

Rock the PHR Bonus #2

»» Tips from the front lines

Practice makes perfect...

Hey! It's [Ben](#). I hope you're using your Rock the PHR guide to the fullest extent by checking out the extra resources and studying hard along the way. You paid for them, so make sure you're using the bonuses fully.

In the pages that follow, you'll find tips from those who have "been there, done that" with the PHR or SPHR exams. I am a firm believer in getting advice from people who have already accomplished what I am trying to do. All too often, we see people giving advice when they have never even tried to do what we are attempting! It's like the single lady who gives marriage advice. Or the childless guy at the office who just has to tell you how to raise a kid. *Not credible.*

Go ahead. Read. Enjoy. And if you have something you'd like to contribute, I'd be happy to add you to this bonus item for those who come after you! Just shoot me an [email](#) and I'll get your advice set in stone. Be a part of the solution. Help someone else get through the exam. Make a difference. You know you want to.

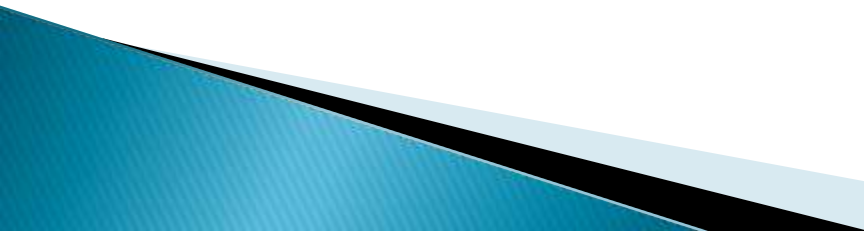
Tips for Rocking the PHR

- ▶ If you can afford it or your company will cover the cost, join your local chapter's PHR/SPHR study program. You'll learn from seasoned HR veterans and pick up info you might miss if you study on your own.
- ▶ Anne Bogardus, SPHR has a PHR/SPHR study guide that is widely popular. It comes with a CD with a PDF copy of the book, its also compatible with some handhelds.
- ▶ Flash cards, flash cards, flash cards. Great for standing in lines at the sandwich shop, getting your hair done, before meetings, or any time you have a spare minute. Keep some with you at all times, rotate them out, and pull them out any time you have a spare second.
- ▶ If you've bought a study guide and it has a CD, use it frequently.
- ▶ Are you a note-taker? Do it. Condense all of the information in the study materials into a small, handmade guide that you're sure will be applicable just for you.

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- ▶ Twitter, following the hashtag #phrsphr is a great way to network with others that are taking the test as well as getting tips from those that have taken the test. Just go to the [Twitter Search](#) page and search for “#phrsphr.”
- ▶ Don't listen to music on the way to the testing site. Having music stuck in your head can be a big distraction.
- ▶ Take practice exams. Lots of them. Answer every question you can find and then look for more. Even if they are not *exactly* the same as the test questions, you still need to practice.
- ▶ Don't try to cram. Take a lot of time to go over each section to make sure you absorb everything you possibly can.
- ▶ Study where you are comfortable and relaxed, but make sure it's also free from distractions. Wasted time is difficult to get back.

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- ▶ Do you learn best by hearing? Taking notes? Reading and rereading? Find out what your best learning strategy is and use it.
 - ▶ Find a study buddy. Even if it's just a friend or spouse, having someone ask you questions can relieve some of the boredom associated with a lot of solo study sessions.
 - ▶ Don't try to study when you're very tired. You won't retain much of the information, and you'll have to go over it again.
 - ▶ You probably already know your weakest subject. If not, then you should take a pretest to ascertain what it is. Make sure to set aside extra time for the part(s) you are least familiar with.
 - ▶ In the final days, study more on sections with a higher exam weight to get the biggest "bang for your buck."
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- ▶ Read it, write it out, say it out loud, and think of how it applies in real life.
- ▶ Another tip particularly for SPHR folks: it is the academics' opinion about what is the best option. There is plenty of gray area.
- ▶ Remember that all the questions are written by academics NOT practitioners. Keep saying: for purposes of the test ...“
- ▶ Know the flash cards, look for what the practice questions are asking and not just what the answers are. Some of them trip you up
- ▶ Use HRCI pre-tests, some of these are actual test questions. There is a price for the test but the benefits are well worth it. *(Note from Ben: I used these for my own prep. \$70 for two exams, but they're pretty close to the real thing!)*

And there you have it! Tips from more than a dozen experts. If you want to add something, just email me. Keep in touch! I want to hear about your progress.

–Ben–