SUMMIT
STUDY GUIDES

SHRM-CP

Diagnostic Assessment

Week 1 Diagnostic

Answer Key & Explanations

Operational and applied HR knowledge at the SHRM-CP level

Aligned to the 2026 SHRM BASK • Law and guidance current as of October 2026

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How to Use This Set

Answer each question on your own first, choosing the single BEST answer. The real exam allows 220 minutes for 134 questions, so aim for about 1.6 minutes per question. Then check your work against the separate answer key and read every explanation, including for the questions you got right, because the reasoning is what transfers to new questions on exam day.

SHRM-CP Week 1 Diagnostic — Answer Key

Quick key first, then a full explanation for every question

1. B	2. B	3. C	4. C	5. D	6. A	7. B	8. A	9. B	10. C
11. D	12. D	13. A	14. C	15. D	16. B	17. D	18. D	19. A	20. A
21. C	22. C	23. D	24. D	25. B	26. A	27. C	28. B	29. C	30. B
31. B	32. A	33. C	34. B	35. A	36. C	37. A	38. D	39. D	40. A

Your Weakness Map

Count your correct answers in each area. Below 60% means focus first; 60–79% means review; 80% or more means maintain. With 5 to 8 questions per area, treat these as a guide to where to focus, not a precise score. The interactive version on summitstudyguides.com scores this for you.

BASK area	Question numbers	Your score	Study first
Leadership	5, 9, 12, 15, 29, 30, 31, 38	_____ / 8	Ch. 4; 8.1; 7
Interpersonal	6, 13, 16, 20, 24, 34	_____ / 6	Ch. 5; 7.1
Business	2, 4, 11, 19, 21, 28, 33	_____ / 7	Ch. 6; 8.2-8.3; 12
People	17, 18, 22, 26, 32, 35, 39	_____ / 7	Ch. 9; 13.1
Organization	1, 3, 8, 10, 14, 23, 25	_____ / 7	Ch. 10; 13.2-13.4; 15
Workplace	7, 27, 36, 37, 40	_____ / 5	Ch. 11; 14

Answers and Explanations

1. Answer: B — Lower risk with lessons applied later, but a longer period of running two systems

A phased rollout limits the impact of any problem to one group or module and lets the team apply lessons to later phases. The trade-off is a longer timeline in which old and new systems coexist, often with temporary interfaces. Fast completion with high risk describes a big-bang approach.

2. Answer: B — 15 hours

Training hours per employee = total training hours / average headcount = 18,000 / 1,200 = 15 hours. The 1.5 and 150 figures are decimal-place errors. The 6.7 figure inverts the formula (1,200 / 18,000 x 100).

3. Answer: C — Confirm the vendor is approved, set retention rules, and give notice and obtain candidate consent

Recording interviews raises consent, privacy and data-security issues, and some states require all-party consent to record. HR should approve the vendor, define how long recordings and transcripts are kept, and notify candidates and obtain consent before use. Waiting for complaints exposes the company to risk, limiting use to internal candidates does not remove consent requirements, and storing recordings on laptops increases security risk.

4. Answer: C — Raise the departures with the manager privately and explore how they relate to the problem.

A consultant should deal openly with the client about relevant information, including what the client left out, and do it privately and without blame. Exploring the departures with the manager brings key data into the diagnosis and keeps the relationship intact. Leaving the data out produces a flawed diagnosis, while going over the manager's head or quitting harms the relationship before the facts are understood.

5. Answer: D — Explain that security must be told to keep everyone safe, and build a safety plan with her.

A credible threat to the workplace triggers the employer's duty to protect employees, so HR cannot promise complete secrecy. HR should tell her that only those who need to know, such as security, will be informed, and work with her on a safety plan. Telling the whole department shares more than necessary, and waiting for a court order delays steps that could prevent harm.

6. Answer: A — Selective perception

Selective perception is the tendency to notice and remember information that fits existing expectations or fears while screening out the rest. Filtering is the sender shaping information before it is passed on, which did not happen here, because HR presented the full picture. The message was neither too much to process nor confusing in its wording.

7. Answer: B — Reverse culture shock

Reverse culture shock is the difficulty returning expatriates have readjusting to their home culture and workplace, often combined with frustration over reduced autonomy. Culture shock refers to the disorientation felt on arrival in a foreign culture, not on return home. Expatriate assignment failure means an assignment ends early or fails to meet its goals, which did not happen here.

8. Answer: A — A flyer, with no mention of the pay dispute, that falsely claims the company's food is unsafe

Concerted activity loses protection when it is maliciously false (made knowing it is false or with reckless disregard for the truth) or when it disparages the employer's products in a way unconnected to the labor dispute. A false food-safety claim that does not even mention the pay dispute fits both problems. Harsh opinions about management and good-faith statements that turn out to be inaccurate remain protected.

9. Answer: B — Observe, orient, decide and act

The OODA loop is observe, orient, decide and act. Decision-makers gather information, make sense of it in context, choose a course of action and act, then repeat the cycle. Cycling through the loop faster than competitors helps leaders adapt in fast-changing conditions.

10. Answer: C — Only employees authorized by the company may post on its official accounts or speak on its behalf

A clear policy reserves official accounts and company statements for authorized spokespeople, which protects the brand without reaching into personal speech. Banning any mention of the company or requiring approval for work-related posts would likely chill protected discussion of working conditions under the NLRA. Requiring logos on personal profiles blurs the line the provision is supposed to draw.

11. Answer: D — A 15% drop in the line's scrap rate over the next two quarters

Level 4 (results) captures business outcomes tied to the training, such as reduced scrap, higher output or lower costs. Observing operators using the checklist is Level 3 behavior, test scores are Level 2 learning, and course ratings are Level 1 reaction.

12. Answer: D — The meaning of gestures and nonverbal cues is learned and varies across cultures.

Gestures and nonverbal behaviors, such as hand signals, eye contact, personal space and touch, are culturally learned, so the same cue can be friendly in one culture and offensive in another. Steady eye contact signals honesty in some cultures but disrespect toward a senior person in others. The idea that nonverbal cues are universal is the mistake that leads to this kind of misunderstanding.

13. Answer: A — Have participants write ideas anonymously before any group discussion

Silent, anonymous idea generation lets employees contribute before they hear the leader's view, reducing deference to authority while keeping the vice president in the room. Having her speak first anchors the group on her opinion. Excluding her by rescheduling may offend a key stakeholder and is unnecessary when process changes can solve the problem.

14. Answer: C — Brief managers first, then tell employees with FAQs and a contact

Briefing managers first prepares them to explain the policy and answer questions when employees hear about it, and FAQs plus a contact support consistent understanding. Simultaneous or employee-first announcements leave managers unprepared, and a passive intranet posting does not ensure employees know about the change.

15. Answer: D — Groupthink and difficulty adapting when market conditions change

Very strong cultures produce commitment and consistency, but they can also suppress dissent, encourage groupthink, and make it hard to adapt when the environment changes. Low commitment, inconsistent interpretation of values and unclear expectations are typical of weak cultures, not strong ones.

16. Answer: B — Judgments of feelings and attitudes when words and tone conflict

Mehrabian's experiments looked at how listeners judged a speaker's feelings or attitude (such as liking) when the words, tone of voice and facial expression sent inconsistent signals. He cautioned that the 7-38-55 split does not apply to communication in general. Treating it as a rule for all messages, including factual content, is a widespread misreading.

17. Answer: D — Recognize the team as a whole and describe the specific results its collaboration achieved

When success came from collaboration and individual contributions cannot be fairly separated, team recognition rewards the shared effort and reinforces cross-functional cooperation. Singling out one person on uncertain information can feel unfair and discourage teamwork. Delaying recognition weakens its effect, and recognizing only department heads overlooks the people who did the work.

18. Answer: D — The ratio is 0.78, under 80%, so the results warrant closer review

Favorable-outcome rates are 45 / 50 = 90% for under-40 employees and 21 / 30 = 70% for those 40 and older, and 70% / 90% = 0.78, which is below 0.80 and signals possible adverse impact worth investigating. Using the 70% rate alone skips the comparison, 1.29 inverts the ratio, and the 80% rule is only a rule of thumb, so no ratio by itself proves discrimination.

19. Answer: A — High performers may be chosen for, or seek out, more training, so performance could drive training hours.

This is a reverse-causation risk: managers often nominate strong performers for development, and motivated employees seek it out, so higher performance may lead to more training rather than the other way around. Before investing more in training on this basis, the analyst should test the direction of the link, for example by comparing ratings before and after training. Underreporting would change the size of the estimate but not answer which variable drives the other.

20. Answer: A — A party's statement that he plans to physically harm a coworker

Workplace mediation is generally confidential, but that confidentiality has limits, such as credible threats of harm and information about legal violations the employer is obligated to address. Frustration about work assignments, a job search or past disagreements are ordinary mediation content the mediator would keep confidential.

21. Answer: C — Check whether the sample was large enough and the program was delivered as designed.

A null result can mean the program does not work, but it can also mean the pilot lacked the statistical power to detect a real effect or that the program was poorly implemented, such as low awareness or incentives paid late. Checking power and implementation fidelity shows which explanation fits. Extending the pilot until something appears is a biased stopping rule that invites a false positive.

22. Answer: C — Huddle logs and regional managers' branch observations in the months after training

Whether managers hold huddles is an on-the-job behavior, which is Kirkpatrick Level 3 and is best measured through observation and records collected after enough time has passed for the behavior to appear. A quiz measures learning at Level 2 and relevance ratings measure reaction at Level 1. Loan volume is a Level 4 result that could be influenced by many factors and does not show whether huddles occur.

23. Answer: D — Give the union advance notice and an opportunity to bargain over the change and its effects on the clerks.

Changes that eliminate unit positions and transfer unit work affect terms and conditions of employment, so the employer should give the union notice and a meaningful chance to bargain before implementation. At a minimum the effects on affected clerks, such as transfers or severance, must be bargained, and moving unit work out of the unit can itself be a bargainable decision. Negotiating directly with the clerks bypasses the exclusive representative, and bargaining only after installation denies the union a meaningful opportunity.

24. Answer: D — Say-do ratio

The say-do ratio compares what a leader says she will do with what she actually does; a high ratio builds credibility because people learn her word can be relied on. Span of control is the number of direct reports, net promoter score measures willingness to recommend, and the halo effect is a rating bias.

25. Answer: B — Freeze hiring for those roles and let normal attrition reduce the surplus

With a small surplus and annual attrition well above it, a hiring freeze lets normal departures close the gap without cutting pay, jobs or hours. Early retirement packages cost money and may remove experienced people the company still needs. Layoffs and across-the-board hour cuts are more disruptive than the size of the surplus requires.

26. Answer: A — The scores are Level 2 and the supervisor reports are Level 3, so learning has not transferred.

A simulation in the training setting measures what participants learned (Level 2), while supervisor observations of real calls measure on-the-job behavior (Level 3). High learning with no behavior change points to a transfer problem, often in the work environment, rather than a failure to learn. Treating the simulation as behavior data would wrongly suggest the reps are already applying the skills.

27. Answer: C — Yes, because a limitation may be communicated to the employer by the employee or her representative.

The PWFA defines a known limitation as one the employee or the employee's representative has communicated to the employer. A family member, doctor or other representative can make the communication, and it does not have to be in writing or go to HR. Contact with the supervisor is enough to trigger the employer's obligations.

28. Answer: B — Randomly assigning new hires to the program or to a control group

Random assignment makes the program and control groups similar in every respect except the program, so a difference in retention can be credited to the program. A before-and-after comparison cannot rule out other changes over the same period, such as a stronger labor market, and correlations or satisfaction surveys do not establish cause.

29. Answer: C — Describe the deal honestly and explain clearly what will and will not change for employees.

When messages contradict what employees see, credibility drops and rumors fill the gap. Honest, specific communication about what is changing rebuilds trust even when the news is unwelcome. Adding events or a few logos keeps the gap between words and reality in place, and going silent lets rumors spread further.

30. Answer: B — Map which processes the rule may affect, monitor for the guidance, and prepare options that can be adjusted once it is issued.

When rules are pending, HR adds value by scanning for changes, assessing likely impact and building flexible plans that can be finalized when the guidance arrives. Rolling out rewritten policies now risks confusion and rework if the guidance differs from HR's guess. Waiting passively leaves the company unprepared, and counsel can help interpret but cannot give a firm answer on guidance that does not yet exist.

31. Answer: B — Laws, cultural norms, and personal safety risks around identity can differ sharply by country.

Laws on identity, data privacy and assembly, as well as cultural norms, vary widely, and in some countries open membership in certain groups could put employees at legal or personal risk. Regional chapters let local leaders adapt the group's activities, visibility and privacy practices while staying connected to a global mission. Tracking member identities by country would create privacy risk, and identical central programming is what local chapters are meant to avoid.

32. Answer: A — A scorecard ties measures to strategic goals and targets; a dashboard tracks operating status

A scorecard links measures to strategic objectives with targets so progress against strategy can be judged over time. A dashboard gives a near-real-time view of operational status, much like an instrument panel. The reversed description is the tempting error, and a scorecard is not limited to financial measures.

33. Answer: C — Pause the model's use and correct for the biased ratings it learned from before it informs promotions.

A model trained on biased labels learns and repeats that bias, so it should not drive promotions until the label problem is fixed, for example by using more objective outcome measures. Deleting the demographic field rarely works, because other variables can act as proxies for group membership. Adding points to one group's scores is prohibited under the Civil Rights Act of 1991, which bans adjusting the scores of, or using different cutoffs for, employment-related tests on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin.

34. Answer: B — Tell her in person before the announcement, with clear reasons and next steps

Internal candidates should hear the decision personally and before any public announcement, with honest, specific feedback and a concrete path forward, which protects engagement and retention. Email feels impersonal for a career setback, and learning the news from an announcement damages trust. Promising her the next opening creates an expectation the company may not be able to keep.

35. Answer: A — It gives employees flexibility and simplifies tracking, but employees may come to work sick to save time for vacation.

PTO banks give employees more control over how they use their time off, reduce the need to verify the reason for absences, and simplify administration. The drawback is that employees may come to work sick to save days for vacation, and in some jurisdictions accrued PTO can increase payout obligations. A PTO bank does not exempt the employer from paid sick leave laws, and it does not inherently reduce total time off.

36. Answer: C — Share the photos with the carrier and check the doctor's restrictions before taking action

Photos alone may not prove fraud, since the activity could fit the doctor's restrictions or the photos could be old. HR should send the information to the carrier, which manages the claim and any fraud investigation, and confirm the medical restrictions. Firing without facts risks a retaliation claim for filing for workers' compensation, and the employer cannot stop benefits on its own.

37. Answer: A — At or near the place of violation for 3 working days or until it is corrected, whichever is longer

OSHA requires a citation copy to be posted at or near each place a violation occurred, for 3 working days or until the violation is abated, whichever is longer. Posting on a general board for only 3 days leaves out the location rule and the until-corrected rule. Fifteen working days is the contest period, not the posting period.

38. Answer: D — They apply to SEC-reporting issuers and require accurate books in reasonable detail and internal accounting controls.

The FCPA's accounting provisions cover issuers, meaning companies with securities registered with the SEC or required to file SEC reports. They require books and records that accurately and fairly reflect transactions in reasonable detail and a system of internal accounting controls. A violation does not depend on proving a bribe; inaccurate records alone can violate the law.

39. Answer: D — The peer is a buddy and the senior leader is a mentor.

An onboarding buddy is usually a peer who helps with day-to-day questions and social integration during the early months. A mentor provides longer-term career and development guidance. Coaches focus on specific performance goals, and sponsors actively advocate for a person's advancement, so neither label fits the peer's role.

40. Answer: A — Get a medical assessment of his current risk, weighing likelihood, severity and imminence

A direct threat decision requires an individualized assessment based on current medical knowledge, considering the duration of the risk, the nature and severity of potential harm, its likelihood and its imminence, and whether accommodation could reduce it. Blanket exclusion based on the diagnosis is unlawful, and imposing a DOT standard the job does not require would be a non-job-related qualification standard. Ignoring a recent seizure in a driving job is also unsafe.