**QUESTION 1**

Define the following HR functions and provide examples in how you can apply each of these functions to today's workplace issues.  I expect you to write at least 150 words for each function.

1. Workforce Management - Recruitment, Selection, Retention, Performance Management-

* Workforce Management refers to HR practices and initiatives that allow the organization to meet its talent needs and close critical gaps in competencies. Applying workforce management in today's workplace encompasses several strategic phases. Start with **strategic workforce planning** to evaluate the current workforce, project future needs, and pinpoint gaps. Cultivate **recruitment strategies** to entice the right talent and increase employer branding. Implement **continuous training programs** and clear career paths for employee growth. Conduct consistent **performance appraisals** and set measurable goals. Promote **employee engagement** through recognition programs, work-life balance initiatives, and feedback mechanisms. Identify future leaders and provide **leadership development**. Safeguard **compliance with labor laws** and gather employee feedback for continuous development. By integrating these practices, establishments can meet talent needs, close competency gaps, and foster a productive, engaged workforce. Effective workforce management also requires regular review and adaptation to changing business environments and employee expectations.
* Recruitment sources for targeting passive, semi-active and active candidates. Recruiters use and interpret a selection of tests. Applying diverse recruitment sources in today's workplace encompasses targeting passive, semi-active, and active candidates using a variation of strategies and tools. **Active candidates** can be reached through job boards, career websites, and recruitment agencies. For **semi-active applicants**, utilize social media, networking events, and industry-specific job fairs. **Passive candidates** can be identified through LinkedIn searches, talent pools, and employee referral programs. Recruiters should use and decode a selection of tests to evaluate candidates' skills and fit, including **cognitive ability tests, personality evaluations,** and **technical skills tests**. Being using **AI and machine learning** tools to examine candidate data and predict job performance. Cultivate a **comprehensive candidate assessment framework** to ensure consistency and fairness in evaluations. By incorporating these practices, organizations can effectively target a broad range of candidates, ensuring a diverse and skilled workforce that meets the evolving needs of the business. The aim of employee selection is to achieve person–job fit. This means matching the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other competencies that are required for performing the job with the applicant’s information.
* Employee Engagement & Retention refers to activities aimed at retaining high-performing talent, solidifying, and improving the relationship between employees and the organization, creating a thriving and energized workforce, and developing effective strategies to address appropriate performance expectations from employees at all levels.
* Performance management reflects nonthreatening principles such as cease dependence on inspection to achieve quality, aim for continuous improvement, institute extensive training, and drive out fear so that everyone may work effectively. The manager’s behaviors should therefore include linking employees’ goals to the company’s goals, giving employees continuous feedback, providing required resources and coaching, rewarding good performance, and remembering that employees’ performance reflects more than just whether they’re “motivated.”

2. Employee Relations- [Employee relations](https://plus.pearson.com/products/1b8c486e-a6ef-4912-a6b7-25fbb5c664ae/pages/glossary.xhtml#P7001015528000000000000000006F2B) is the managerial activity that involves establishing and maintaining the positive employee–employer relationships that contribute to satisfactory productivity, motivation, morale, and discipline, and to maintaining a positive, productive, and cohesive work environment. Whether you’re recruiting employees, managing union organizing campaigns, asking employees to work overtime, or doing some other task, it obviously makes sense to have employees “on your side.” Many employers therefore endeavor to build positive employee relations, on the sensible assumption that doing so beats building negative ones. Employee relations in today's workforce concentrates on fostering a positive atmosphere, promoting interaction, and addressing issues proactively. Encourage open communication through feedback means and conflict resolution training. Foster recognition programs to celebrate achievements and promote work-life balance with flexible arrangements. Offer career development opportunities through training and mentorship. Conduct regular engagement surveys and involve employees in decision-making. Ensure compliance with labor laws and ethical standards. These practices build strong relations and enhance job satisfaction.

3. Training and Development- Training and developing employees by providing the training to ensure that your employees have the knowledge and skills needed to accomplish their tasks. Set clear, measurable goals and align them with organizational objectives. Performance management and appraisal have techniques you can use for appraising employee performance throughout their career. Managing careers and retention has many causes of and solutions for employee turnover, and how to help employees manage their careers. Offer mentorship programs, career coaching, and resources to help employees manage their careers and achieve their professional goals. By integrating these practices, organizations can ensure employees have the necessary skills, receive consistent performance evaluations, and feel supported in their career development, leading to a more skilled, motivated, and retained workforce.

4. Total Rewards - Compensation and Benefits- Total rewards is an important concept in compensation management. People bring to their jobs many needs—for challenging work and for respect and appreciation, for instance—not all of which are satisfied by pay or bonuses. “‘Total rewards’ encompass not only compensation and benefits but also personal and professional growth opportunities and a motivating work environment.” It includes not just traditional financial rewards (wages and incentives plus benefits and perks), but also nonfinancial and intangible rewards such as recognition, the nature of the job/quality of work, career development opportunities. These can **attract talent** by havingcompetitive compensation and benefits packages help attract top talent to the organization. Fair pay and comprehensive benefits contribute to overall job satisfaction. When employees feel they are compensated well for their work and have access to benefits like health insurance, retirement plans, and paid time off, they are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs.

5. Labor Relations and Collective Bargaining- Labor negotiations, including the union actions you can expect during The Union Campaign and Election. It’s not just the money, instead the urge to unionize often comes down to the belief on the part of workers that it’s only through unity that they can get their fair share of the “pie” and protect themselves from the arbitrary whims of management. The grievance process is the process or steps that the employer and union agreed to follow to ascertain whether some action violated the collective bargaining agreement. It is the vehicle for administering the contract day to day. In a modern workforce, compensation and benefits are critical elements that intersect significantly with labor negotiations and union activities. In today's diverse and dynamic work environment, the role of unions and the grievance process remains relevant. They provide employees with a platform to address issues related to compensation and benefits and to negotiate improvements. Overall, unions and the grievance process are integral to addressing and managing compensation and benefits in a way that aligns with modern workforce expectations and ensures fair treatment for all employees.

6. Risk Management - Employee Safety and Health- Risk Management is the identification, assessment and prioritization of risks, and the application of resources to minimize, monitor and control the probability and impact of those risks accordingly. We’ve all heard the saying, “lead by example,” and when it comes to creating a successful safety culture, this saying still rings true. In fact, the tone for safety is usually set from the top. Moving safety from “just another program” to an uncompromised value within the organization that everyone respects and follows will ensure its success. In today's workforce, integrating risk management with a strong safety culture is crucial for creating a productive and secure work environment. In summary, integrating risk management and safety culture into the modern workforce involves proactive measures to identify and mitigate risks, fostering a strong safety culture led by example, and addressing safety concerns through union actions and the grievance process. This approach not only protects employees but also enhances overall organizational performance and employee satisfaction.

Explain the main features of the Fair Labor Standards Act, Title VII, Equal Pay Act, Pregnancy Discrimination Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Civil Rights Act of 1991, Family Medical Leave, and the Affordable Care Act.  I expect at least 500 words for this question (not each act...just the question!)

**Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)**

The Fair Labor Standards Act, enacted in 1938, is a introductory labor law that creates key standards for wages and working hours. Its major provisions include creating a minimum wage, regulating overtime pay (1.5 times the regular rate for hours worked beyond 40 in a workweek), and setting ethics for child labor. The FLSA pertains to most private and public sector employees, although certain exclusions exist, predominantly for executive, administrative, and professional roles. It also dictates record-keeping requirements for employers to ensure compliance with wage and hour laws.

**Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**

Title VII is a revolutionary federal law that forbids employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. It affects to employers with 15 or more employees, including federal, state, and local government agencies. The Act prohibits inequitable practices in hiring, firing, promotions, and other employment-related activities. It also commands the creation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which explores complaints and enforces Title VII provisions. This Act has been crucial in promoting workplace diversity and equality.

**Equal Pay Act of 1963**

The Equal Pay Act, part of the Fair Labor Standards Act, obliges that men and women obtain equal pay for equal work performed under similar conditions. This law aims to close the wage gap between genders by guaranteeing that jobs requiring equal skill, effort, and responsibility are compensated equally. Exemptions to this requirement include seniority systems, merit systems, or systems based on quality or quantity of production. Prosecution is typically handled by the EEOC, which can study claims and seek remedies for wage disparities.

**Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA)**

Enacted in 1978 as an amendment to Title VII, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act bans judgement based on pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Under this Act, employers must treat pregnancy and childbirth as they would any other temporary disability, providing the same benefits and job protection. The PDA ensures that pregnant employees have equal access to employment opportunities, including medical benefits, and cannot be forced to take unpaid leave if they are able to continue working.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

The Americans with Disabilities Act, passed in 1990, is a wide-ranging law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in several areas including employment, public alterations, transportation, and telecommunications. The ADA mandates employers to provide reasonable accommodations to eligible employees with disabilities, so long as these accommodations do not impose undue hardship on the business. The Act also mandates that public spaces and services be accessible, promoting inclusivity and equal opportunity for people with disabilities.

**Civil Rights Act of 1991**

The Civil Rights Act of 1991, an modification to the original Civil Rights Act of 1964, boosts protections against employment discrimination. It permits individuals to request compensatory and punitive damages for intentional discrimination and provides for jury trials in such cases. This Act also intensifies the burden of proof in employment discrimination cases, shifting it to employers in certain instances. It speaks to issues of disparate impact and provides guidance on how to handle claims related to race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

**Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

The Family and Medical Leave Act, sanctioned in 1993, offers qualified employees with the right to take unpaid, job-protected leave for certain family and medical reasons. This includes up to 12 weeks of leave within a 12-month period for the birth or adoption of a child, to care for a sick family member, or for personal medical conditions. The Act applies to employers with 50 or more employees and requires that employees return to their same or equivalent job upon their return. The FMLA aims to balance the demands of the workplace with the needs of families.

**Affordable Care Act (ACA)**

The Affordable Care Act, contracted into law in 2010, represents a major overhaul of the U.S. healthcare system. It aims to increase access to health insurance, advance the quality of healthcare, and reduce overall costs. Key provisions include the expansion of Medicaid, the founding of health insurance marketplaces, and the obligation for most individuals to have health insurance or face a penalty (though the individual mandate penalty was effectively eliminated in 2019). The ACA also dictates that employers with 50 or more full-time employees provide health insurance to their workers. Furthermore, it contains protections for individuals with pre-existing conditions and extends coverage for young adults under their parents' insurance until age 26.

All of these laws have a critical function in shaping workplace practices and ensuring fair treatment and accessibility to benefits for employees across various aspects of their employment and personal lives.