SUMMIT
STUDY GUIDES

SHRM-CP

Diagnostic Assessment

Week 1 Diagnostic

40 Questions • 65 Minutes

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

40 questions • 65 minutes • Score each of the six BASK areas with the Weakness Map in the Answer Key file

Choose the single BEST answer for each question. The real exam gives 220 minutes for 134 questions, so pace yourself at roughly 1.6 minutes per question.

1. What is the main advantage of a phased HRIS rollout compared with a big-bang go-live, and what is its main trade-off?

A. Fewer interfaces to maintain, but more disruption to users on go-live day

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

C. Lower total cost, but no chance to refine the system after the first go-live

D. Faster overall completion, but a higher risk of widespread failure across all users at go-live

2. Last year a company logged 18,000 hours of employee training and had an average headcount of 1,200. What was the average number of training hours per employee?

A. 6.7 hours

B. 15 hours

C. 1.5 hours

D. 150 hours

3. Recruiters want to start using an AI tool that records and transcribes candidate interviews and produces summaries. What should HR do BEFORE the tool is used?

A. Begin using the tool on a trial basis and add a privacy notice if candidates raise concerns

B. Use the tool only for internal candidates, since external applicants are not yet employees covered by company privacy policies

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

D. Store the recordings on recruiters' laptops so the data never leaves company-owned devices

4. While diagnosing low productivity in a warehouse, HR learns in employee interviews that two senior leads quit last month over a scheduling change. The warehouse manager who requested the project did not mention the departures during contracting. What should HR do?

A. Leave the departures out of the findings to protect the working relationship with the manager.

B. End the engagement, since the manager has shown he cannot be trusted with the process.

C. Raise the departures with the manager privately and explore how they relate to the problem.

D. Report the omission to the manager's boss, since it suggests the manager is not being candid.

5. An employee tells HR that her abusive ex-partner has threatened to show up at the worksite. She asks HR to tell no one because she is embarrassed. What is the BEST response?

A. Honor her request fully and check in with her daily to see whether the threat has passed.

B. Inform her department so coworkers can watch for the ex-partner and alert security if needed.

C. Advise her to obtain a protective order and wait to see a copy before taking any action.

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

6. During a benefits presentation, HR explains that premiums will rise slightly while deductibles will fall and a new free telehealth option will be added. In follow-up conversations, many employees recall only the premium increase and say the company is cutting benefits. Which concept BEST explains this?

A. Selective perception

B. Information overload

C. Semantic noise

D. Filtering

7. After four years in Singapore, an engineer returns to the U.S. office and tells HR she feels out of step with her coworkers, frustrated with her narrower role and unsettled in her home community. What is this experience called?

A. Expatriate assignment failure

B. Reverse culture shock

C. Culture shock

D. Acculturation stress

8. Employees involved in a pay dispute make public statements about their employer. Under the National Labor Relations Act, which statement is MOST likely to lose protection?

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

B. A social media post calling management stingy and unfair for refusing to discuss the pay complaints

C. A flyer stating that the company pays less than other local employers for the same work

D. A news interview in which workers describe pay concerns that later prove to be overstated

9. What are the four steps of the OODA loop, a decision-making cycle developed by military strategist John Boyd?

A. Orient, organize, decide and audit

B. Observe, orient, decide and act

C. Organize, observe, direct and adjust

D. Observe, optimize, deliver and assess

10. Which social media policy provision BEST distinguishes official company accounts from employees' personal use?

- **A.** Employees must get written approval from HR before posting anything about work on their personal accounts
- **B.** Employees must add the company logo to personal profiles that list the company as employer
- **C.** Only employees authorized by the company may post on its official accounts or speak on its behalf
- **D.** Employees may not mention the company's name on any of their personal social media accounts

11. Which of the following is a Kirkpatrick Level 4 measure for a quality training program delivered to production-line operators?

- **A.** Participants rating the course 4.6 out of 5 for job relevance
- **B.** Supervisors seeing operators use the new inspection checklist
- **C.** Average post-test scores rising from 68% to 91% after the course
- **D.** A 15% drop in the line's scrap rate over the next two quarters

12. A U.S. manager is surprised that a thumbs-up gesture and steady eye contact were seen as rude by colleagues in another country. What BEST explains this reaction?

- **A.** Colleagues reacted to the manager's tone of voice rather than the gestures used.
- **B.** Nonverbal cues carry the same meaning everywhere but differ in how intensely they are expressed.
- **C.** Most cultures treat any nonverbal signal at work as a sign of unprofessionalism.
- **D.** The meaning of gestures and nonverbal cues is learned and varies across cultures.

13. A vice president joins a staff session that HR is facilitating on improving the onboarding process. Each time a question is asked, employees look at her and wait for her to answer first. What is the BEST adjustment for the facilitator?

- **A.** Have participants write ideas anonymously before any group discussion
- **B.** Address all questions to the vice president to keep her engaged
- **C.** Ask the vice president to share her view first to set the direction for the group
- **D.** End the session and reschedule it without the vice president

14. A company's new attendance policy takes effect next month. What is the BEST sequence for communicating it?

- **A.** Tell employees first so managers hear the same message they do
- **B.** Email all employees and managers at the same time for consistency
- **C.** Brief managers first, then tell employees with FAQs and a contact
- **D.** Post the policy on the intranet and let managers answer questions later

15. A company's culture is very strong: employees share the same values, tend to hire people like themselves, and rarely question long-standing practices. Which risk is MOST associated with this kind of culture?

A. Low employee commitment and weak identification with the company

B. Inconsistent decisions because employees interpret values differently

C. High turnover caused by unclear expectations about behavior

D. Groupthink and difficulty adapting when market conditions change

16. A trainer tells a group of new supervisors that "only 7% of communication comes from words," citing Albert Mehrabian's research. What did Mehrabian's findings actually apply to?

A. Written messages compared with spoken face-to-face messages

B. Judgments of feelings and attitudes when words and tone conflict

C. Every type of message, including technical and factual content

D. Group presentations compared with one-on-one conversations in the workplace

17. A cross-functional team of eight from sales, engineering and finance delivered a major client launch ahead of schedule. Leaders want to recognize the win, but it is unclear who contributed most. What is the BEST approach?

A. Delay recognition until a review can rank each member's individual contribution

B. Recognize each department head, since they were accountable for their staff's work

C. Ask the project lead to name the single top contributor and recognize that person publicly at the next all-hands

D. Recognize the team as a whole and describe the specific results its collaboration achieved

18. In a year-end rating cycle, 45 of 50 employees under age 40 avoided the bottom rating category, compared with 21 of 30 employees age 40 and older. Applying the 80% rule of thumb, what is the result?

A. The ratio is 0.70, under 80%, so the results warrant closer review

B. The ratio is 0.33, under 80%, which proves age discrimination

C. The ratio is 1.29, over 80%, so no further review is indicated

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

19. An AI analysis finds that employees who log more training hours receive higher performance ratings. Leaders conclude that adding training will raise performance. Which alternative explanation should an HR analyst raise?

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

B. The relationship is too strong to be real, which suggests the AI tool made a calculation error.

C. Training hours may be underreported in the learning system, which would make the true benefit of training even larger.

D. Ratings may be inflated across the company, which would fully cancel out any effect of training.

20. An HR professional serves as an internal mediator for coworker disputes. Which information disclosed during mediation is the mediator generally NOT able to keep confidential?

A. A party's statement that he plans to physically harm a coworker
B. A party's admission that she has been quietly looking for another job
C. A party's frustration with how the manager assigns work
D. A party's account of a past disagreement with a former peer

21. A three-month pilot of wellness incentives at one site shows no difference in absenteeism between participants and non-participants. A senior leader wants to declare the program a failure and drop it. What should HR do before agreeing?

A. Agree that it failed, since no difference means the incentives had no effect at all.
B. Report the pilot as a success instead, since its costs stayed within the budget.
C. Check whether the sample was large enough and the program was delivered as designed.
D. Extend the pilot until a difference appears, then report the final overall results.

22. A bank trained branch managers to hold weekly coaching huddles with their tellers. Leadership now wants to know whether the managers are actually holding the huddles. Which data source is BEST?

A. An end-of-course quiz on the coaching huddle model and the steps for running one
B. Participants' ratings of the training's relevance collected on the last day of class
C. Huddle logs and regional managers' branch observations in the months after training
D. A comparison of loan volume at trained branches with branches not yet trained

23. A unionized hospital plans to install an electronic scheduling system that will eliminate the bargaining-unit scheduling clerk position and shift some tasks to nurse managers. The contract does not address technology changes. What should HR do?

A. Install the system without notice, because shifting tasks to managers removes the work from the unit entirely.
B. Meet with the clerks to negotiate severance individually, because the decision affects only a few employees.
C. Install the system first and then bargain over effects, since technology purchases are a basic management right.
D. Give the union advance notice and an opportunity to bargain over the change and its effects on the clerks.

24. An HR director tracks how often her actions match the commitments she has made to her team, and she uses this as a check on her own credibility. What concept is she applying?

A. Span of control
B. Halo effect
C. Net promoter score
D. Say-do ratio

25. A workforce forecast shows a projected surplus of about 3% of staff in a clerical department over the next 18 months, and the department's normal attrition is about 8% a year. Which response is LEAST disruptive?

A. Lay off the lowest-performing clerical employees before the surplus grows

B. Freeze hiring for those roles and let normal attrition reduce the surplus

C. Offer a voluntary early retirement package to long-tenured clerical staff

D. Cut all clerical employees' hours equally until the surplus is absorbed

26. Customer-service reps averaged 92% on an end-of-course call simulation. Two months later, their supervisors report no change in how the reps handle actual calls. How should HR classify and interpret this data?

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

B. Both are Level 3 data, so the supervisor reports should be discounted in favor of the scores.

C. The scores are Level 1 and the reports are Level 2, so the course content must be redesigned.

D. The scores are Level 3 and the reports are Level 4, so the business results simply lag behavior.

27. An employee in the hospital with pregnancy complications cannot contact work, so her husband calls her supervisor to explain that she will need limited duty when she returns. Under the PWFA, is the limitation "known" to the employer?

A. No, because a limitation becomes known only when HR receives a written request and certification.

B. No, because the employee must personally make the request so that it counts as a known limitation.

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

D. Yes, but only if the husband is listed as her emergency contact in the employer's personnel records.

28. HR wants to show that a new onboarding program caused an improvement in 90-day retention. Which research design BEST supports that causal claim?

A. Surveying new hires about how satisfied they were with the program

B. Randomly assigning new hires to the program or to a control group

C. Correlating hours spent in the program with each hire's retention

D. Comparing retention before and after launch with no comparison group

29. Employees of an acquired company were told the deal was a "merger of equals," but every senior role went to acquirer leaders and all branding switched to the acquirer's. Trust is falling and rumors are spreading. What should HR advise leadership to do?

A. Keep the merger-of-equals message and add joint social events to make the claim more believable.

B. Pause all integration messaging until the work is complete to avoid confusing employees.

C. Describe the deal honestly and explain clearly what will and will not change for employees.

D. Add some acquired-company logos to materials so branding better matches the message.

30. A federal agency has announced that it will issue guidance explaining how a new recordkeeping rule applies to employers, but the guidance is not expected for several months. The HR manager's leaders want to know what the company should do in the meantime. What is the BEST approach?

A. Wait until the guidance is final before doing any work, since any preparation could be wasted if the agency's details change later.

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

C. Rewrite all recordkeeping policies now based on the most likely reading of the rule and roll them out to managers.

D. Ask legal counsel to issue a formal opinion on how the rule will apply before HR takes any further steps on it.

31. A U.S.-based company is expanding its LGBTQ+ ERG to offices in 12 countries. Why do global ERGs commonly use regional chapters that adapt to local norms?

A. Global chapters let the company track member identities by country for its annual workforce diversity reporting.

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

C. Regional chapters allow headquarters to run identical programming at the same time zone.

D. Each country's chapter needs its own executive sponsor to approve every event and expense.

32. An HR director is explaining the difference between a scorecard and a dashboard to new HR analysts. Which description is MOST accurate?

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

B. A scorecard reports only financial results, while a dashboard reports only people metrics

C. A scorecard and a dashboard are the same tool presented in different visual formats

D. A dashboard ties measures to strategic goals and targets; a scorecard tracks daily operations

33. An AI promotion-readiness model was trained on 10 years of manager ratings. An audit shows those ratings were consistently lower for one demographic group whose objective results were similar to others'. What should the HR analyst do?

A. Add a fixed number of points to the affected group's scores to offset the historical ratings gap.

B. Keep the model running, since it reflects how managers have historically judged performance.

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

D. Remove the demographic field from the training data, which will keep the model from reproducing the historical bias.

34. Maria, a strong internal candidate, interviewed for a team lead role that has been offered to an external hire. The hiring manager asks HR how to let her know before the hire is announced next week. What is the BEST approach?

A. Let her hear it in the announcement, then meet with her to discuss next steps
B. Tell her in person before the announcement, with clear reasons and next steps
C. Tell her the decision was close and that she will be first in line next time
D. Email her the decision promptly so she has time to process the news privately

35. A company is considering replacing separate vacation and sick leave banks with a single paid time off (PTO) bank. Which trade-off should HR highlight?

A. It gives employees flexibility and simplifies tracking, but employees may come to work sick to save time for vacation.
B. It eliminates any need to track why employees are absent, but it removes the need to comply with sick leave laws.
C. It reduces the total time off employees receive, but it increases the administrative work of tracking each type of absence.
D. It encourages employees to take more sick days, but it makes it harder for managers to approve vacation requests.

36. A manager sees social media photos of an employee on workers' compensation leave for a back injury playing softball. The manager wants to fire the employee for fraud. What should HR do?

A. Approve termination, since the photos show the employee is able to do physical work such as playing sports
B. Stop the employee's workers' compensation benefits until the matter is reviewed
C. Share the photos with the carrier and check the doctor's restrictions before taking action
D. Tell the manager to confront the employee by phone and ask for an explanation

37. A manufacturer receives an OSHA citation for an unguarded machine in its packaging area. Under OSHA rules, how must the employer post the citation?

A. At or near the place of violation for 3 working days or until it is corrected, whichever is longer
B. In the HR office for 30 calendar days, or longer if the employer files a notice of contest
C. At or near the place of violation for 15 working days or until the contest period ends
D. On the main employee bulletin board for 3 working days, starting on the day the citation is received

38. Which statement accurately describes the books and records provisions of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act?

A. They apply to every U.S. business and require records only of payments made to foreign government officials.
B. They apply to any company with foreign operations and require disclosure of all foreign payments to the DOJ.
C. They apply to SEC-reporting issuers but are violated only when an inaccurate record is used to conceal an actual bribe.
D. They apply to SEC-reporting issuers and require accurate books in reasonable detail and internal accounting controls.

39. A new analyst is paired with a peer who answers daily questions about tools, processes and where to find things during the first few months. The analyst is also matched with a senior leader for long-term career guidance. How are these two roles BEST described?

A. Both are mentors, since each supports the new hire's growth.

B. The peer is a coach and the senior leader is a sponsor.

C. The peer is a mentor and the senior leader is a coach.

D. The peer is a buddy and the senior leader is a mentor.

40. A yard driver who moves trailers only within a fenced distribution center tells his supervisor he had a seizure last week, his first. His job does not require DOT medical certification. What is the BEST approach for HR?

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

B. Require a DOT medical card before he returns to any driving duties at the site

C. Let him keep driving, since a single seizure cannot be a disability under the ADA as amended in 2008

D. Remove him from driving permanently, since seizures carry an inherent safety risk