CPHR Alberta

SPEVA GUIDE

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GETTING STARTED

The Senior Pathway Experience Validation Assessment (SPEVA) is the final step in the certification process. Successful completion of the SPEVA grants you the right to use the designation Chartered Professional in Human Resources (CPHR).

Applicants are accepted into the Senior Pathway based on the results of the Senior Pathway Questionnaire. The purpose of the questionnaire is to assess eligibility for entry into the pathway. **Acceptance into the pathway should not be interpreted as a guarantee of success**, as applicants must still meet all assessment requirements to successfully complete the pathway and obtain the designation.

An application for SPEVA is decided on the merits of the written application and supporting documentation. Accordingly, an applicant must submit all requested information, explanations and materials supporting the contention that experience noted on the questionnaire and requirements have been met.

The application form is designed specifically to give the Registration Committee the information that is most relevant to the determinations they are tasked to make (that the experience is in HR, that it is at the appropriate professional level, that you currently work or have worked at the senior level and that the time requirement has been met).

CPHR Alberta offers two annual intake deadlines for SPEVA submissions: - May 31, and September 30.

The Use of AI

It is important to complete the form **in your own words** as this provides the most accurate reflection of the work you personally performed in each role. **The use of AI** in responses may describe what is generally expected of someone in a position rather than the specific contributions, responsibilities, and decisions you made. As a result, applications can begin to show repetitive or generic patterns that do not align with the experience and supporting documentation submitted.

The layout and format of the application is intended to capture all the information needed. Applicants for the Senior Path must attest that all information provided is accurate and complete.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

There are two mandatory documents required as part of your SPEVA application.

1. A chronological resume with your most recent position listed first. This should be a standard resume that includes all positions you have held throughout your career, including roles that you may choose not to include in your SPEVA application. A complete career history helps assessors understand your professional progression over time. Before uploading your resume, please redact any personal identifying information, including your name, phone number, and address.

2. Provide a valid job description for each position listed in the Employment section of your SPEVA application. Job descriptions should be official employer-issued documents. To establish authenticity, the document should include identifying information such as a company logo or a website URL where the job description was obtained. If the document does not contain a company logo or website URL, it must be signed by the employer and include the signatory's name and title to verify its authenticity.

Any alternative document submitted in place of a job description, such as an employment verification letter, must include a summary of the duties and responsibilities associated with the role. Documents that only confirm employment dates, position titles, or salary information cannot be accepted. The purpose of the job description is to verify the scope and nature of the role from the employer's perspective and to provide assessors with sufficient information to evaluate the experience being claimed.

📌 Independent consultants must submit a project scope outlining HR services provided to various clients and the duration of each project or engagement in place of a traditional job description.

For comprehensive details regarding the SPEVA process including application fees, resubmission procedures, the review process, and appeals, please consult the **Registration Manual**.

REQUIREMENTS TO PASS THE SPEVA

Experience submitted for the SPEVA must have been obtained within the **fifteen years (15) preceding the submission deadline**. Applicants must demonstrate:

- Ten (10) years of progressive advisory HR experience
- Five (5) years of the 10 years recorded should be in a senior level position
- Applicants must answer all questions under Organizational change and development and the general competencies
- Applicants need to select three additional functional areas and answer all competency questions in those sections.
- Membership in good standing with CPHR Alberta
- Agree to abide by the CPHR Alberta's Code of Ethics & Standards of Professional Conduct

DEFINING SENIOR HR EXPERIENCE

Senior HR professionals are individuals who have reached the upper echelons of the profession through demonstrated leadership, accountability, and influence over organizational outcomes and direction. At this level, the emphasis shifts from technical HR knowledge to strategic thinking, business acumen, and organizational leadership. Senior professionals may be found in corporate, consulting, legal, public sector, and other professional environments.

The following are some of the qualities a senior level Chartered Professional in

Human Resources should have:

- Authority to recommend on most HR decisions in an organization
- Strategic thinking and execution
- Considerable budgetary responsibility for the full organization
- Authority and skill to design and implement leadership succession plans
- Strong leadership qualities
- Personal integrity/high ethical standards
- Negotiating/influencing skills
- Ability to balance strategic with operational issues

TIME WORKING IN HR

To receive credit toward the experience requirement, more than **51%** of your responsibilities in a position must be human resources related.

If HR duties account for less than **51%** of the role, the position will not be credited.

Before submitting your application, review your job description to ensure that the majority of the duties listed are HR-related.

ELIGIBLE TIMEFRAME

Only experience gained within the 15 years immediately preceding the application deadline will be considered.

Example: If you apply for the May 2025 intake, only experience obtained from May 2010 onward is eligible

LEAVES OF ABSENCE

If you took an approved leave of absence during a qualifying position, indicate the **total number of months** only on your EVA application. Please do not include the type of leave or the dates for the leave.

FULL-TIME VS PART TIME WORK

Full-time employment is considered 30 or more hours per week.

If you work less than 30 hours per week, your experience will be calculated on a pro-rated basis.

If you had 2 or more fulltime roles occurring at the same time, it is beneficial to include how much hours were dedicated for each role per week and the amount work covered during the period to be credited with full-time work. In the absence of this, once of the roles will be credited as full time while the others credited as part time.

RESPONDING TO COMPETENCIES

Use the STAR method, **provide specific examples** where HR work is at the **advisory or senior level and aligned to the HR competencies**.

When responding to competency questions, avoid the use of 'we' and instead, focus on your individual contributions to Human Resources. The SPEVA application is designed to assess your personal experience and impact. Even if the competency was demonstrated as part of a group project, your response must clearly articulate your specific role and responsibilities within the group context

Using the CPHR Competency Framework, Appendix 1, review the "Knowledge and Skills expected of a CPHR designation holder" in sections of the specific COMPETENCY you are selecting (i.e. Employee and Labour Relations, Inclusion, Diversity, and Human Connections, Total Rewards, etc.). This will help you structure your example.

For each competency selected please provide your position or employer followed by specific examples in the text boxes provided of the work that you are responsible for and have completed including the impact that it has on the organization. It is important for assessors to understand your role.

STAR METHOD

HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR EXAMPLE USING THE STAR METHOD	
Situation	Describe a specific situation that you were in (not a generalized one) Provide brief context, including where and when the situation occurred. Keep your description concise and focused
Task	What needed to be done and why? Avoid using acronyms. Briefly describe the task, its purpose, and the criteria for success. If the work was completed as part of a group, outline the group's objective but emphasize your specific role and contributions. Keep your explanation succinct.
Action	Describe the specific actions you took to address the situation, ensuring the focus remains on your individual contributions. Include sufficient detail to clearly demonstrate what you did and how you did it. Specify any tools, methods, or resources you used. Be direct and specific. This should be the most detailed and substantial part of your response
Result	Describe the outcome of your actions, focusing on what you accomplished. If possible, quantify the results to demonstrate impact (e.g., cost savings, efficiency gains, improved outcomes). Clearly explain the significance of the results.

EXAMPLE USING THE STAR METHOD

1.6.3 Support the development of a workforce plan by identifying current and future talent needs of the organization.

S: At XYZ Company, a significant portion of the senior leadership team was approaching retirement, creating succession risks and potential leadership gaps. A proactive workforce planning strategy was needed to ensure leadership continuity and support future business needs.

T: As VP, HR, I was accountable for developing the organization's succession planning framework and identifying current and future leadership talent requirements. My objective was to build a sustainable leadership pipeline and mitigate succession risks

A: I led an assessment of the leadership workforce to identify critical roles and evaluate the potential impact of future vacancies. Working with the executive team, I reviewed retirement projections, business growth plans, and organizational priorities to determine future leadership needs.

I facilitated talent review discussions with senior leaders to identify high-potential employees and assess leadership bench strength. Potential successors were categorized based on readiness: immediately ready, ready within one to two years, or requiring more than three years of development.

Based on these findings, I developed succession strategies and targeted development plans that included executive mentoring, leadership development, stretch assignments, and cross-functional opportunities. Where leadership gaps could not be addressed internally, I recommended external recruitment strategies.

R: The organization gained a comprehensive succession plan for all senior leadership roles and a clear view of future talent requirements. Leadership gaps and succession risks were identified early, allowing focused investment in talent development and recruitment.

IMPORTANT!!

1. Submit Early: Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their application at least one week before the intake deadline. Applications are reviewed by the Professional Standards Team for completeness before being forwarded to Assessors for evaluation. Submitting an application a few days prior to or on the submission day leaves you little to no time to make changes should there be a need. This will result in your application being considered in the next intake.

2. Incomplete Applications: Applications that remain incomplete as of the submission deadline will not be reviewed and will be deferred to the next intake once all requirements have been met. No exceptions will be made. Examples of incomplete applications include, but are not limited to:

- Improperly redacted documents
- Missing job descriptions or unofficial job descriptions

3. Submission Confirmation: After submitting your application, its status should be displayed as "**Staff Review."** Should we require more information from you, the status of your application will change to **"Need more information"** with comments in the application. Ensure comments are addressed and application is submitted back to staff review ahead of the deadline.

4. Document Redaction Requirements: To support a fair and impartial assessment, applications are reviewed using file numbers rather than applicant names. Applicants must redact only the following personal information from all uploaded documents (resumes, job descriptions, employer letters, etc):

- Name
- Email address
- Phone number
- Photograph (if applicable)

Do not redact:

- Company names
- Job titles
- Employment dates
- Supervisor names

5. Independent Consultants: If you are an independent consultant, submit a project scope outlining HR services provided to various clients and the duration of each project or engagement

6. Job Description Requirements: A job description is required for each position submitted on the EVA application. For the purposes of the EVA, a job description should be an official employer-issued document. To establish authenticity, it should include at least one of the following:

- Company logo
- Company website URL
- Employer signature, name and title. This is required on job descriptions with no identifying features

📌 Job descriptions that do not contain sufficient employer identification will not be accepted.