

# Implementing an IT Certification Program at Mystic Lake

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# Agenda

- Internal Certification Programs
  - What are they?
  - Why do you need them?
  - Listen to your peers
- Getting Started
- Testing and Implementation
- Level I – III Support Certification
- Benefits and Challenges
- The Lifecycle of Internal Certification Programs
- Lessons Learned
- Next Steps
- Questions

# What Are They?

- Internal Certification Programs
  - Programs designed to:
    - Teach concepts, tasks, and skills
    - Test participants on current information and follow up after certification tests
    - Enable employees to apply knowledge to real job situations
    - Fulfill stakeholder expectations
    - Determine if the program is effective

# Why Do You Need Them?

- Response to events, regulations (industry, safety, health/welfare), customer feedback, loss, or to gain competitive advantage
- Efficiently document employee skills and establish uniform performance standards
- Close gaps between orientation training and daily job performance
- Prevent employee disputes
- Legally defensible, documented programs for probationary period that tie to performance reviews

# Why Do You Need Them?

- Critical component of developing and maintaining current and future business needs
- Organizational benefits of well-trained employees
- Employee advancement:
  - Design internal/organizational career paths to attract and retain staff
- Off-the-shelf certification programs may not fit your organization's essential skill sets

# Why Do You Need Them?

- Raise core competency levels
- Create skills consistency among employees
- Integrate products, processes, and supply chain
- Comply with local and industry regulations
- Create multi-disciplined jobs
- Show business value/credentials and IT professionalism to stakeholders, target audiences, and key critics

# Listen to Your Peers

- Past HDI program speaker:
  - Blue Cross/Blue Shield call center program
- Tuck ideas away to bring out when timing is better
- Other IT managers
- Key business customers
- Do it before you are asked
- Operational common jobs
  - Service Desk
  - Operations Techs
  - Applications Analysts
  - Network Admins

# Getting Started

- Establish a clear program driver
  - Driver shapes design and requirements to satisfy the credentials
- Design drives cost to implement and maintain
- Drive criteria against what the program will be evaluated for and future revisions
- Solve problem or worth solving?
- Involve stakeholders, target audience, key critics in design

# Testing and Implementation

- Certification program levels:
  - Base levels on length of time in the job
  - Probationary period=Level I
  - Greater skills expected per level
- Staged implementation, communication, and training
- Test/review with someone in the job, at various stages in the job, and with a key critic
- Partnering is key: Tech Writer, Trainers, Supervisors
- Include time for managing, marketing, and updating the program

# Level I – Tell Me

- Topics:
  - Call handling
  - Business skills (ExecuCare)
  - Service desk software and job tasks
  - Incident and call monitoring checklists
  - Metrics - incident tickets, call surveys, ACD, (Virtual Observer software & event/system monitoring soon)
  - High priority and emergency issues (apps priority and escalation lists, procedures, and desk books)

# Level I – Tell Me

- Topics:
  - Key control
  - Gaming system monitoring and escalation
  - SSL VPN
  - Laptop and digital camera checkout
  - Visitor escort policy
  - Other Level I applications and escalation
- Training
  - 9 CBTs, 8 ILT courses (5 PC Basics/Level I Microsoft courses, 3 HR classes; can test out of Level I MS courses)
- Testing: Q&A and review areas
- Tie-in: HR/job probationary period; pass/fail

# Level II – Show Me

- Topics:
  - IT forms processing (logging, scanning, database, routing, notification and filing)
  - Adds, moves, changes, and deletes (7 apps)
  - Critical shift-specific tasks
  - Passwords
- Training: Level 2 Microsoft Office courses
- Testing: Number right/wrong; re-train as needed
- Tie-in: Next level of task readiness and annual review

# Level III – Show Me

- Topics:
  - New user set ups
  - Changes, terms, and general forms processing
  - PC/hardware deployment (hot swaps)
  - Network ports, basic & VOIP phone support, wireless
  - Network tape swaps (daily, weekend, month-end)
  - Kiosk/promotion and event setup, testing, teardown, troubleshooting, and coordination
  - Printers (Club and F&B, Gaming, LaserJets), scanners, time clocks

# Level III – Show Me

- Training: Business Writing and E-Learning
- Testing: Number right/wrong; re-train as needed
- Tie-in: Next level of task readiness, job readiness, and annual review

# Lifecycle

- Plan time for updates (at least monthly)
- Training time for each level
- SharePoint
- Upgrades/new projects

# Lessons Learned

- It takes *time* to manage, update, implement each phase!
- Shows the need for another full-time IT trainer
- Bring back key department shadow audits
- Compliance/Internal Audit can be your business partner/champion
- External training vs. internal training/certification
  - What/when/where each is appropriate
- Should have done this years ago!

# Next Steps

- Level IV
  - ISO/ITIL
  - Change, problem, and asset management
  - Security policy and standards
  - IT infrastructure, application, and interface overview
  - Shadow audits
  - Virtual Observer software
  - Community areas (14 and growing)
  - Shared services
  - Event and system monitoring
  - Dashboards
  - Other IT groups

# Take-Aways

- Benefits
  - Everyone satisfied; expectation management
  - Promoted bonding, leadership within group
- Challenges
  - Time: Dinner/early evening training worked best
  - Staff turnover
  - Won't fix all group/department issues

# Questions

Thank you for attending  
today's HDI presentation!

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