





PHR/SPHR Information Session

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PHR vs. SPHR: Experience/Education Requirements

Educational Attainment	PHR Experience	SPHR Experience
No degree or Associate's	4 years	7 years
Bachelor's degree	2 years	5 years
Master's degree +	1 year	4 years

Experience must be **professional level**.
See <https://www.hrci.org/certifications/understanding-professional-level-experience>

Don't opt for SPHR solely based on years of experience. Consider the type of work you have done and how you are "wired" to think about HR in the context of the organization.

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PHR vs. SPHR: Focus/Criteria

- PHR:
 - HR professionals with experience implementing programs with tactical/logistical orientation
 - Emphasizes a practitioner's operational responsibilities for the organization's HR department
- SPHR:
 - HR professionals with strategic and policy-making backgrounds
 - Designed for leaders responsible for planning rather than implementing HR policy in the U.S.
 - Accountable for HR department goals, planning and executing business strategies and technology, understanding organization's overall HR needs

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PHR vs. SPHR: Exam Content Outline

Content Per Exam Content Outline	PHR	SPHR
Employee & Labor Relations	39%	
Business Management	20%	
Leadership & Strategy		40%
Employee Relations & Engagement		20%
Talent Planning & Acquisition	16%	16%
Total Rewards	15%	12%
Learning & Development	10%	12%

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Exam Item Types

- **Traditional multiple choice** (majority of exam)
 - Stem with 4 possible choices; 1 correct answer
- **Alternative Format**
 - **Multiple choice, multiple response**
 - M/C questions with 2+ correct answers (item says how many are correct)
 - **Fill in the blank**
 - Complete a statement using a word, phrase, or numeral
 - **Drag and drop**
 - Use mouse cursor to drag information into correct position
 - **Scenarios**
 - Overview of a typical HR situations, with a series of exam items

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Exam Question Format

- May be phrased as a question, statement, or open-ended sentence.
- In all cases you should select the **best correct response**.
 - Some choices are **distractors** that look correct but aren't the *best* option
- Exam item types/levels include:
 - **Knowledge/comprehension** - Recalling factual material, such as definitions
 - **Application/problem solving** - Applying familiar principles or generalizations to solve real-life problems
 - **Synthesis/evaluation** - Combining different elements and using critical thinking skills to solve a complex problem

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Sample Question: Tech Policy Proposal

The HR Director has recommended implementing a policy that establishes clear guidelines for employee usage of company computer equipment, software systems, networks, mobile devices, etc. Management feels that the company already has too many policies and is resisting adding “yet another set of HR rules.” Which of the following options is the best argument in support of implementing this type of policy.

- It would prevent the company from being targeted by cyber criminals and phishing scams
- It would help improve the company’s bottom line profits by saving the organization money
- It would reduce the company’s risk related to employee usage of such systems and equipment
- It would keep managers from having to deal with issues related to employee tech usage

Hints:

- Don’t read things into the question that aren’t there.
- Don’t stop as soon as you get to an answer that seems correct

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Insider Info: How to Read MC Test Items

- Read the item very carefully.
- Look for any “magic HR phrases” and think about what they mean
 - “*Knowledge management*” isn’t just *managing information*
 - “*Adverse impact*” doesn’t mean that there was a *bad outcome*
- Re-read the question to be 100% sure you know what is being asked
- Do not look for the correct answer
- Go through the options and eliminate the ones that cannot be right
- Re-read item for clues to help decide which remaining option is correct
 - *Best option* • *What to do first* • *Position/role* • *etc.*
 - *What would HRCI think you should do / perfect world, ideal case scenario*

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More Test Taking Tips & Strategies

- You can't memorize your way into passing this test, but you cannot pass this test without doing a lot of memorizing.
- You have to master a lot of information to do well on this test, but knowing *how* to take the test is just as important as what you know.
- Use a study system that includes books, practice questions, and flashcards.
- Study over an extended period of time, in small chunks so that your knowledge base builds.
- When you start doing practice questions, do them "open book." Dig through the materials to find the answers.
- Look at the "wrong" answers and use the materials to figure out what the question would have to have asked for them to be "right."

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Why You Shouldn't Rely on Personal Experience

- Thinking about test items in the framework of your own experience may keep you from looking at the question the way HRCI expects.
 - *What HRCI thinks I should do first is often not what I would actually choose to do first.*
 - *The company policy that I have based decisions in my career may not be what HRCI would consider to be a best practice.*
 - *If you've dealt with a boss who solely cares about bottom line profit, you may be in the habit of using decision making criteria that are different from what HRCI thinks you should use.*

When I took the SPHR, my lowest scores were on the part I knew the least about (of course) and the part I knew the most about (because I'm stubborn about doing things "my way" and I let that influence my answers).

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Testing FAQs

- How many can I miss and pass?
 - *No one can tell you that. It's not a simple percentage.*
- But I read somewhere else that I have to get X right in order to pass...
 - *No one outside of HRCI has that information and it is not released.*
- But why?
 - There are several pretest items on the exam that are not scored.
 - HRCI reports results using scaled scores, which is the result of a transformation applied to the raw score.
 - The transformed score will fall between a range of 100 and 700, and the passing score is set to 500.

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Testing FAQs

- What is the exam cost?
 - *PHR is \$395 + \$100 application fee*
 - *SPHR is \$495 + \$100 application fee*
 - *Can add second chance insurance for \$250*
- Where do I test?
 - *At a Pearson Vue test center or via OnVue online testing.*
- How do I know where my test will be?
 - *You will choose. Once you apply for and are approved to take the exam, you will be given a candidate ID (from HRCI) that you'll use to get scheduled via Pearson Vue.*

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Other FAQs

- How is PHR/SPHR different from SHRM-CP/SCP?
 - *There is some overlap in content, but they are not the same. The SHRM credentials are global in scope. Everyone around the world takes the same exams. PHR/SPHR has a U.S. focus more so than global and as a result has a greater emphasis on U.S. employment law. HRCI has separate global and international certifications.*
- Why should I take a 12-week class instead of a shorter one?
 - *The exam content areas encompass an enormous body of information.*
 - *The course books are a stack of 8 ½" x 11" small print books that's three inches thick.*
 - *It takes time to cover the information, process and master it, then apply what you've learned to the unique experience of taking these exams.*

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Other FAQs

- If I take your class, what additional study materials should I get?
 - *Our class includes the full HRCI Learning System – books, practice tests, flashcards, online resources.*
 - *I do not recommend adding on additional materials, unless an individual has worked through the learning system so thoroughly that they've memorized all the practice questions and so isn't benefitting from them anymore.*
 - *Think about it like this: Using the resources you have is more important than continuing to add more and more.*
- How soon after completing class should I take the exam?
 - *I don't have an answer for this one ... it's when you feel you're ready.*
 - *I suggest gauging your performance on the practice tests to help decide when you are ready.*

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Info. Session Attendee Exclusive Offer

- As a thank you for attending the information session, we are offering you a \$200 discount on our 2023 PHR/SPHR class that starts on February 7.
- This offer is available only to registered information session attendees. To get the discounted rate:
 - ***Do not*** register via our website.
 - Email me at mary@insideinsights.info to let me know you want to enroll.
 - Include your name, email address, and shipping address for materials.
 - We'll email an invoice with a credit card link that reflects the special rate.
 - Registration must be paid in full prior to registration/materials order.
- The course fee is \$1,350 through 1/23, so your cost will be \$1,150
 - Class, HRCP Learning System, recording access for 3 months after course ends
- After 1/23, late registration begins & the fee increases to \$1,450

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Meet the Facilitator



- Mary Gormandy White is a founding partner of Inside Insights, Inc., where she provides leadership, management, employee, and team development training, along with Everything DiSC and The Five Behaviors assessments, facilitation, and coaching. She also teaches online SHRM CP-SCP, PHR/SPHR, and aPHR exam prep classes.
- Mary holds graduate and undergraduate degrees in Communication. She is an Everything DiSC Certified Practitioner and holds SHRM-SCP and SPHR credentials.
- She is also a college instructor and frequent keynote speaker at conferences and association meetings nationwide.
- **Connect Via Social Media**
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- Building better workplaces via solution-focused workshops, webinars, and online programs.
- Authorized Partners for Everything DiSC and The Five Behaviors.
- Online HR certification exam prep training (PHR/SPHR/APHR)
- Custom database development services.

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- *Management Development*
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