

How to Choose the Best Answer When All Options Look Correct

SCENARIO



A department manager tells HR that team morale has dropped after a recent workload increase. Several employees have complained informally about stress, and one high-performing employee has asked about transferring to another department. The manager wants HR to approve a temporary incentive payment to keep the team motivated.

What should HR do first?

Answer Options:

- A** Approve the temporary incentive payment because it may help reduce frustration and retain key employees.
- B** Recommend that the manager hold a team meeting to acknowledge concerns and explain the business reason for the workload increase.
- C** Review available data, speak with the manager and employees to understand the root cause, and then recommend an appropriate response.
- D** Advise the manager to remind employees that workload changes are part of business needs and that performance expectations still apply.



BEST ANSWER

C. Review available data, speak with the manager and employees to understand the root cause, and then recommend an appropriate response.

Why C is the best answer



A is tempting because incentives may support retention, but it jumps to a solution before understanding the real issue.

B is useful because communication matters, but it may not fully diagnose the morale, workload, and retention risk.

D may be necessary later, but it sounds too manager-focused and does not address employee concerns or root cause.

C is strongest because HR gathers evidence first, considers both manager and employee perspectives, identifies the root cause, and then recommends a balanced solution.

5-STEP BREAKDOWN

1

Identify the real issue

This is not only about pay or motivation. It may involve workload, morale, retention risk, communication, and workforce capacity.

2

Clarify the HR goal

The goal is to protect performance and retention while ensuring the response is fair, evidence-based, and aligned with business needs.

3

Eliminate weak options

A jumps to compensation too quickly. B addresses communication but may miss deeper causes. D focuses on expectations but does not address morale or retention risk.

4

Choose the best-balanced response

C is the best response because it gathers data, listens to stakeholders, identifies the root cause, and avoids rushing into a solution.

5

Check for long-term impact

A temporary incentive may only solve the symptom. Understanding the root cause helps HR find a solution that improves morale, workload planning, retention & performance.



KEY TAKEAWAY

In SHRM SJI questions, the best answer is often not the fastest action. It is usually the response that gathers context, balances stakeholder needs, supports business goals, and leads to a fair, sustainable decision.