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## Letter from the President

### The Importance of HR Certifications for HR Professionals

by: Melissa Lockhart, SHRM-CP, SPHR  
TAHRA 2022 President

*"How do I get into HR?"*

That is the most common question I get asked. And the truth is, there is no cookie-cutter, simple answer to that question. But if I were to simplify that answer I would say, "You have to put in the work."

One of the beautiful things about working in the HR field is the diversity of the HR professionals themselves. I think that if you were to survey every one of our members (500+ just in the Tulsa area), you would probably hear almost that many different stories about how they got into the HR field. I am not sure that I have ever heard a child say they wanted to be an HR professional when they grew up. Yet, many of us did grow up and become just that. And it is a career that many of us are perfectly suited for, but how did we get there?

Some HR professionals started out the traditional way; they went to school for it and got a job in the HR field after graduation. Some started out their professional careers in a completely different field and worked their way into HR. Some were promoted into the roles from within their companies that didn't currently have HR representation, and they had to figure it out as they went along. Whichever way they got into HR, they couldn't be successful in the field without putting in the work and doing whatever it took to stay educated and up to date with the ever-changing local, state, and federal employment laws that affect what they do every day.

Continuing to stay informed, while still doing the work of taking care of the needs of your employees and company, is no easy task. There are multiple ways to do that, but one of the most effective ways to show your employer, or future employers, that you are indeed an informed and experienced HR professional is to obtain, and maintain, your HR certification(s). Research shows SHRM-certified professionals make 14-15% higher salaries than their uncertified counterparts, and 76% of HR hiring managers agree that SHRM certifications increase the likelihood of obtaining a promotion.\*

There are multiple benefits to obtaining an HR certification. Here is a list of a few key benefits:

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Identify and obtain the right amount of knowledge and experience.

**Enhanced Skills Set:** One of the most crucial departments of any organization is the HR department, as downfall in that department can often lead to disaster and done right can help take the organization to the next level. In order to manage an HR department those department professionals need to use their skills in order to effectively handle all of their tasks and to keep all functions up and running smoothly.

**Increased Work Efficiency:** HR professionals not only need to work on themselves but are often tasked with helping to create those work environments for the organizations that they work. Opting for a certification program helps to increase those work efficiencies significantly. New methods and techniques can be learned and can help them to quickly adapt to various situations and to perform their work more efficiently.

**Recognized Authority:** Some individuals argue that they can easily obtain all of the necessary knowledge and skills necessary by using online non-paid content such as watching online videos or reading articles. Professionals highly disagree. It is very important to have some sort of physical proof to back the claim of expertise. Having a certification helps to provide that solid proof that those individuals actually possess the right kind of skills, knowledge, and experience.

**Enhanced Profile:** HR professionals have some of the highest chances of getting a promotion, or new job in the HR field, if they can show a commitment to increasing their knowledge and skill sets. Candidates need a way to stand out to recruiters amongst a typically large pool of candidates for a job in HR. And certifications are becoming a minimum requirement to even apply to some jobs in HR.

There are other benefits, as well, but the point of the above list is to highlight key benefits for those who are curious about whether or not they should consider getting certified. While it is also important to remember that nobody provides a guarantee that after getting a certification there would be a hot job offer waiting on the table for every certified person, but it does increase the chances of good opportunities and growth.

Two of the top national institutes offer several types of HR certifications. The most commonly offered, and widely accepted, certifications are:

1. Professional in Human Resources (PHR) or Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR), both of which are offered through the Human Resource Certification Institute (HRCI).  
You can find the requirements needed in order to test for those certifications here: [Individual Certifications - HRCI](#)
2. SHRM Certified Professional (SHRM-CP) or Senior Certified Professional (SHRM-SCP), both of which are offered through the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM).  
You can find the requirements needed in order to test for those certifications here: [Eligibility Criteria | SHRM Certification](#)

Currently approximately 65% of TAHRA's members are certified. This means that about 35% of our members are not yet certified. If you are one of those members, you are not alone. It can be scary to put yourself out there and take the steps necessary to sign up,

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Sign up to take the exam so you have a goal to work towards. Find a study partner who is also going to take the exam. Set aside the time to actually study and prepare yourself up for success. TAHRA also provides an annual review course for the SHRM Certification and it a great resource to get the information you need to know in order to pass the exam.

This fall, TAHRA will be providing a 3-day SHRM Certification Prep Course.

Date: November 18-20 (Friday-Sunday) from 8am - 5pm  
 Facilitated by Nancy Gunter, SHRM-SCP, SPHR  
 Location: Career Development Partners

Click [here](#) to learn more about this course. If you are interested in attending, please send an email to [admin@tahra.org](mailto:admin@tahra.org).

Choose to take a step forward in your career. And know that you can do hard things.

\*Source: 2020-2021 HR Careers Study, SHRM

## October Program Meeting

Wednesday, October 19 |11:15am - 1:00pm|

Renaissance Tulsa Hotel and Convention Center

## The Power of Empathy to Build Bridges

Presented by John Bobb-Semple

The impact of the pandemic will be felt for generations worldwide. The current pace of change and ongoing cultural friction is creating an opportunity for difficult conversations around the virtual water cooler and our dinner tables. These conversations can result in a desire to "cancel", confront, or ignore those who see our world differently. As professionals navigating the tensions between personal beliefs and experiences and company values, how can we lean in to make positive change in our workplace, families, and communities? This session will discuss the power of empathy to build bridges through self-reflection, proximity, and direct engagement.

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[Register here](#)

## October Learning Lab

Thursday, October 27 | 2:00pm - 4:00pm |

Zoom Meeting

### The Power of Performance Feedback Presented by Amber Vanderburg

Feedback is a critical part of performance. The way you give and receive feedback directly affects the outcomes of your team. If you're like most people, the feedback you provide is often vague, inconsistent, nuanced, and generally ineffective.

To unlock real performance improvement- you must learn how to utilize feedback effectively. It's a game changer for your team.

In this session, I want to teach you how to give feedback that is timely, specific, and simply more effective. I'll share how to set meaningful performance expectations, address unmet expectations effectively, and performance feedback timelines and processes to improve performance. I'll provide you with a set of tools that you can begin using today to deliver feedback, to not only transform your team, but your entire organization.

[Sign Up](#)

**The Plan Sponsor University Presents:  
Tuesday October 25th, 2022  
8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. ET**

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# JOIN US FOR AN *Exclusive* 3 HOUR VIRTUAL FIDUCIARY TRAINING PROGRAM

**Learn how to better manage & optimize your company's retirement plan in the "new normal"**

— No Cost To Attend —

Top industry professionals will be presenting a 401(k) & 403(b) virtual educational program in your area. The Mission of TPSU is to enable plan fiduciaries to improve their retirement plan through education and training. This half-day program covers essential topics pertaining to retirement plan leadership. TPSU welcomes HR professionals, benefit specialists, business owners and retirement plan committee members who serve in any of the following capacities for their own company retirement plan – Plan Fiduciaries, Plan Trustees and Plan Administrators. After successfully completing this Program an attendee will improve their understanding of:

- Responsibilities of a Plan Fiduciary
- Effective retirement management strategies
- Plan improvements with a high impact on plan outcomes
- Behavioral finance solutions to improve retirement readiness
- Structure and oversight of a retirement plan committee
- Internal communication strategies

401(k) and 403(b) Plans require special attention.

## Attend Virtually to Receive

1. Up to 5 SHRM PDCs & 5 HRCI (General) Continuing Education Credits
2. Certificate of Attendance
3. Complimentary access to the TPSU Learning Management System and online courses.

2 of the 12 online courses are approved for 1 SHRM PDC & 1 HRCI (General) CE Credits each. Topics include:

- ERISA
- Fundamentals of 401(k) Plans
- Retirement Plan Health
- Retirement Readiness
- Understanding Participant Behavior



The Plan Sponsor University is recognized by SHRM to offer Professional Development Credits (PDCs) for the SHRM-CP® or SHRM-SCP®.



The use of this official seal confirms that this Activity has met HR Certification Institute's® (HRCI®) criteria for recertification credit pre-approval.



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Tues  
Oct

8:30

Topic

Essential Retirement Plan Oversight

Save More Tomorrow - Using Behavioral Finance to Help Drive Better Outcomes

Adjunct Lecturer:  
Chris Thixton, C(k)P®

**Click to View or Register**

## Registration

**ONLINE:** www.TPSUniversity.com, and Proceed to the Program Schedule TAB, and Select your Program. Register with code "2022SP".

**CALL:** 855-755-4015 and Select Option 2. For more information regarding the session go to www.TPSUniversity.com or contact Marc Lester at [marc@TPSUniversity.com](mailto:marc@TPSUniversity.com).

## COMPLIMENTARY Plan Benchmarking

You can claim this valuable service just by registering for a TPSU program.

Call 1.855.755.4015 ext. 104 or email [rj@TPSUniversity.com](mailto:rj@TPSUniversity.com)

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TAHRA Employment Law and Practices Seminar  
Thursday, November 3 | 7:30am - 4:30pm

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# Registration OPEN!

TAHRA's Annual Employment Law and Practices Seminar - one of TA's most popular and well-attended events - will return on Thursday, November 3rd! This seminar is a full day of informative and interactive presentations by experienced area attorneys who will be in person. At this year's event, presentations will include sessions on mitigating employee mental health issues, legally managing remote workers, updates on FMLA and ADA and the ever-popular stump the lawyer segment. This seminar will also feature a session on ethics in workplace investigations and the new HRCI ethics requirement for HRCI certified individuals. You don't want to miss this!

Additional details and agenda here

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This is a paid advertisement.

## Community Connections

by Denise Reid, Board Member at Large - Community Relations

Mental health awareness has been front and center over the last couple of years for many reasons. As HR professionals we have EAPs that offer assistance but I wanted to share national and local resources that may be helpful. Creating open ways of sharing information and resources like this may lessens stigma associated with asking for help.

988 is the new Mental Health Lifeline - call or text if you or someone you know needs help.

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system - provides links to resources and information. Offers Mental Health First Aid at no cost.

[Home - Mental Health Association Oklahoma \(mhaok.org\)](#)

### CREOKS

Local nonprofit that provides comprehensive health, wellness, and 23 locations across the state. Check out their resource page for additional information.

### [CREOKS](#)

Oklahoma Mental Health and Substance Abuse State of Oklahoma information and resources

[Are You OK? \(oklahoma.gov\)](#)

Mental Health First Aid by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing Link below provides tips and links to assist with starting conversation about mental health. You can explore the full website for more information and resources.

[ALGEE: How MHFA Helps You Respond in Crisis and Non-crisis Situations - Mental Health First Aid](#)

If you would like additional information or have questions feel free to reach out to me at [denise@denisereid.com](mailto:denise@denisereid.com) or (918)633-0073.

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## Despite violating numerous workplace behavior policies, flight attendant wins initial day in court

Kathy R. Neal, McAfee & Taft

A recent jury verdict against Southwest Airlines and Transport Workers Union of America, Local 556 is an interesting study in the tension between an employer's right to police an employee's statements on social media and the employee's right to make those statements. The case is *Carter v. Trans. Workers Union Local 556*, N.D.Tex., No. 3:17-cv-02278.

### Flight attendant wages grossly offensive campaign against union leader

Charlene Carter, a long-term Southwest Airlines flight attendant, claimed her employment was terminated either (1) in retaliation for opting out of her union, or (2) because of her religious beliefs in violation of Title VII. Southwest claimed Carter was terminated because of a "two-year grossly offensive and terrible campaign to personally

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insults and name-calling to shocking images. She called Stone "moral bankrupt," "lacking in morals," a "criminal," "Pure Evil," and a "DISGRACE." She sent a t-shirt stating, "F\*\*\*TARD, I VOTED BRETT NEVAREZ CAUSE HE RESPECTS ME" Carter supported a recall campaign, posted and sent messages on social media expressing her disapproval of the union and its leadership, and accused the union

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## Welcome to our newest members!

- Heather Ostenberg - Tulsa Zoo Management Inc
- Genny Smith - Tulsa Zoo Management Inc
- Heather McGinley - Tulsa Zoo Management Inc
- Tracey Turner - S & R Compression LLC
- Victoria DeLeon - InTulsa Initiative
- Princess Austin - InTulsa Initiative
- Katie Gussenhoven - Brookhaven Hospital
- Mae Phillips - MESA
- Matt Olsen - Tulsa Community College
- David Imerbthama - Gallagher - Better Works
- Alden Klefeker - CCK Strategies, PLLC
- Autavia Sharp - Oklahoma Chiller Corporation
- Annalisa Neal - The People Perspective, LLC
- Sofia McGrand - Vision Care Direct of Oklahoma
- Ali Whitaker - Spherion Staffing
- Doris Cravens - Cherokee Federal
- Leonelle Thompson - Williams
- Danielle Storie - Gulfstream Aerospace
- Kiara Luevano - OSU Tulsa
- Ashley Parham - EMSA
- Damian Everette - Paragon Films
- Jenna Heimerman - Thermal Specialties
- Shaina Silcox - OSU Tulsa
- Marie Ellenburg - LandesBlosch Insurance
- Brooke Watie - River Spirit Casino and Resort
- Opal Price - Indian Health Care Resource Center
- Ryan McPherson - Casino Cash Trac
- Payton Wilson - Acctknowledge
- Adrienne Dollins - ADP
- Michael Williams - Muncie Power
- Leah Johnson - Airco Service, Inc
- Dason Gwartney - USI Insurance Services
- Cricket Moore - Sulzer Chemtech USA, Inc.
- Rhonda Madewell - Family & Children's Services

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Thursday, October 27 - Learning Lab  
Thursday, November 3 - Employment Law and Practices Seminar

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