

IPC Board of Directors and AGM meeting in October, USA

Dates and place are not finally decided yet, but the next Annual General Meeting will probably be held in Chicago or Los Angeles at the end of October, 2015. There we plan to discuss future development of IPC and present papers. We invite you to send us draft papers for review. [Join us in the next AGM meeting !](#)

Competence vs Qualification Personnel Certification Programs

Technical note by Dr. George J. Anastasopoulos, IPC General Secretary.



Personnel certification was, is and will remain a desirable asset for any modern professional. In order to achieve it, significant effort and expenses are usually invested. Many times candidates have to choose between a "competence-based" and a "qualification-based" certification program. And in most of the cases the latter is "easier" and "cheaper" to achieve. But is it actually worth it? What is the difference between Competence vs Qualification Personnel Certification

Programs?

Competence, in ISO 19011:2011 standard, is defined as *"the ability to apply knowledge and skills to achieve intended results"*. Competence based certification means that the PCB is expected to examine candidate's knowledge, skills, personal attributes and qualifications specific to the program and/or scope of certification. Qualification based certification is based on the applicant's education and qualifications, rather than on the basis of measurable competence. The following short dialog is catalytic to understand, in a few words, the difference between "competence" and "qualification":

- "Do you know how to drive a car?"
- "I got trained and acquired the driving license but I am still not confident to drive a car."
- "That means you have qualification, not competence."

There are college drop-outs who are CEOs of Fortune 500 companies as they have competencies, not qualifications. Therefore, having both qualifications and competencies helps immensely but people can still excel through competencies rather than qualifications.

International Organization for Standardization (ISO), recognizing this fact, decided that the certification of persons, according to International Standard ISO 17024, should be based on the demonstration of competencies, and not the demonstration of qualifications. International standard ISO 17024 standard sets

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IPC new members are welcome!

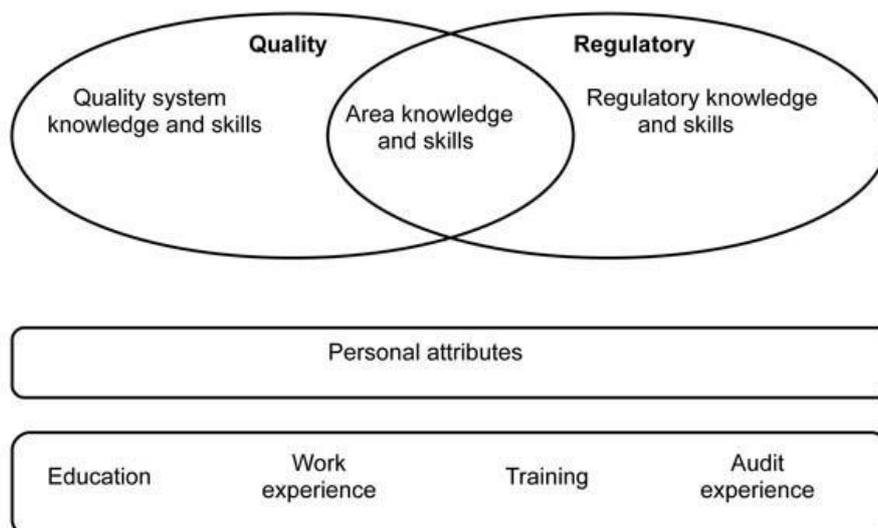
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the requirements and the framework, in a global level, for the operation of Personnel Certification Bodies (PCBs). Through using the ISO 17024 standard, business, industry and other key stakeholders have recognized that this is the optimum way of achieving confidence in the competence of the persons certified by the PCBs. ISO 17024 allows variation in how competence is demonstrated and consequently different PCBs will interpret and apply this in different ways.

Still, there are PCBs that are insisting in offering, non-accredited, qualification based programs on the assumption that a qualification equals competence. While that assumption may be correct in very many cases, and may continue to be acceptable to a range of users, it is less acceptable for those who operate in contexts which require a more rigorous demonstration of competence based on a valid examination. This creates a considerable confusion to the market and to certification candidates. And, of course, as qualification programs don't satisfy all competence requirements they are non-accreditable.

Another key difference among the competence and qualification based programs is the change of emphasis from training to examination. Qualification based programs are emphasizing on the training while competence based programs are emphasizing on the results of training (assessing competencies through one or more methods of examination). And that examination must be valid, reliable and independent. Such certification programs should detail on defining competencies required. And it is those competencies that must be examined.

So is it possible to distinguish a competence from a qualification based program? The answer is simple: Check for the accreditation of the PCB that provides this program. If it is there, then check if achieved against ISO 17024 standard requirements. Then, check if the scope of accreditation includes that program. And, finally, check if the accreditation is provided by an Accreditation Body member of IAF (International Accreditation Forum/www.iaf.nu). All those requirements are also satisfied by the PCBs which are signatories of the MLA of IPC (International Personnel Certification Association/www.ipcaweb.org).



Example of Competence for Quality Management System Auditors (ISO 19011)

The Auditing Profession and the Glass Ceiling

Article written by Peter Holtmann, President and CEO of Exemplar Global, and acting Director of IPC Board of Directors.



Is there a glass ceiling in the world of auditing for women? Or even for the young auditor? The results may surprise you.

From our recent global survey of auditors and their career path we were keen to understand the role of the professional female auditor. What does it take to be a professional woman in this space? Does the reward pay off? Are there challenges in reaching the higher ranks of the senior auditor and receiving the remuneration that comes with it?

Before we dive into the data lets set the scene on the respondents to the survey. We canvassed over 10,000 auditors globally; 1,200

responded.

The respondents were respectively from USA, Australia and New Zealand; then South East Asia; followed by Europe, Africa, Latin America. Our audience is predominantly male (75%) and are aged in the 55+ age bracket.

Lets look a little further at some of the younger brackets now. We have no reliable data for the 18-25 age bracket. There just wasn't sufficient response from this demographic. For what we know currently there are very few young professionals in this space.

In the 26-35 age bracket we see the beginnings of a strong female presence. In fact in Australia we see the number of females increasing at 1.5 times the number to males. In USA the story returns to the norm of 75% male; in Europe its 50%. This would indicate that there is an attraction to the role that is being met by employers in markets outside USA.

At the 36-55 age bracket the representation of women is now closer to parity in all markets. The ability to retain women in the auditing profession seems to be occurring.

Beyond the 55 age bracket the story turns to one of an almost completely male dominated space. This may have something to do with the origins of the profession emerging from manufacturing post war and the roles of the sexes during that time.

I will point out that age distribution by country shows USA with the highest population of auditors older than 55years of age.

So opportunity abounds for the younger female professional, how are they being remunerated?

Women aged 26 – 35 are earning the higher salaries. Between \$60 -120K, women are earning this amount more frequently than men. At \$120k and above the data suggest only men are earning this range.

Between 36- 55 men now begin to earn the higher salaries more frequently then women, however women are now frequently earning above \$120K.

Above 56 years and because of the demographics the higher earning brackets are dominated by men.

If we weight the averages of respondents to age and salary range for the sexes it shows a surprising outcome. Women, on average, are earning more than men in all age ranges. The weighted average suggest that 10% more likely to earn more than men.

So if you are a woman and want the greatest chance of earning a salary equal or better than your male colleague, where should you look? Australia. Women are earning the higher salaries almost 20% more often than men.

Are women having to work harder for their money? What is the qualifier for "hard"? Well, in this instance, hard would mean given the respect for their competence and capability and the opportunity to prove their professional value.

From collection of data from respondents about their own stories in the industry it suggest that women and more often subjected to incredulity of their abilities and their outcomes. Their stories say it comes from the auditors aged 55 and older. It may be suggested that this is a result of the era with which the boomers were raised. It's not a condonation or an indictment, rather a hypothesis that would require more investigation. Something the data is begging to explore.

Having said this, the stories don't suggest it's all bad news and hard graft for a pay check. When asked if women would recommend this as a career to the younger generation the answers were predominantly affirmative. The variety of work, the flexibility of lifestyle for those seeking to start raise or manage a family, the access to entry through training, experience and qualification were all regarded as equal among sexes and attractors to women.

What the survey data and subsequent qualitative analysis suggests is that the barriers to entry are being faced by the younger generations (18-35). Here the responses are little more critical of their peers and state that their expertise is being overlook in place of a blanket statement about "too young to be experienced".

The statement was being made by both audit peers and customers. Perhaps this is a factor in keeping women motivated in the profession in regions such as the Americas and Europe where the data suggests men stay longer in the career.

It's worth sticking it out! Many respondents said that they are seeking career advancement in the next 1-3 years and that the investment to enter and advance is worth it. Certainly the salary data suggests that the output is supporting the input of time, effort, money and focus.

In a sector where technical competence is the main game, the ability to audit and demonstrate outcomes to clients, the glass ceiling may not be as tough to break through as other sectors. Of course our data is capturing a percentage of our community. Greater response to future surveys and willingness to engage in focus groups, feedback sessions and interviews may show us a more detailed picture with greater depth from the stories being collected.

In my personal opinion now, data and statistics aside, from my experiences as an auditor working alongside many professional women I would say there is no reason why their competencies should be treated as anything other than equal. I regard highly the opinion of many female auditors because of their greater experiences and technical competence to mine. I would strongly encourage women to push hard and drive for the recognition and the remuneration that is on par with their male counterparts.

If you would like to contribute your own personal story to the compendium of global auditors, I would be grateful for your contribution. You can respond to me by email at holtmann@exemplarglobal.org.

ISO NEWS – Progress on anti-bribery standard



Bribery is one of the greatest challenges to international development and poverty relief. Its consequences can be catastrophic for the economy, infrastructure, health, education, quality and safety.

During the past 15 years, many countries have made efforts at the national and international level to tackle bribery. Treaties

have been signed and laws improved, and many countries are now prosecuting bribery offences. However, there is still work to be done. At the organizational level, bribery affects tendering and contract implementation, and increases costs and risks. One way organizations can help address this issue is by implementing anti-bribery management controls equivalent to those for quality and safety.

How can organizations fight bribery? More information about the coming standard can be found here

http://www.iso.org/iso/home/news_index/news_archive/news.htm?refid=Ref1967

Dear Members and Interested Parties,

IPC in Touch has resumed its role of being an information letter to our members and other interested parties. So please forward this newsletter to you colleagues and business associates that might be interested. If they want to be on our mailing list, please contact secretary@ipcaweb.org

Best regards,
Marit Paus Finsnes,
Editor, IPC in touch