PHRi Functional Area 01

Talent Acquisition

Professional in Human Resources – International (PHRi)

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Professional in Human Resources – International (PHRi) Workbook

Module One: Talent Acquisition

2018 Edition

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International Human Resource Certification Institute (IHRCI)
Unit 4, 7F, Bright Way Tower, No. 33 Mong Kok Road.
Kowloon, Hong Kong
www.ihrci.org

Introduction

As a purchaser of the **PHRi** certification workbook serials, you have access to the www.ihrci.org learning system. The system contains Glossary that provides a search box and a description of the key terms in HR. Also, the system consists of over 900 practice exam questions and answers with explanations in our database including pre-test, review-test, and post-test:

Pre-test: It contains the same percentage of questions from each content area. Participants can take a pre-test of that module to access their conceptual understanding of that specific area of the **PHRi** Body of Knowledge. When the pre-test is completed, an overall correct percentage is provided along with the number and percentage of questions answered correctly. The answers with explanations to individual questions are also provided. Our system allows users to save the results of the pre-test so that they can improve upon that later.

Review-test: Every review test contains questions with explanations which help to understand the concepts of that particular knowledge area for each section of the study workbook. Once you successfully finish reviewing for one section text in the workbook; you naturally get access to the next section. Every new section helps construct on the earlier concepts learnt in the previous knowledge areas. Please do step-wise study for all the knowledge areas.

Post-test: Once you complete with all the knowledge areas, have a post-test through the full length simulated practice tests under the same testing conditions as the actual exams. With **170** questions covered during the **3.25** hours test. These tests are designed to help you get the feel of the final **PHRi** Exam, with similar format and question types. Practice till you are near to 80% correct answers in the post-test. This helped you in understanding areas where you have improved since the last test as well as list down topics for which you needed more revision.

Access to the learning system is valid for twelve (12) months from the date of purchase to cover two test windows. Each practice for the pre-test, review-test, and post-test may be taken as many times as you would like within the 12 months. Access to these practice exams is for your individual use; your account is not to be shared with others. Your use of the online practice exams signifies your acknowledgment of an agreement to these terms.

This workbook is not a textbook. These materials include workbooks and practice exams are intended for use as an aid to preparation for the **PHRi** Certification Exam conducted by the HR Certification Institute. By using all of the preparation materials, you will be well-versed in the **six** key functional areas that make up the HR Certification Institute **PHRi** body of knowledge. Studying these materials does not guarantee, however, that you will pass the exam. These workbooks are not to be considered legal or professional advice.

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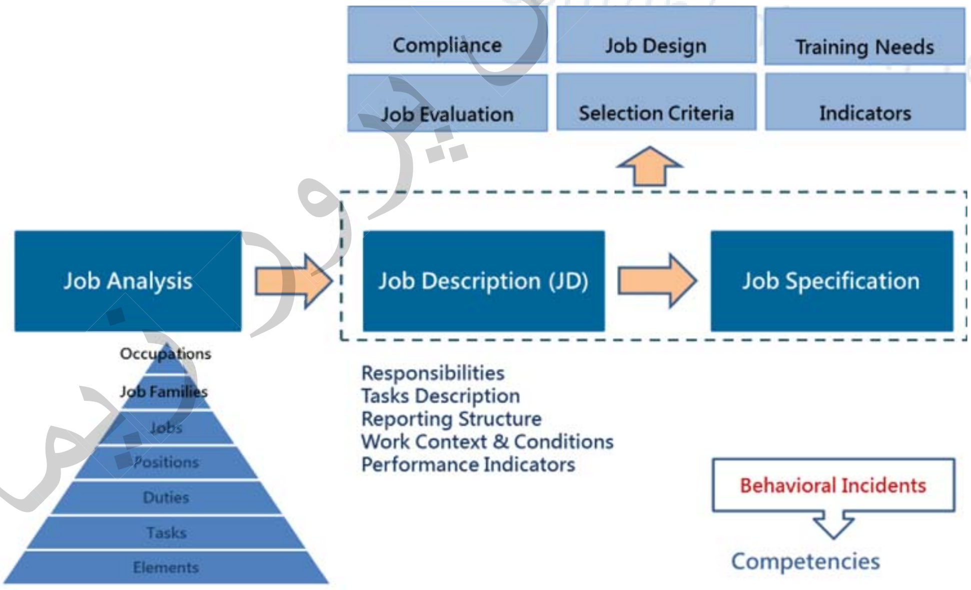
Part One: Job Analysis and Design

1. Job Analysis

Human resource management in organizations virtually always requires an in-depth understanding of the work that people do in that organization. The process by which this understanding is developed is a job analysis; a job description is the documentation of the results of that analysis. While these two terms are often used interchangeably, we strongly recommend against such usage, as job analysis is a process and a job description is a product of that process. Simply put, a job analysis is a systematic process for collecting and analyzing information about a job.

In a more comprehensive and detailed definition, Scholars defined job analysis as ‘‘the collection of data on (a) ‘job-oriented’ behavior, such as job tasks and work procedures; (b) more abstract ‘worker-oriented’ behavior, such as decision making, supervision, and information processing; (c) behaviors involved in interactions with machines, materials, and tools; (d) methods of evaluating performance, such as productivity and error rates; (e) job context, such as working conditions and type of compensation systems; and (f) personnel requirements, such as skills, physical ability, and personality traits’’ This definition of job analysis focuses on the systematic collection of data on the observable job behaviors of employees and what is accomplished by these behaviors and what technologies are required to do so.


Compliance
Job Design
Training Needs
Job Evaluation
Selection Criteria
Indicators
Job Analysis
Job Description (JD)
Job Specification
Occupations
Job Families
Jobs
Positions
Duties
Tasks
Elements
Responsibilities
Tasks Description
Reporting Structure
Work Context & Conditions
Performance Indicators
Behavioral Incidents
Competencies

Brannick, M.T., Levine, E.L., & Morgeson, F.P. (2014). Job and Work Analysis: Methods, Research, and Applications for Human Resource Management (2nd edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Given the importance that job analyses play in the management of human capital, it is surprising that job analyses are not regarded as a more critical tool in the field of human resources. Over three decades ago, a researcher observed, ‘Although job analysis is an essential feature of every activity engaged in by industrial-organizational psychologists, the subject is treated in most textbooks in a manner which suggests that any fool can do it and thus is a task which can be delegated to the lowest level technician’. Unfortunately, the situation has not much changed, and this important function is not given the proper degree of attention and respect either by psychologists or HR professionals.

1.1. Applications of Job Analyses

A variety of important reasons support conducting job analyses in the workplace. These include recruitment, candidate selection, employee training and development, performance management, organizational management and planning, and litigation protection. Each of these will be briefly reviewed.

1.1.1. Recruitment

The first external application of job analysis is in recruitment, when the job description becomes the basis for recruiting applicants. In beginning to fill a vacant job, the recruiter needs to know the job responsibilities as well as the skills and other characteristics required of candidates. Not only is it necessary for the recruiter to know these things, but candidates need to know the kind of job for which they are applying. The need for a job description should be obvious to all.

1.1.2. Candidate Selection

In our experience, candidate selection accounts for most job analyses. Employers need to know in some detail the work activities involved in each job vacancy and, most importantly, the knowledge, skills, and abilities— the competencies— required to fill that job successfully. While most employers maintain files of job descriptions, there is widespread understanding that many, if not most, of these job descriptions are dated and need to be redone, especially for jobs deemed to be critically important.

The work activities of a job change over time, as do the requirements for successfully carrying out those activities. As an example, consider the impact that the computer has had on the work activities both in the office and on the shop floor. Administrative positions that once had a heavy dose of taking shorthand and transcription are now given over to a very different set of activities, ones that require a rather different set of requirements. Similarly, the introduction of the computer onto the shop floor and into the warehouse has produced an equally large impact on the work activities. The tightening of bolts on the assembly line is now done by a computer-driven robot, the contents of the warehouse are all bar coded, and most jobs require computer skills for success. Such changes are ongoing and have enormous impact on the competency requirements for hiring. And these changes can be specified only by a careful job analysis.

Further, it is important to recognize that many skills are specific to a given occupation and that these occupationally specific skills are only be identified by a job analysis.

One use of job analyses is in developing behavioral interviewing protocols for candidate screening. The job description that is the end-product of the job analysis should provide a clear picture of the work and activities and the requirements. These then

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should provide the basis on which to develop a behavioral interviewing protocol—questions inquiring into a candidate’s experience in such work activities and seeking to establish the degree to which the candidate has the necessary requirements to perform the important work activities. This is a method for developing a behavioral interview much preferred to the more generic approach that lacks a specific job-relevant focus.

Another important use of job analyses is as the criteria for validity studies of any pre-employment selection procedure, especially psychological tests. The Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing specify that the job requirements involved in studies of predictor-criteria relationships should be ‘‘determined by a job analysis’’. In other words, the validity of a psychological test or any procedure for selecting job candidates must be determined by the correlation of that procedure with an important aspect of job performance as identified by a job analysis.

1.1.3. Employee Training and Development

Once a current job analysis becomes available, the competency of current employees in that job becomes apparent. Employees without a high level of the identified necessary competencies will be less productive than they otherwise should be. For example, if a new applicant tracking system is introduced in the HR function, someone has to be hired to manage that system. But, implicit in that decision, is the question of the competency of the existing HR staff to use that new system. Without knowing the answer to that question, the positive impact of the introduction of this new system will be less than intended. Thus, the job analysis used for the new hire should lead to an analysis of the competencies of the existing staff, and a training and development program should be instituted to produce the necessary competencies.

The job analysis can impact on the individual training and development level as well. It is rare that even those candidates who are the best fit developed through the job analysis are a perfect fit. The selection process should have identified both the candidate’s strengths— those that led to the selection—and weaknesses— those that need to be addressed by some training and development process. This might be part of a supervisory or mentoring process or by some actual training, either on the job or somewhere else. In a somewhat dated example, a very experienced travel agent with an established clientele was hired by a large travel agency. The agent, despite her considerable experience, has little experience using the computer booking system that had been identified as an important requirement in the job analysis. Her experience and list of clients were sufficient to outweigh her lack of skill with the system, a lack that could be remedied by taking a week-long training course, which was an acceptable solution to both parties. Clearly in this case, as in all training decisions, the job analysis is the starting point.

1.1.4. Performance Management

Another important use of job analysis is in performance management. Job analyses play an important role in developing or modifying compensation systems and in performance appraisal. Determining the various levels of performance on a given job is an essential aspect of every job analysis. The knowledge of what constitutes an outstanding level of performance, an average level, and a borderline level is a critical

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aspect of performance management and should be the basis for setting pay and bonuses, the need for training and development, and for virtually all other aspects of the HR function.

Job analyses have been used not only to set pay levels but also to help determine whether different jobs require different requirements or effort, or involve different working conditions. In either case, such differences merit different pay scales. Jobs that involve equivalent factors, however, should lead to equal pay.

The pay level a job warrants is also important, and the job characteristics as determined by the job analysis are frequently used to determine the level of pay. Among the factors included in such decisions are

- Level of education, training, or experience required
- Degree of creativity involved
- Strength or stamina necessary
- Amount of responsibility
- Degree of independence of action
- Scope of influence
- Intellectual demands, including problem solving
- Risk of death, injury, or sickness

Presumably the level of each of these factors can be identified by a job analysis and then combined in some meaningful way to determine the level of the job among the various jobs in that organization. The job description and the combined evaluation of these various factors provide the basis for establishing a compensation system that is then priced according to the data produced by a salary survey of similar jobs in the local job market.

Since such comparisons are fraught with uncertainties, they have become the basis of a considerable amount of litigation about the equality of pay for different jobs. As just one example of the ambiguities involved, consider the difficulties inherent in attempting to use job analysis to justify equal pay of elementary school teachers and truck drivers. While there is some evidence that sophisticated statistical analysis of the results of job analyses can be used successfully to predict market compensation rates, this can be done only for blue-collar jobs. Further, it is often argued that such an approach captures only existing discriminatory pay polices and does little to advance the cause of equal pay for equal work. It is safe to conclude that setting compensation systems on the basis of job analysis is a complex and difficult process.

Job analyses are also used in the performance appraisal process. For this process, job analyses should highlight the various work activities involved in performing a job and the relative importance of each activity. A rational performance appraisal system would evaluate the quality of the work performed by the individual being appraised according to the various importance ratings. It should be far more critical for that employee being

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rated to perform the important tasks more competently than for him or her to perform those of lesser importance competently. Unfortunately, this does not always seem to be the case, and often employees feel that they are downgraded for not attending to rather trivial tasks, ones not critical to fulfilling the organization’s mission. This leads to a feeling on the part of employees that the performance appraisal process is an unimportant managerial task, so they often discount the entire process.

1.1.5. Organizational Management and Planning

As we noted above, the appropriateness of job descriptions tends to decay over time. Changes in the marketplace require new behaviors, technology changes jobs with warp speed, and incumbents begin to do their jobs in idiosyncratic ways. As a result of these and other changes, job descriptions become obsolete. Further, mergers and acquisitions lead to a need to integrate different human resources management systems. And a new CEO comes in and decides to rationalize the HR function, to update the job descriptions, create a new compensation system, one based on equal pay for equal work, none of which can be accomplished without starting with a job analysis.

When one of us became the CEO of a large professional association, he quickly learned about employee discontent over what appeared to be favoritism in assigning job titles, compensation, and a variety of other benefits. It appeared that the only way to deal with this unrest was through an organization-wide review and rationalization, beginning with job analyses. To win employee acceptance of the process, the staff was promised that no one would suffer financially or in status.

The organization had almost five hundred employees, and the HR function was inadequate to perform the required work. A national HR consulting firm was engaged to create an organization-wide series of job analyses, draft current job descriptions based on these analyses, create a uniform set of job titles, and recommend a compensation system based on the job content involved and a regional salary survey. This was done over a period of several months and was widely accepted by both rank-and-file employees and the organization’s board of directors. Moreover, this work enabled the organization to identify where additional resources were needed and where redundancy would provide some resources to fill those gaps. But all of this depended on the first step— the job analyses.

1.1.6. Litigation Protection

Still another use of job analyses is to reduce an organization’s exposure to litigation based on allegations of discriminatory hiring practices. In order to ensure that all individuals are treated fairly in the workplace, including in hiring, pay, training, and other conditions of employment, we need to base all of our decisions on job-related qualifications. The only way to be able to do this is through the use of job analyses. For example, if we wish to hire a plumber, we need to ascertain that applicants can run pipe and have a license to do so, requirements based on the job analysis. Simply stated, if we are to hire people based on the qualifications to perform a job, we first must determine what those requirements for doing that job are—and conducting a job analysis is the only legal way to do this.

As we noted above, the Uniform Guidelines are quite explicit in requiring ‘‘an analysis

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