

# THE 2017 MARKET VALUE OF HRPA CERTIFICATION



# FUEL FOR HR CAREERS

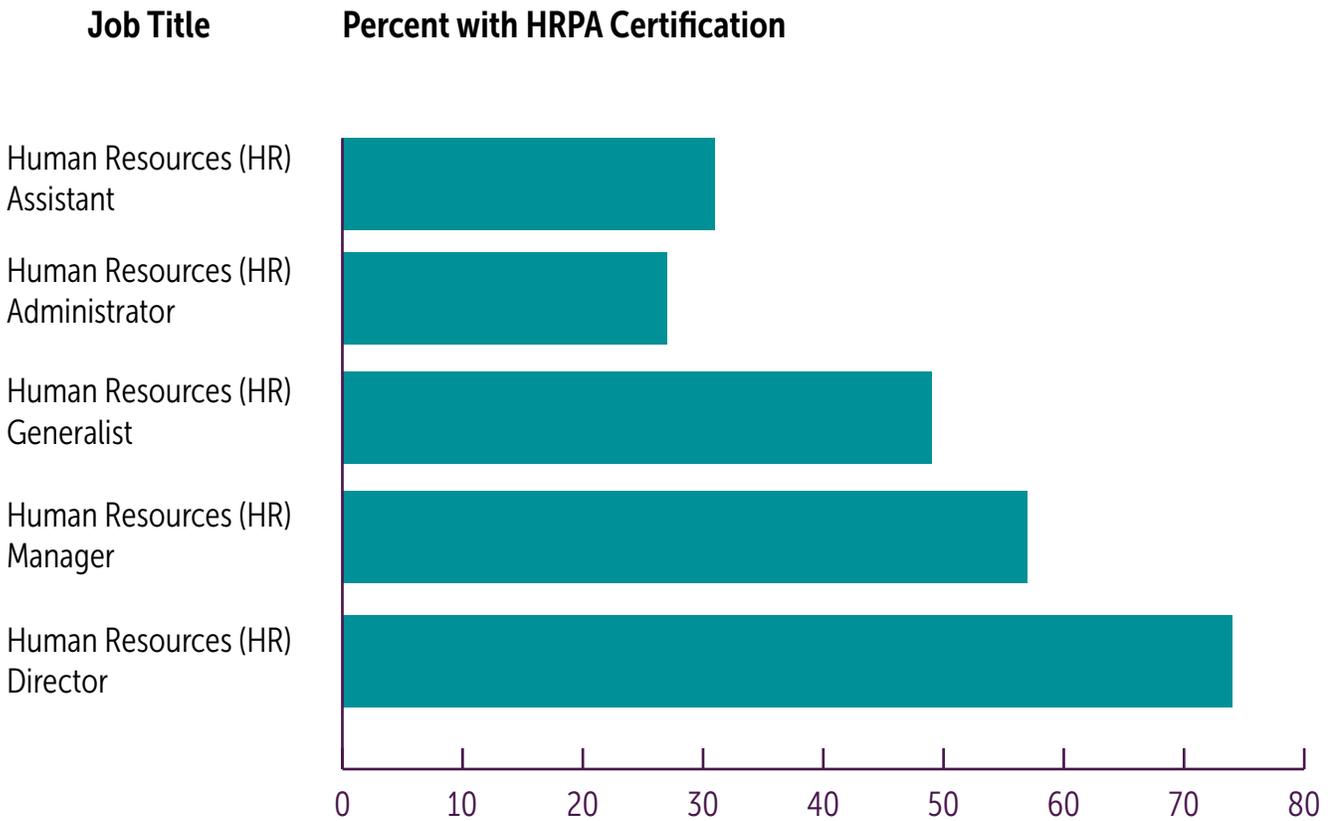
In conjunction with the Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA), PayScale conducted an analysis of the impact of HRPA certification on compensation and career trajectory for HR professionals. We looked at what percentage of workers by title have an HRPA certification, median pay by certification type, the percent pay boost of having an HRPA certification by industry, the percentage by title of HRPA-certified and non-HRPA-certified HR workers who received promotions, and the pay growth of HRPA certification holders over the past year.

The specific certifications we included in our analysis were the Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP), the Certified Human Resources Leader (CHRL) and the Certified Human Resources Executive (CHRE).

Unsurprisingly, we found that having an HRPA certification is hugely helpful for HR career progression. Below, we present some of the key findings.

# Who's Getting Certified?

Certification becomes more common as you move up the title chain.



While only 31 percent of HR Assistants are HRP certified, 86 percent at the VP level have obtained certification. And it's a steady progression in between. It's clear that certification matters. Certified professionals are more likely to be promoted, something we will take a closer look at later in the paper.

## Impact on Pay

How does being HRP-certified influence pay? Does it vary by certification? By industry or job level? We answer all of these questions in this section.

### Pay Jumps With Certification

There's over a \$10K jump in median pay for HRP-certified versus non-HRP-certified HR professionals.



#### Any HRP Certification

Median Pay  
**\$59,200**



#### No HRP Certifications

Median Pay  
**\$47,700**

## Pay Increases as Certification Level Increases

As for specific certifications, median pay increases a whopping *240 percent* from CHRP certification to CHRE certification.



### CHRP Certification

Median Pay  
**\$59,000**



### CHRL Certification

Median Pay  
**\$142,000**



### CHRE Certification

Median Pay  
**\$186,000**

There's quite an increase – \$44K – from CHRL to CHRE, too.

## Mixed Bag Among Job Titles

It appears lower level employees earn a little less with certification – we believe that's likely because the top performers among certified professionals are the individuals getting promoted, and are represented in the job titles up the ladder.

### Median Pay

Job Title	HRPA Certification	No HRPA Certification	% Pay Boost
Human Resources (HR) Assistant	\$39,400	\$39,600	-1%
Human Resources (HR) Administrator	\$41,300	\$44,600	-7%
Human Resources (HR) Generalist	\$54,500	\$51,600	6%
Human Resources (HR) Manager	\$73,500	\$68,900	7%
Human Resources (HR) Director	\$109,000	\$95,500	14%
Vice President (VP), Human Resources (HR)	\$165,000	\$129,000	28%

With HRPA certification, HR generalists and managers earn 6 and 7 percent more (respectively), directors earn 14 percent more and VPs earn almost 30 percent more (28 percent).

## Industry Matters

How does a certification's impact shake out by industry? If you're an HR professional in education, you absolutely want to be certified — it could earn you a 93 percent boost in pay!

### Median Pay

Industry	HRPA Certification	No HRPA Certification	% Pay Boost
Finance & Insurance	\$58,200	\$49,000	19%
Construction	\$57,800	\$53,700	8%
Health Care	\$50,100	\$48,900	2%
Energy & Utilities	\$77,900	\$56,000	39%
Manufacturing	\$58,400	\$49,300	18%
Nonprofits	\$80,900	\$43,300	87%
Retail & Customer Service	\$54,700	\$44,100	24%
Education	\$90,500	\$46,800	93%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	\$59,900	\$45,500	32%
Accommodation and Food Services	\$49,000	\$43,300	13%
Engineering & Science	\$58,000	\$52,700	10%
Tech Industries	\$60,200	\$51,200	18%
Agencies & Consultancies	\$61,500	\$45,600	35%
Transportation & Warehousing	\$64,000	\$44,800	43%

Nonprofits also seem to significantly reward certification holders, who earn 87 percent more than other nonprofit HR professionals who aren't certified.

Certification had the least impact in health care, at 2 percent.

# Impact on Job Progression

Having an HRPA certification positively influences an HR professional's chances of being promoted and of experiencing pay growth. First, we look specifically at the role certification plays in eligibility for promotion.

## Certification Increases Likelihood of Promotion

For every job level, having HRPA certification matters.

% Receiving Promotions in 5 Years

Job Title	HRPA Certification	Without HRPA Certification
Human Resources (HR) Assistant	91%	70%
Human Resources (HR) Administrator	92%	56%
Human Resources (HR) Generalist	71%	46%
Human Resources (HR) Manager	36%	17%
Human Resources (HR) Director	17%	5%

It matters a lot at the HR administrator level: Of certified pros in this role, 92 percent report they've been promoted in the past five years, versus just 56 percent of those who aren't certified. There are significant differences for HR assistants and generalists, too: 91 percent of certified assistants have been promoted versus 70 percent, and 71 percent of generalists have been promoted versus 46 percent.

## Workers at the Top and Bottom See Most Pay Growth From Certification

Pay growth for certification holders was greatest at the top and bottom of the job title chain in 2017.

### Median Pay

	Job Title	2016	2017	% Growth in Median Pay
HRPA Certification	Human Resources (HR) Assistant	\$37,700	\$40,600	7.7%
	Human Resources (HR) Administrator	\$40,900	\$41,400	1.2%
	Human Resources (HR) Manager	\$72,400	\$75,100	3.7%
	Human Resources (HR) Generalist	\$53,300	\$55,400	3.9%
	Human Resources (HR) Director	\$108,000	\$111,000	2.8%
	Vice President (VP), Human Resources (HR)	\$162,000	\$174,000	7.4%
	No HRPA Certifications	\$52,100	\$54,200	4.0%

Certified VPs' median pay grew 7.4 percent year-over-year, and certified assistants' pay went up 7.7 percent.

# Summary

There are clear, quantifiable benefits to obtaining an HRPA certification. The degree to which becoming certified impacts pay and progression for HR professionals varies among job levels and industries — but overall, the benefit is demonstrable. Getting HRPA certified seems to be a wise goal for the vast majority of HR professionals.

## Methodology

PayScale analyzed salary profiles of 3,909 HR professionals who provided information on certifications, collected between 1/1/2016 to 12/27/2017. Only workers with common HR titles (HR Assistant, HR Administrator, HR Generalist, HR Manager, HR Director and VP of HR) and complete profiles were included.

For the median pay calculations, we made no restrictions on and did not control for company size, experience level or other job qualifications that affect pay.

## Definitions

**Total Cash Compensation (TCC):** TCC combines base annual salary or hourly wage, bonuses, profit sharing, tips, commissions and other forms of cash earnings, as applicable. It does not include equity (stock) compensation, cash value of retirement benefits or value of other non-cash benefits (e.g., healthcare).

**Median Pay:** The median pay is the national median (50th percentile) annual total cash compensation. Half the people doing the job earn more than the median, while half earn less.

**HRPA Certifications:** These workers indicated that they had at least one of three HRPA certifications: Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP), Certified Human Resources Leader (CHRL) and Certified Human Resources Executive (CHRE).

**Job Title 5 Years Ago:** In PayScale's salary survey, users are asked what their job title was five years ago. We used these data to calculate the ratio of HR professionals who received a promotion in the past five years. We excluded previous or current job titles outside of the list of titles above to deal with the issue of people switching functions to and from HR, and to identify title changes that are clearly promotions.

## About PayScale

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