

Webinar presented by Human Resources Professionals Association
Regulatory Affairs: Preparing to Write the CHRP-KE or CHRL-KE: Tips from Top Scorers
March 21, 2024

1. What resource would you say was the best investment of your time leading up to the exam?

Amanda: The Captus Press CHRL product is helpful as it provides an overview for each competency. It takes an area of broad scope and simplifies it into its most important parts. From there, the learner can expand on those parts through further research to fully understand those concepts.

The HRPAs Practice Exams were very useful as they provide insight into how the HRPAs writes their exam questions. They are also hosted on the Prometric platform which allows for building familiarity with the platform before exam day.

Garry: The HRPAs Practice Exams are available on the HRPAs website. I studied the texts and chapters for each functional area as recommended on the Challenge Exam portion of the HRPAs Website.

Janice: I found the Captus Press product to be most useful, as it allowed me to review all the content based on the different functional areas, and the practice and diagnostic tests were helpful to know where my gaps are, and which areas I need to focus on more.

2. Where can I find the Blueprints and Professional Competency Framework?

The competency framework can be found on the knowledge exam page of our site here, <https://www.hrpa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Professional-Competency-Framework.pdf>.

3. Everyone tackles emotions when test-taking differently; what would you say was the best way you dealt with anxiety or nerves leading up to the test, as well as during the test?

Amanda: Feeling prepared is the best way to combat performance anxiety. Create a comprehensive study plan and stick to it, go the extra mile by doing deeper research into concepts being studied. Nerves will always be present on exam day, but if you are confident in your knowledge then they should quickly subside once you start the exam.

Garry: If taking the exam online, be sure to become very familiar with the Prometric website. Taking the HRP A practice exams on this platform will go a long way in relieving anxiety. Also, be sure to download the Prometric App on your computer and upload your ID about a week before the exam. Finally, on the day of the exam, be sure to log in early in case there are issues.

Janice: In the weeks before the exam, I created a study schedule and committed to using my time at the weekend to sit for 3 hours at a stretch to prepare myself for the similar test conditions. The week of the exam, I focused on reviewing all the content which I had doubts about. The night before the exam, I tried to sleep early, and wake up with a fresh mind.

During the exam, keep an eye on the time, use the flag feature on the system to review questions I was unsure about, keep a positive mindset, and don't get hung up on any one question for too long.

4. What is your advice to someone who just finished their undergrad? Do you think this type of person will need to study as much as someone who has been out of school for a while?

Amanda: My advice is to study as much as you need to to become the most knowledgeable that you can be. The amount of studying required will be individual to each person.

Garry: This question can only be answered by comparing what textbook was used in the undergrad and if the relevant chapters covered were similar to the suggested readings for the Challenge Exam for that particular functional area. Also, there are studies that show that much of the knowledge is lost in a short amount of time (Retention Interval).

Janice: I would say to at least give yourself 6 months before you sit for the exam, after you complete your undergrad. Whilst the content might be fresher and easier to relate to, the structure of the exam is different; it is a multiple-choice format. Reflect on how you have performed in the various functional areas in your course at university/college and determine if you need to revise or prepare further.

5. Some of the presenters mentioned that they had used textbooks for knowledge gaps or some HR textbooks. It would be great to have the exact name of the books.

Amanda: I did not have any textbooks, just the chapter notes I created when I studied the books during school.



Garry: I recommend using the textbooks found on the Challenge Exam portion of the HRPAs Website: <https://www.hrpa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Challenge-Exam-Combined-Study-Material.pdf>.

Janice: I would recommend the books listed below. You can potentially borrow it from a library, source it from Kijiji or Facebook Marketplace. Based on which functional areas you need to do further research or practice in, try and get access to those textbooks.

- Long, Richard J. & Singh, Parbudyal, Strategic Compensation in Canada
- Belcourt, Singh, Bohlander, and Snell. Managing Human Resources
- Dessler, Gary and Nita Chhiner. Human Resources Management in Canada,
- Monica Belcourt & Kenneth McBey, Ying Hong, & Margaret Yap: Strategic Human Resource Planning,
- Larry Suffield and Gary L. Gannon, 4th. Edition – Labour Relations
- E. Kevin Kelloway, Lori Francis – Management of Occupational Health and Safety,
- McShane, Steven L., Sandra L. Steen and Kevin Tasa, Canadian Organizational Behaviour
- Catano, V.M., Wiesner, W.H., and Hackett, R.D. – Recruitment and Selection in Canada
- Saks, Alan and Haccoun, Robert, Managing Performance Through Training and Development

6. Should we focus on definition or situational questions?

Amanda: Both. Know definitions and how and where the concepts might apply.

Garry: Both are required. You won't be able to apply the concepts to situations unless you know the definitions.

Janice: You should know the definitions, as even in a situation/scenario-based question, to select the right choice, knowing the definitions in the options will help you eliminate the wrong options. Familiarize yourself with key HR terms and the fundamental concepts, to be able to apply the information to real-life contexts.

7. Would memorizing all the definitions (glossaries) be sufficient to pass the CHRL-KE?

Amanda: Unlikely. I would not recommend this approach.

Garry: Knowing the definition is a good start but sometimes a definition has multiple characteristics that need to be considered and may not be captured in the glossary alone.

Janice: There are various types of questions, memorizing only definitions will not be sufficient to pass the exam.

8. Do we need to memorize any formulas for the CHRL-KE?

Amanda: I would recommend understanding HR relevant metrics.

Garry: Yes. Some of the more common ones like ROI.

Janice: You should be familiar with the fundamental formulas often used in HR. You have access to a digital calculator in the test environment.

9. Which competencies did you find the most challenging on the exam? Which area(s) did you feel you could have spent more time preparing on?

Amanda: Finance/Metrics

Garry: Found Organizational Effectiveness to be challenging because of the breadth of knowledge required.

Janice: It all depends on what function in HR you work in, as there may be some functional areas you find more comfortable with. In my opinion, I found labour relations and occupational health and safety to be challenging, I would have focused more on this.

10. Cramming was mentioned, but are there any other study habits you would avoid for this exam?

Amanda: Don't use other people's study notes as you will adopt any errors/omissions they made. Building a set of study notes is part of the studying process. Also, study consistently and go over the material multiple times to ensure you have absorbed all the content.

Garry: Don't read the materials like a novel. I find retention with this approach to be minimal. Do whatever works for you to make the knowledge stick.



Janice: Avoid procrastination by setting realistic study goals, creating a study schedule, and holding yourself accountable to deadlines. (this is where being in a study group helps to stay on track). Avoid passive studying by actively participating in the learning process through activities like summarizing key points, quizzing yourself, or teaching the material to someone else.

11. I am a working HR professional, and I completed the courses over 10 years ago. How do I prepare for the exam?

Amanda: Captus or Challenge exams might be useful to benchmark your knowledge against current standards/best practice.

Garry: See answer to question #1. Working in HR is not a substitute for technical knowledge. For example, when was the last time you performed a Markov Analysis?

Janice: Looking at the blueprint on the HRPAsite is helpful to see the weightage assigned to the different areas. You can then determine if investing in the Captus product would be useful to revise the content.

12. Can you describe the breakdown of the CHRP-KE? For example, which competency is graded more over the others?

The thresholds per functional area are not established until after an exam has been administered. Please review the technical reports for each administration on our knowledge exam page. This outlines the methodology for scoring our exams.

13. Did you find the practice tests that came with the Captus Press preparatory product helpful/descriptive of exam questions? Would you say the Practice Exams that you can purchase separately from HRPAsite better than the Captus Press ones?

Amanda: They are both useful. I found the Captus questions to be a bit more difficult than the exam due to their wording. The HRPAsite practice exams are useful because they show how the exam questions will be worded and structured.

Garry: The HRPAsite practice exams better reflect the questions and level of difficulty you will encounter on the exam. Found the HRPAsite practice exams to be more helpful than the Captus exams.

Janice: I found the exam from the HRPAsite which they recently launched to be helpful. I purchased one set, to get an understanding of using the remote test environment. Since these are retired questions that were once used in the exam, it

also gave me a clear understanding of how to prepare, how to read/interpret the questions etc. The Captus Press products helped me to determine which functional areas I needed to prepare for in more detail, and I could identify my gaps in the content.

14. Are the functional area questions grouped together in the exam or are they scattered between the two sections?

The functional area questions are not groups together and are scattered randomly throughout the exam.

15. How did you prepare yourself 24 hours before taking the exam (sleep schedule, food, etc.)?

Amanda: Reviewed my notes throughout the day, made sure I knew where the testing site was located, my route to get there and that I had money for parking. Packed my snacks to eat during the 15 min break. Sleep schedule remained the same. I wanted to allow my brain to relax as much as I could to make sure it was rested for exam day.

Garry: Did not study in the last 24 hours. Took a walk and watched some TV.

Janice: A day before the exam, I revised only the content I had doubts about, a quick glance at the glossary. I tried to sleep early, had a good breakfast on that day. Knowing that I am not a morning person, I chose an afternoon time slot for the exam, as that's when I feel most alert.

16. What was your overall impression of the exams? Was there anything unexpected?

Amanda: The exams are very fair. There aren't any trick questions.

Garry: The exams were fair and reasonable. They were exactly what I expected because I bought the HRPAs practice exams. Nothing unexpected.

Janice: Overall, I felt the exam met my expectations. The blueprint on the HRPAs site and attending a similar webinar last year, was useful as I knew what to expect. I identified the functional areas which I needed more practice in. The features on the test environment, like striking out and highlighting are useful. Even when doing quizzes or testing myself on the content, I followed the same routine – of striking out options and highlighting key words in a question to make sure I interpreted it correctly.

17. What kind of Finance and Accounting questions are there on the CHRP-KE? Do we require use of a calculator?

Amanda: N/A as I wrote the CHRL.

Garry: Very little use of a calculator is required. If doing the remote proctoring, you cannot use your own calculator, but one is provided in the Prometric App. In terms of the type of questions, I would say that key fundamental concepts were tested. Nothing too obscure or in-depth.

Janice: You have access to a digital calculator in the test environment, there are questions that cover the area - Human Resources Metrics, Reporting, & Financial Management

18. Which section of the CHRP-KE or CHRL-KE did you feel took the longest to complete?

Amanda: CHRL - The second section took 15 to 20 minutes longer than the first section due to brain fatigue (it took me longer to read and understand the questions)

Garry: The exam allows for ample time. If using Prometric remote proctoring, use the flag option. Put an answer down and then come back at the end to review. Don't get stuck on one question for too long.

Janice: Section 2 after my break took longer, as I began to feel fatigued in the second half. The CHRP exam is about 3.5 hours long, during my preparation for the exam, I would sit and study for a similar time period to increase my focus.

19. How much time did you set aside to review material prior to the exam and how often did you review it?

Amanda: I studied every day in the weeks leading up to the exam. My study schedule was content based (not time-based), so I used as much time as needed to get through the topics I had scheduled for that day. Typically, it was about 3 hours a day (1 hour at lunch and 2 hours at night).

Garry: About 10 weeks, studying 2 to 3 hours per day.

Janice: My schedule - I started studying for the exam 4 months in advance. The first two months were mainly to familiarize myself with all the content from the 9 functional areas. In the 4 weeks before the exam, I only focused on revising the

content, ensuring I knew the fundamental concepts and could apply them. The week of the exam, I focused on continuous revision to prepare.

20. There are two practice exams on the HRPA website. Are these the same and should we purchase both?

The practice exams on the website contain different questions and are not the same. These are our fully calibrated stand-alone practice exams, and it is highly recommended that you use them.

21. How do CHRP-KE and CHRL-KE differ? Are they the same content wise?

The body of the knowledge is fundamentally the same for both exams, however more is expected of a CHRL vs a CHRP and the questions are designed under this premise. The CHRL is a longer exam and uses non-compensatory scoring vs. compensatory scoring for the CHRP Knowledge exam.

22. Do you recommend studying with digital or handwritten notes?

Amanda: Depends on how you like to read (screen vs paper). I think that creating the notes yourself (instead of using someone else's) is probably more important than the platform they are created on.

Garry: I studied using digital but tested my knowledge using handwritten notes. I tend to memorize things better when I write.

Janice: I studied with digital notes as I could summarize them from various sources, and add comments, highlights etc. Using shortcuts like ctrl+f – you can easily pull up some definitions etc. without flipping through physical pages.

23. Should you study before doing the Practice Exams or go straight to Practice Exams to see what to focus on?

Amanda: I studied before, but only looked at my overall mark for the practice exam, not at which questions I got wrong. I wanted to use the practice exams multiple times to assess my increase in knowledge, so it was important that I NOT know what questions I got wrong for this method to be effective. I only looked at the answers the final time I used the exam. I used this same tactic with both the Captus and the HRPA practice exams.



Garry: I would say you need to do at least some studying otherwise you risk a very low score and then may feel discouraged and overwhelmed. The counter argument is that writing the practice exams early will give you insights in terms of the breadth and depth of knowledge being tested.

Janice: I would study before going to test myself on the practice exams, at least do a complete read through of all the content and then test. It helps to determine how much information you've retained, what areas you need to further practice.

24. Understanding Quizlet is loaded by students, is it fact checked in any way, or could there be errors within the flashcards?

Janice: There can be errors within the flashcards, as the information is not checked. I would normally use Quizlet for reviewing glossary, summaries from textbooks, and even sometimes review chapter quizzes. If I have a doubt as to why my answer is different from the flashcard, I would do a bit more research on Google to confirm it.

25. On Quizlet, how do we know the information is current? Legislation, policies, etc. change all the time.

Janice: Try to use Quizlet content created in the last 2-3 years as it has usually been created with the recent version of a textbook etc. It's useful to revise definitions, glossary etc. but it should not be your only source of study method.

26. Some post-secondary institutions have two-day preparatory courses. Do you suggest registering for those in addition to the Captus Press preparatory product or HRPAs resources?

Amanda: It would be prudent to obtain a copy of the syllabus and compare it to the exam blueprint before making the decision to enroll. From that you can decide if complements the Captus/HPRA products or if it is redundant.

Garry: No advice.

Janice: I didn't register for this, so cannot answer. I would advise to see if you can obtain a syllabus for what's to be covered in the prep workshop.

27. Has anyone taken advantage of AI to help you study? For example, ChatGPT or Perplexity AI? What are the pros and cons?

Amanda: I did not use this method.

Garry: I used ChatGPT to better understand some concepts. Consider jurisdiction in your queries for things that are Ontario specific such as OHS or OHRC. I began my queries with, "In the province of Ontario..." Be careful as the answers are not always correct.

Janice: I used a bit of ChatGPT to help me study, it all depends on what commands you provide for it to generate some practice quizzes, summaries or provide a simple/basic explanation of a difficult HR concept. Again, as AI is also learning, it might not be completely accurate, and requires to be fact-checked at times.

28. At what point is a textbook too old to use for studying for a current exam?

Amanda: N/A

Garry: Anything in textbooks that touches on legislation (ESA, OHS, OHRC, PEA) has a short life in terms of value. Textbooks for subjects that are more or less static have a longer shelf life (e.g. Accounting, Organizational Effectiveness, Training and Development, Labour Relations).

Janice: I would say try to access the most recent version or at least one version prior to ensure the information is up to date.

29. Are questions based on textbook material or real work experience?

Amanda: Both.

Garry: Textbook.

Janice: The questions test the understanding of HR principles and concepts, with a mix of both scenario and textbook material.

30. For the Diagnostic Test and Mock Exams in the Captus Press preparatory product, are we able to complete them more than once?

Amanda: Yes, you can complete them as many times as you want. However, the system only keeps your most current set of results, so be sure to document your results if you want to reference them later.

Garry: Yes.

Janice: Yes, you can practice it more than once.



31. Is it possible to overstudy for the exam? There is a lot of material in the nine textbooks that are not mentioned in the Captus Press preparatory product.

Amanda: Captus provides an overview of the required competencies. Expanding concepts beyond the Captus product will be beneficial.

Garry: The only side-effect of overstudying is that you may become a top scorer. The downside of understudying is that you may need to take the exam again. The HRPAs practice exams will show you the depth and breadth of knowledge required to pass the exam.

Janice: I would say it is possible to see a drop in motivation, or at times feel frustrated because there's a lot to read. The Captus product is designed to be more of a refresher and provide foundation for studying. Since the textbooks are used by colleges and universities, they are more in-depth with explanation of concepts, examples and discussion questions that can be reviewed in more detail. My suggestion is to identify the functional areas that you have gaps in and review textbooks related to that area.

32. Do we need to study the entire Professional Competency Framework?

Amanda: I did not use this document. I looked at it at the very beginning of my studying and then set it aside.

Garry: I did not use the competency framework but did use the exam blueprint.

Janice: I didn't study this framework, just reviewed the blueprint and the weightage for each functional area.

33. Did it take you the full 3.5 or 5 hours to complete your exams? What tips can you provide for time management to ensure that we complete the exam within the specified timeframe?

Amanda: I used approximately 2 hours for the first half and 2.5 hours for the second half. If you are struggling to answer a question, choose your best answer, flag the question and move on. Once you are at the end of the section, go back to the flagged questions (if time permits) and check your answer. Don't leave any questions unanswered as you can always go back and change your response before submitting the section.

Garry: What tips can you provide for time management to ensure that we complete the exam within the specified timeframe? I did not need the entire time and had ample time left over. My advice is that if you are in doubt about an answer, put the best answer and flag the question for review at the end. Prometric has a great flagging feature that I used extensively.

Janice: I took the full 3.5 hours, to complete the exam. Use practice exams or timed mock tests to simulate the actual exam environment and get accustomed to answering questions within a specified timeframe, it builds up that concentration and focus as well. During the exam, give yourself 1-2 minutes per question, some questions are straightforward. Some questions that might be more confusing, you can flag and return to once you have attempted all questions. Reserve at least 20mins at the end of each section to review your answers, particularly for flagged questions where you rushed through.