SUMMIT
STUDY GUIDES

SHRM-CP

Diagnostic Assessment

Week 3 Checkpoint

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 3 Checkpoint — Answer Key

Quick key first, then a full explanation for every question

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

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

Answers and Explanations

1. Answer: B — Reciprocity

Reciprocity is the tendency to repay a favor: because the generalist helped first, the manager feels obliged to help in return. Liking can make people more agreeable, but the key fact here is the earlier help that created an obligation. Commitment and consistency would require an earlier stated position, and social proof relies on what others are doing.

2. Answer: A — Give each manager a department report with context and suggested actions.

Managers act on data that is relevant to their teams, explained in context and paired with practical next steps. Sending the full dataset exposes personal information and assumes analytical skills managers may not have. A company-wide dashboard or annual summary is too broad and too infrequent to drive action within a team.

3. Answer: C — Form small peer groups that meet monthly to share how they are applying the skills and solve problems together.

Peer learning groups cost little and provide encouragement, accountability and practical problem solving among people facing the same challenges, which helps maintain new behaviors. External coaching for each leader is effective but expensive, so it does not fit the budget constraint. Posting slides provides access to content but does nothing about the work pressures that are crowding out the skills.

4. Answer: D — Preserve the post, alert security and keep the employee off site pending a threat assessment

A statement that someone will get hurt is a potential threat of violence, so the immediate priority is safety: preserve the evidence, involve security, keep the employee away from the workplace pending review and conduct a threat assessment, contacting law enforcement if the risk appears credible. Waiting for him to arrive puts others at risk. Silencing coworkers or sending a policy reminder does nothing to assess or manage the danger.

5. Answer: A — Decline the request and staff the account on qualifications, involving leadership

Customer preference is not a defense to race or national origin discrimination, and an employer that carries out a client's discriminatory request is itself liable under Title VII. Keeping pay the same does not cure it, because job assignments are terms and conditions of employment. Leadership should be involved because the response may affect the client relationship, but the assignment decision must stay nondiscriminatory.

6. Answer: C — Do not terminate, since firing someone to keep him from vesting violates ERISA Section 510.

ERISA Section 510 makes it unlawful to discharge or discipline a participant for the purpose of interfering with the attainment of any right under a benefit plan. Firing an employee to stop his pension from vesting is a classic Section 510 violation, and the manager's own statement shows that intent. Moving the date past vesting does not fix a termination that has no legitimate business reason.

7. Answer: C — 15%

Click-to-open rate = clicks / opens x 100 = 135 / 900 x 100 = 15%. The 13.5% figure comes from wrongly dividing clicks by 1,000, and 85% is the share of openers who did not click. The 17.6% figure divides clicks by openers who did not click (135 / 765) instead of by all openers.

8. Answer: B — An LXP lets learners find and share content from many sources; an LMS administers assigned training

An LXP is learner-driven: it curates and recommends content from internal and external sources, often with personalization and social features, much like a consumer streaming service. An LMS is administrator-driven, assigning, tracking and reporting on required training such as compliance courses. The reversed statement is the common confusion, and authoring is done in separate tools.

9. Answer: B — 8%

Voluntary turnover rate = voluntary separations ÷ average headcount = 40 ÷ 500 = 8%. 11% is total turnover (55 ÷ 500), 3% is the involuntary rate (15 ÷ 500), and 73% is the share of all separations that were voluntary (40 ÷ 55), not a turnover rate.

10. Answer: B — Pause, acknowledge her feelings, and offer a short break before resuming.

Acknowledging the emotion and offering a brief pause shows respect and lets the employee regain composure so the conversation can continue productively, or be rescheduled if needed. Ending abruptly loses the dialogue, changing the rating undermines accuracy, and pushing ahead ignores her state and reduces what she can absorb.

11. Answer: D — To gather insight and advice about the field and how to prepare for it

An informational interview is a conversation to learn about a field, role or organization and to get advice and contacts; it is explicitly not a job request. Asking for a job or referral changes the nature of the meeting and can damage the relationship, and screening is part of a formal selection process.

12. Answer: B — Refine the theme definitions together, recode a sample, and check that their agreement is acceptable

Low inter-coder agreement signals that theme definitions are unclear, so the coding is not yet reliable. The analysts should clarify the codebook, recode a sample, and confirm acceptable agreement before reporting. Dropping the disputed comments discards a third of the data and biases the results toward the easiest-to-code comments.

13. Answer: D — Internal consistency reliability

Internal consistency, often measured with coefficient alpha, reflects whether a test's items work together to measure the same thing, and items that do not correlate with each other point to low internal consistency. Inter-rater reliability concerns agreement among scorers, and parallel-forms reliability concerns consistency between two versions of a test. Criterion-related validity is about how scores relate to job performance, not a type of reliability.

14. Answer: C — Whether they have similar wages, skills and working conditions and share common supervision

Community-of-interest analysis looks at factors such as similarity of wages, hours, skills and duties, common supervision, functional integration, and interchange or contact among employees. Section 9(c)(5) says the extent to which employees have organized cannot be controlling, so existing card support does not define the unit. Management preference and hire dates are not part of the test.

15. Answer: C — Observations, feelings, needs, requests

Nonviolent communication moves from observations (what happened, without evaluation) to feelings, to the underlying needs, and then to a specific, doable request. The model explicitly separates observations from judgments and requests from demands. Solutions and commitments are not part of the model, and the order matters because requests follow from identified needs.

16. Answer: D — Environmental supports, such as information, resources and incentives

Gilbert's model splits performance factors into environmental supports (information, resources, incentives) and individual repertoire (knowledge, capacity, motives). He argued that environmental factors, starting with clear information and feedback, are the most common cause and the highest-leverage fix. Defaulting to training assumes an individual knowledge gap when the environment is usually the problem.

17. Answer: A — Between 40 and 60

By the empirical rule, about 95% of a normal distribution falls within two standard deviations of the mean: 50 - (2 x 5) = 40 and 50 + (2 x 5) = 60. The range from 45 to 55 is one standard deviation (about 68%), and 35 to 65 is three standard deviations (about 99.7%).

18. Answer: A — The Railway Labor Act

Railroad and airline employees are covered by the Railway Labor Act, which the National Mediation Board administers, rather than the NLRA. The LMRDA regulates internal union affairs such as elections and financial reporting. The Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute applies to federal government employees.

19. Answer: A — Break the data down by employee, shift, and supervisor

Segmenting the data shows whether the increase is concentrated in a few people, one shift, or one supervisor, which points to the right next step and helps flag absences that may be protected leave. Discipline before analysis risks penalizing protected absences, benchmarks do not explain a local change, and a companywide survey is too broad for a one-department problem.

20. Answer: A — Management's discussion and analysis

Management's discussion and analysis (MD&A) is where leaders explain, in narrative form, why results changed, how the company is funding operations, and which known trends and uncertainties may affect future performance. The notes explain accounting policies and details behind line items, and the auditor's report gives the auditor's opinion, not management's view.

21. Answer: D — These variables can act as proxies for race and age, producing adverse impact even though protected traits are excluded.

Proxy variables correlate closely with protected traits: ZIP code often tracks race because of residential patterns, and graduation year closely tracks age. A tool that relies on them can screen out protected groups at higher rates, creating disparate impact liability. The issue is discriminatory effect, not data entry errors or processing time, and no general federal transparency rule applies.

22. Answer: B — Reply through the hotline with specific questions about who, what and when.

Two-way messaging lets the investigator gather details while preserving the reporter's anonymity, so the next step is to ask targeted follow-up questions. Closing the report without trying to clarify it could miss real misconduct. Trying to identify the reporter undermines the hotline's promise of anonymity, and a full audit is premature before the concern is defined.

23. Answer: D — Several related items capture the concept more fully and average out single-item error.

Inclusion has several facets, so multiple related items measure it more completely, and averaging them reduces the effect of how any one question is worded or interpreted. Longer surveys usually lower response rates rather than raise them. Identifying respondents would undermine confidentiality, and external comparisons still require matching items and methods.

24. Answer: C — Bring both sponsors together with each date's trade-offs and ask for one joint decision

Conflicting direction from co-sponsors should be resolved by the sponsors themselves, so the PM's role is to lay out the impact of each option and facilitate a single decision. Siding with either sponsor oversteps the PM's role and damages the relationship with the other. Planning for both dates wastes resources and delays the decision that is needed.

25. Answer: B — The clause binds the seller, and if the buyer does not assume the contract, the seller faces claims.

A successorship clause is a promise by the seller, so a sale that does not require the buyer to assume the agreement can expose the seller to grievances, arbitration or injunction requests, which affects deal structure and timing. A buyer generally is not bound by the predecessor's contract terms unless it agrees to assume them, although it may still have to recognize and bargain with the union. The clause is enforceable against the seller, so it cannot be ignored.

26. Answer: C — Legal, since it creates a new compliance duty

In a PESTLE scan, the legal category covers laws and regulations that create obligations for the organization, such as new withholding rules. The change may have economic, social and technology effects, but the factor itself is a legal requirement the employer must follow. Classifying by side effects rather than by the factor's nature is a common error.

27. Answer: B — Entry and contracting to define the problem, roles and expectations

Internal consulting begins with entry and contracting, when the consultant and client agree on the problem, goals, roles and scope. Data collection, diagnosis and intervention follow. Jumping straight into surveys is a common mistake because the consultant may gather the wrong data without an agreed definition of the problem.

28. Answer: B — Show empathy, share EAP and leave resources, and still go over the expectations.

Acknowledging her distress and pointing her to the EAP and possible leave options, such as FMLA for a parent's serious health condition, supports her without abandoning the performance issue. The attendance expectations still need to be made clear, though a short pause is fine. Withdrawing the warning or postponing it indefinitely undermines consistency, and dismissing her disclosure ignores a possible leave right and damages trust.

29. Answer: D — A senior leader uses personal influence and capital to advocate for the person's advancement.

Sponsors actively spend their own influence on the protege's behalf, for example by recommending them for promotions, high-visibility assignments or roles when decisions are made. Advice and regular feedback are what mentors provide, and a sponsor may also give feedback, so feedback is not the defining feature. Formal assignment by HR can apply to either type of program.

30. Answer: C — $220,000, about 1.8 times base

Total cost is $120,000 + $18,000 + $40,000 + $12,000 + $30,000 = $220,000, and $220,000 / $120,000 = about 1.8. Leaving out the tax-equalization cost gives $190,000, leaving out the premium gives $208,000, and counting only the add-on costs without base pay gives $100,000.

31. Answer: C — The talent acquisition director is accountable; legal counsel and IT security are consulted.

RACI assigns a single accountable owner for each activity, normally the business leader who owns the process the tool supports, while experts such as legal counsel and IT security are consulted for input. An outside vendor cannot be accountable for the employer's selection decisions, and making three groups jointly accountable blurs ownership. IT security is a key adviser on data risk but does not own hiring outcomes.

32. Answer: B — $3,825

The employer matches the employee's FICA: 6.2% Social Security plus 1.45% Medicare, or 7.65% x $50,000 = $3,825. $7,650 combines the employee and employer shares, and $3,100 counts Social Security only. $4,275 wrongly adds the 0.9% Additional Medicare Tax, which is withheld only from the employee, only on wages over $200,000, and is never matched by the employer.

33. Answer: D — They must be required of all entering employees in the same job category

Post-offer exams are permitted if they are given to all entering employees in the same job category regardless of disability and the results are kept confidential. Unlike exams of current employees, post-offer exams need not be job-related, although any use of the results to screen someone out must be. Singling out candidates who disclose a disability is discriminatory.

34. Answer: D — Treat it as a possible retaliation issue and review the project change

Removing an employee from a preferred assignment soon after a safety report can be retaliation under the OSH Act, so HR must treat it as a compliance matter and review the decision rather than continue with interpersonal coaching. Waiting for a complaint ignores what HR already knows. Building a performance record now could look like after-the-fact justification and increase legal risk.

35. Answer: A — Communicating the change vision

Kotter's fourth step calls for communicating the vision repeatedly through every available channel and having leaders model the new behaviors, because actions communicate more than words. Anchoring changes in the culture is the final step and comes after the new behaviors have produced results. Short-term wins are visible performance improvements, not messaging.

36. Answer: A — The shop need not keep routine OSHA logs, but it must still report the amputation to OSHA within 24 hours.

Employers with 10 or fewer employees at all times during the prior calendar year are partially exempt from routine injury and illness recordkeeping. Every employer under OSHA's jurisdiction, however, must report fatalities within 8 hours and in-patient hospitalizations, amputations and losses of an eye within 24 hours. Loss of a fingertip is an amputation, so a report is required whether or not the employee was hospitalized.

37. Answer: A — Ranges moved with the market; individual raises come through the merit process

A structure adjustment moves range minimums, midpoints and maximums to keep pace with the market, but it does not change any individual's pay by itself. Individual increases come through the merit or salary increase budget. The exception is an employee whose pay falls below the new minimum, who is typically brought up to it.

38. Answer: A — A timeline of when each message goes out and who owns it

A complete communication plan specifies not only audiences, messages and channels but also timing (sequence and dates) and accountability (who delivers each message), plus how success will be measured. Without timing and owners the plan cannot be carried out or tracked. Mission statements, contract terms and technical feature lists are not core plan elements.

39. Answer: D — Assign a member to argue against the policy and identify its weaknesses before final approval.

Devil's advocacy, assigning someone to critique a proposal, is designed for this kind of fast, unchallenged agreement. It brings out risks such as conflicts with accommodation obligations before the policy is final. A secret ballot may confirm support without examining the flaws, broad employee comment does not ensure legal and practical risks are analyzed, and reviewing after a year allows avoidable harm.

40. Answer: C — Compare how each system defines headcount and when its data is pulled.

Mismatches between systems usually come from different definitions, such as whether terminated employees receiving a final check, leaves of absence or interns are counted, or from different extract dates. Reconciling definitions and sources identifies which figure is right and prevents the same gap from recurring. Picking one system, averaging or assuming a payroll error all skip the diagnosis.