

Certification Success Guide

Guaranteeing Excellence in Software Skills Training

Hands On Technology Transfer, Inc. • 800-413-0939

In this guide we'll cover everything you need to consider as you make a decision about getting certified. You'll discover the benefits of certification, how it validates, differentiates and ultimately compensates you for your IT skills. In fact, the average technical certification can increase your salary by 14%.

Included in this guide:

- ▶ The Benefits of Certification
- ▶ Passing a Test vs. Preparing for a Career
- ▶ Keeping the Process Simple
- ▶ How HOTT Helps You Get There
- ▶ HOTT Certification Training Programs
- ▶ Bob and Ted: A Cautionary Tale

“Certifications have proven to be a metric of excellence, especially during times of economic uncertainty and continuous business and technological transformation.”

- Cert Times

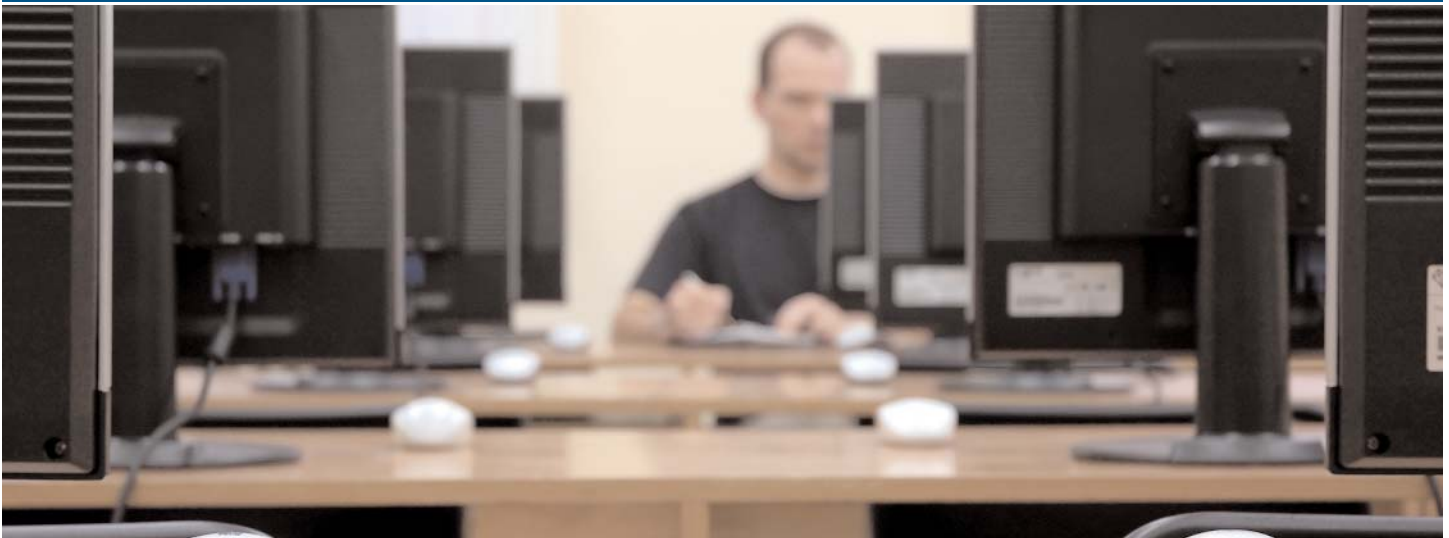


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Introduction



Welcome to the *Certification Success Guide*. If you're interested in getting highly effective software skills training that will prepare you for certification, then please read on. In this guide we'll cover everything you need to consider as you make a decision about getting certified.

You'll discover the benefits of certification, how it validates, differentiates and ultimately compensates you for your skills. In fact, the average technical certification can increase your salary by 14%.

However, certification is not an end in itself. When we're done speaking to the benefits of certification we'll explain how the slip of paper you earn isn't what truly matters. What truly matters is that certification should be a byproduct of competency. You must learn to perform tasks, not just pass tests.

And, if you believe as we do, that certification should be the result of true competency you'll learn how Hands On Technology Transfer, Inc. can help you on your way. We offer unparalleled flexibility and convenience. You can train at your site or at any of our regularly scheduled, open-enrollment classes in more than 75 cities across the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. There are no penalties for rescheduling or switching study-tracks. We give you total control of when, where and what you study.

Our certification tracks include Microsoft's MCSE, MCSA, MCDBA, MCP, MCST, MCIPT, or MCPD exams. We also offer Java™ and Linux certification training.

The Benefits of Certification



Why become certified at all? There are a number of reasons. Whether you're trying to further your career or break into a new one, certification validates the level of skill you've attained through experience and training. Certification helps to differentiate you when you're looking for a job. It helps keep your resume on top of the heap. And of course, there is the most obvious reason of all: the money. Of course, salary increases are also generally contingent upon an individual's competency and experience, which often goes hand in hand with certification.

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Validation

Certification is the best way to earn official recognition of your new skill set, outside of going back to school for another degree. It may even be a better option for some.

Cert Times offers, "Certifications have proven to be a metric of excellence, especially during times of economic uncertainty and continuous business and technological transformation. Today, in order to keep up with the changing pace of the market, professionals need an academic degree, a branded certification as well as a specialty area."

We must emphasize that you need the experience to back those validators up. Validation won't matter if you can't do the job once you've obtained it.

Differentiation

Certification may well be the item on your resume that gets you a promotion or new job over the plethora of others jockeying for the position. Certifications help to quickly identify your areas of expertise and signal appropriate matches for job placement.

The article goes on to point out, “The immigrants who made the investment to learn how to speak, read and write English fluently got the higher-paying jobs. Those who learned only to speak it got medium- to low-paying jobs and those who didn't learn English at all got manual labor, ditch-digging and other low-paying jobs.” It's important to be savvy in the latest technologies and it may help to validate your knowledge with a certification. Multiple certifications may indicate and validate that you are competent in multiple technologies.

Finally, certification testing can help identify previously undetected gaps in your skillset. By filling those gaps, you'll become a more well rounded and valuable employee.

Instructor-Led, Open Enrollment Classes in a City Near You

Northeast	Southeast	Midwest	West/Southwest
CT - Hartford	AL - Huntsville	AR - Little Rock	AZ - Phoenix
CT - New Haven	FL - Fort Lauderdale	IA - Cedar Rapids	AZ - Tucson
CT - Stamford	FL - Jacksonville	IA - Des Moines	CA - Bakersfield
DC - Washington	FL - Miami	IL - Chicago	CA - Fresno
MA - Boston	FL - Orlando	IL - Schaumburg	CA - Irvine
MA - Chelmsford	FL - Pensacola	IL - Springfield	CA - Los Angeles
MA - Quincy	FL - Sarasota	IN - Indianapolis	CA - Modesto
MA - Springfield	FL - Tampa	KY - Louisville	CA - Oakland
MA - Waltham	FL - West Palm Beach	MI - Detroit	CA - Riverside
MA - Woburn	GA - Atlanta	MI - Lansing	CA - Sacramento
MA - Worcester	GA - Savannah	MN - Minneapolis	CA - San Diego
MD - Baltimore	LA - Shreveport	MO - Kansas City	CA - San Francisco
MD - Columbia	NC - Charlotte	MO - St. Charles	CA - San Jose
NH - Manchester	NC - Raleigh-Durham	MO - Springfield	CA - Santa Clarita
NH - Nashua	NC - Winston-Salem	NE - Omaha	CA - Santa Monica
NJ - Jersey City	SC - Charleston	OH - Cincinnati	CA - Temecula
NJ - Newark	VA - Alexandria	OH - Cleveland	CO - Denver
NJ - Princeton	VA - Fairfax	OH - Columbus	ID - Boise
NY - Albany	VA - Norfolk	OH - Dayton	NM - Albuquerque
NY - Binghamton	VA - Richmond	OK - Oklahoma City	NM - Las Cruces
NY - Buffalo	VA - Williamsburg	OK - Tulsa	NV - Las Vegas
NY - Ithaca		TN - Memphis	OR - Portland
NY - Manhattan		TN - Nashville	TX - Austin
NY - Rochester		WI - Milwaukee	TX - Corpus Christi
NY - Syracuse			TX - Dallas
PA - Harrisburg			TX - El Paso
PA - Philadelphia			TX - Fort Worth
PA - Pittsburgh			TX - Houston
RI - Providence			TX - San Antonio
			UT - Salt Lake City
			WA - Seattle

Passing a Test vs. Preparing for a Career



HOTT training is never strictly product-oriented and we never “teach to exams.” The goal is not to just prepare you to pass a test. We're preparing you to competently perform in an industrial environment and successfully complete complex tasks. Certification should be a byproduct of competency. If the tests are well constructed, then competent people will pass the tests.

When it comes to computer training, you need to develop true competence in new skills, not just receive an overview of syntax and techniques. A certification will be a meaningless slip of paper if you don't. It may get you in the door, but once you're in, you'll have to prove you can do what the slip of paper says. That's why all of our training is task-oriented and employs hands-on practice for at least 50% of the time in class. Your experience in directly applying new skills leads to clarity, confidence and true competence.

Customers who have come to us after training disasters elsewhere often complain that the self-styled Certification Boot Camps they've attended provide as little as 30 minutes a day of facilitated hands-on practice, and use valuable class time to run through lengthy exam simulations. Imagine if our military boot camps were focused on the recruits passing a bunch of written exams certifying them as soldiers.

We feel that boot camps should focus on making people competent. It's a disservice to claim that certification by passing a test will in and of itself change someone's career or make an industry better. Increased competence should be the goal. And when certification results from hands-on, competency-based training, it truly means something.

Keeping it Simple



HOTT offers unparalleled flexibility and convenience when it comes to preparing you for certification. In addition to serving you at your location, we offer regularly scheduled open-enrollment classes at frequent intervals in more than 75 cities across the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. And, at HOTT there are no penalties for rescheduling or switching study tracks. You are in control of when, where and what you study.

HOTT also strives to make every student comfortable within their newly learned skill-set. We want you to pass your exams, but we also want you to feel confident you can do the job once you have passed. If a student is not confident, they have the option to retake all or part of the course again for no additional charge. If a student lacks confidence we will work with him to develop the understanding that leads to confidence as well as competence.

According to *Training* magazine, nearly two-thirds of all corporate training expenses involve accommodations and travel. Another way HOTT keeps it simple is by minimizing your travel expenses. If your local class cancels and you'd prefer not to wait for the next one, we'll pay your hotel expenses at an alternate location. HOTT also offers an all-inclusive package covering air, hotel and tuition expenses at a cost lower than tuition alone at most other training companies.

We also don't charge extra for the word "certification" or the words "boot camp." Our certification tracks or boot camps if you like, are software skills training courses so they're priced in accordance with our other software skills courses. That makes them anywhere from 15% to 40% less expensive than most of the competitors we see out there offering certification boot camps.

When deciding on a training provider, you want to compare total costs including tuition, travel and time away from work. HOTT concentrates on efficiency through condensed training. We take less time to teach you the skills you need to be effective on the job.

Getting You There



Small Class Sizes

Large classes assure some students will not receive an excellent training experience. HOTT's open-enrollment classes are kept small, generally 8-12 students and never more than 16, assuring each student gets personal attention.

Quality Instructors

HOTT's instructors are experienced professionals, cross-trained in several technologies. They can relate the strengths and weaknesses of products and present alternative solution strategies when they are warranted. Only 2% of all instructors teaching for our competitors meet our strict standards. The other 98% are not considered qualified to teach for HOTT.

Competence

True competence is achieved in technical training when every student performs tasks in the form of realistic, well-structured hands-on exercises, facilitated by an expert instructor. And, our instructors provide the opportunity to discuss how the topic at hand affects the student's own work. With HOTT, you'll receive a truly personalized training experience.

Cost Effectiveness

Our tuition fees remain among the lowest available for instructor-led IT training. You pay no registration fees and no cancellation fees. We minimize travel expenses with regularly scheduled, open-enrollment classes, in more than 75 cities across the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. You won't be forced into taking a multi-course track in a continuous block. You take the courses you want to take, at the pace you want, when your wallet allows you to.

Certification Training Programs



HOTT offers regularly scheduled open-enrollment certification tracks, at frequent intervals, preparing students for *Microsoft*, *Java™*, *Linux* and other popular certifications. When you train with HOTT you are guaranteed small class sizes, expert instructors, and comprehensive hands-on exercises. HOTT offers a wide selection of discount programs to accommodate individuals as well as groups both small and large.

Microsoft Certifications

There a number of Microsoft-specific certifications available. Our regular schedule of open enrollment classes will help you prepare for your *MCSE*, *MCSA*, *MCDBA*, *MCP*, *MCTS*, *MCITP*, or *MCPD* exams.

To learn more about Microsoft certifications please visit: www.mcse-training-classes.com

Linux Certifications

Most experts estimate that as many as 30% of all new servers sold have Linux installations. As companies continue to adopt the Linux operating system, employers are increasingly looking for individuals competent with Linux. One good way to demonstrate that competency is through certification. HOTT's 5-day *Linux System Administration* course and the 4-day *UNIX/Linux Fundamentals* course prepares you for several intermediate and advanced level certification exams.

HOTT offers Linux certification training for *Brainbench*, *Linux Professional Institute (LPI)* and *Red Hat*.

To learn more about Linux certifications please visit: www.hott-unix-linux-training.com

Java™ Certifications

HOTT offers training in seven Sun Java technology certifications. Three of these certifications are based on the J2SE™ (Java 2 Standard Edition) environment (*Sun Certified Java Associate (SCJA)*, *Sun Certified Java Programmer (SCJP)* and *Sun Certified Java Developer (SCJD)*) and the other four are based on the J2EE™ (Java 2 Enterprise Edition) environment (*Sun Certified Developer For Java Web Services (SCDJWS)*, *Sun Certified Web Component Developer (SCWCD)*, *Sun Certified Enterprise Architect (SCEA)* and *Sun Certified Business Component Developer (SCBCD)*).

HOTT's 10-day curriculum consisting of *Java Programming* and *Java EE Web Application Development with Enterprise JavaBeans and Web Services* provides you with the knowledge you need to pass all eight exams and gain all five certifications.

To learn more about Java certifications please visit: www.hott-java-certification.com

"Classes were great. I've been here for 3 weeks and learned a lot. I'll definitely consider HOTT for any future certifications."

- A.R., Medco Health

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“Bob and Ted: A Cautionary Tale”



Meet Bob and Ted, two mid-level IT professionals working for the P&C Company of Boston, Massachusetts. Bob and Ted are surprisingly similar fellows. They work in unsurprisingly similar pale-green cubicles, right across the aisle from one another. Bob and Ted do lunch together every odd Friday. They eat at a seafood restaurant across the street from work, and they always order the same thing. Bob gets haddock and coleslaw. Ted munches on haddock and a double-order of French fries.

Things have gotten tighter at the P&C Company since the dot-com downturn, everything from salaries and bonuses, to Ted's pants, which fit much more snugly after all those French fries. Bob and Ted have both considered upgrading their skill-sets over the last few months to increase their value, and maybe pull in a few extra dollars at the same time. Both of them are looking to add a MCSE certification on top of their MCP certification. Bob tells Ted he's read about the financial benefits of just such a combination in a recent *CertMag* salary survey.

One odd Friday Bob and Ted decide to go their separate ways and investigate training companies in town. After a short walk, Ted plops himself down on the couch of the first training company he sees: Sam's Exam Crams. He fills out an application, takes a brochure and heads back out to try and grab his regular lunch before his break is up.

Bob, knowing that he'd want to devote his entire lunch break to his search, brings his lunch from home. He eats half a roast beef sandwich while he surfs the Internet looking for a training provider. Bob wants to be careful and pick just the right company for him. He wants the certification but he wants to actually learn the technologies during his training, not just study to pass the test. Bob finds Hands On Technology Transfer, Inc. on the web. He's most pleased by their stance on certification as a byproduct of competency. He spends the rest of his lunch on the phone with a training coordinator, figuring out the details of when he'll attend a course.

When Bob and Ted report to their manager with requests to take time off for training, she is pleased to see that neither one of them will be out for very long. She wonders, though, whether they'll be receiving quality training. Ted promises he'll ace the certification test his first time.

Bob hopes he will do the same, but mentions that, if he fails he'll be able to take a portion of the course over. The boss asks Ted if his training company offers a similar deal but he brushes it off, saying she need not worry. He'll pass the first time around.

Both Bob and Ted head off to their classes for the next three weeks, but they still take time to get together one Friday in the middle of the training to catch up. Bob is excited by all the hands-on exercises he's been put through. Some have been tough, but he really feels like he's getting it. Ted looks tired and worn down. He hasn't done any hands-on work but they have simulated portions of the test a half-dozen times already.

At the end of their training both Bob and Ted ace their exams. Ted takes an extra two days off to recuperate, but Bob is back to work right away, excited to put his new skills to use.

Over the next few months Bob and Ted are asked to resolve a number of issues for both the department and the company as a whole. The boss notices how easily it all comes to Bob. She sees that Ted however, is having an awfully difficult time. There are some tasks Bob can complete in fifteen minutes that Ted can't finish in less than a full workday. Even though they are both certified, Bob has become the go-to guy. Ted, meanwhile, remains a mystery to the boss. She can't understand how he got certified without knowing how to do anything.

Things get tighter at P&C. The boss calls a meeting of the department. There is talk of downsizing and layoffs.

The boss calls Ted into her office later that day. She tells Ted she's sorry, but she has to let him go. He's not cutting the mustard. Ted begs for a reason. He's just as qualified as Bob. They have all the same certifications. What's going on?

The answer is simple. They can go to Bob with problems. They can ask him the tough questions. He gets the hard tasks done. They helped pay for Ted's training and they've seen no return on investment. Ted may have passed the exam, but he can't do the job.

Ted packs up his things, says goodbye to Bob, and heads home to read the want-ads.

Bob is called to the boss's office just after that. The boss tells Bob that, despite the rough times, she wants to offer him a promotion. She recognizes true dedication and competence when she sees it. She doesn't want to lose the most valuable employee in the department. Bob says he'll have to talk it over with his wife, and then leaves the room with an ear-to-ear grin, happy he made his certification count for something.

Conclusion

- ▶ *Classes in more than 75 cities Across the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom*
- ▶ *Training for Microsoft, Java and Linux Certifications*
- ▶ *Small Class Sizes, Experienced Instructors, Cost-Effective*



Certification is clearly beneficial, but is not an end in itself. You've read about the benefits. You've seen how a certification can validate, differentiate and compensate. And now you can see why certification training at HOTT is your best bet for a truly valuable experience and to achieve demonstrable results. *Cert Times* reminds us that in today's market, "Branded certifications that are earned through extensive hands-on training and use are a must-have."

HOTT's certification training tracks emphasize a hands-on, task-oriented and skill-based approach. The most important aspect of any training curriculum is robust course content and quality delivery. HOTT courses are not simply product-based or certification-based. Our courses go well beyond normal certification tracks - meaning that you come out knowing how to perform useful job functions, not just pass tests.

Our certification tracks include Microsoft's MCSE, MCSA, MCDBA, MCITP, MCST, or MCPD exams. We also offer Java™ and Linux certification training. And, we continue to evaluate other IT certifications for possible future training tracks. For a complete list of certification-related offerings from HOTT, visit www.traininghott.com and click on the Certifications tab. Or, call 800-413-0939 and speak with a career counselor today.