

Work-Ready Electronics

Synchronizing Curriculum to the Rapidly Changing Workplace

Module: Certification in Electronics Technology



Introduction to Certification

Certification is the process of having your knowledge, skills, and/or experience verified by an independent source for the purpose of proving to others your competency in a particular field. Most certifications rely on investigation of your education and experience and one or more exams to verify your eligibility for certification.

Certification is useful to electronic technicians as it provides a way to ensure employers that you are knowledgeable and capable. It helps remove doubt in hiring and therefore can lead to more and better job opportunities.

Electronic Certification Organizations

There are literally dozens of certification organizations specializing in electronics. Most electronic technology students and graduates do not know about certification and its benefits. This module introduces you to certification, outlines the many positive rewards, summarizes the most popular certifications and their sources, and suggests ways to prepare for certification exams.

Module Prerequisites

There are no special requirements for this module. Any one interested in electronics and employment as a technician will find this module interesting and helpful.

Those students nearing graduation from an AAS degree program will especially be interested in how they can qualify for a certification that can accompany their AAS degree in applying for jobs in electronics.

What Technicians Need to Know

Definition of certification

Benefits of certification

Process of certification

Sources of available certifications

How to prepare for certification exams

Certification and Benefits

Certification

Certification is a method of verifying that a person has a specific body of knowledge to be competent in a field of specialization. Through testing and investigation of a person's background, certifying organizations state that the person's knowledge is true and meets certain standards of quality.

Certification is a way to validate your knowledge, skills, or proficiency through an independent third party. It is a widely recognized process used in many trades and industries.

Licensing

Certification is similar to licensing. Licensing is the process of a government body giving a person official permission to own or do something. Many professions require licensing to practice such as barbers, nurses, electricians, and building contractors. Licensing usually requires that the person pass a test or submit to past employment verification.

Most certifications require similar conditions but do not confer official permission.

Independent Certification

There are two types of certification: independent and vendor.

Independent certification is by an independent third party, usually a non-profit organization, that has been established as a certification source. It is not affiliated with any other company or technology. The certifications offered are generic and are open to any person or organization.

Vendor Certification

Vendor certification is associated with a specific company, technology, or product. Novell, Microsoft, and Linux networking software certifications are examples of vendor certification. Such certifications ensure that a person can competently use, install, service, and troubleshoot the product of interest.

Vendor certification is the most widely used in the computer and networking fields. It is as good, if not better, than independent certification because it is so relevant to the job. In the computer field, certification is more widely used than college graduation in hiring because it directly indicates a person's proficiency and knowledge with a specific piece of software.

Voluntary Process

Certification is a voluntary process. A person need not be certified to get a job although some employers may require it as a hiring condition. Even though certification is not a formal requirement for hiring, having the certification often tells the employer that the person is competent at a certain level as verified independently by some organization.

The primary benefit of certification is that it can help a person get hired. Having a specific certification can give you an edge over other candidates for the same job.

Benefits of Certification



In some fields, especially the computer and networking fields, certification has become the de facto hiring standard. Those individuals working with personal computers, networks, and other computer/networking equipment and software must usually be certified to get the job. In this field, the certification is more important than any college degree as it attests to a person's knowledge and skill rather than just the completion of some generic academic program.

Other Benefits

Besides getting a job initially, having a specific certification can help you get promoted or otherwise rise in your organization of employment. Having a specific certification can sometimes lead to a raise or a better job.

Another benefit of certification is that by going through the process you discover what you know and do not know.

Preparing for a certification exam clearly lets you know where you stand. You can then review or learn what you do not know. This process leads to self instruction and self improvement and makes you all the more competent. Think of certifications as one form of continuing education in your field of interest.

Certification can also help with your self esteem and confidence as well as your image as a competent person in the eyes of your peers.

Benefits to Employers

Employers want to hire the best, most knowledgeable, and competent. Hiring organizations have a variety of ways to screen candidates including tests, interviews, and background checks. Anything else that can provide some clue as to a candidate's competency is welcomed. For example, a college degree is widely required even if it is not absolutely necessary because it indicates a certain level of learning.

Certification is one additional way to show a prospective employer that you have qualified at a certain level. Having a certification can help you get hired simply because it gives the employer more confidence in your qualifications.

Some employers require specific certifications simply because they must be certain that you have the critical knowledge and skills needed to do specific work. They do not want to take chances on unqualified candidates.

Test your knowledge

**Certification in Electronics Technology
Knowledge Probe 1
Certification and Benefits**

Click on [Course Materials](#) at the top of the page.
Then choose **Knowledge Probe 1**.