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Comprehension Test Questions for SBI Clerk Pre, IBPS Clerk Pre, LIC Assistant Pre and IBPS RRB Assistant Pre Exams.

Passage No. 161

Direction: Read the following passage carefully and answer the following questions.

Across the world, organisations are increasingly offering the gift of flexibility to their employees.

A study by the Society of Human Resource Management shows that 17% of the organisations in the United States allow sabbaticals. We see this as a rising trend in India, particularly in the last 5 years. Most of these are “leave without pay” and offered to employees having a strong performance track record.

This is how it works.

Organisations invest significant amount of resources in training and development of their employees. The returns on the investments are realised over a long period of time. As the employee keeps performing, there is an increasing acclimatisation and cultural alignment with the beliefs of the organisation. One may be able to spot a pair of trained hands with the competition, but the commitment that a performer brings to work each day is irreplaceable. So, for companies to have a sustainable future, they must retain not only the top performers but also all the people who meet expectations consistently. When one of the good employees wants a long leave either to explore a new world of opportunity or deal with something personal, sabbaticals come in handy. By granting a long vacation, an organisation can win a star performer’s heart and ensure he/she is in for the long haul.

Sabbaticals do create unpredictability and inject instability into the organisation. Typically, the boss has to find someone to fill in the role vacated by the person going on a sabbatical. Often, the person proceeding on a sabbatical does not offer a long notice period and hence, the replacement has to happen quickly. This further adds to the pressure of finding a replacement. Secondly, such replacements are risky because of the high stakes involved with an external stakeholder such as a key client, a government body or a strategic partner.

For employees, it is a great benefit. They do not have to scratch their heads after they complete their switch-off period. They have the same job and a workplace that recognises them. The risk of not finding a new job is non-existent and hence, the person can easily take the bold step of moving away from the din and bustle of day-to-day work. Sabbaticals give them the space to reflect, the opportunity to shape their dreams and craft the path ahead.

People proceed for higher studies, go for medical treatment, take up social work, pursue a passion, write a book, attend to personal emergencies in family and so on without worrying about a place and job to resume after the break.

Sometimes, sabbaticals are misused by people. One could **moonlight** during that period of time with another organisation in a similar area of work and hence, act against the spirit of taking a sabbatical. Companies try to mitigate the risk by drawing up the terms of the sabbatical such as eligibility in terms of duration of employment, level in the organisation and performance track record; they also define the period of sabbatical considering these factors.

There are hidden costs associated with a sabbatical. For example, employee benefits such as health insurance and accident cover have to continue. Another challenge with a long sabbatical, say six months, is to accommodate the employee in a role which is commensurate with his or her capabilities and commensurate with the pay. Small organisations do not have the **elbow room** required for a successful sabbatical programme. Many United States and United Kingdom headquartered multinational companies operating in India offer such programmes. Many large Indian companies and mid-sized progressive companies in India, particularly in the services sector, such as IT, consulting and healthcare have been offering sabbaticals. This helps the employer brand stand tall in the crowd and attract bright talent.

Questions :

1. Which of the following statements is true with respect to the information given in the passage?

- I. Sabbaticals are generally paid leaves.
- II. Sabbaticals do create an environment of uncertainty into the organization.
- III. Sabbaticals bring great benefits to employees in an organization.

A. Only I B. I and III C. II and III D. Only III E. All I, II and III

2. Which of the following is a valid assumption with reference to the passage?

- A. The concept of 'Sabbaticals' exists only in the west.
- B. Happiness of employees is valued by the organizations which offer 'Sabbaticals' to them.
- C. No organization offers 'Sabbaticals' to its employees willingly.
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above



3. Which of the following benefits ‘Sabbaticals’ offer to employees?

- I. Employees do not have risk of losing their jobs.
- II. They can find time to follow their passion.
- III. They can attend to personal emergencies without bothering anything about their jobs.

A. Only I B. Only III C. I and II D. II and III E. All I, II and III

4. Which of the following can be inferred as a valid reason/reasons as in why the ‘sabbatical programme’ isn’t a success as far as small organizations are concerned?

- I. Small organizations do not follow a fair leave management policy.
- II. Small organizations in general do not have a heavy budget that can support ‘sabbatical programme’.
- III. Small organizations have a high attrition rate.

A. Only I B. I and III C. Only II D. All I, II and III E. None of I, II and III

5. Which of the following is given as an example of a possible misuse of ‘Sabbaticals’ offered to employees?

- I. Employees on sabbaticals can divulge secret information of their organization to rival companies.
- II. Employees can get themselves indulge in criminal activities.
- III. Employees availing themselves of sabbaticals can join rival companies in the market.

A. Only I B. Only III C. I and III D. All I, II and III E. None of I, II and III

6. Which of the following defines the word ‘moonlight’ as given in bold in the passage?

- A. To enjoy oneself B. To have a second job, typically secretly C. To avoid responsibilities
- D. To be dishonest E. None of the above

7. Which of the following describes the meaning of the phrase ‘elbow room’ as given in bold in the passage?

- A. Permission B. Moral support from the management C. Freedom at work
- D. Union among employees E. None of the above

8. Which of the following is a key challenge for an organization offering a sabbatical programme to its employees?

- A. To find a worthy set of employees whom sabbaticals can be offered to.
- B. To find a quick replacement for the employee who opts for a sabbatical programme.
- C. To offer sabbaticals to employees across all the branches present at different locations.
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

Correct Answers :

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
C	B	E	C	B	B	C	B



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Explanations:

1. Refer to:

... **“Most of these are “leave without pay”** and offered to employees having a strong performance track record. ...

This confirms that the statement I is false.

Refer to:

Sabbaticals do create unpredictability and inject instability into the organisation.

The highlighted part above proves that the statement II is true.

Refer to:

For employees, it is a great benefit. ...

The highlighted part above confirms what’s given in statement III.

Option C is hence the correct answer.

2. Refer to:

Across the world, organisations are increasingly offering the gift of flexibility to their employees. ...

The very first sentence of the passage as taken above as reference implies that when an organization brings a concept of ‘Sabbaticals’ for its employees, it clearly shows that it values their happiness.

No other statement is a valid assumption with reference to the passage.

Option B is hence the correct answer.

3. Refer to:

For employees, it is a great benefit. They do not have to scratch their heads after they complete their switch-off period. They have the same job and a workplace that recognises them. **The risk of not finding a new job is non-existent** and hence, the person can easily take the bold step of moving away from the din and bustle of day-to-day work. **Sabbaticals give them the space to reflect, the opportunity to shape their dreams and craft the path ahead.** People proceed for higher studies, go for medical treatment, take up social work, pursue a passion, write a book, **attend to personal emergencies in family** and so on without worrying about a place and job to resume after the break.

The highlighted parts above reaffirm what’s been mentioned in points I, II and III.

Option E is hence the correct answer.

4. **Refer to:**

There are hidden costs associated with a sabbatical. For example, employee benefits such as health insurance and accident cover have to continue. Another challenge with a long sabbatical, say six months, is to accommodate the employee in a role which is commensurate with his or her capabilities and commensurate with the pay. **Small organisations do not have the elbow room required for a successful sabbatical programme.**

The above two sentences clearly implies that small organizations do not have much freedom to spend on 'sabbaticals' and therefore the concept is not successful with them.

The other two statements are nowhere mentioned or can be inferred from the passage.

Option C is hence the correct answer.

5. **Refer to:**

Sometimes, sabbaticals are misused by people. **One could moonlight during that period of time with another organisation in a similar area of work** and hence, act against the spirit of taking a sabbatical.

The highlighted part of the sentence above confirms what's been mentioned in statement III.

Neither of the other two statements is mentioned anywhere in the passage.

Option B is hence the correct answer.

6. To have a second job, typically secretly, in addition to one's regular employment.

Ex. He had been moonlighting for a rival tabloid.

Option B is hence the correct answer.

7. Elbow room (Idiom):

The freedom and ability to act as one wants.

Clearly, option C is the correct answer.

8. **Refer to:**

Often, the person proceeding on a sabbatical does not offer a long notice period and hence, **the replacement has to happen quickly.**

The highlighted part above confirms what's been stated in the statement II.

The other two statements are nowhere mentioned in the passage.

Option B is hence the correct answer.



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