



# Don't Confuse Certification With a Training Certificate

## Value of ASQ Certification

Since 1991, certification has been rated as one of the three most valued benefits of ASQ membership. A professional certification offers tangible benefits to both the individual and the employer.

### INDIVIDUAL

#### To the individual professional it provides:

- A process that encourages the learning of new skills and a mechanism for demonstrated proficiency upgrades (recertification).
- Demonstrated professional and personal accomplishment.
- Investment in career.

### ORGANIZATION

#### To the organization it provides:

- Demonstration of employee proficiency via validation of skills by a third-party organization.
- Investment in future quality operations.
- Sharing of new knowledge in the workplace.
- Objective indicator of organizational excellence.

## Don't Confuse Certification With Certificates of Training

An authentic professional certification is formal recognition by a respected, recognized, and established professional organization that an individual has demonstrated a proficiency within, and comprehension of, a specified body of knowledge.

An ASQ certification, like most authentic professional certifications, requires that individuals demonstrate these competencies by passing an exam and having a track record of expertise in one of the specified quality disciplines, such as Six Sigma. ASQ does not require you to take the ASQ training—or any other particular courses—as a condition of awarding such certifications.

There has been a great deal of confusion as to the true meaning of certification, especially recently, as individuals and companies strive to achieve and validate competencies in a competitive job market. Numerous training companies, educational institutions, and even individual training consultants are competing to sell training courses that purportedly include “certification.”

In many cases, these are not certifications based on a noncommercial standard body of knowledge as developed by objective third-party entities, but rather paper certificates awarded for participating in specific training.

While there is nothing wrong with providing evidence of a course completion (whether through a document and/or accredited continuing education units), this should not be confused with the rigor and achievement of a professional certification.

## Join ASQ

ASQ members are building the future of quality. Show your commitment to quality and give yourself a strong competitive advantage. Join today at [www.asq.org/membership](http://www.asq.org/membership) and help raise the voice of quality.



The Global Voice of Quality™

## Comparing Certification With Certificates

The following summary comparison is provided for purposes of clarification:

	ASQ Certification	(Training) Certificate
Basis for award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires passing an exam reflecting professional consensus and expertise.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Experience and/or educational prerequisites.</li> <li>– Exam is proctored and expertly developed to evaluate competency in a particular field of knowledge.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Not awarded for completing any specific course.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending a particular training session and/or completing a course or specified courses.</li> </ul>
Awarded by	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An established independent professional association not affiliated with any commercial entity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An educational institution or commercial entity.</li> </ul>
What it recognizes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subject mastery of an objective and consistent body of knowledge based on expert consensus and objective and research-based job analysis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of a course or several courses offered by a particular training provider offered at a particular point in time.</li> </ul>
Source of the body of knowledge/skill sets referenced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional organization members who are recognized subject matter experts and practitioners in the field of the particular certification.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The course content is developed and offered by the particular provider as of the time it is offered to, and attended by, the student.</li> </ul>
Standards for granting the award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technically rigorous exam questions and grading structure to which a systematically developed knowledge content is applied.</li> <li>• Use of professional testing experts and content subject matter experts.</li> <li>• Exam formally administered under scheduled and prescribed conditions to ensure integrity.</li> <li>• Adherence to ISO 17024.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course content as demonstrated by the student's participation and/or the specific provider's knowledge assessment method.</li> </ul>
Professional credentialing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASQ trademarked certifications can be listed after one's name and used on business cards.</li> <li>• Many job postings ask specifically for ASQ certifications.</li> <li>• ASQ certifications are recognized by more than 125 corporations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A, but the course attended/completed can be referenced as an educational qualification on employment applications.</li> <li>• Employers' recognition of the completed training mostly based on familiarity with the training provider.</li> </ul>
Duration of the credential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Like most professional certifications, ASQ certifications must be renewed by demonstrating continued competency to reflect the knowledge updates that take place at least every five years.</li> <li>• A formal recertification process ensures that the certification holder has maintained the appropriate level of competency and is up to date.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally no expiration date is applicable because the certificate verifies the completion of a specific course of instruction on a certain date.</li> </ul>