

TORQUE IT

THE TECHNOLOGY SKILLS FACTORY

Authorised training **the only way to go**

Insist on certification as a measurable outcome of training

CERTIFICATION and the practical application of skills are often seen as mutually exclusive. It is my experience that there are many highly skilled, and experienced, engineers who do not hold any formal IT certification.

We all tend to work with the technology that we currently have, or have inherited, and we tend to do things in the manner in which we are accustomed. My students often comment on the fact that they have never been exposed to the various technologies covered in the curriculum, many superior to those that they currently employ on their networks and that they have not been exposed to new and often better ways to configure their existing technology. I often find that these engineers are configuring their technology correctly but that they do not understand why.

Professional training not only sharpens the skills of one's resources, making them more capable and efficient, but also addresses many other challenges, such as skill retention, that seem to have no direct connection with training.

Authorised training is very different to non-authorised or "grey" training and it is critical that organisations that do not currently choose authorised training, or that have had poor experiences with "grey" training, recognise this. Offering authorised training means that Torque IT is required to present courses using the most current authorised curriculum and authorised facilitators. This process ensures that when you attend training at Torque IT, you are assured of the very best facilities and learning environment. You are assured of top class instructors who are able to facilitate your learning regardless of your current experience. Courses are presented using an outcomes-based methodology, equipping the student with the necessary knowledge and confidence

to write and pass the international exam and gaining the associated certification.

Cisco Systems Inc. has probably the most advanced certification model in the world, providing for the most sought-after career paths imaginable. Their certification pyramid is made up of three layers, Associate, Professional and Expert. The bottom layer is the broadest, and is called the Associate layer. The skills required in order to attain this level of certification are fundamental and many certified skills make up this layer. The Associate Layer has traditionally been fairly limited in terms of the breadth of technology covered and engineers would traditionally need to later specialise in a particular field, for example Telephony or Security, at the Professional level.

Cisco has recently launched three new Associate Level Certifications namely CCNA Voice, CCNA Security, and CCNA Wireless. These new certifications are very exciting as they lower the barrier to entry with regard to technologies that have traditionally been considered to be specialist topics.

The introduction of these three new Associate Level Certifications broadens the base of the certification pyramid and it gives engineers an opportunity to differentiate themselves and to illustrate their skills as they pertain to these pervasive technologies.

The message is clear; technologies such as telephony, security, and wireless have traditionally been considered to be specialised and to only appear higher up on the certification pyramid.

With the proliferation of these technologies in business today, these skills are now considered to be fundamental, and engineers are required to demonstrate their mastery of these technologies from the lowest level of the certification pyramid.



CARL RAATH,
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR AT TORQUE IT

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