



itcc

IT CERTIFICATION COUNCIL

**WHY GET IT
CERTIFIED?
THE VALUE OF IT
CERTIFICATION**

AN IT CERTIFICATION WHITE PAPER

Chuck Cooper | March 2021 | V3

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Learn the Value of an IT Certification

There's something about the word "certified" when it precedes a professional title that conveys to the consumers and employers a sense of trust, credibility, knowledge, and an official "stamp" of approval. This is not a coincidence.

IT certification has long been a proven means of differentiation and qualification among professionals in the industry. Employers often include certification as a prerequisite when seeking qualified candidates to fill positions; consumers often trust only those IT professionals who boast credentials proving they have attained a certain level of knowledge. IT professionals themselves realize numerous benefits by holding an industry-recognized and valuable certification, including:

- Higher salaries
- Better jobs
- Enhanced skill sets
- Market differentiation
- Community support from like-minded peers

Obtaining additional skills that allow an IT professional to move into a new area or to perform current functions more effectively is never a waste of time or a bad idea. There's no such thing as "too much education" or "too many skills." There is no time like the present to learn about the benefits and value of IT certification for:

- [IT Professionals](#)
- [IT Business Partners](#)
- [IT Decision Makers](#)

As an IT Professional, IT Business Partner, and/or IT Decision Maker, certification demonstrates a strong commitment to the future development of the individual, business, and industry. This explicit value enforces the progression of information technology. It is because of this documented learning and mastery that new technologies are created and then passed on to others for additional technological advances. IT certification is a win-win for everyone. Let's examine how specifically IT certifications provide essential value.

IT Professionals

Preparing for a certification exam, even in a skillset you already know well, almost always expands the breadth and depth of your technical knowledge. Passing the exam gives you instant credibility among your peers and potential employers, and often creates a privileged relationship between you and the certification sponsor. This gives you access to faster technical support, advanced troubleshooting tools, and a community of equally motivated and skilled peers.

Over **48%** of certified individuals have been employed and growing in their job roles, using their certified skills, for more than 10 years.

Certification Magazine, January 2021

Whether you are a relative newcomer to IT or a veteran of the field, there are certifications that are a perfect match for your career goals.

Respect and Recognition

No one gets certified strictly for the bragging rights, but that doesn't mean you can't take advantage of them! The presence of IT certifications on your resume demonstrates that you are on top of your game, dedicated, and able to keep up with change in the industry. IT certifications can be added to your LinkedIn profile, proof of skills when asking for a promotion, and achievements recognized by companies.

Benefits to the Individual After Getting Certified



Pearson VUE 2018 Value of Certification Survey

Career Enhancement

Even if you already have a job you love or are looking for a career change, there's always room for professional growth.

Whether it's a desire to perform better in your current job, expand your skillset, or increase your job satisfaction and marketability, a well-chosen certification can help nourish your career.

Benefits you received from completing your certifications:



Pearson VUE 2018 Value of Certification Survey

Early Skills Certification

66% With Company < 5 years

61% Got First Certification < 5 years

Bonus/Raises



47.8% Got bonus or incentive pay
61.9% Of those got a raise
74.9% Getting cert was key factor

Stability



64.0% Staying in their job
92.8% Don't expect a layoff
92.4% Don't expect a pay cut

Certification Magazine, January 2021

77.8%

Agree they have experienced greater demand for their skills since becoming certified.

Certification Magazine, January 2021

Productivity

Without exception, pursuing a certification will expand your technical horizons. You'll learn new skills and may discover a few tricks to increase speed and efficiency of things you already do.

67% stated that getting certified has increased their workplace productivity

71.6% agree/strongly agree that certification has increase their ability to solve problems

Certification Magazine, January 2021

66.4%

Agree that getting certified has increased their ability to solve problems.

Certification Magazine, January 2020

How did achieving a certification help you the most in your role?



Pearson VUE 2018 Value of Certification Survey

"I used skills learned or enhanced through certification."

48.5%

Several times a day

28.6%

Several times a week

11.5%

Several times a month

9.1%

Occasionally

2.3%

Rarely

Certification Magazine, January 2021

Certified Community

Achieving certification in a particular skillset gives you an instant "in" with other IT pros in the same specialty. It may come through access to specialized forums and private communities who hold the same credential - allowing you to network and discuss the issues with other IT pros. Your certification earns you the respect to be part of this elite group and to contribute to it.



Salary

A new certification can lead directly to a bigger paycheck through a bonus or promotion, but even if that doesn't happen right away, you've strengthened your position for future financial gain.



Certification Effects on Salary

- IT professionals who obtained a new certification saw salary increases of \$13,000
- IT professionals with 6+ certifications see salaries 8% higher than the worldwide average

Women in IT

- 86% have at least one certification
- Annual salaries increased 8% year over year
- Salaries in 2020 were 9% higher than men; increasing from 6% less than men in 2019

Global Knowledge 2020 IT Skills and Salary Report

Stay Current

“Stay Current” programs are designed to ensure that certified people keep their skills up-to-date. Many of these programs work as a form of continuing education in that they require the certified professional to be informed of current enhancements and changes and to take a short test or assessment to validate their understanding, while others require that certified candidates take an exam that covers the updated skills. Regardless of the method, the goal is the same--to ensure that you are keeping your skills relevant.

Certification not only shows that you are dedicated to keeping your skills up to date; it also provides a blueprint and impetus for doing so. Vendor-specific certifications are often tied to a particular product version, so when a newer version of the product is released, an upgrade plan will be defined for you and placed at your fingertips.



Certifications that are tied to particular technical areas, such as computer security or project management, will keep you on your technical toes, too, as they often lay out a continuing education path to help you stay current.

Overall Assessment of Value of Certification to the IT Professional



90% would recommend certification.

Pearson VUE 2018 Value of Certification Survey



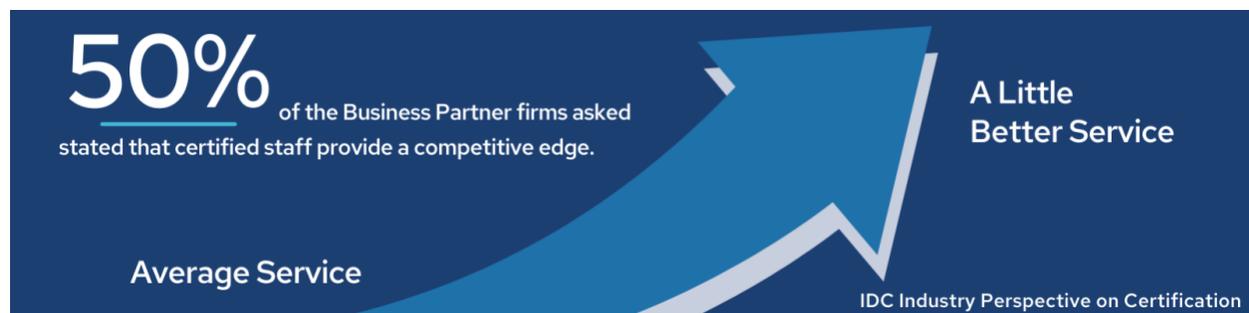
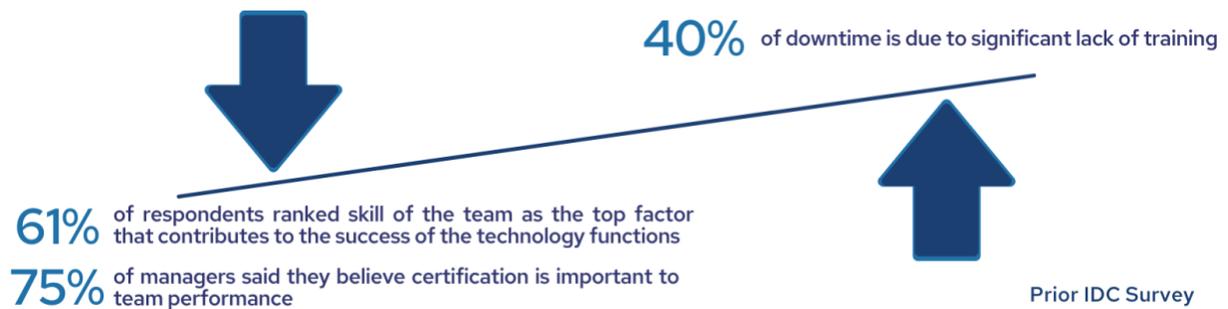
IT Business Partners

Numerous performance studies show that certified employees consistently deliver better results, faster. And the higher the quality and efficiency of an IT team, the more likely customers will come to you for repeat business or to purchase products and services in the future.

With relevant certifications earned by your team, your firm will be better positioned to win contracts, deliver fast, quality solutions, become a trusted partner, and repeat the cycle with a larger contract next time.

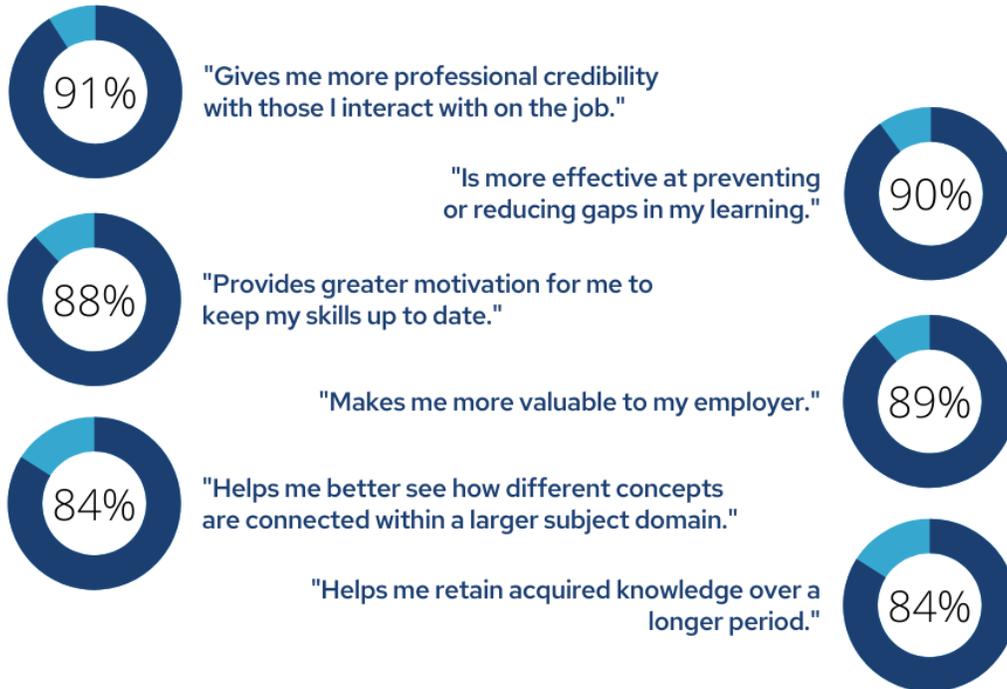
Team Performance

The No.1 factor contributing to team success is the skill of the team. Certifications provide a powerful tool to measure, ensure, and demonstrate that your team has the appropriate technical skills in place.



Building and Retaining Your Employee's Knowledge

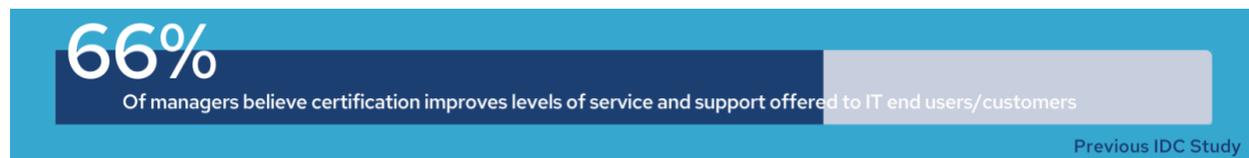
Candidates who agreed that certification is better than training alone stated that certification...



Pearson VUE 2018 Value of Certification Survey

Deliver Faster, Quality Solutions

Being able to deliver effective results in a timely manner is critical to all business, therefore performance studies show certified employees outperform non-certified employees.

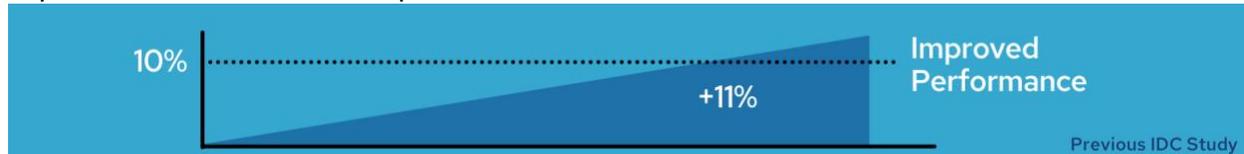


59%

Of respondents said certifications improved implementation of technology

Previous IDC Study

IT performance can increase up to 11% with certified staff.



ROI – Return on Your Staff Investment

An investment in professional IT certification delivers multiple payoffs for the same expenditure. The first is a skilled staff who provide more efficient and effective support to clients as well as for in-house technical functions, but that's not all. Firms with more certified staff increase the number of deals, and the size of the transactions, which lead to greater customer satisfaction and the growth in repeat business that comes with it. The ROI opportunity is endless by implementing this single strategy.

94% of IT decision-makers worldwide say that certified team members provide added value above and beyond the cost of certifications

Over **50%** estimate the annual economic benefit of a certified employee is > \$10,000; 16% estimate > \$30,000.

Global Knowledge 2020 IT Skills and Salary Report

An **Amazon Consulting Survey** shows that:

- 40% of respondents said certified staff leads to better sales & higher customer satisfaction
- 30% of respondents said certified staff leads to larger deal sizes
- 48% of respondents said they gained more market credibility
- 58% of respondents said certified staff leads to more deals per quarter

An **IBM study** shows that

- 40% of respondents said their field personnel, technical support teams, and application development staff became more efficient in their respective jobs due to their certifications.
- 60% said they decreased the time to install and configure a solution, to resolve an ongoing problem, and to fulfill an overall engagement; they credited this, in part, to having certified individuals.

Certifications Drive Revenue

Research shows that when you add a certified individual to your staff, revenue goes up. Add another, and revenue goes up a greater amount than it did for the first one. In fact, prior research into certification among IBM Systems and Storage business partners revealed that the more certified individuals a firm has on staff, the greater the revenue per certified individual (RPCI) becomes. When it comes to certified staff, 1+1 > 2.

When business partners are grouped by number of certified individuals on staff, those with higher levels of certifications exhibit measurably higher revenue per certified individual, and the value of each additional certification improves team performance.

Revenue Per Certified Individual (RPCI) = Revenue Productivity/Person



Adding Value to Your Company

As an IT Business Partner, it is essential that value is added to the company. IDC conducted a survey asking if “having certified staff adds value to my company.” Solution Providers across the board scored the survey above 50% with strongly agreeing to multiple factors. Certified staff generate more business, generate higher staff productivity, help generate business with new customers, and differentiates the company from competitors.

Having Certified Staff Adds Value to My Company (Strongly Agree Ratings)				
Having Certified Staff	Sol Prov	SI	ISV	SVC Prov
Generates more business for us	65%	37%	48%	44%
Generates higher staff productivity	70%	44%	29%	42%
Helps generate business with new customers	65%	44%	33%	33%
Differentiates us from our competition	56%	44%	29%	49%

IDC Industry Perspectives on Certification

Increased Credibility with Your Customer

The presence or absence of industry certifications has been proven to influence whether or not a potential customer signs with you, how fast they do it, and how much trust they place in your advice. Per an IDC survey, an overwhelming percentage of firms said that certified staff increases credibility with customers and also added that certifications improve customer satisfaction.

- » 55% of IT managers said certifications increase the credibility of IT consultants
- » 50% of IT managers said certified IT consultants improve implementation of a new technology
- » 52% of IT managers said relevant certifications validate product knowledge of technology consultants

IDC: Four Ways Certifications Help Organizations Achieve Their IT Strategies, October 2020

Better Hiring Decisions

Your potential customers are looking at industry certifications when hiring, and you should be, too. In addition to increasing the likelihood that the candidate will be a motivated, high performer, a well-certified employee also brings an association with the certifying authority.

Having an associated certifying authority is an extra you can leverage into a technical and marketing boost for your firm. It's like getting an employee-plus hire. The percentage of relevant certifications a team holds is a reliable measure of a team's functional capability.

IT Decision Makers

Selecting the right people or vendor for a job is a critical decision. Industry certifications can play an important role in the decision-making process.

Although certifications are not a substitute for experience, they can speak volumes about the candidates and staff that hold them. Current, relevant certifications show much more than skill level or product knowledge; they also demonstrate motivation, professionalism, and in the case of product-specific certifications, they strengthen the nature of the relationship between the certified individuals or teams and the vendor of those products.

Confidence in Selecting Employees and Vendors

Many IT decision makers - whether HR executives, hiring managers or Chief Technology Officers (CTOs) - use technical certifications to tilt the odds in their favor of finding the best candidates or vendors for a job. The presence (or absence) of certifications can be very telling.

Certifications indicate the depth and breadth of an individual's or team's skills, their dedication to keeping their skills current, and their relationship with relevant vendors. Because certifications can be verified by the certifying authority, they can act as a "reference" that validates their skills.

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IDC: Four Ways Certifications Help Organizations Achieve Their IT Strategies, October 2020

Faster Quality Solutions to Market

In order to deliver on its mission, every IT group needs a quick, effective way to ensure that technical staff knows what they need to know, when they need to know it. The process of earning and maintaining professional certifications provides and requires that. Certifying your staff empowers them to adapt, deploy, and deliver better and faster than competitors who don't understand just how much certification can do for them.

- » IT professionals with one certification have 2.5x the influence on strategic IT projects as IT professionals with no certifications in their first year in a role.
- » IT professionals with two to five certifications have as much professional influence after three years as IT professionals with no certifications after six years.
- » After seven years in a role, IT professionals with more than two certifications have about 20% greater professional impact on strategic IT projects than professionals with no certifications.

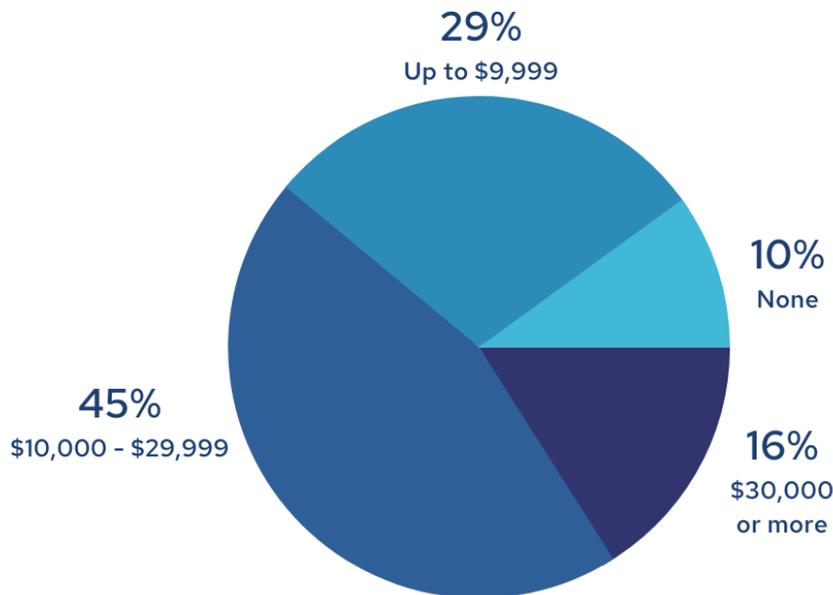
IDC: Four Ways Certifications Help Organizations Achieve Their IT Strategies, October 2020

Economic Benefits to the Company

According to the Global Knowledge 2020 IT Skills and Salary Report, when asked about a quantitative revenue impact of certified employees, respondents noted that there was an increase in annual revenue.

This comparison to non-certified counterparts demonstrates that year-over-year certification adds economic value to the company.

Estimated Annual Economic Benefit of Certified Employees



Global Knowledge 2020 IT Skills and Salary Report

Overall Benefits from Certified Personnel

Certified IT professionals provide extensive benefits globally. As noted in the chart below, IT certified personnel have provided value from meeting client requirements to closing organizational gaps. These benefits boost productivity and allow for quicker troubleshooting of issues.



Conclusion

The answer to the question “Why Get IT Certified?” is an easy one. There is tremendous value as demonstrated throughout this white paper. Whether an individual is an IT Professional, IT Business Partner, and/or IT Decision Maker, the value of IT certifications continues to grow and is essential to organizational success. To realize this value, companies must invest in the necessary training and encourage and allow employees to take the time necessary to master the subject, and to demonstrate their skills through the achievement of IT certifications.

Certification will not only help you be successful in your role, but it will also help your organization be successful.

References

Certification Magazine, January 2021

[Global Knowledge 2020 IT Skills and Salary Report](#)

IBM Study

IDC Industry Perspectives on Certification, Prior Survey

[IDC: Four Ways Certifications Help Organizations Achieve Their IT Strategies](#)

[Pearson VUE 2018 Value of Certification Survey](#)

Additional Reading

[Salary Survey Extra: Does Lots of Certs = Lots of Salary?, 2017](#)

[Salary Survey Extra: What’s IT Worth to You, or Why Certify?, 2017](#)

[SAP article- The Value of Certifications: Learning as a Sustainable Competitive Advantage, December 2020](#)

Acknowledgements

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About ITCC



The IT Certification Council (ITCC) is a nonprofit organization committed to growing and promoting professional IT certifications. Its core purpose is to support the industry and member companies by marketing the value of certification, promoting exam security, furthering innovation, and establishing and sharing industry best practices.

Founded in 2007, ITCC is a community of 40 of the most respected companies in the IT certification industry. Members have access to exclusive resources, collaborate with industry leaders, and engage in task forces working on initiatives to benefit the certification industry. Learn more at www.itcertcouncil.org.

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