transfers through observation, explanation, practice, questions, and captured decisions rather than one retrospective artifact. A presentation, performance review, or crisis-driven reconstruction may omit exceptions, judgment, sequence, and relationships. HR should identify critical knowledge, assign recipients, schedule transfer activities, capture reusable resources, and verify independent performance. This supports a defensible decision.

51. B — A well-designed job aid places accurate criteria at the moment of need and reduces memory burden during an infrequent decision. A distant lecture, motivational message, or rating label does not provide usable rules when the representative must act. HR should test the aid with users, control revisions, link it to policy, and monitor decision quality and escalation patterns.

52. A — Career development is stronger when aspirations connect to role requirements, experience, support, timing, and evidence of increasing readiness. A guarantee, course list, or enthusiasm alone does not establish capability, opportunity, accountability, or a fair readiness decision. HR should help the manager and employee define goals, secure assignments, review progress, and adjust the plan as evidence develops.

53. C — Completion shows exposure, not necessarily understanding, transfer, reinforcement, process support, or a reduction in risk. More slides, an intent conclusion, or abandoning outcome measurement does not diagnose why violations continue. HR should review realistic assessment, observation, manager behavior, workflow controls, and policy clarity before redesigning the intervention. This supports a defensible decision.

54. B — Total rewards communication should make the full value proposition understandable, including development, eligibility, access, and career relevance. New benefits, catalogs, and employee self-navigation do not solve unclear choices or inconsistent manager support. HR should simplify information, train managers, provide examples, monitor participation, and improve access where evidence shows barriers. This supports a defensible decision.

55. D — Nonexempt employees must have all compensable work time captured and paid under applicable overtime rules, including remote work. Location, prior approval, or a classification change does not erase time already worked or replace a valid exemption analysis. HR should correct the record, train managers and employees, audit similar practices, and address repeated off-the-clock work. This supports a defensible decision.

56. A — Job evaluation compares the work itself using consistent, documented factors that reflect responsibility, requirements, effort, and conditions. Title prestige, salary history, and incumbent count can reflect prior decisions or organization size rather than the work's relative value. HR should validate factors, train evaluators, document rationale, review anomalies, and connect grades to a governed pay structure. This supports a defensible decision.

57. C — Compa-ratio equals salary divided by midpoint: \$64,000 divided by \$60,000 equals 1.0666667, or approximately 106.67 percent. Ninety-five, 100, and 115 percent compare the salary with an incorrect reference or use an inaccurate calculation. HR should interpret the ratio with experience, performance,

market data, internal equity, range design, and documented pay practices. This supports a defensible decision.

58. D — A credible incentive plan gives employees understandable measures and governance while protecting quality, customer, and compliance outcomes. After-the-fact discretion, volume-only targets, and inconsistent interpretation weaken line of sight and perceived fairness. HR should test the plan for unintended behavior, define approvals and corrections, and communicate examples before the period begins. This supports a defensible decision.

59. B — Controlling for some factors narrows an analysis but does not explain every difference or determine the appropriate remedy. Assumption, universal adjustment, and information removal can overlook discrimination, create inequity elsewhere, or prevent diagnosis. HR should validate data, examine additional job-related factors, review decisions and comparators, and document corrective options. This supports a defensible decision.

60. D — FLSA exemption analysis considers applicable compensation and duties tests, so a salary label or title is not enough. Salary, manager belief, and reporting level alone do not establish that the statutory requirements for exemption are met. HR should review actual duties and current rules, document the classification, and revisit it when responsibilities or pay change. This supports a defensible decision.

61. C — Benefit administration requires accurate eligibility, timing, elections, dependents, notices, and supporting documentation under plan terms. Title alone, cost preference, and manager choice do not establish eligibility or the employee's valid election. HR should use controlled data, reconcile enrollment with the administrator, protect personal information, and correct discrepancies promptly. This supports a defensible decision.

62. A — HSAs and FSAs are different tax-favored arrangements with distinct eligibility, ownership, contribution, and carryover features. The alternatives reverse ownership, confuse account purposes, or incorrectly treat the arrangements as identical. HR should communicate current plan terms and tax guidance carefully, including eligibility, limits, claims, and account treatment. This supports a defensible decision.

63. B — Average annual cost per participant equals total cost divided by enrolled participants: \$540,000 divided by 900 equals \$600. The other amounts use an incorrect denominator or arithmetic result and do not measure the average cost for each participant. HR should define included costs and enrollment, use a consistent period, and interpret cost with utilization, coverage, and workforce needs.

64. B — Accurate benefits communication explains timing, eligibility, operation, employee action, examples, and where official information resides. A percentage alone, informal explanation, or delayed notice can create errors, confusion, and unplanned employee expectations. HR should coordinate with the plan administrator, review examples, provide a contact route, and retain the approved communication. This supports a defensible decision.

65. C — Recognition reinforces values when it identifies observable behavior, occurs near the event, and explains the connection to results or principles. Generic praise, visibility bias, and reward

substitution weaken credibility and leave employees unsure what conduct is valued. HR should provide inclusive guidance, monitor access and patterns, and ensure recognition complements rather than replaces sound rewards. This supports a defensible decision.

66. A — Compensation benchmarking requires comparable work, relevant market scope, sound survey data, and documented matching judgment. Titles, highest pay, and one preferred peer can distort the comparison and create an unsupported compensation decision. HR should document matches, assess survey quality, consider geography and industry, and explain limitations to decision-makers. This supports a defensible decision.

67. D — Balanced incentive design reduces harmful gaming by connecting volume with quality, safety, compliance, and customer outcomes. Volume-only rewards, undocumented waivers, and after-the-fact changes undermine the plan's fairness and control. HR should define gates, weights, correction authority, and examples before launch, then monitor unintended behavior. That is the appropriate first control.

68. B — Cost per participant equals total initiative cost divided by participants: \$72,000 divided by 160 equals \$450. The other amounts result from an incorrect divisor or arithmetic step and do not represent the stated cost for each participant. HR should define participation, include all relevant costs, and compare cost with engagement, health outcomes, and the program's purpose.

69. D — Flexibility is a total-rewards element that requires a balance of employee value, operational feasibility, consistent access, and outcomes. Universal arrangements, removal, and private discretion can create inequity, operational problems, and unclear accountability. HR should set criteria, support informed manager judgment, review access and results, and communicate how concerns are handled. This supports a defensible decision.

70. C — Payroll controls should detect errors before or during transmission and create evidence of review, correction, ownership, and root cause. Individual fixes, manager totals, and deleted correction records do not prevent recurrence or demonstrate control effectiveness. HR should reconcile source data, use an independent review, track exceptions, and retest the process after remediation. This supports a defensible decision.

71. A — Employees acting together about pay, schedules, or other employment conditions may receive labor-law protection even without a union. Time, union certification, and tone alone do not determine whether conduct is protected or whether separate misconduct occurred. HR should preserve context, avoid retaliation, separate protected activity from unrelated violations, and coordinate informed manager guidance. This supports a defensible decision.

72. C — Supervisors must avoid conduct that interferes with employee choice, including threats, interrogation, promises, and surveillance. Private questioning, conditional benefits, and tracking organizing activity can chill protected rights and create labor-law exposure. HR should provide supervisor training, a consistent communication route, approved facts, and an escalation process for questions. This supports a defensible decision.

73. B — A union-represented employee may request assistance during a qualifying investigatory interview reasonably believed to risk discipline. Continuing, demanding proof, or delegating the decision to a supervisor can undermine the employee's right and the integrity of the meeting. HR should pause, document the request, follow the available lawful option, and brief participants before any later interview. This supports a defensible decision.

74. A — Grievance handling requires timely, evidence-based interpretation of the agreement, relevant past practice, facts, and contractual procedure. Manager convenience, delayed review, or pressure to withdraw does not establish compliance or protect the labor relationship. HR should preserve schedules and communications, consult labor representatives as required, document the response, and monitor commitments. This supports a defensible decision.

75. D — Retaliation review considers protected reporting, adverse treatment, timing, comparators, stated reasons, and evidence of causation. A supervisor's assertion, premature closure, or blanket freeze does not fairly test whether the action was legitimate or retaliatory. HR should preserve records, address the safety issue, protect the reporter, and review the scheduling decision under consistent criteria. This supports a defensible decision.

76. C — Title VII requires an employer to consider reasonable accommodation for sincerely held religious practices unless undue hardship applies. Rigid denial, coworker voting, and a resignation ultimatum avoid individualized assessment and can interfere with protected practice. HR should clarify the need, explore effective schedule options, assess operational impact, document the analysis, and communicate respectfully. This supports a defensible decision.

77. B — The ADA accommodation process focuses on the workplace barrier, essential functions, effective alternatives, and undue hardship. Diagnosis demands, a rigid single-option rule, or delay until failure can bypass the interactive process and a workable solution. HR should engage promptly, protect medical confidentiality, involve the employee and manager, and document options and implementation. This supports a defensible decision.

78. D — The PWFA covers reasonable accommodations for known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Mandatory leave, absence-based denial, and a permanent employee-funded workaround may ignore a feasible accommodation. HR should discuss the limitation, evaluate temporary adjustments, document the response, train supervisors, and prevent retaliation. This supports a defensible decision.

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

80. B — Threatening career consequences for protected leave can discourage its use and raise interference or retaliation concerns. Career pressure, benefits administration, or a preference label does not remove the obligation to administer protected leave lawfully. HR should preserve the statement,

correct the guidance, review the promotion process, and assess whether the employee experienced harm. This supports a defensible decision.

81. D — USERRA generally protects reemployment and the position the employee would have attained absent service, subject to statutory rules. Random placement, automatic recompetition, and service-based skill proof can disregard reemployment and seniority protections. HR should verify notice, service, timeliness, qualification, and exceptions, then document placement and benefits treatment. This supports a defensible decision.

82. C — A blocked exit creates a safety concern requiring prompt correction, while fear of lost hours may indicate a separate retaliation issue. Employee self-repair, delayed response, and usage assumptions do not establish a safe condition or protect reporting. HR should involve safety professionals, document the report, preserve evidence, protect the worker, and track corrective action. This supports a defensible decision.

83. A — Return-to-work decisions should follow documented functional restrictions and coordinate the applicable benefits, safety, and accommodation processes. Supervisor opinion, employee optimism, and a waiver do not replace restrictions or establish a safe lawful assignment. HR should identify suitable duties, involve appropriate specialists, document the plan, and review restrictions when medical information changes. This supports a defensible decision.

84. C — An allegation involving power or conflicts requires credible independence, protected evidence, neutral questions, and a prompt defined process. A subordinate investigator, direct confrontation, or waiting for a pattern can compromise evidence and employee confidence. HR should preserve records, interview relevant witnesses, protect against retaliation, and base findings on the available evidence. This supports a defensible decision.

85. A — Consistent discipline relies on factual notice, proportionality, comparable treatment, documentation, and a meaningful opportunity to improve. Embarrassment, maximum punishment, and private procedures can create arbitrary treatment and obscure the actual workplace standard. HR should review policy, severity, history, comparators, mitigating facts, and decision authority before confirming the response. This supports a defensible decision.

86. D — Termination review should test whether protected activity intersects with timing, evidence, comparators, explanations, and decision consistency. Confidence, an unlimited moratorium, or complaint history alone does not establish a legitimate and consistently supported decision. HR should separate protected activity from performance evidence, preserve records, verify comparators, and document the approval rationale. This supports a defensible decision.

87. B — A final warning provides fair notice by connecting facts to expectations, improvement, support, timing, and possible consequences. Vague labels, penalty-only notices, and conditional promises do not explain what must change or how the process operates. HR should verify facts, invite the employee's response, set measurable follow-up, and apply the same documentation standard to comparable cases. This supports a defensible decision.

88. B — Strong performance documentation records observable facts close to the event and connects them to expectations, impact, response, and next steps. Late labels, unsupported conclusions, and copied language can be subjective, incomplete, or disconnected from current work. Managers should document respectfully, allow response, set measurable follow-up, and involve HR when facts or consequences are disputed. This supports a defensible decision.

89. D — Attendance controls must distinguish protected or legally required time from ordinary absences before discipline or points are applied. Mechanical equality, policy abandonment, and complaint-based enforcement can create interference and inconsistent treatment. HR should audit the rule, correct records, define exclusions, train managers, and review prior decisions for potential impact. This supports a defensible decision.

90. C — A joint discussion about staffing or safety may concern employment conditions and receive labor-law protection. Automatic removal, context-free discipline, and forced identification can chill protected activity and distort policy enforcement. HR should preserve context, assess conduct and policy neutrally, consult labor guidance, and train leaders on protected expression. This supports a defensible decision.

91. A — WARN analysis depends on employer and facility coverage, employment-loss facts, timing, definitions, exceptions, and notice requirements. Announcement preference, format, and severance alone do not resolve statutory coverage or notice duties. HR should gather workforce and event facts, coordinate the analysis, preserve decisions, and align communications 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 may prevent the individual from exercising available rights. HR should coordinate with the plan administrator, verify event data, track notices, protect information, and correct errors promptly. This supports a defensible decision.

93. D — A legal hold protects 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 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. B — Administrative leave should serve a defined interim purpose, remain proportionate, and receive review for duration, pay, and alternatives. Automatic leave, indefinite delay, and employee agreement alone can create arbitrary or inconsistent treatment. HR should document the rationale, set review points, protect confidentiality, consider less restrictive options, and communicate status. This supports a defensible decision.

95. A — A handbook acknowledgment records receipt or access and can direct employees to clarification, reporting channels, and updated policies. It should not waive statutory rights, create unintended permanent promises, or prevent good-faith reporting. HR should control versions, use

accurate disclaimers, explain material changes, and retain acknowledgments securely. This supports a defensible decision.

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

97. B — WARN analysis requires precise employer, facility, employment-loss, timing, definition, and exception facts before notice decisions. The affected count alone, severance, or post-announcement analysis cannot establish whether notice obligations apply. HR should gather facts, evaluate federal and state rules, coordinate review, preserve the analysis, and align notices with timing. This supports a defensible decision.

98. C — A specific credible threat requires prompt protection of people, evidence, and decision-making through trained safety or emergency resources. Absolute secrecy, employee-led assessment, and deleted evidence can increase danger and obstruct a proportionate response. HR should follow emergency protocols, limit information to those with a need to know, document actions, and reassess protection. This supports a defensible decision.

99. A — A controlled exception process tests whether deviation is justified, authorized, limited, documented, and consistent with policy purpose. Automatic approval, blanket denial, and secrecy can create favoritism, weaken controls, and undermine trust. HR should compare similar cases, document the decision, set review or expiration, and monitor broader employee-relations effects. This supports a defensible decision.

100. A — Investigation planning supports fairness 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. HR should preserve records, identify relevant witnesses, protect against retaliation, document responses, and expand scope when facts warrant. This supports a defensible decision.

101. D — Retaliation can appear in later assignments, schedules, evaluations, or access, so monitoring should continue after the initial case. Admission, automatic transfer, and immediate closure do not reliably identify subtle or delayed adverse treatment. HR should set proportionate check-ins, coordinate with leadership, review comparable decisions, and escalate credible concerns promptly. This supports a defensible decision.

102. C — Accommodation administration generally requires enough functional information for implementation while limiting disclosure of medical details. Full diagnosis, complete silence, and coworker disclosure exceed need-to-know boundaries and can harm privacy. HR should coordinate limited information, secure medical records, confirm operational responsibilities, and address questions without oversharing. This supports a defensible decision.

103. B — A timely request for representation in a qualifying investigatory interview requires respect for the employee's protected choice. Convenience, an accusation of guilt, or one extra question can undermine the right and taint the interview. HR should pause, document the request, follow the available lawful option, and brief supervisors before any later questioning. This supports a defensible decision.

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

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

106. D — Drug-testing programs require clear standards, consistent process, privacy protection, and controlled handling of results. Manager suspicion, surprise procedure, and departmental differences can create inconsistency, privacy concerns, and legal exposure. HR should review applicable law, notice, chain of custody, confidentiality, accommodations, and consequences before implementation. That is the appropriate first control.

107. B — Layoff selection should use defined business and job-related criteria applied consistently and reviewed for disproportionate effects. Lowest pay, preference, and automatic tenure may ignore role requirements, agreements, or protected-group impact. HR should compare alternatives, document rationale and approvals, communicate respectfully, and coordinate notice and support. This supports a defensible decision.

108. C — Mediation can 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 prejudged process. HR should screen suitability, explain limits, select a qualified neutral, protect against retaliation, and document commitments. This supports a defensible decision.

109. D — Management authority depends on contract language, past practice, the nature of the change, and applicable bargaining obligations. A clause alone, dismissal of past practice, or individual voting does not resolve the labor relationship or required process. HR should document the analysis, coordinate with labor representatives as required, and communicate a lawful implementation plan. This supports a defensible decision.

110. B — Good intake captures concerns without demanding labels, sets realistic expectations, and identifies urgent protection or escalation needs. Legal terminology, a signed form, and absolute secrecy can discourage reporting and delay risk assessment. HR should preserve the account, clarify desired support, route the matter appropriately, and follow up without promising an outcome. This supports a defensible decision.

111. A — A safety response should protect the employee, meet reporting requirements, investigate contributing conditions, and correct hazards. Metric protection, delayed care, and unexamined reassignment can worsen harm and obscure required corrective action. HR should coordinate with safety and benefits specialists, document the event, preserve evidence, and track correction. This supports a defensible decision.

112. C — Exit interviews can reveal patterns in management, workload, pay, or career experience when participation and analysis are consistent. Compelled naming, anecdotal certainty, and discarded criticism create biased evidence and discourage candid participation. HR should code themes, compare turnover and survey results, protect confidentiality limits, and target evidence-based improvements. This supports a defensible decision.

113. B — Survey credibility improves when employees hear what was learned, what will change, who owns actions, and when progress is reviewed. Identifiable comments, unlimited promises, and silence can reduce trust and discourage candid future participation. HR should prioritize manageable actions, communicate updates, protect confidentiality, and track implementation and outcomes. This supports a defensible decision.

114. D — Triangulation combines related evidence to examine patterns, timing, subgroup differences, reporting behavior, and intervention effects. A single count, rate, or story can be distorted by workforce mix, unusual experience, or willingness to report. HR should define measures, establish a baseline, protect confidentiality, and reassess conditions after action is taken. This supports a defensible decision.

115. A — 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 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.