

PHR / SPHR Practice Exam Questions

1. ABC company is thinking about rolling out a health and wellness program in their company, why would this program be beneficial for the company?

- A. They provide on-site nutrition counseling and fitness training.
- B. They reduce insurance costs, increase employee productivity, and attract top-tier employees.
- C. They mandate that employees lose weight.
- D. They mandate that employees stop smoking and drinking.

2. Joe is getting ready to terminate his first employee what must be included upon termination of employment?

- A. Written documentation of any agreements that have been set
- B. State unemployment documentation
- C. COBRA requirements
- D. All of the above

3. What two terms are generally used interchangeably to describe methods for obtaining any information that may be necessary to make decisions that will best allow the organization to accomplish its goals?

- A. Needs organization and needs assessment
- B. Organizational assessment and organizational analysis
- C. Needs analysis and organizational approach
- D. Needs assessment and needs analysis

4. Which of the following, developed by a behavioral scientist, explains how people meet their various needs through work?

- A. The Hierarchy of Work
- B. The Meaning of Work
- C. The Hierarchy of Needs
- D. Needs, Wants, and Work

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6. Once an objective has been set, which type of analysis compares the current situation to the objective, resulting in a list of actions, items, and/or people that the organization will need in order to attain that objective?

- A. Gap analysis
- B. Needs analysis
- C. Budgetary analysis
- D. Resource analysis

7. In what kind of transaction is a contract provided by an entity that is not otherwise involved in the agreement?

- A. Request for proposal
- B. Terminal contract
- C. Third-party contract
- D. Bought contract

8. Julie is about to terminate one of her employee's, what must be included with the employee's severance package?

- A. Written documentation of any agreements that have been set
- B. State unemployment documentation
- C. COBRA requirements
- D. All of the above

9. Which of the following, developed by a behavioral scientist, explains how people meet their various needs through work?

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10. Which motivational theory surmises that people are motivated only by the reward they will receive when they succeed and that they will constantly weigh the value of that reward against the effort they believe is required to achieve it?

- A. The ERG Theory
- B. The Expectancy Theory
- C. The Motivation/Hygiene Theory
- D. The Equity Theory

11. You are the HR manager for a small non-profit organization. The department manager for the fundraising staff comes to you and mentions that she believes that the productivity of her data entry staff is not adequate. The manager suggests that you should develop a training program to improve the efficiency of her staff members. Which of the following should be your first step?

- A. Tell the manager that a training of this kind is her responsibility.
- B. Have one-on-one meetings with each of the data entry employees to determine if this is true
- C. Conduct a needs assessment
- D. Sign all of the data entry employees up for a course

12. Laura is doing a strategic planning process for her company and is wanting to do PEST analysis. What is PEST an acronym for?

- A. Political, economic, social, technology
- B. Personal, environmental, strategic, technology
- C. Private, efficiency, strategic, turnover rate
- D. Productivity, efficiency, strategic, task structure

13. What is the middle value when a group of values are arranged in order from high to low?

- A. Mode
- B. Mean
- C. Median
- D. Middle average

14. What is a picture of an organization's financial situation on a specific day (usually the last day of the accounting period)?

- A. Profit and loss statement (P&L)
- B. Statement of cash flows
- C. Product placement
- D. Balance sheet

15. Who introduced Total Quality Management Theory?

- A. Ishikawa
- B. Deming
- C. Ackoff
- D. Herzberg

16. What is the requirement of the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act (also known as VEVRAA)?

- A. State employment agencies must give preference to Vietnam vets for positions that last 3 days or longer.
- B. State employment agencies must hire 2 Vietnam vets for every 1 non-vet.
- C. State employment agencies must give preference to Vietnam vets for non-entry-level positions.
- D. All employers must give preference to Vietnam vets for any positions.

17. Eric is putting together the conditions under which staff members may use sick leave. This is an example of what?

- A. A work rule
- B. A work regulation
- C. An absence strategy
- D. A policy

18. Which of the following is not one of the elements of a SMART goal?

- A. Measurable
- B. Specific
- C. Rational
- D. Action-oriented

19. Pipe Beams, Inc. has recently decided to initiate a job analysis exercise. The line managers would prefer to focus on the technical aspects of the positions, while HR prefers to focus on the soft skills needed for job performance. Of the methods listed, which are the groups most likely to prefer?

- A. Supervisors would prefer to use interviews, while HR would prefer questionnaires
- B. Supervisors would prefer to use observations, while HR would prefer to gather information
- C. Supervisors would prefer to use questionnaires, while HR would prefer interviews
- D. There is no disagreement-both supervisors and HR would prefer observations

20. Which court case identified adverse impact as being an unlawful employment practice?

- A. Taxman v. Board of Education of Piscataway
- B. Griggs v. Duke Power Co.
- C. Faragher v. City of Boca Raton
- D. Harris v. Forklift Systems

21. Does the ADEA provide more or less protection than the Civil Rights Act?

- A. More
- B. Less

22. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) comes under the jurisdiction of which of the following departments?

- A. Labor
- B. Executive
- C. Education
- D. Justice

23. Which type of learning curve initially begins slowly, with smaller learning increments, but generally increases in pace and with larger increments as learning proceeds?

- A. Negatively accelerating learning curve
- B. S-shaped learning curve
- C. Positively accelerating learning curve
- D. Plateau learning curve

24. Unknowingly, Serenity Now, Inc. recently hired an employee who has a past criminal record for violent actions. Since the hire, the employee assaulted a fellow colleague after they had a minor disagreement. Is Serenity Now, Inc. liable?

- A. Yes
- B. No

25. Dominick, a warehouse employee, gets called into his supervisor's office for a discussion about an inventory shortage in the warehouse. After the supervisor's first question, Dominick invokes his Weingarten rights. What is the supervisor's next step?

- A. Arrest Dominick
- B. Wait for Dominick's attorney to arrive
- C. Continue asking Dominick questions
- D. Stop asking questions and determine what happened to the supplies based upon other hard evidence.

26. What act requires all government contractors with contracts exceeding \$10,000 (for everything that is not construction work) to pay their employees the real, prevailing wage for their locality, as established by the Secretary of Labor?

- A. Service Contract Act
- B. Walsh Healey Public Contracts Act
- C. Fair Labor Standards Act
- D. Davis Bacon Act

27. During what kind of economic conditions are cost of living adjustments generally used?

- A. Periods of high inflation
- B. Periods of low inflation
- C. Periods of depression
- D. Periods of stagnation

28. As of 2009, what is the federal minimum wage set at?

- A. \$5.15/hour
- B. \$5.75/hour
- C. \$7.25/hour
- D. \$6.15/hour

29. What is an interview with potential future co-workers an example of?

- A. Tag-team interview
- B. Panel interview
- C. Realistic job preview
- D. Behavioral interview

30. When was the term “fringe benefits” first included in the definition of minimum wage?

- A. 1972
- B. 1990
- C. 1964
- D. 1965

31. Mark is doing an employee evaluation on the head cook in the kitchen he manages, what method is typically thought of as the most valuable for a company?

- A. Learning
- B. Behavior
- C. Results
- D. Reaction

32. Of the following acts, which one requires that companies with federal construction contracts must pay their laborers and mechanics the standard wage of employees in the geographic area in which the work is being performed?

- A. The Fair Labor Standards Act
- B. McNamara-O'Hara Service Act
- C. Federal Labor Relations Act
- D. The Davis-Bacon Act

33. Of the following, which is not an experiential training method?

- A. One-on-one
- B. Demonstration
- C. Conference
- D. Performance

34. Which of the following is the correct term for an arrangement in which an employee is paid a portion of their income at a later stage in life?

- A. Late pay
- B. Deferred pay
- C. Incentives
- D. Stock options

35. Jen, a manager at We Love Books! makes a verbal promise regarding job security to a lower-level employee. Subsequently, the lower-level employee is terminated, using the employment-at-will doctrine.

True or False: We Love Books! can legally terminate the employee using the employment-at-will doctrine.

- A. True
- B. False

36. Which of the following questions must be addressed in a needs analysis to select an HRIS?

- A. Will the system share any data with other systems in the company?
- B. What information will be an input into the HRIS?
- C. Who will have access to the information in the HRIS?
- D. All of the above

37. When is an employer with 100 or more employees required to provide at least 60 days' notice for a mass layoff, according to the WARN Act?

- A. If the company lays off at least 50 employees in 30 days.
- B. A fire hits the plant and the company is forced to lay off 20 employees until repairs are done
- C. The company is looking for more investors, but will be forced to lay off 50 people if more money does not come in
- D. The company hires a new CEO, who insists on restructuring the sales department

38. The function of marketing is often described by the four P's. Which of the following sets is the four P's?

- A. Price, product, placement, and promotion
- B. Pressure, position, product, and professional
- C. Price, position, product, and promotion
- D. Pacify, perks, placement, and promote

39. Mike recently resigned from his job for a major corporate publisher. During his exit interview, Mike tells his HR representative that his reason for resigning is due to his direct supervisor, who, for the past three months, has been extremely hostile, did not provide proper instruction for completing work assignments, gave him menial work tasks, and reprimanded him in front of other co-workers. Mike may be able to take legal action based upon what precedent?

- A. Employment-at-will
- B. Fraudulent misrepresentation
- C. Constructive discharge
- D. Fair Employment Standards

40. How is the bargaining unit determined during the union organizing process?

- A. By the president of the union
- B. By the National Labor Relations Board
- C. By the president of the union and the head of Human Resources
- D. By the members of the union

41. Which of the following is the most effective mode of evaluating employee performance?

- A. An essay review
- B. A paired comparison
- C. Continuous feedback
- D. A field review

42. Of the following, which is an example of a nonqualified deferred compensation plan?

- A. A target benefit plan
- B. Money market account
- C. Money purchase plans
- D. An excess deferral plan

43. Which of the following is the concept that recognized that businesses are social organizations and economic systems and recognized that employee productivity was directly related to job satisfaction?

- A. Human relations**
- B. Human resource management
- C. Human resource strategy
- D. Strategic management

44. What is the correct term for the process of identifying risks and taking effective steps to minimize them?

- A. Risk assessment
- B. Risk strategy
- C. Risk management
- D. Liability assessment

45. When does a lockout occur?

- A. When the union shuts down the workplace
- B. When the employer refuse to allow the union to unionize the premises
- C. When employees refuse to work
- D. When the employer shuts down the workplace entrances, keeping employees from working

46. Which act is also known as the Anti-Kickback Act?

- A. Copeland Act
- B. The Stark Law
- C. Bayh-Dole Act
- D. Model Business Corporation Act

47. The Human Resources group for Dessert in a Bun! gathered salary data on all of its employees last year but was unable to analyze it until now. Is the data still considered to be relevant for the exercise?

- A. No. Any data is considered irrelevant after the start of a new calendar year.
- B. Only if the data is being analyzed during the same fiscal year
- C. Yes, as long as the wages are adjusted for wage inflation.
- D. Yes. The salary data will always be completely relevant.

48. Which of the following would not be a part of a typical employee handbook?

- A. Employee Benefits
- B. An organizational overview
- C. Information about sexual harassment
- D. Names of management personnel

49. Mike runs a successful chain of ice cream shops and wants to gain some insight into his employees' goals, their job satisfaction, and to provide some career counseling to employees who want it. What would be the most effective method to do this?

- A. An employee survey
- B. Town hall meetings
- C. A skip-level interview
- D. Brown-bag lunches with store heads

50. Marti is conducting an OSHA training session on fire safety procedures. During class, he would like for everyone to be able to observe each other, as well as easily see the trainer. Which seating arrangement would be best suited for his program?

- A. Classroom style arrangement
- B. U-shaped arrangement
- C. D-shaped arrangement
- D. Theater style

51. Which of the following rights is not granted to copyright holders by the Copyright Act of 1976?

- A. The right to duplication/reproduce/copy the work.
- B. The right to exclude others from making, using, offering for sale, or selling the invention in the United States.
- C. The right to display the work publicly.
- D. The right to sell, lease, rent, or otherwise duplicate copies of the work in public.

52. All of the following are reasons for conducting needs analysis/assessment except

- A. To identify performance related problems within the organization.
- B. To increase the likelihood of identifying a solution that will truly bridge the performance gap.
- C. To begin the initial creation of the HRD/training program before meeting with any organizational resistance that could slow progress.
- D. To ensure that a legitimate cost-benefit analysis is conducted before a commitment is made to any particular HRD/training solution.

53. Which of the following statements about using reading as a training methodology is true?

- A. It should be included at least once, whenever possible, in every training program, since ideally all training methodologies should be included in every training program.
- B. It should be avoided in training programs unless truly necessary, since participants generally do not find it engaging or stimulating.
- C. It represents a particularly effective methodology for auditory learners.
- D. It should be included in training programs when participants would benefit from time to absorb and process detailed materials.

54. Which of the following statements does not reflect a statement by which the presentation effectiveness of instructors/potential instructors could be assessed/evaluated?

- A. Summarizes major points throughout and at the conclusion of the workshop.
- B. Refers to and utilizes training materials throughout the program.
- C. Allows ample time for participants to develop concepts.
- D. Scores consistently well on post-training evaluation forms.

55. Taking a “summative” approach to evaluation means that

- A. The designer/instructor/HRD professional collects, summarizes, and incorporates feedback throughout the program development and implementation phases.
- B. The designer/instructor/HRD professional collects, summarizes, and incorporates feedback at the conclusion of the program design and development phases.
- C. The designer/instructor/HRD professional collects, summarizes, and incorporates feedback after implementing the HRD/training program.
- D. The designer/instructor/HRD professional does not collect, summarize, and or incorporate feedback until summary data from a representative number of participants has been collected and analyzed.

56. All of the following statements about Kirkpatrick’s behavior level evaluation are true except

- A. It measures “transfer of training” - the degree to which participants apply the skills and knowledge covered in the training sessions in the workplace.
- B. It measures whether and to what degree participants have mastered the skills or acquired the knowledge explored through the learning objectives.
- C. It measures changes in behavior that might be the result of factors unrelated to the HRD/training initiative.
- D. It measures whether participants’ on-the-job behaviors have changed in a manner consistent with training objectives.

57. Which of the following would not be considered to be a major purpose of OD?

- A. Identifying and implementing more cost-effective ways of increasing employee retention
- B. Enhancing the overall effectiveness of organizations
- C. Promoting openness towards differences
- D. Aligning employee goals with unit and organizational goals

58. “Unfreezing” refers to

- A. The process by which an instructor establishes rapport with a reticent group of participants.
- B. The process by which resistance to change is addressed and “worked through.”
- C. The process by which managers are convinced to provide their employees with career development opportunities that could result in them leaving their current positions.
- D. The process by which budgetary funds are released for allocation to HRD/training initiatives.

59. The Pareto principle says that

- A. An organization’s commitment to customer service must extend even beyond the point of purchase.
- B. Quality is achieved by prevention, not appraisal.
- C. In organizations, individuals tend to be promoted up to their “level of incompetence.”
- D. 80% of consequences can be attributed to 20% of the causes.

60. Of the following learning methodologies, which is likely to yield the highest level of participant retention?

- A. Discussion
- B. Demonstration
- C. Application
- D. Association

61. _____ is one of several learning organization characteristics.

- A. An assessment center
- B. Massed practice
- C. Systems thinking
- D. Programmed instruction

62. Which of the following should be included in a supervisory training program?

- A. Conflict resolution skills
- B. Budgeting
- C. Rotation through various divisions
- D. Internal controls

63. In the evaluation phase, the _____ evaluation method focuses on how well the training resulted in learning new skills and competencies.

- A. Reaction
- B. Learning
- C. Behavior
- D. Results

64. Which of the following factors can adversely affect transfer of training?

- A. The trainer's expertise
- B. A lack of job reinforcement
- C. The subject of the training
- D. The supervisor

65. A _____ learning curve begins slowly with smaller learning increments, but increases in pace and with large increments as learning continues.

- A. Positively accelerating
- B. Negatively accelerating
- C. S-shaped
- D. Plateau

66. The most common reason for the failure of organizational change initiatives is which of the following?

- A. The strategic plan was not communicated to employees.
- B. Organization leaders did not support the change.
- C. There was no training system in place.
- D. Employees were not prepared for the change.

67. The best quality tool to use for gathering information about a specific problem is which of the following?

- A. A Pareto chart
- B. An Ishikawa diagram
- C. A stratification chart
- D. A histogram

68. Which employee growth and assessment program is characterized by performance objectives?

- A. Behavioral-based performance assessment
- B. Skills-based performance assessment
- C. Management by objectives
- D. Continuous feedback program

19. Which performance appraisal method would be used most effectively in a large, geographically dispersed organization with many similar jobs?

- A. Critical incident
- B. Forced ranking
- C. Behaviorally anchored rating system
- D. Field review

70. Mentoring involves which of the following?

- A. Someone who monitors an employee's performance in doing their job
- B. Someone whose goal is to develop an employee in a particular area
- C. Someone who takes a personal interest in an individual's career and who guides and sponsors the individual
- D. Someone who provides training in areas of interest to an employee

71. All of the following statements about OD are true except

- A. OD refers to the process through which the overall performance, growth, and effectiveness of an organization is enhanced through strategic, deliberate, and integrated initiatives.
- B. OD incorporates the following four academic disciplines: psychology, sociology, anthropology, and management.
- C. OD helps maintain the organization's focus on the belief that the systems that have been enacted within organizations are ultimately responsible for whether the work of the organization is accomplished.
- D. OD interventions are intended to identify an organization's competitive advantages and to ensure the organization's success.

72. Which of the following is true of Ishikawa's fishbone diagram?

- A. Demonstrates how 20% of causes account for 80% of effects
- B. Identifies factors that ultimately affect whether a desired outcome will be attained
- C. Assesses the potential impact of utilizing quality circles in a particular situation
- D. Depicts information about a single factor

73. Which of the following was not one of Knowles's five key assumptions about how adults learn?

- A. The learner's need to know
- B. The learner's readiness to learn
- C. The learner's self-concept
- D. The learner's willingness to change

74. Which of the following is not one of Philip B. Crosby's four Absolutes of Quality Management?

- A. Quality means conformance to requirements, not goodness.
- B. Quality is achieved by prevention, not appraisal.
- C. Quality has a performance standard of Zero Defects, not acceptable quality levels.
- D. Quality is measured by specific production indexes, not by customer satisfaction.

75. An interviewer truly enjoys interviewing because he feels as though it gives him the opportunity to make a difference in the world by helping individuals who are unemployed to find gainful employment. Which of the following four interviewer biases/errors might this interviewer be most likely to experience?

- A. Compassion
- B. Urgency
- C. Leniency
- D. Recency

76. An employee who prefers to learn about HR practices by attending a guest lecture series is probably a

- A. Visual learner
- B. Auditory learner
- C. Kinesthetic learner
- D. Vicarious learner

77. All of the following statements about teambuilding are true except:

- A. Building on the idea that there is no I in team, teambuilding exercises focus primarily on the role of the team, rather than on the role of each team member.
- B. Teambuilding is an effective means through which team members can explore issues such as communication, problem solving, and trust.
- C. Teambuilding exercises are most effective when they are linked directly and specifically to organizational objectives.
- D. Teambuilding exercises can be of value even if the activity itself doesn't seem to bear any immediate resemblance to the actual workplace.

78. Managers who use performance appraisal systems based on rating scales

- A. Rate employees against each other
- B. Rate employees against performance expectations
- C. Identify statements that are reflective of employees' performance
- D. Write a narrative assessment of employees' performance

79. Which of the following statements does not constitute a consideration for determining what constitutes fair use?

- A. Whether the work will be used for commercial purposes, or for not-for-profit or educational purposes.
- B. The nature or way in which the work will be used.
- C. How much of the work is used, both in terms of the aggregate amount of work that is being used, as well as the percentage of the total work that is being used.
- D. Specific permissions that the copyright holder has previously granted, if those permissions are deemed to be precedent-setting in nature.

80. Who introduced Total Quality Management Theory?

- A. Ishikawa
- B. Deming
- C. Ackoff
- D. Herzberg

81. Rich is a division manager at ABC Corp, where you are the HR representative. Rich is extremely frustrated with the new performance appraisal system in which some employees must mandatorily rated low-despite their performance. What type of performance appraisal system are you using at ABC Corp?

- A. Job ranking
- B. Forced distribution
- C. Forced comparison
- D. Narrative method

82. Which type of learning curve initially begins slowly, with smaller learning increments, but generally increases in pace and with larger increments as learning proceeds?

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- B. S-shaped learning curve
- C. Positively accelerating learning curve
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83. Of the following, which is not an experiential training method?

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- B. Demonstration
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84. Which of the following is the most effective mode of evaluating employee performance?

- A. An essay review
- B. A paired comparison
- C. Continuous feedback
- D. A field review

85. What is the correct first step in dealing with most normal performance issue problems?

- A. Suspension
- B. Written warning
- C. Decision-making
- D. Verbal warning

86. Which of the following is the best quality tool for gathering information about a specific problem?

- A. Pareto chart
- B. Ishikawa diagram
- C. A cause and effect diagram
- D. Scatter charts

87. Most likely, which of the following employees would take part in vestibule training?

- A. A cashier
- B. A teacher's assistant
- C. A marketing manager
- D. An outside sales representative

88. Janice is conducting a training session. During it, he would like it if everyone can observe each other, as well as the trainer. Which seating arrangement would best fit his needs?

- A. Classroom style
- B. U-shaped arrangement
- C. D-shaped arrangement
- D. Theater style

89. Which of the following is not a BFOQ?

- A. A synagogue hiring a new rabbi requires that the rabbi be Jewish.
- B. A lingerie catalog hires only female models.
- C. A retail store in a predominantly Asian neighborhood advertises for Asian clerks.
- D. A swimming club requires that the men's changing room attendant be male.

90. Your West Texas plant has an opening for a controller, and four candidates have been selected for interviews.

- **Mark, the son of a plant employee, worked as an accountant for two years to put himself through the Wharton Business School and recently earned his MBA.**
- **Aaron is a CPA with eight years of experience in a public accounting firm.**
- **Michelle also has a CPA and has worked as an accounting manager in the corporate office of a large corporation in the same industry.**
- **Lorna does not have a CPA or MBA but has worked as controller of a smaller local competitor for eight years.**

After interviewing all four candidates, the general manager told you he wants to hire Mark because he shows promise. You know from previous conversation with the GM that he also worked his way through college.

Which of the following biases could be influencing the GM's decision?

- A. Knowledge of predictor
- B. Halo effect
- C. Similar-to-me
- D. Gut feeling

91. OSHA may inspect a workplace at any time. The purpose of these inspections is to maintain safety for all workers. OSHA has established five priorities for workplace inspections.

Which one of the following statements is the correct order of most important OSHA priorities to least important OSHA priorities?

- A. Imminent danger, planned inspections in high-hazard industries, employee complaints, catastrophes and fatal accidents, follow-up inspections
- B. Imminent danger, catastrophes and fatal accidents, planned inspections in high-hazard industries, employee complaints, and follow-up inspections
- C. Imminent danger, catastrophes and fatal accidents, planned inspections in high-hazard industries, follow-up inspections, and employee complaints
- D. Imminent danger, catastrophes and fatal accidents, employee complaints, planned inspections in high-hazard industries, follow-up inspections

92. Which of the following is NOT one of the 6 types of OSHA violations?

- A. Serious
- B. Other-Than-Serious
- C. Posting Requirements
- D. Failure to Audit
- E. Willful or Repeated
- F. De Minimis

93. How many days does an employer have to contest an OSHA violation?

- A. 15 working days of the receipt by the employer of the notice of proposed penalty
- B. 14 days from the date the citation was issued
- C. 30 days
- D. 90 days from the date of the violation