

The background features a large, stylized 'HR' in red and a large 'PR' in black. The 'H' and 'P' are formed by thick red bars, while the 'R' is a solid black shape. A dark blue horizontal bar is positioned across the middle of the 'H' and 'P'.

**HR  
PA**

**Human  
Resources  
Professionals  
Association**

**Preparing to write the CHRP-KE or CHRL-KE:  
Advice from the Office of the Registrar**

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# Housekeeping

- Webinar will be recorded and posted online
- This webinar is NOT eligible for CPD

# Questions Involving Specific Individual Circumstances

- This webinar is not the appropriate place and time to address specific individual circumstances
- Sometimes the correct answer depends on details that are not provided with the question
- Please contact the Office of the Registrar [registrar@hrpa.ca](mailto:registrar@hrpa.ca) or [exams@hrpa.ca](mailto:exams@hrpa.ca) with questions involving specific individual circumstances



# Agenda

## **The seven pieces of advice:**

1. Go to the source
2. Understand how the exams were developed
3. Develop a plan
4. Choose exam prep methods that are right for you
5. Develop multiple-choice test-taking skills, but avoid 'tricks'
6. Learn to manage exam anxiety

# Advice #1:

## Go to the source

- The first piece of advice is to get your information about the exams from the *source*—this means HRPAs website or Office of the Registrar staff.
- We know that many exam candidates get their information from course instructors and others. Although these individuals are well-meaning, we have found that some of their advice is either outdated or incorrect.
- We know that many exam candidates get their information from social media groups i.e. Facebook groups. Although these individuals are well-meaning, we have found that some of their advice is incorrect. Exam candidates who have written exams are bound by a non-disclosure agreement and cannot reveal the content or provide hints about content of any exams to anyone on a study group.
- The reality is that anyone who has anything to do with the content of the exams is bound by a non-disclosure agreement.

# Who really knows what is on the exam?

- HRPAs psychometrician John Wickett of Wickett Measurement Systems, Inc.
- Members of the CHRP and CHRL Exam Validation Committees
- Kelly Morris, HRPAs Exams Manager
- Thomas Callitsis, HRPAs Exams Specialist



# Confidentiality agreement

- All exam candidates agree to maintain the confidentiality of the exams as one of the terms and conditions of writing the exam and sign a non-disclosure agreement
- There are multiple forms of the exam in each administration window
- The content of the exam is refreshed for each administration
- Hearing what previous exam candidates might remember of the exam is not likely to be useful to you and violates this agreement
- Consequences of violating this agreement could result in disciplinary action, a referral to HRPAs complaints committee or the nullification and/or voiding of exam results

# Be wary of those who offer advice

- HRPAs provides a lot of information on its exams
- There is no 'insider information'
- No one or no organization has access to better or more accurate information than you do
- So, be careful out there



## Advice #2: Understand how the exams were developed

- The CHRP-KE and CHRL-KE measure basic knowledge in HR—the kind of knowledge candidates would be expected to have in order to be able to demonstrate the competency
- Basic knowledge... not competence
- HR is a terminology laden-field. It is recommended you are familiar with common HR terminology and be able to distinguish the meaning of this terminology on the CHRP-KE or the CHRL-KE

# HRPA publishes a lot of information about its exams

- HRP Human Resources Professional Competency Framework
- Exam blueprints
- Question-writing style guidelines
- Technical manuals for previous administrations
- Webinars on exam development process
- Webinars on eligibility requirements for exams
- Webinars on remote proctoring



# Where do the questions come from?

- The questions are written by subject matter experts that can include course instructors—diploma course instructors and degree course instructors and HR Professionals who currently practice in the field
- The questions are referenced to the competencies in the *HRPA Human Resources Professional Competency Framework*. Question writers start from a given competency and then consider the knowledge would be required to be able to demonstrate the competency

# Style guide

- All questions are in the same four-option multiple-choice format
- No *'all of the above'*
- No *'none of the above'*
- No *'a and b are true'*
- No double negatives
- No negative questions
- No trick questions



## Multiple layers of review

- All CHRP-KE and CHRL-KE questions are reviewed for adherence to *style guidelines*
- All CHRP-KE and CHRL-KE questions are reviewed for having one and only one correct answer. All questions are *fact checked* independently, meaning that correctness of the correct option and the incorrectness of the incorrect options is verified against commonly used textbooks
- Questions are reviewed by a *copy editor* for consistency of grammar and style
- Questions are then reviewed and validated by HRPA's Exam Validation Committees

# Exam blueprints and exam assembly

- The exam blueprints provide a listing of the major content areas and cognitive levels intended to be included on each exam form. It also includes the number of questions each exam form should include within each of these content and cognitive areas
- All our exam blueprints are published on the HRPA website
- The CHRP and CHRL Exam Validation Committees use the exam blueprints as their guide to assemble exam content
- Care is taken that there are no '*enemy questions*'



# Post-exam review

- Despite all the layers of review, sometimes questions don't work like they are supposed to
- After each administration, questions are reviewed based on psychometric performance criteria by our psychometrician John Wickett
- Members of the Exam Validation Committee are convened to review the results with our psychometrician—this process is called *key validation*

# Pass scores and pass rates

- HRPAs exams are 'criterion-referenced'
- There is no target pass rate
- For each administration equating is used
- CHRP-KE and CHRL-KE questions are carefully developed and vetted, but what distinguishes these questions the most is that they are *calibrated*
- For the CHRP-KE and CHRL-KE every item is calibrated meaning that a panel has established the probability that a minimally qualified candidate will answer the question correctly
- A minimally qualified candidate is a candidate at the threshold of proficiency
- Passing scores are set by adding these probabilities for the questions included in the exam



# Floating pass scores

- The pass score is set for each form of the exam
- This is fine-tuning to ensure that the pass-score is set at the same level of proficiency every time (the number of questions to be answered correctly may vary somewhat, but the level of proficiency required to pass the exam does not change from one form to the next)
- As an overall expectation, the percent correct required to pass the exams hovers between 60% and 65%

# Compensatory and non-compensatory scoring

- Compensatory scoring means that a high score in one sub-domain will compensate for a low score in another. It's the total score that counts. The CHRP-KE has *compensatory* scoring
- Non-compensatory scoring means that in addition to a overall cut-score, there is a cut-score for each sub-domain. The CHRL-KE has *non-compensatory* scoring
- Non-compensatory scoring is like the coursework requirement—a 70% average across all nine courses but with no single course under 65%



# Compensatory and non-compensatory scoring

- If you are writing the CHRL-KE it is important to work on your weak subjects

# Advice #3:

## Develop an exam preparation plan

**The plan should address content, process, and environment**

### **Content**

- Acquiring and retaining the relevant knowledge
- Choosing the exam prep methods that are right for you
- Identify your knowledge gaps and focus studying accordingly

### **Process**

- Processing multiple-choice questions efficiently
- Pacing
- Managing exam anxiety

### **Managing the test environment and the technology**

- Ensure that your environment is conducive to remote proctoring
- Ensure that your equipment passes all the system

# Conduct a self-assessment

- What has been your experience with important exams?
- What has worked for you and what hasn't?
- How would you assess your current level of knowledge in each functional area? Use an assessment scale to rate your knowledge
- Review the functional areas and competencies in the Competency Framework to identify the areas where you feel strongest and those which would benefit more from extra study
- Use the functional competencies matrices at the end of the Framework for added information about what is intended by each competency
- Some competencies are not covered on the CHRP-KE and that is noted in the matrices and on the CHRP-KE blueprint



# Strategies for Studying

Below are some strategies to help you develop your study plan to focus on your knowledge gaps:

- Cluster Information
- Spatially organize the information
- Use image rich comparisons
- Keep rehearsing content
- Use memory aids
- Maximize primacy effect
- Maximize recency effect



## Is it possible to study too much?

- Yes, but it is highly variable from person to person and the intensity of the studying and how long ago you completed your coursework
- Three-months may be the optimum & develop a schedule over this time and pace yourself accordingly. Recognizing that this is not the same for everyone
- Pacing is important here
- When developing study plan – map out how much time you have per day/per week etc. you can devote to study time.
- Carve out some extra time for studying just before test day

# Knowledge

- **It is about facts**
- **Coverage is important**
- **Textbooks**
  - in reviewing textbooks remember it is about facts
  - the depth of knowledge comes from the relevant HR textbooks- these same textbooks were used when you took the HR courses
  - not required to purchase new textbooks – use the textbooks you already have
  - one textbook is not sufficient to cover the depth of knowledge required for the knowledge exams
  - Secure good textbooks for the knowledge gaps
- **Consider glossaries**
  - Perhaps the most underutilized strategy
  - Human Resources has a lot of specialized terminology
  - If you can define all the specialized terms and describe of how each relates to other specialized terms you are likely in good shape



# Acquiring and retaining the relevant knowledge

- Plan to review it all
- Create a learning plan to identify the knowledge gaps and if time is short focus on the functional areas where you are weakest and use the Competency Framework as a guide to further focus your studying
- HR is a terminology laden-field. It is recommended you are familiar with common HR terminology and be able to distinguish the meaning of this terminology on the CHRP-KE or the CHRL-KE
- It is important to know how to apply various concepts represented by terminology, as some questions will be definitional vs situational



## **Advice #4:** **Choose exam prep method(s) that are right for you**

**Let's review the pros and cons of the following exam prep methods:**

- Self-study
- Study groups
- One-on-one mentoring
- College and university test centres prep programs
- Prep programs

# Self-study

Approach	Strengths	Weaknesses
Self-study	Flexible Can be efficient (maximum return for time invested)	Depends on one's study skills Requires self-discipline

# Study groups

Approach	Strengths	Weaknesses
Study groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Moral support</li><li>Extra motivation to follow up on commitments</li><li>Sharing of resources (textbook, notes, etc.)</li><li>Useful to share workload</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Not too big, not too small</li><li>Develop terms of reference beforehand</li><li>Careful not to let the social aspects take over</li><li>Depending on the study group. It may be difficult to address individual needs</li><li>Sometimes, incorrect information might be shared (<i>"I heard that..."</i>)</li></ul>



# One-on-one mentoring

Approach	Strengths	Weaknesses
One-on-one mentoring by someone who has passed the exam	Depends on mentor Moral support Extra motivation to follow up on commitments	Depends on mentor Other than the fact that they passed the exam, the mentor may not know more than you do about the exam  What might have worked for mentor may not work for you

# College and universities test centres

Approach	Strengths	Weaknesses
College and university test centres	<p>Some college and university test centres will also provide services to recent graduates</p> <p>Especially useful for students with accommodations of special learning needs</p> <p>Great for information on test-taking skills</p>	<p>May not be available to you</p>

# Prep programs

Approach	Strengths	Weaknesses
Prep programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Not all prep programs are the same</li><li>None have seen the 'real' exams</li><li>Focus on content</li><li>Can include practice exams</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Expense \$\$\$</li><li>Prep programs cannot do the studying for you</li><li>The questions on the exam <u>will</u> be different—careful not to develop an expectation that questions on the exam will be similar</li></ul>



# What about writing exam questions and developing practice exams?

- Writing exam questions is a learning experience in its own right. One begins to think (and read textbooks) like a question writer
- Don't develop an expectation that the 'real' questions will be like those you developed or that your performance on the real exam will be like your performance on practice exams

**NOTE : HRPAs have launched as of September 7<sup>th</sup> – stand –alone practice exams. These are fully calibrated exams.**

## **Advice #5: Develop or sharpen your multiple-choice test-taking skills**

**Your test-taking strategy should consider three aspects:**

1. Processing multiple-choice questions efficiently
2. Pacing and stamina
3. Managing exam anxiety

# Processing multiple-choice questions efficiently

- All the usual advice
- Read questions completely before answering
- Eliminate options you know to be incorrect
- There is no penalty for incorrect answers, guess from among options you could not eliminate
- But there is also some advice out there that is not correct



# Don't count on 'tricks' to answer questions

<i>"when in doubt pick option b or c"</i>	The order of appearance of the correct answer is randomized
<i>"when there is a typo, the option is incorrect because more care and attention is given to correct the correct response"</i>	Copy editor reviews all options and does not know which is correct
<i>"the longest answer is most often the correct one because the language is more careful"</i>	All questions are reviewed to ensure that this is not the case which is the longest answer is random
<i>"when there is an 'all of the above' option it is usually correct"</i>	HRPA exams do not use 'all of the above' or 'none of the above' options
<i>"the correct answer won't be in the same position more than three times in a row"</i>	The order of appearance of the correct answer is <u>randomized</u> —runs will happen just by chance

# Pacing

- Pacing—making sure that one gets through the exam within the time allotted
- The CHRP-KE and CHRL-KE are designed to be ‘all power and no speed’—meaning that candidates should have no problem in completing the exams. Indeed, 95% of the candidates writing the CHRP-KE and CHRL-KE have no problem completing the exams within the time limits
- The standard is one minute per multiple-choice question

# Pacing

- The advice here is to learn to pace oneself. For instance, if you have answered 30 question in the first half hour or 60 questions in the first hour, you know you are on track
- Our computer-based exams, including the CHRP-KE And CHRL-KE, have a timer that counts down so you can pace yourself using this feature. Exam-writers also get 30, 15 min alerts
- But this is an average, not a limit. It is OK to spend more time on a question because you will be spending less than one minute on other questions



# Advice #6: Learn to manage exam anxiety

## Exam anxiety is manageable

- Maintain a healthy lifestyle
- Get accurate information
- Study effectively
- Prepare to write the exam
- Adjust your attitude
- Change unhelpful thoughts
- Use test-taking strategies
- Use anxiety reduction techniques

Source: <https://www.lib.sfu.ca/about/branches-depts/slc/learning/exam-anxiety/reducing-exam-anxiety>

## Advice #7: Remote proctoring or test centre

- With remote proctoring come two new challenges '*managing the test environment*' and '*managing the technology*'

# Advice #8 Final Tips

- Be confident to sit for the exam is your first priority
- Consider how to balance your work and personal life allowing time to study and to develop a study plan
- Don't be afraid to ask for support from family and friends or colleagues/ and or peers
- Take time off from work to study, if that is what you need
- Decide on what is the best method for you based on your learning style



# Accommodations

- HRPAs will provide accommodations in regard to exams and provide candidates with fair access to the exam
- By their very nature, accommodations are individualized
- All the information, the policy and forms required to request an accommodation are posted on the HRPAs website
- Note that accommodations in a remote testing environment can present interesting challenges
- If you require an accommodation, please let HRPAs exam staff know as early as possible

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Q&A