

In an exchange with the Alaska SHRM State Council **[SC] Questions are bold**
Micaiah Liebhaber **[ML]** responses follow

[SC] What made you interested in taking the Human Resources Certification exam?

[ML] I've wanted to take the SHRM exam since I started to study the HR field but did not think I would be ready until further in my HR career.

Do you want to continue your career in the area of Human Resources (HR)?

Yes, I do! I plan to spend my lifetime career in the HR field. HR is a useful skill for working in many industries and there are many different paths within HR itself.

What part of HR do you enjoy?

I enjoy helping people and making a meaningful difference in their lives. I think of each transaction as a change that will have impact on the lives of our employees, farther beyond what our eyes can see. It is very rewarding, especially when it comes to people's pay and benefits. Leadership development is also one of my favorite activities and watching new leaders grow.

Does the certification change anything, for example, the way you see or feel about yourself knowing you meet a standard of competency and knowledge?

Taking the exam at this point has strengthened my confidence in my skills as an HR professional. I take pride in being SHRM Certified.

Everyone finds success in their own way of studying. Can you share your strategies for studying? Did you study alone, with a group? Did you use the SHRM's learning system?

I studied online using the SHRM learning system. I did not end up cracking the hardcopy books once. I used the flashcards and other virtual tools, including the quizzes and practice test. I did little bits at a time, and never spent more than a few hours studying at once. I did lean on my experience to guide me through some of the questions. The week before the exam, I took a break from studying and did other things such as hiking to take my mind off the stress of the upcoming exam. I went into it hopeful but accepting [the outcome] if this was not the right time for me to pass. I'm glad I took the test anyways!

Anything else you'd like to add for others who are considering taking the exam or are not sure if they should study/take the exam? Specifically, students who are interested in HR or Early Career HR members?

HR is a rewarding and challenging field, but can take a lot out of you emotionally. Be sure to take care of yourself first so that you can be of assistance to others. Join your local or university SHRM chapter, find a mentor, network and get involved in the HR community! Getting certified is the next step in building confidence and proving your skills by building credibility. I would say go for it, and apply for a scholarship if possible!
