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The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) offers two primary certification exams: the SHRM Certified Professional (SHRM-CP) and the SHRM Senior Certified Professional (SHRM-SCP). These certifications are designed to validate the knowledge and skills of HR professionals, providing them with a competitive edge in the job market. Understanding how these exams work, including the scoring system and the number of questions you can get wrong, is crucial for candidates preparing to take the exams. This article delves into various aspects of SHRM certification, including preparation steps, exam structure, and scoring criteria. The SHRM is the world's largest HR professional membership organization, founded in 1948. With over 300,000 members, SHRM is dedicated to promoting the HR profession and providing resources for HR practitioners. The organization offers two main certifications: the SHRM-CP and the SHRM-SCP, which cater to different levels of HR professionals. SHRM Certification Overview The SHRM-CP is aimed at HR professionals who perform operational HR functions, while the SHRM-SCP is designed for senior HR professionals who are involved in strategic decision-making. Both certifications are competency-based, focusing on the knowledge and behaviors necessary for effective HR practice. The SHRM certification exams consist of multiple-choice questions that assess a candidate's understanding of HR principles and their ability to apply these principles in real-world scenarios. The exams are structured to evaluate both knowledge-based and situational judgment skills, ensuring that certified professionals are well-equipped to handle the complexities of HR roles. Exam Composition The SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP exams contain a total of 134 questions, which include: Knowledge-Based Questions: These questions assess factual knowledge and understanding of HR concepts. Situational Judgment Items: These scenario-based questions evaluate a candidate's judgment and decision-making skills in HR-related situations. The exams are computer-based and allow candidates a total of 3 hours and 40 minutes to complete them. Candidates can choose to take the exams in person at designated testing centers or remotely through live proctoring. Achieving SHRM certification involves several critical steps that ensure candidates are adequately prepared for the exams. Below are the essential steps to obtain SHRM certification: 1. Determine Eligibility Before applying for SHRM certification, candidates must verify their eligibility based on their education and professional experience and register for the SHRM exam of your choice. The eligibility criteria for SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP differ slightly: SHRM-CP: Candidates should have at least a bachelor's degree and at least one year of HR experience. Alternatively, candidates with a master's degree in HR or a related field can qualify with less experience. SHRM-SCP: Candidates must have at least a bachelor's degree and at least three years of HR experience, or a master's degree with at least two years of experience in a strategic HR role. 2. Select the Appropriate Certification Candidates must decide which certification aligns with their career goals. If they are early in their HR careers or primarily involved in operational roles, the SHRM-CP may be the right choice. Conversely, those in senior HR positions focusing on strategic initiatives should consider the SHRM-SCP. 3. Prepare for the Exam Preparation plays a vital role in achieving success on the SHRM exams. Candidates can enhance their readiness by utilizing online SHRM-CP test prep and SHRM-SCP test prep resources, which provide comprehensive outlines of the competencies and knowledge areas evaluated in the exams. These structured materials help candidates familiarize themselves with the exam content, ensuring they are well-equipped to tackle the questions effectively. In addition to these resources, practicing with SHRM exam practice questions is an excellent way to reinforce learning and build confidence. Engaging with practice questions allows candidates to assess their understanding of key concepts and identify areas that may require further study. Candidates can choose from various study methods, including: Self-Study: Utilizing the SHRM Learning System, which includes study materials, practice questions, and online resources. Instructor-Led Courses: Participating in classes led by certified instructors, either in-person or online. Study Groups: Joining local SHRM chapters or study groups to collaborate with peers and share insights. Practice with Sample Questions: Taking practice exams is an effective way to gauge readiness. Candidates should familiarize themselves with the format and types of questions they will encounter on the actual exam. You can access SHRM-CP exam practice test questions. 4. Schedule the Exam Once candidates feel prepared, they can schedule their exams during designated testing windows. The SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP exams are offered twice a year, typically in the spring and fall. Candidates should ensure they register during the open application window. Check SHRM Exam Dates 2024 5. Take the Exam On the exam day, candidates should arrive at the testing center or log in for remote proctoring with ample time to spare. The exams are timed, and candidates must manage their time effectively to complete all questions. 6. Maintain Certification After passing the exam, certified professionals must recertify every three years to maintain their credentials. This can be achieved by earning Professional Development Credits (PDCs) or retaking the exam. Staying engaged in ongoing education and professional development is essential for long-term success in the HR field. The scoring process for SHRM certification exams is designed to ensure that candidates are evaluated fairly and accurately. Here's how the scoring works: Scoring Methodology: The SHRM exams use a criterion-referenced scoring system, which means that candidates are measured against a predetermined standard rather than against one another. The passing score for both the SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP exams is set at 200 points. Question Weighting: The 134 questions on the exams are divided into categories: knowledge-based and situational judgment items. Each question is weighted equally to the overall score, with specific weighting assigned to either category. Candidates must demonstrate competency across both knowledge and situational judgment areas to pass the exam. Field-Test Items: Additionally, each exam includes 24 field-test items that are not counted toward the candidate's score. These items are used to gather data on question effectiveness and are randomly mixed with scored items. Candidates will not know which questions are field-test items during the exam. The passing score for the SHRM certification exams is set at 200 points. It is important to note that candidates do not need to achieve the maximum score to pass. The exams are designed to assess a candidate's knowledge and skills in HR, and the passing score reflects the minimum competency required to demonstrate proficiency. The SHRM exams consist of 134 questions, but the scoring is not a simple percentage of correct answers. The passing score of 200 is based on a scaled scoring system that takes into account the difficulty of the questions. This means that not all questions are equal in terms of their contribution to the overall score. The scaled score allows for a consistent passing standard, regardless of variations in exam difficulty from one testing window to another. This approach ensures that candidates are evaluated fairly, even if they take different versions of the exam. Minimum Correct Answers Required While the exact number of questions that must be answered correctly to pass the SHRM exams can vary, candidates can generally expect that they need to answer approximately 65-75% of the questions correctly. Given that there are 134 questions on the exam, this translates to needing around 87 to 100 correct answers to achieve a passing score. Do I Have to Answer All Questions Correctly to Pass? No, candidates do not need to answer all questions correctly to pass the SHRM exams. The number of questions that must be answered correctly varies depending on the exam's difficulty. Using the estimated passing score of 200 points, candidates can determine the number of questions they need to answer correctly to pass. For example, if a candidate answers 100 questions correctly, they would need to answer the remaining 34 questions correctly to reach the 200-point threshold. Conversely, if aiming for a higher score, the number of allowable incorrect answers decreases. Understanding this margin can help candidates manage their expectations and focus their study efforts on the most challenging areas of the exam content. If you get many questions wrong, definitely you will not pass the exam and hence, you will have to think about retaking your SHRM exam. Preparation is crucial for success on the SHRM certification exams. Here are some effective strategies for how you should study for your SHRM certification: Develop a Study Plan: Creating a structured study plan is essential for effective preparation. Candidates should allocate time each week to review the SHRM BASK and study materials. Setting specific goals for each study session can help maintain focus and motivation. Utilize Online SHRM Study Materials: Online resources can significantly enhance the study experience. The SHRM Learning System offers a comprehensive suite of study materials, including: Interactive Learning Modules: These modules provide engaging content that covers key HR concepts and competencies. Access to practice questions allows candidates to familiarize themselves with the exam format and question types. Detailed SHRM study guides outline the content areas covered in the exams, helping candidates prioritize their study efforts. Taking practice tests is one of the most effective ways to prepare for the SHRM exams. Candidates can assess their knowledge and identify areas where they need additional study. Practice tests also help candidates become comfortable with the exam format and time constraints. Join a Study Group: Collaborating with peers can enhance the learning experience. Joining a local SHRM chapter or forming a study group with fellow candidates allows for discussion of challenging topics and sharing of study resources. Group study can provide motivation and accountability. Stay on top of your preparation. If you've earned a master's degree and have worked in HR for one year, you've earned a master's degree in HR-related discipline and currently work in an HR role. Then, you've earned a bachelor's degree and have at least one year of HR experience. Four, you've earned a bachelor's degree in an HR-related discipline and you have at least one year of HR experience. Five, you've earned a high school diploma and have at least four years of HR experience. Six, you've earned a high school diploma and have at least three years of HR experience. And finally, you're a college student in your final year of a program that aligns to the SHRM's curriculum guidelines and you have 500 hours of internship or practical HR experience. You can go to shrmcertification.org for a definition of HR experience and HR-related degrees. You should also visit the site and review the SHRM Certification Handbook for additional detail. Once you have determined that you meet the eligibility criteria, you will need to apply to take the test on the SHRM Certification website. You'll be asked to submit evidence of professional level HR experience at that time. Once you've successfully passed the audit, you will receive an authorization to test letter. After receiving this letter, you may register to take the test during one of the two testing windows offered each year. Typically running from May to July or December through February. The SHRM-CP is a four hour test with 160 questions that covers eight functional areas identified by the SHRM Body of Competency and Knowledge. 95 questions are knowledge-based, and 65 questions are situational judgment questions. There are also 30 field questions that are not scored. Take a look at the exercise file named SHRM-CP Exam Weighting for the percentage breakdown of each area. There are many approaches for preparing to the SHRM-CP exam. Try not to rely on any one source for preparation. Take as many full-length practice exams as you can and give yourself enough time to study. I followed this advice with every HR certification exam I've taken, and I've passed them all the first time. I recommend you use this course as an introduction to the SHRM-CP to provide you with a foundation of the topics you'll need to review in-depth to be prepared. You can start off by taking the SHRM-CP practice test included in the exercise files. Then I'll take you through each behavioral competency and give a high-level overview of the functional areas you need to explore to prepare for the exam. You can also access free resources, like the Department of Labor website, to familiarize yourself with the laws and regulations that impact HR. Getting certified is a game-changer. Employers see certified HR pros as people who are committed to continual learning and development, which is an attractive quality to many employers. So let's get started on your certification journey together. Download the files the instructor uses to teach the course. Follow along and learn by watching, listening and practicing. Exercise File: Subscribe to access. EX_Files Intro SHRM CP Cert Exam.zip Watch courses on your mobile device without an internet connection. Download courses using your iOS or Android LinkedIn Learning app. Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit, personalize Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. 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Join to access unlimited articles and member-only resources. Join/Renew This content is for the SHRM Executive Network and Executive Content Subscription members only. You've reached the limit of 1 free article this month. Join the Executive Network and enjoy unlimited content. Learn about Executive Network Membership This content is for the SHRM Executive Network and Executive Content Subscription members only. You've reached the limit of 1 free article this month. Join to access unlimited articles and tools. Join / Renew In order to continue enjoying our site, we ask that you confirm your identity as a human. Thank you very much for your cooperation. To achieve success in the competitive field of human resources, obtaining the SHRM Certified Professional (SHRM-CP) certification is a significant milestone. This credential, awarded by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), validates the expertise and knowledge of HR professionals. However, aspiring candidates often wonder about the passing score required for this exam. The SHRM-CP exam is designed to assess a candidate's understanding of HR principles and their ability to apply this knowledge in real-world scenarios. In this article, we will explore the passing score for the SHRM-CP, how the passing is calculated, the content areas tested, the exam structure, preparation strategies, and more, providing a comprehensive guide for those looking to embark on this certification journey. Learn: How to Register For SHRM Content Areas Tested on the SHRM-CP Exam The SHRM-CP exam evaluates candidates across several critical content areas essential for effective human resource management. The exam consists of 134 multiple-choice questions, which include both scored and unscored items. The primary content areas tested on the exam are: People (18%), Business (14%), Leadership (14%), and Situational Judgment (14%). This area tests communication skills and the ability to build relationships within the workplace. Workplace (14%) Questions here revolve around workplace culture, diversity, and compliance with labor laws. These content areas are designed to ensure that HR professionals possess a well-rounded understanding of the various aspects of human resource management. The SHRM-CP exam is structured to provide a comprehensive assessment of a candidate's HR knowledge and skills. The exam consists of 134 questions, which are divided into two sections. Candidates have a total of 3 hours and 40 minutes to complete the exam, with each section lasting up to 1 hour and 50 minutes. The questions are a mix of stand-alone knowledge-based items and scenario-based situational judgment items. The latter requires candidates to apply their knowledge to realistic workplace scenarios, demonstrating their judgment and decision-making skills. Notably, 24 of the questions are unscored field-test items used for future exam development, ensuring that candidates are evaluated fairly based on their performance on the scored questions. To pass the SHRM-CP exam, candidates must achieve a scaled score of 200 points or more. The scoring system ranges from 120 to 200, with 200 being the maximum score achievable. The raw score, calculated based on the number of correct answers, is transformed into a scaled score to account for variations in difficulty across different exam forms. Importantly, guessing is not penalized, which means candidates can answer questions without fear of losing points for incorrect answers. This scoring approach allows for a fair assessment of a candidate's competency and knowledge in human resource management, reflecting the level of expertise required for certification. The process for calculating the SHRM-CP passing score involves several key steps that ensure a fair and standardized assessment of candidates' knowledge and skills in human resource management. Scoring Methodology: Every Raw Score Calculation: After completing the SHRM-CP exam, candidates receive a raw score based on the number of questions they answered correctly. The exam consists of 134 questions, of which 24 are field-test items. The raw score is then converted into a scaled score that ranges from 120 to 200. This scaling process is essential as it accounts for variations in difficulty across different exam forms. The purpose of scaling is to ensure that scores are comparable regardless of when or which version of the exam was taken. Passing Score Determination: The passing score for the SHRM-CP exam is set at a scaled score of 200. This score reflects the minimum level of competency expected from HR professionals performing operational roles. The passing score is determined using the Modified Angoff method, a widely recognized standard-setting procedure that involves expert panels evaluating the exam questions and determining the level of knowledge required to answer them correctly. Importance of the Passing Score Achieving a passing score of 200 indicates that a candidate has demonstrated sufficient knowledge and skills in the core areas of HR management, which include people, organization, workplace, strategy, and technology. This score is not just a numerical value; it represents a benchmark for professional competency in the HR field. Understanding the process of calculating the SHRM-CP passing score is crucial for candidates preparing for the exam. By knowing how raw scores are converted to scaled scores and the significance of the passing score, candidates can better focus their study efforts and approach the exam with confidence. Read more: What are SHRM-CP Scores? 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Validation and Adjustment The cut score may be validated against actual test data to ensure it accurately reflects candidate performance. If necessary, adjustments can be made based on statistical analysis and feedback from the testing process. Preparing for the SHRM-CP exam requires a strategic approach to ensure candidates are well-equipped to tackle the diverse content areas. Here are some effective preparation strategies: Study the SHRM Learning System: The SHRM Learning System is a comprehensive resource that provides in-depth coverage of the exam content areas, including interactive learning modules and practice questions. Take Practice Exams: Engaging in practice tests such as the ones offered by our SHRM-CP Test Prep can help familiarize candidates with the exam format and types of questions, aiding in time management and reducing test anxiety. 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