Professional in Human Resources (PHR) Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide

Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

• Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
• Improve accuracy and speed,
• Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
• Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Don't worry about getting everything right, your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations, and take breaks to retain information better.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning.

7. Use Other Tools

Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly — adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

1. **Which of the following is NOT a goal of Total Quality Management (TQM)?**

   A. Increased customer satisfaction

   B. Continuous process improvement

   C. Higher employee turnover

   D. Involvement of all employees

2. **What distinguishes job enlargement from job enrichment?**

   A. Job enlargement focuses on increasing job complexity, while job enrichment increases job variety

   B. Job enlargement broadens job scope, while job enrichment adds depth and responsibility

   C. Job enlargement is less effective than job enrichment

   D. They are essentially the same process

3. **What does the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act facilitate?**

   A. A fixed time frame for filing gender-based wage claims.

   B. A rolling time frame for filing wage discrimination claims.

   C. The requirement for companies to publish wage data.

   D. A limit on the number of claims filed annually for discrimination.

4. **Which best describes organizational learning?**

   A. Learning activities at a single level of the organization

   B. Learning activities occurring at various levels in the organization

   C. Learning exclusive to management and leadership

   D. Learning limited to formal training sessions

5. **What is typically assessed in a performance appraisal system?**

   A. Employee work-life balance

   B. Development of team dynamics

   C. Achievement of individual and organizational goals

   D. Impact of leadership styles

6. **What role does an employer have in providing reasonable accommodation?**

   A. To alter the job description to lower standards

   B. To ensure all applicants meet the same criteria

   C. To modify the workplace environment for individuals with disabilities

   D. To reduce working hours for all employees

7. **What does the term prima facie mean?**

   A. Right to appeal a decision

   B. Grounds for immediate dismissal

   C. Strong evidence presented at first glance

   D. Initial findings that require further investigation

8. **What do liabilities refer to in an organization?**

   A. Assets that generate profit

   B. Financial obligations and debts

   C. Investment opportunities

   D. Employee benefits and compensations

9. **What is the purpose of the Jobs for Veterans Act (JVA)?**

   A. To provide financial assistance to veterans

   B. To establish job training programs for veterans

   C. To address discrimination against certain veterans in the workplace

   D. To connect veterans with civilian job opportunities

10. **What is the main focus of Human Resource Management (HRM)?**

    A. Ensuring compliance with employment law

    B. Designing effective systems to utilize human capital

    C. Managing compensation and benefits

    D. Fostering workplace diversity

Answers

1. C
2. B
3. B
4. B
5. C
6. C
7. C
8. B
9. C
10. B

Explanations

1. Which of the following is NOT a goal of Total Quality Management (TQM)?

A. Increased customer satisfaction

B. Continuous process improvement

C. Higher employee turnover

D. Involvement of all employees

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a comprehensive management approach aimed at improving the quality of an organization's outputs, including goods and services. The goals of TQM fundamentally focus on enhancing customer satisfaction, fostering a culture of continuous improvement, and involving all employees in the quality enhancement process. Increasing customer satisfaction is a core focus of TQM because the philosophy emphasizes understanding customer needs and meeting or exceeding those expectations to build loyalty and improve competitiveness. Continuous process improvement is another central element, as TQM encourages organizations to continually refine their processes for efficiency and quality. Furthermore, TQM promotes the involvement of all employees, recognizing that quality improvement is a collective responsibility that benefits from the ideas and participation of the entire workforce. In contrast, a goal of higher employee turnover is misaligned with the principles of TQM. High employee turnover can negatively impact organizational stability, knowledge retention, and overall quality. In TQM, the emphasis is on creating a positive work environment that fosters employee engagement and satisfaction, leading to lower turnover rates rather than higher ones. Therefore, the identification of higher employee turnover as not aligning with the goals of TQM is accurate and highlights a significant deviation from TQM's foundational objectives.

2. What distinguishes job enlargement from job enrichment?

A. Job enlargement focuses on increasing job complexity, while job enrichment increases job variety

B. Job enlargement broadens job scope, while job enrichment adds depth and responsibility

C. Job enlargement is less effective than job enrichment

D. They are essentially the same process

The distinction between job enlargement and job enrichment lies primarily in their focus and outcomes. Job enlargement involves broadening the scope of a job by adding additional tasks or responsibilities to the role. This means that an employee may take on more activities that are of a similar level of complexity as their existing tasks. The goal here is to reduce monotony and make the work more fulfilling through variety in tasks. On the other hand, job enrichment goes deeper by adding more responsibility and complexity to a job, which can enhance an employee's engagement and motivation. This might include giving employees more autonomy in how they accomplish their responsibilities or involving them in decision-making processes. By enriching a job, employees are not just given more tasks but are also asked to take on higher-level responsibilities that contribute more to their personal growth and satisfaction. This differentiation helps in understanding why broadening a job's scope through enlargement doesn't necessarily lead to the deeper engagement that comes from adding responsibility and complexity, as is the case with enrichment.

3. What does the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act facilitate?

A. A fixed time frame for filing gender-based wage claims.

B. A rolling time frame for filing wage discrimination claims.

C. The requirement for companies to publish wage data.

D. A limit on the number of claims filed annually for discrimination.

The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act facilitates a rolling time frame for filing wage discrimination claims. This law, enacted in 2009, was designed to address and overcome obstacles faced by individuals seeking to challenge pay disparities. It allows employees to file a claim of discriminatory pay each time they receive a paycheck that reflects a discriminatory pay structure. This means that the statute of limitations resets with each paycheck affected by the discrimination, rather than starting at the time the discriminatory decision was made.   This important provision empowers employees to seek justice over ongoing wage discrimination and acknowledges that individuals may not learn about pay disparities immediately or may be impacted by continued discriminatory practices over time. It thus makes it easier for individuals to challenge pay inequities that may not have been initially apparent, reinforcing the ongoing nature of wage discrimination.

4. Which best describes organizational learning?

A. Learning activities at a single level of the organization

B. Learning activities occurring at various levels in the organization

C. Learning exclusive to management and leadership

D. Learning limited to formal training sessions

Organizational learning is best described as learning activities occurring at various levels in the organization because it encompasses the collective learning process that takes place among individuals, teams, and the organization as a whole. This type of learning is not confined to a single department or level; rather, it integrates knowledge and skills across all levels of the organization, from front-line employees to top management.   This comprehensive approach helps organizations adapt to changes, improve processes, and foster innovation by leveraging diverse insights and experiences. By encouraging learning at multiple levels, organizations can create a culture that values continuous improvement and shared knowledge, leading to better overall performance and alignment with strategic goals.   The other options, while there are elements of truth in them, do not capture the breadth and depth of organizational learning as effectively as the correct choice does. Learning activities at a single level, exclusive learning for management, or limiting learning to formal training sessions would restrict the potential for growth and adaptability within the organization.

5. What is typically assessed in a performance appraisal system?

A. Employee work-life balance

B. Development of team dynamics

C. Achievement of individual and organizational goals

D. Impact of leadership styles

A performance appraisal system is primarily designed to evaluate how well employees are fulfilling their roles in relation to both individual and organizational objectives. This assessment focuses on quantifiable achievements, such as meeting targets, contributing to team efforts, and driving the organization's mission forward. Employees are typically assessed based on specific criteria that align with the goals set by their roles and the overall strategy of the organization. While factors such as work-life balance, team dynamics, and leadership styles can certainly influence performance, they are generally not the primary subjects of performance appraisals. These aspects may be considered in a more holistic view of employee engagement or development but do not fit within the core metrics used to gauge an employee's performance directly against established goals and deliverables. Therefore, the focus on the achievement of individual and organizational goals is what makes this option the most accurate in the context of performance appraisal systems.

6. What role does an employer have in providing reasonable accommodation?

A. To alter the job description to lower standards

B. To ensure all applicants meet the same criteria

C. To modify the workplace environment for individuals with disabilities

D. To reduce working hours for all employees

An employer has a critical responsibility to create an inclusive work environment, which includes making reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities. Providing reasonable accommodations means modifying the workplace environment or changing how things are typically done to enable employees with disabilities to perform their job duties effectively. Examples of such accommodations can include adjusting workstations, providing assistive technology, or allowing flexible scheduling. By fulfilling this role, employers not only comply with the legal requirements set forth in laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) but also promote diversity and inclusion within their workforce, enhancing overall productivity and morale. In contrast, altering job descriptions to lower standards, ensuring all applicants meet the same criteria without consideration of individual needs, or reducing working hours for all employees do not address the specific needs of individuals with disabilities in a way that supports their ability to work effectively. These approaches might not provide the necessary support and could potentially lead to discrimination or lack of optimal performance.

7. What does the term prima facie mean?

A. Right to appeal a decision

B. Grounds for immediate dismissal

C. Strong evidence presented at first glance

D. Initial findings that require further investigation

The term "prima facie" originates from Latin, meaning "at first sight" or "on its face." It refers to something that is presumed to be true unless it is disproven by further evidence. In legal and human resources contexts, when strong evidence is presented at first glance, it means that there is sufficient proof or justification to initially support a claim or assertion before any further examination or investigation takes place. In the context of the options provided, this understanding aligns with the concept of having credible evidence that would warrant a more in-depth analysis. For example, in a workplace investigation, a prima facie case might be established if there appears to be sufficient evidence of harassment or discrimination based solely on initial findings. This does not necessarily mean the case is closed but rather that it has enough merit to continue with further inquiries. The other options do not accurately capture the essence of what "prima facie" conveys. The right to appeal a decision pertains to procedural rights in different contexts, grounds for immediate dismissal relates to specific justifiable reasons under employment law, and initial findings that require further investigation suggest an incomplete status rather than strong evidence being present right away. Therefore, the definition that best matches the meaning of prima facie is strong evidence presented at first

8. What do liabilities refer to in an organization?

A. Assets that generate profit

B. Financial obligations and debts

C. Investment opportunities

D. Employee benefits and compensations

Liabilities in an organization represent its financial obligations and debts; they are essentially the amounts that the organization owes to external parties. This includes loans, accounts payable, mortgages, and any other debts that require the organization to settle payments over time. Understanding liabilities is crucial for assessing an organization's financial health because they are a key component of the balance sheet. By analyzing liabilities, stakeholders can determine the organization's ability to meet its financial commitments and manage risks effectively. The other terms focus on different aspects of financial management. Assets that generate profit are usually considered advantages that the organization possesses, such as cash, inventory, or property. Investment opportunities refer to potential areas where the organization might allocate resources for future growth, which are not obligations but rather potential gains. Employee benefits and compensations pertain to the employment aspect, representing costs incurred by the organization but not classified as liabilities in the financial sense. Thus, recognizing liabilities as financial obligations provides a clearer view of the organization's overall financial position.

9. What is the purpose of the Jobs for Veterans Act (JVA)?

A. To provide financial assistance to veterans

B. To establish job training programs for veterans

C. To address discrimination against certain veterans in the workplace

D. To connect veterans with civilian job opportunities

The Jobs for Veterans Act (JVA) primarily aims to connect veterans with civilian job opportunities, ensuring they have access to various employment resources. While options like providing financial assistance, job training programs, and addressing workplace discrimination are important aspects of veteran support, the central focus of the JVA is about facilitating the transition of veterans into the civilian workforce. This includes measures to improve job placement and provide veterans with the necessary tools and resources to find employment, recognizing their service and the unique skills they bring to the job market. The intent is to leverage the experience, discipline, and skills acquired through military service to help veterans secure meaningful employment, thus enhancing their reintegration into society after military service.

10. What is the main focus of Human Resource Management (HRM)?

A. Ensuring compliance with employment law

B. Designing effective systems to utilize human capital

C. Managing compensation and benefits

D. Fostering workplace diversity

The main focus of Human Resource Management (HRM) is centered on designing effective systems to utilize human capital. This encompasses a broad range of activities aimed at optimizing the workforce to achieve the organization's goals. Effective HRM practices involve recruitment and selection, training and development, performance management, and succession planning, all tailored to ensure that the right people are in the right roles, equipped with the necessary skills, and aligned with the company's objectives. While ensuring compliance with employment law, managing compensation and benefits, and fostering workplace diversity are important components of HRM, they are ultimately subsets of the broader goal of maximizing the potential of the organization's workforce. By concentrating on human capital, HRM plays a critical role in developing a culture that supports employee engagement, enhances productivity, and drives organizational success.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

https://phr.examzify.com

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!