

The win-win of certification

How employees and businesses thrive through continuous learning



Introduction: The need for certifications

With the digital environment changing faster than ever, driven by both internal and external forces, IT certification, knowledge, and readiness are more valuable than ever to both the individual employee and the IT organization. Cloud, wireless, hybrid work, advances in data management, security, all demand more nimble, skilled IT teams. Being ready for what's now and what's next requires both skill and an attitude that values continual learning.



It starts with a growth mindset

Developing and maintaining what's called a "growth mindset" is key to organizational and personal success. A 2020 study by IDC explains that a growth mindset is "a self-belief that competence can be developed through dedication and hard work and a willingness to leverage tools and learnings of others."¹ This is as opposed to a "fixed mindset," or a belief that talents are primarily innate gifts that are "fixed" and generally unchanging. The study shows that developing a growth mindset is incredibly important to long-term career resilience. Of those with certifications, 91% believe that the effort they put into acquiring new skills strongly contributes to their success – not just the skills themselves.²

That determination pays off. The IDC study estimates that trained and certified teams responsible for core IT activities are almost 20% more productive than less proficient staff.³ Let's look at how acting on a growth mindset through gaining certifications benefits employees and organizations.

¹ IDC White Paper, sponsored by Microsoft, Business Value of Digital Transformation and the Contribution of a Growth Mindset in IT, doc #US46245620, May 2020

² Ibid

³ Ibid

PART I: The benefits of certification to the employee

While it would seem that developing a growth mindset that values continued certification would have benefits to the individual employee, when they are actually quantified, their importance takes on a larger scale. For instance, once a certification candidate sets out a career goal that involves certification—promotion, pay raise, new role—they are far more likely to achieve it. A majority of candidates (70%) successfully fulfilled these primary goals. Only three percent did not.⁴

70%

achieve their certification-related goals

3%

Only 3% do not

61%

obtain the specific IT roles they wanted

Show me the money: The monetary benefits of certification

For those employees who are looking to earn more money, certification is an important part of any plan, with 28% of employees receiving a salary or wage increase after earning a certification.⁵ Of those earning a raise 50% of candidates receive a pay increase of between 6% to 20%.⁶ And it happens fast; 55% of those getting raises after certifications get them within three months.⁷

Certify for the job you want

Employees earning certifications also see promotions:

21%

receive promotions or other advancement

23%

find new jobs in a related industry

13%

find new jobs by changing industries

Personal benefits: Be the tech pro you want to be

Earning certifications can lead to a variety of personal benefits

91%

feel increased confidence

84%

get a boost in determination to succeed professionally

75%

receive greater respect from their peers

76%

achieve greater satisfaction in their jobs

75%

are entrusted with more work autonomy and independence

PART II: The Employer Benefits of Certification

When individuals within an organization pursue certifications, the organization as a whole benefits, too. In general, these benefits come from three main areas where organizations benefit from improving skills and knowledge:



Timeliness

Well-trained cloud migration teams meet nearly 90% of their business and project milestones. Compared with less than 50% of milestones met by cloud migration teams at only "average" skill level.



Insight

Nearly all (90%) of the organizations with well-trained teams are satisfied or very satisfied with their ability to monitor, forecast, and optimize server, storage, and network resources. Compared with less than 10% of the organizations with undertrained teams being satisfied with their ability to optimize resources.



Business impact

Of the organizations with teams well trained in automation and orchestration tools, 80% report being satisfied or very satisfied with the business impact of the move to cloud. Only 20% of the organizations without sufficient skills were satisfied with the impact of cloud.⁸

⁸ IDC White Paper, sponsored by Microsoft, Leveraging Microsoft Learning Partners for Innovation and Impact, doc #US47225021, January 2021



More specifically, IT teams overwhelmingly report other benefits including:

81%

Increased quality and value of work contributions

80%

Greater ability to mentor and support co-workers 80

77%

Increased ability to innovate work processes and outcomes

75%

Able to perform a task or fill a role that I was not able to before

72%

Increased efficiency (produce more in less time)

71%

Increased productivity (produce more overall)

And it helps when the organization pays. When employers covered the costs for certification, employees were less likely to seek new opportunities outside of the company (74% compared to 87%).⁹

Finally, what's the net promoter score of certifications?

When individuals are willing to advise others to do something, they are putting their own reputations on the line. The net promoter score measures participants' willingness to recommend the service to others—a high bar for any action. Certification earners are remarkably enthusiastic about their experience with 89% of candidates are likely to recommend certification to someone hoping to begin or advance in a technology-related career.¹⁰



⁹Op cit, Pearson Vue

¹⁰Ibid, Pearson Vue