



CERTIFICATIONS IN  
HUMAN RESOURCES

SPHR®  
Senior Professional in  
Human Resources®

# SPHR® Exam Content Outline



# SPHR® Exam Content Outline At-a-Glance:

## SPHR Exam Weighting by Functional Area:

Functional Area 01 | Leadership and Strategy (33%)

Functional Area 02 | Workforce Planning and Talent Acquisition (17%)

Functional Area 03 | Talent Management (23%)

Functional Area 04 | Total Rewards (17%)

Functional Area 05 | HR Information Management, Safety, and Security (10%)

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### IF LAWS CHANGE

We realize that employment laws change constantly. Candidates are responsible for knowing the HR laws and regulations that are in effect at the time of their exam.

The Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR®) exam is created using the SPHR EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE, which details the responsibilities of and knowledge needed by today's HR professional. The SPHR EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE is created by HR Subject-Matter Experts through a rigorous practice analysis study conducted by HRCI. It is updated periodically to ensure it is consistent with current practices in the HR profession.

## Functional Area 01 | Leadership and Strategy (33%)

Leading the HR function by developing HR strategy, contributing to organizational strategy, influencing people management practices, and monitoring risk.

### Responsibilities:

- 1.1** Contribute to the development of the organizational strategy and planning (for example: vision, mission, values, ethical conduct, future business opportunities)
- 1.2** Develop, execute, and lead HR strategies that are aligned to the organization's strategic plan (for example: HR initiatives, plans, budgets, business plans, service delivery plans, workforce requirements)
- 1.3** Analyze and assess internal and external factors that impact operations and people management to decide on the best available risk management strategy (for example: human capital risk analysis, business continuity, response planning, geopolitical environment scanning, mental health)
- 1.4** Interpret and use business metrics to assess and drive achievement of strategic goals and objectives (for example: key performance indicators [KPIs], financial statements, budgets)
- 1.5** Use credible and relevant information to make decisions and recommendations (for example: salary data, management trends, published surveys and studies, legal/regulatory analysis)
- 1.6** Develop and manage workplace practices that are aligned with the organization's vision, mission, values, sustainability, corporate social responsibility (CSR), ethics, and anti-corruption, to shape and reinforce organizational culture
- 1.7** Develop and evaluate strategies and workplace practices to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)
- 1.8** Identify and analyze HR metrics to inform strategic actions within the organization (for example: develop new metrics, predictive analytics, business intelligence, turnover rates, cost per hire, employment statistics, return on investment [ROI], pay equity analysis)
- 1.9** Design, implement, and facilitate effective change strategies to align organizational performance with the organization's strategic goals (for example: change leadership, change management)
- 1.10** Advise and influence organizational behavior and outcomes through effective relationships with key stakeholders
- 1.11** Ensure alignment of HR strategies across the organization (for example: across geographic locations/sites, across business units)
- 1.12** Evaluate the applicability of US federal laws and regulations to organizational strategy and/or complex HR strategies and make recommendations based on findings (for example: policies, programs, practices, business expansion/reduction, concerted activity)

## Functional Area 02 | **Workforce Planning and Talent Acquisition (17%)**

Forecasting organizational talent needs and develop strategies to attract and engage new talent.

### **Responsibilities:**

- 2.1** Evaluate and forecast organizational needs throughout business cycles to develop or revise workforce plans (for example: corporate restructuring, divestitures, workforce expansion, or reduction)
- 2.2** Develop, monitor, and assess recruitment strategies to attract talent (for example: labor market analysis, salary expectations, selection processes, sourcing, employee value proposition [EVP] and employer branding)
- 2.3** Develop and evaluate strategies for onboarding new employees and managing cultural integrations (for example: new employee orientation, onboarding, restructuring, global expansion, mergers and acquisitions [M&A], joint ventures)

## Functional Area 03 | Talent Management (23%)

Developing and designing talent management programs and initiatives that foster an engaging and high performing workforce.

### Responsibilities:

- 3.1** Evaluate the integration of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the workplace culture and make recommendations based on findings
- 3.2** Design, implement, and evaluate programs or processes in order to develop the workforce (for example: training and development, knowledge management, mode, timing)
- 3.3** Analyze business needs to develop a succession plan for key roles (for example: identify talent, outline career progression, implement coaching and development) to promote business continuity
- 3.4** Design and evaluate strategies for employee engagement, satisfaction, and retention (for example: mentoring and sponsorship, flexible work arrangements)
- 3.5** Align team and individual performance goals to organizational measures of success
- 3.6** Design and evaluate strategies and processes for performance management (for example: performance evaluation, performance improvement, feedback, coaching)
- 3.7** Identify and implement strategies and processes for leadership development (for example: conflict resolution, mentoring, performance discussions, coaching, effective communication)
- 3.8** Develop and evaluate employee career and growth opportunities (for example: assessing talent, developing career paths, managing job movement within the organization)
- 3.9** Design policies and processes for the return of employees to the organization (for example: parental leave, expatriates returning to home country, employees returning from sabbaticals or layoffs)
- 3.10** Create and evaluate labor strategies (for example: collective bargaining, grievance program, strategic alignment with labor, other union-related activities)
- 3.11** Design and assess offboarding strategies, processes, and trends (for example: exit interviews, layoff strategies, alumni programs)

## Functional Area 04 | Total Rewards (17%)

Creating effective compensation and benefit strategies to attract, reward, and retain talent that aligns to the organizational strategy and culture.

### Responsibilities:

- 4.1** Design the total rewards philosophy and communications strategy that balances the organizational and individual needs (for example: hourly, salary, expatriate and foreign nationals, executives, board members, contractors)
- 4.2** Create and evaluate compensation strategies that attract, reward, and retain talent (for example: classification, direct, indirect, incentives, bonuses, equity, executive compensation)
- 4.3** Create and evaluate benefit strategies that attract, reward, and retain talent (for example: health, welfare, retirement, work-life balance, wellness)
- 4.4** Design and develop employee recognition programs (for example: non-monetary and monetary rewards, workplace amenities, service awards)

## Functional Area 05 | HR Information Management, Safety, and Security (10%)

Identifying the tools, technology, and systems that are needed to report on the organizational strategy while also monitoring employee safety and security.

### Responsibilities:

- 5.1** Align HR data privacy and security processes to organizational data protection strategies (for example: cyber security, phishing emails, documentation, employee files)
- 5.2** Evaluate employee safety and security strategies (for example: OSHA, HIPAA, emergency response plans, access control, contingency planning, crisis management)
- 5.3** Lead, implement, and evaluate HR digitalization initiatives (for example: information, workflows, emerging technologies, gamification, employee self-service, social networking, and human resource information system [HRIS], risk management system)



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HRCI developed the HRCI Capability Model™ to support the interplay between evidence-based knowledge, stakeholder-relevant capabilities and results-oriented outcomes. It serves as a roadmap designed to support and guide HR's diverse community of professionals as they pursue learning and assessment opportunities. For more information about the Capability Model, please visit our [website](#).

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