

# “Why should I become Certified?”

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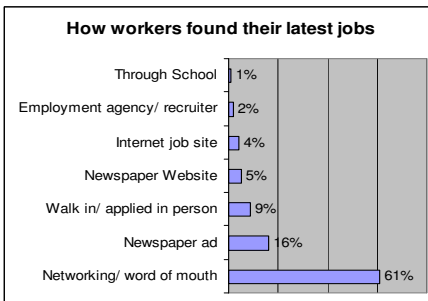
As a quality professional, you worked hard to get your undergraduate degree, or you may have even received your degree from the ‘hard-knocks university’. Some of us may have even gone on to complete a masters degree. So you may have been like myself and asking, “Why should I become certified?”

## Individuals

If I learned anything in developing a career path, I learned to remain flexible in your abilities and always be prepared for the right opportunity. Experience and continuing education can assist in being prepared, while networking may present the ‘right opportunity’.

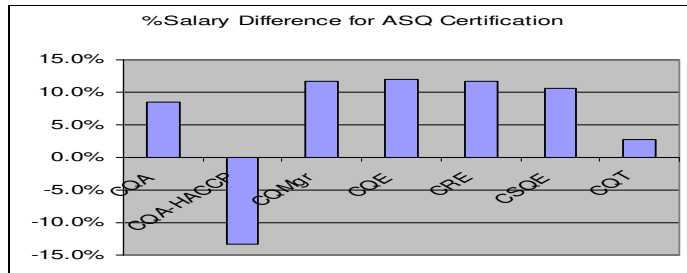
In a USA Today Snapshot<sup>1</sup> the results of a survey described that ‘Networking/Word of Mouth’ was how 61% of those surveyed found their latest job. Networking can be accomplished through affiliations, meetings, conferences, speaking, writing, teaching and continuing education. The ASQ Pittsburgh Section can offer these avenues of opportunity.

Continuing education, in particular, certification demonstrates your lifelong commitment to the quality profession. It acknowledges your proficiency and comprehension of a specified body of knowledge. Using this even make your job easier



individuals who achieve monetary benefits. The derived from the annual published in Quality (57.8%) of the quality

It has also been stated that certification have enjoyed data to support this claim is ASQ Salary Survey Progress. More than half professionals who responded to the survey indicated that they achieved one or more ASQ



certification. The negative result for the CQA-HACCP can be explained as it is the

most recent addition to ASQ certifications.<sup>2</sup>

Lastly, certification makes your resume stand out from that big stack of submittals and may give you a competitive edge. For those of you who do not have a degree, certification may be your way of acknowledging your knowledge and experience.

<sup>1</sup> USA Today, February 3, 2003 issue, Moneyline, conducted by Taylor Nelson Sofres Intersearch of 703 respondents.

<sup>2</sup> Quality Progress, December 2002, “Salary Survey”, page 51.

## **Employers**

As certification acknowledges an individual's proficiency and comprehension in a specified body of knowledge, employing certified individuals can promote more predictable results in obtaining organizational goals. For example, the Quality Manager and Software Quality Engineer Certifications certify an individual's knowledge in project management.

Certification can also be used as a tool to differentiate those people who are knowledgeable from those who claim they are knowledgeable by just using the buzzwords. ASQ certification also requires a certain level of experience before an individual may take the exam.

Finally, employers that value certification demonstrate a level of commitment similar to that individual commitment. Supporting certification programs proves to the employees that you are serious about their professional development. This contributes to employee retention and satisfaction, possibly reducing long-term training costs.

## **Summary**

Certification can be a win-win for both employees and employers. Individuals enjoy both personal and professional benefits that come from being certified and companies can obtain the business rewards from certified employees. For those of you have embarked on that lifelong commitment, the ASQ Pittsburgh Education Committee looks forward to your continued participation. We welcome the opportunity to assist other individuals and employers on that journey!

**Ms. Dudash** has been a Senior ASQ member since 1994 and the ASQ Pittsburgh Education Chair for the last 7 consecutive years. She has also taught the CSQE Refresher course based on the ASQ BOK. Robin has degrees in Computer Science and Applied Mathematics, and an MBA, concentrating in finance, from the University of Pittsburgh. Ms. Dudash holds CQManager, CQA, CQE, CRE, CSQE, QS-LA, and QS-9000 certifications. She may be contacted at [www.iqps.net](http://www.iqps.net).