

SHRM Announces New Competency Based Certification

Henry Jackson, President & CEO of SHRM National made a surprising announcement earlier this month via an email he sent out to all volunteer leaders indicating that SHRM will be rolling out a new competency based certification. According to Mr. Jackson in an article from the SHRM website entitled “*SHRM Announces Details of New Certification*”,

“We view SHRM certification as the next evolution of certification for HR professionals... Certification started out as testing for knowledge. Now it’s evolving to how to demonstrate that you can apply that knowledge in a manner that yields positive individual performance and better business outcomes or competency”.

From January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015, SHRM will allow those with HR Certification from other organizations (i.e. PHR/SPHR/GPHR through HRCI) to convert to the new credential free of charge.

We know you will have lots of questions, as do we! Below are the Frequently Asked Questions published by SHRM.

FAQs

Investing in the HR Profession

For Certified HR Professionals

If I’m already certified, what do I have to do? Do I have to take another exam?

Beginning January 1, 2015, if you are certified and in good standing, you are eligible for SHRM’s new certification -- at no cost -- by completing the following by December 31, 2015:

- **Document** that your current certification is in good standing.
- **Sign** the SHRM Code of Ethics.
- **Complete** a brief online tutorial on HR competencies.

Once you go through this process, you will receive the new SHRM credential and will begin a three-year recertification cycle.

If I’m already certified, am I automatically eligible for the new SHRM credential?

Yes. HR professionals with existing generalist certifications (PHR®, SPHR®, GPHR®, HRBP®, HRMP®), and other recognized generalist certifications, will be eligible for the new SHRM certification – at no cost – beginning January 1, 2015.

Does this mean SHRM will no longer support my existing certification?

SHRM has always focused on making sure HR practitioners are seeking and attaining certification. We are committed to ensuring that the certification our members achieve is recognized as best in class and distinguishes them in the marketplace. We are developing the SHRM competency-based certification with a focus on teaching and testing the practical, real-life information HR professionals need to excel in their careers today, including knowledge, skills and competencies.

We believe the best way to support HR professionals with existing generalist certifications (PHR®, SPHR®, GPHR®, HRBP®, HRMP®), and other recognized generalist certifications, will be to make them eligible for the new SHRM certification – at no cost – beginning January 1, 2015.

For HR Professionals Seeking Certification

Should I still sit for the exam I'm currently studying for or scheduled to take?

SHRM supports your decision to prepare for and take the current exam for the existing credentials. If you pass your exam, you will be eligible to receive the new SHRM credential free of charge from January 1 – December 31, 2015.

During this period, you will be invited to obtain the new SHRM certification by completing the following process:

- **Document** that your current certification is in good standing
- **Sign** the SHRM code of ethics
- **Complete** a brief online tutorial on HR competencies.

Once you go through this process, you will receive the new SHRM credential and will begin a three-year recertification cycle.

If you do not pass your exam prior to January 2015 and you purchased the current SHRM Learning System, we will provide the new SHRM Learning System for the new SHRM certification free of charge in preparation for the new assessment.

How will SHRM's new competency-based certification impact the cost of getting certified?

We anticipate that our new certification will be a cost-effective program for both our members and chapters, as we are reducing or eliminating certain fees currently associated with certification and re-certification. We will have more details soon on the exact cost structure of the new certification.

We understand that seeking certification requires an investment. But we believe that the value of certification for an HR professional's career cannot be overstated, which is why we've always encouraged our members to seek certification. In fact, SHRM has invested significant funds in research and development of our new competency-based certification – an investment that is leading to the development of a more valuable certification for our members.

For SHRM Chapters and Councils

If my chapter or state council has an event scheduled in 2015, how will that affect the recertification credits associated with that event?

If you are a chapter or state council in good standing, you can become a preferred provider for the new SHRM certification program free of charge. We are streamlining the process for awarding recertification credit for your chapter and state council events.

Your SHRM Field Services Director will be contacting you detailing that process as it becomes available.

For SHRM Education Partners

Will the Learning System delivery be the same?

Yes, our proven training system for partners and students will remain the same. The new program will

be similar in length to the current system with approximately 36 contact hours.

Will the pricing on our Learning System kits change?

No. Pricing will stay the same for the new SHRM Learning System.

How will the new certification fit in to the recertification process?

SHRM understands the need for recertification to help keep HR practitioners current on industry topics. We plan on helping our partners build and grow their recertification opportunities and more information will be provided in the coming months.

Background on SHRM Certification Development

What input led to SHRM's decision to develop this certification? Were members and certificant consulted?

For the past several years, SHRM has been conducting research on HR's role in the workforce, how expectations have shifted for HR professionals, and what these new expectations mean to our members.

Our global research findings, which included outreach to major corporations, universities and over 30,000 members of the profession, are clear – in addition to technical knowledge, a successful HR career will also be determined by behavioral competencies.

One of the best ways to prove these competencies is through professional certification, and the inclusion of competencies in the certification process is something we've been discussing for a couple years now as a way to enhance our profession. We have valued the input of members in this process and believe that the development of a competency-based certification is responsive to the needs we've heard expressed by members, in addition to being responsive to the overall trends of our profession.

Why was the new certification announced now?

For the past several years, SHRM has been conducting research on HR's role in the workforce, how expectations have shifted for HR professionals, and what these new expectations mean to our members. Our global research findings, which included outreach to major corporations, universities and over 30,000 members of the profession, are clear – in addition to technical knowledge, a successful HR career will also be determined by behavioral competencies.

With the first test window expected in mid-2015, we wanted to make this announcement with plenty of time for our partners and members to start considering the launch of our new certification in their planning. We will have more information to share soon, including detailed transition information.

What's the rollout timeline for this new certification?

The first test window for the SHRM competency-based certification is scheduled for mid-2015. Marketing materials and support will be available to SHRM educational partners beginning June 2014. The Learning System for the new SHRM certification will be available toward the end of 2014.

Are SHRM and HRCI developing the new certification together?

SHRM and HRCI have had a long and mutually beneficial relationship. In fact, we have been meeting with HRCI over the past several months to reach a consensus about the vision for a certification based on competencies. SHRM's goal has always been to continue and expand our work together in

order to better serve the profession. Our goal has not changed.

However, at this time, SHRM's determined that it's best to move forward independently with our vision for a competency-based certification, which is urgently needed for the advancement of the HR profession and HR practitioners.

We continue to hope that HRCI will join us in this effort.

Why aren't SHRM and HRCI working together on this certification?

SHRM and HRCI have had a long and positive relationship; in fact, SHRM created and funded HRCI to provide certification services to our members. SHRM's goal has always been to continue and expand our work together in order to better serve the profession. We have been meeting with HRCI in good faith over the past several months to reach a consensus about our future relationship and what our vision is for certification. But at this time, we've reached the conclusion that it is necessary for SHRM to move forward with the development of a competency-based certification, which is urgently needed for the advancement of the HR profession and HR practitioners. We continue to hope that HRCI will agree to the work with us on this important change.