

# Why certification is important

by Joan Burge

Great administrators are known as those who do their best, work at the top of their game and who work like they are in a profession of choice. One of the strongest ways to send that message is when you choose to become certified.

*Your certification should be strategic, specific and structured. Look for desk-specific, growth-oriented enhancement of skills and competencies.*

Certification demonstrates to those around you that you can set goals and achieve objectives—you can be trusted to go the distance.

So why should you choose to become certified?

1. **You build confidence!** Having that certificate on your wall sends a great positive message to everyone you work with.
2. **You gain new skills and competencies.** You need to become—and remain—competitive.
3. **You reinvent yourself.** Reinventing yourself means you remain current and viable; you transcend age. This is critical because no matter your chronological age, you need to be adaptable.
4. **You broaden your perspective.** When you grow, you gain new insights that allow you to approach your work in a new, fresh way. You think more creatively and strategically.
5. **You gain reputational prowess within your company.** Framed certificates communicate that you care, that you “get it” and are serious about the business.
6. **You master your time.** When you decide to go the second mile for your career, you learn how to harness all that “free time” spent surfing the television and ‘net, and at the water cooler chatting.
7. **You decide to value yourself more highly.** Yes, it takes effort to work a certification through to completion. But it’s so worth it!
8. **You can compete.** In this competitive job market, you need every tool and resource in your toolkit.
9. **You may even pay for it yourself.** You may need to split costs with your employer, such as using vacation to attend a conference they pay for, etc. Seeing yourself as an investment will increase your face value. You’ll carry yourself well, and have professional poise and presence.

What kind of certification is best for you? What’s out there? Here are some points to ponder:

- Your certification should certainly support your company’s corporate vision, mission and goals, falling in line with the company’s overall strategies for success.

• Your certification should be strategic, specific and structured. Look for desk-specific, growth-oriented enhancement of skills and competencies.

- **Strategic:** What's in it for your company? How will you improve? Bring it to their bottom line. Shore up your weak spots and grow your strengths.
- **Specific:** Learn how to implement higher soft skill behaviors, flawlessly execute project management, shine in team environments, leverage social media, etc.
- **Structured:** Programs that do not require assignments, reading, activities, or exposure to higher learning and new ideas will not help you much.

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