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Professional in Human Resources Exam

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Question: 1

Consider the following employee roll call data. If a human resources professional were researching the workplace environment and employee benefits to inspire diversity among leadership, at what level would he or she begin the data collection?

	Entry-Level Workers	Front-End Managers	Store Managers	Department Heads	Associate VPs	C-Suite Executives
Total Number of Employees	3,655	189	62	18	10	5
Male Employees	1,663	96	47	13	8	4
Female Employees	1,992	93	15	5	2	1

- A. Entry-level workers
- B. Front-end managers
- C. Store managers
- D. C-suite executives

Answer: B

Explanation:

The greatest drop-off in representation rates between men and women occurs between front-end managers and store managers. Women represent 49% of the workforce as front-end managers, but they only represent 24% as store managers and maintain somewhat comparable rates of representation through to the C-suite level of the organizational hierarchy. While all levels of the hierarchy can offer useful data for the human resources professional, the level immediately before the representation drop-off (front-end managers) is more likely to offer impactful insight into what mechanisms may be causing the drop-off, such as disparate impact, discrimination, lack of mentors, inadequate benefits, etc. Following the data collection from front-end managers, the human resources professional will have additional information that can help inform the next step. Is there a lack of leadership buy-in that may lead to interviewing VPs and C-suite level employees? Are there concerning matters raised that call for attention to the 5.8% promotion rate for male employees from entry-level workers to front-end managers versus the 4.7% promotion rate for female employees? Are there matters raised that call for the next data collection to come from the female employees promoted to store managers to ascertain how their promotion process went?

Question: 2

Which of the following is not an example of a calculation used to evaluate the effectiveness of a talent acquisition process?

- A. Time to fill
- B. Cost per hire
- C. Applicant to interview to offer ratio
- D. ATS

Answer: D

Explanation:

An ATS (applicant tracking system) is a system used by an employer to handle information related to applicants that move through its system. The other three responses are metrics used to evaluate the effectiveness of the talent acquisition process.

Question: 3

An individual who has full discretion as to how their work is completed and where their work is completed, and is paid on a 1099 form upon completion of each specific project is classified as:

- A. An independent contractor
- B. A freelance employee
- C. A non-traditional employee
- D. A temporary employee

Answer: A

Explanation:

An employer will generally have control over how and where the work of an employee is completed, and employees are paid on a W-2 form. In contrast, independent contractors are generally hired for a specific project, are not subject to the control of the employer, and are paid on a 1099 form.

Question: 4

An employee is told that they will be spending one day per week working in a different role as a way to expand their skills. This is an example of:

- A. Job enlargement
- B. Job enrichment
- C. Job rotation
- D. Career succession planning

Answer: C

Explanation:

Job rotation refers to working in a different role. Job enlargement and enrichment refers to broadening of the scope of an individual's current role, but the employee will be working in a

different role for one day per week in this case.

Question: 5

When an employee submits their resignation, what tool does an HR professional have at their disposal to seek to gain information about how the departing employee viewed the workplace culture?

- A. An employment engagement survey
- B. An exit interview
- C. A focus group
- D. An ERG group

Answer: B

Explanation:

It is best practice for organizations to conduct exit interviews with their departing employee to obtain feedback about the individual's experience.

Question: 6

If a female patient requests that a female nurse assist her in the shower, the employer agrees to the request, and the male nurse files a claim for employment discrimination because the shift change resulted in loss of overtime hours, the employer would likely have a defense under what legal theory?

- A. The customer requested the change
- B. The BFOQ defense
- C. A reasonable accommodation was requested
- D. There is no defense and the employer will likely be held liable for sex discrimination under Title VII

Answer: B

Explanation:

An employer can assert the BFOQ defense when a decision based upon a protected class (here, sex) is reasonably necessary for the individual to carry out a job function. The BFOQ defense is narrowly-applied but generally accepted as a defense within the context of privacy issues such as in this case.

Question: 7

If the CEO indicates she is going to retire within the next 3-5 years and the company develops a strategic plan to fill the role this is called:

- A. A pipeline review
- B. Succession planning
- C. Balance scorecard review

D. Managerial matrix

Answer: B

Explanation:

Succession planning refers to the process an organization uses to identify the most crucial roles in an organization and establish a plan to replace the individuals working in those roles as they depart.

Question: 8

An example of an insider threat that may result in loss of sensitive workplace data may be:

- A. Phishing
- B. Catfishing
- C. Spearing
- D. A departing employee

Answer: D

Explanation:

Phishing, catfishing and spearing pose a threat to the confidentiality of workplace data, but a departing employee is an insider threat because they have access to the information that an outsider would generally not have.

Question: 9

Angela, an operations manager, is interviewing candidates for an open position and is considering selecting Melanie, who, like Angela, recently earned her master's degree after taking time away from her career to raise her family. Which of the following biases might be affecting Angela's decision?

- A. Extroversion bias
- B. Social comparison bias
- C. Affinity bias
- D. In-group bias

Answer: C

Explanation:

An affinity bias can occur when an individual creates a stronger bond with another due to perceived similarities in upbringing, backgrounds, and personal characteristics. This particular bias may cloud the hiring managers judgment because he or she sees himself or herself in the candidate rather than seeing all the candidates for their relevant experiences and qualifications. An extroversion bias (A) is the tendency to select or trust outgoing, charismatic individuals over those who appear more reserved. Social comparison bias (B) occurs when an individual compares oneself to others that he or she

perceives to be better off than the individual is in a certain quality. In-group bias (D) is the tendency to show a preference for those who are part of the same social group as opposed to those perceived as outsiders.

Question: 10

Which of the following statements about the performance appraisal process is LEAST accurate?

- A. Ranking is the most effective method for appraising large groups of employees.
- B. Annual performance appraisal cycles are becoming less prevalent in favor of review cycles that are more frequent and regular in design.
- C. Forced ranking systems assume that most employees are neither exceptionally good nor exceptionally bad.
- D. A behaviorally anchored rating system isolates each job's most important tasks.

Answer: A

Explanation:

Ranking is not an effective method for appraising large groups of employees. The ranking method simply entails placing employees in order from most important to least. In a large organization, it will be difficult to make comparisons between jobs. Also, many job groups will be so different that comparisons will be worthless. The other answer choices are true statements. Annual performance reviews are waning in favor of the higher engagement levels required for regular reviews. In a forced ranking system, the appraisers place all employees on a bell curve, and therefore the vast majority end up close to the middle. Behaviorally anchored rating systems (BARS) assess employees based on the behaviors deemed critical to their particular job.

Question: 11

The head of the administrative department for a major university has asked Raisa, a human resources professional at the school, for a team-building exercise that will benefit the administrative department. The administrative department is composed of employees who work closely together daily but often experience conflicts that indicate a clash of personalities. The department head hopes to find a team-building exercise that will improve the relationships among staff members in the department. Which of the following should Raisa recommend to the department head?

- A. A team obstacle course
- B. Role-playing situations
- C. Team scavenger hunts
- D. The Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator

Answer: D

Explanation:

In the workplace, the Meyers-Brigg Type Indicator is primarily used as a personality test to enable individuals to understand their personalities better and to assist staff members in

appreciating how to interact with their co-workers more effectively. Due to the nature of the administrative department and its situation—employees who work together quite frequently and run into personality conflicts—the Meyers-Brigg test will be Raisa's best recommendation. Answer choices A and C are incorrect because research has suggested a lack of long-term value in team-building activities such as obstacle courses and scavenger hunts. Answer choice B is also incorrect. While role-playing situations might be beneficial to those who work in highly active and often sensitive fields, they will not necessarily be as useful for employees whose jobs are more focused around completing and maintaining paperwork or projects.

Question: 12

For their first few months, new employees at Flanders Company receive frequent praise and encouragement from their supervisors. After a while, though, supervisors pay less attention to these employees. Performance evaluations indicate that employee productivity declines at this point. What are the supervisors at Flanders Company practicing?

- A. Punishment
- B. Positive reinforcement
- C. Negative reinforcement
- D. Extinction

Answer: D

Explanation:

The supervisors at Flanders Company are practicing extinction, though they are most likely unaware of doing so. Extinction occurs when the positive reinforcement that followed a behavior ceases, and the behavior gradually ceases as well. Punishment is a negative consequence to a behavior. The absence of positive reinforcement is not considered punishment. Positive reinforcement is a reward, while negative reinforcement is the removal of a punishment. Positive and negative reinforcement are both used to encourage certain behaviors.

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