

# Michael Knudson, PHR

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## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

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PHR-certified Human Resource professional who combines hands-on HR operations with technology and AI automation skills—founded on expertise in research, critical thinking, and problem solving—to reduce manual errors, increase process efficiencies, and promote accountability across the workforce. Valued for fostering teamwork, consistently achieving goals through adaptability and reliability, and delivering results through data-driven strategy.

## CORE COMPETENCIES

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- Full Employee Lifecycle & HR Operations
- Multi-State Compliance
- FMLA and Leave Administration
- Compensation & Benefits
- HRIS
- HR Technology & Analytics
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Training & Mentoring
- Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
- AI Automation & Integration
- Process Improvement Analysis
- Data Science for Human Resources
- Policy Development
- Employee Relations
- Conflict Resolution & Investigations
- Organizational Development

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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### HR Manager, Payroll & Benefits | National Benefit Services, LLC (Remote)

Jan 2024 – Jul 2026

- Served as the single HR owner for a remote workforce of about 350 salaried, hourly, and contract employees in 31+ states, taking over the role from a 27-year incumbent and mastering its systems quickly.
- Ran full HR Employee lifecycle: onboarding, terminations, FMLA/leave administration, PTO, payroll, compensation and benefits, garnishments, local/state/federal filings, state registrations, business licenses, and employee education and training.
- Monitored and managed federal, state, and local government employment law and delivered weekly compliance reports to senior leadership with status, benchmarks, and recommended actions.
- Handled 100+ terminations and led or took part in 10–15 investigations, from minor workplace matters to DOL-level issues including age and sex discrimination questions; supported company layoffs.
- Analyzed processes and innovated improvements and automations to streamline efforts and increase efficiency utilizing Microsoft Power Automate, Power Apps, Excel & Outlook macros, and custom code.
- Wrote custom Python scripts for reporting, board packet data, and internal cost tracking (hiring, turnover, internal transfers, overtime), turning multi-hour weekly, monthly, and quarterly tasks into runs of under 3 minutes.
- Owned the entire operational use of Paylocity HRIS suite daily and utilized survey features to gather qualitative and quantitative data to perform statistical analysis and identify gaps in organizational culture.
- Championed AI adoption: built a chatbot answering employee and leadership questions from company documents only, with cited answers, and trained HR colleagues to use AI in their work.
- Wrote and updated policies, maintained the employee handbook and annual acknowledgment, and documented processes in clear SOPs to reduce institutional-knowledge risk.
- Trained a new SVP of Human Resources, a Payroll and Benefits Specialist, an Employee Engagement Specialist, and a Recruiting and Onboarding Specialist; coached leaders on FMLA, interviewing, and employee relations.
- Developed company-wide training regarding payroll & benefits, management, interview compliance, and employment skills.

### University Instructor | BYU, St. Olaf College, Yale University, University of Wisconsin–Madison

2017 – 2023

- Designed curricula and taught 18 unique courses in language, literature, and history to students of varied backgrounds, serving as instructor of record.
- Trained and mentored teaching assistants and student teachers; mentored students; completed Title IX and student-support compliance responsibilities.
- Planned and managed departmental and campus events, including conferences and visiting dignitaries; served on curriculum and scheduling committees.

- Received the Wisconsin Idea Award (2020) for community service and outreach.

**Senior Genealogical Researcher & Translator** | Norwegian American Genealogical Center & Naeseth Library (Madison, WI) *Oct 2019 – Mar 2021*

- Researched and translated historical records for clients, taught courses to technical and novice audiences, and led international research tours.
- Authored *Research Guide for Norwegian Genealogy* (2020); mentored researchers and served as first point of contact for clients and partner organizations.

**Quality Control Auditor & Team Lead** | Ancestry.com (Provo, UT) *2012 – 2015*

- Led North and South American records digitization teams, audited document quality, and trained specialists on best practices.

**Norwegian–English Translator** | Self-Employed (Remote) *Aug 2011 – Present*

- Translate legal, historical, journalistic, and personal documents with linguistic and cultural context, and maintain long-term client relationships.

## EDUCATION

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- **Ph.D., Scandinavian Studies—Philology and Medieval Studies**, University of Wisconsin–Madison, May 2023
- **M.Litt., Viking & Medieval Scandinavian Studies and Celtic Studies**, University of Aberdeen, Nov 2016 (Distinction)
- **B.A., European Studies and Scandinavian Studies**, Brigham Young University, Apr 2015

## CERTIFICATIONS

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- **Professional in Human Resources (PHR)**, HRCI, Jan 2026
- **Full Stack Software Developer Certification**, Coding Temple, Sept 2023

## OTHER COMPETENCIES

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- **Languages:** Multilingual competency in 10+ languages, including modern and historical languages.
- **Technical Competencies:** Python, Data Science standard libraries, JavaScript/TypeScript, HTML, CSS, Relational & Non-Relational Databases, React, Node.JS, SQL/PostgreSQL, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Excel, Microsoft 365, Data Analysis and Evaluation.