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Special Thanks to the Industry Partners Who Made the 2014 Q2 Edition Possible:



Message from the Chair

Coming Together at the National Credentialing Summit

By Linda Lysoby, MS, MCHES, CAE



It was my honor and privilege to accompany ICE Executive Director Denise Roosendaal as invited attendees to the American Legion Washington Conference: National Credentialing Summit held April 28-29, 2015, in Washington, D.C. The objective of the summit was to bring together key stakeholders to share best practices for enhancing the credentialing opportunities and civilian career prospects for service members and veterans. Approximately 200 people attended as the speakers and panelists explored ways to make connections between military experience and credentials required for civilian careers.

There were presentations on some very innovative programs to help service men and women get additional training, experience and credentialing necessary for employment as they re-enter the workforce following the completion of military service. One example is instituting work release programs in the final few months before discharge from the armed services, which allows an active-duty service person to intern in a commercial industry to gain valuable job experience. Another is a partnership with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters to help military personnel obtain their commercial driver's license. Another program encourages credentialing for specific positions within the active military that would carry over into civilian life.

The summit also included a session on assessing the quality and value of credentials. Vijay Krishna discussed the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accreditation process and Karen Plaus, from the National Board of Certification and Recertification of Anesthetists, discussed NCCA accreditation and the concept of continuing competency. This conference offered a wonderful opportunity for credentialing organizations and branches of the armed services and veterans groups to learn from each other. It became evident that more work still needs to be done to understand the differences in certification, credentialing, certificate programs, on-the-job skill training and the importance of accreditation and standards, but encouraging progress has been made in this effort since a similar conference, which took place approximately two years ago. One significant sign of progress is that ICE has been asked to comment on military/veterans related legislation for certification reimbursement. This outreach is proof that ICE has a valid perspective and offers valuable resources in this on-going dialogue.

My message in response to this conference is twofold. First, please know that the representatives of ICE are ensuring that the standards of quality credentialing are included in this particular forum and other avenues as appropriate. For example, as a follow-up to the summit, ICE has contacted the office of Senator Tim Kaine of Virginia in his work to ensure quality of credentials. Second, I would like to encourage member organizations of ICE to reach out to the active military and veterans groups to ensure that your credential is available to those in or about to leave military service. This is both a

service to the military personnel and it will also add to the volume of your potential pool of certification candidates.

For more information regarding military credentialing opportunities, visit the ICE Resource page.

<http://www.credentialingexcellence.org/p/cm/ld/fid=57>

Revised NCCA Standards – 2016 Implementation **From ICE Headquarters**

On Nov. 26, 2014, the latest revision of the Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs was adopted by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) following approval by majority vote of organizations with NCCA-accredited programs. In addition to determining that the standards should retain their currency and relevance, another purpose for the revision was to add clarity and maintain relevance with the evolution of new exam-related technologies and methodologies. As a result, several standards were added or expanded and require additional evidence to demonstrate compliance.

The last application deadline for 2015 is Aug. 31. All applications submitted for this deadline will be evaluated to the current standards. Any application submitted after Aug. 31 will be required to follow the new NCCA Standards and will be reviewed at the Jan. 31, 2016, deadline.

The purpose of the NCCA standards is to delineate the attributes of a quality certification program. The major themes of the standards are resources, autonomy, conflicts of interest, representativeness, transparency, accountability, confidentiality, security, psychometric soundness, quality assurance and maintenance of currency with practice. These themes have not changed in the revision process, and the revised standards for 2016 clarify and more clearly articulate the requirements that define a quality program.

The standards have retained their format, with a main standard, several essential elements that articulate the requirements to meet that standard, and commentary to provide guidance regarding the interpretation of the standard and the evidence needed to demonstrate compliance. The revision added details to clearly identify specific policies and procedures and the rationale for certification requirements. Several important updates were made to address increasing complexities in testing and new technologies. Additionally, the revision separated the standards for handling confidentiality, conflict of interest and quality control, requiring identification of specific personnel involved in the certification program and their roles and qualifications, whether as staff, consultant, board member or subject matter expert.

ICE has developed a number of resources to assist currently accredited programs as well as new applicants with the transition to the new standards.

- The standards, along with the commentary, are published on the ICE website and are available for free download to members (there is a small charge to nonmembers).
- A high-level cross-walk document to highlight the major changes from the current NCCA Standards.
- A free, on-demand training that outlines the application process, reviews each new standard, and provides guidance on the intent of the standard and its essential elements and the types of evidence needed to demonstrate compliance.

These resources can be found on the ICE website on the NCCA standards pages:
<http://www.credentialingexcellence.org/p/cm/ld/fid=66>.

The current online application will be updated immediately following the Aug. 31, 2015, application deadline. Any applications submitted after this deadline must follow the new standards. Organizations with currently accredited programs should review their current evidence for compliance to the new standards, and particularly major exam development milestones such as job analyses and standard setting that may take additional effort to demonstrate ongoing compliance. The current applications online will remain active until a final decision is rendered, and they will be retained and archived with each organizational record. Any applications that have been started but not submitted by Aug. 31, 2015, will not be lost, as they will be transitioned automatically into the new application for 2016 submission by mapping each current standard to its new counterpart.

The 4th Circuit Reaffirms Judicial Deference to Accreditation Agencies

By Jefferson C. Glassie, Esq., FASAE; and Dorothy Deng, Esq., Whiteford, Taylor & Preston LLP

On March 24, 2015, the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit issued a published opinion in *Professional Massage Training Center, Incorporated (PMTTC) v. Accreditation Alliance of Career Schools and Colleges, d/b/a Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC)*, in which PMTC filed a civil lawsuit against ACCSC for alleged violation of due process after ACCSC denied PMTC's application to renew its accreditation. As further explained below, the Fourth Circuit's ruling is significant for both accreditation and certification organizations, as it affirms judicial deference to decision making by credentialing bodies. The opinion is available at <http://www.ca4.uscourts.gov/Opinions/Published/141086.P.pdf>.

ACCSC is a nonprofit corporation recognized by the Department of Education as a national accrediting agency. PMTC is a school for massage therapists that sought and received initial accreditation from ACCSC in 2000, and then received renewed accreditation in 2005. When PMTC sought to renew its accreditation again in 2010, PMTC's renewal application was ultimately denied by ACCSC, and the lawsuit followed.

PMTTC's primary claim against ACCSC is that PMTC was entitled to due process under 34 C.F.R. §602.25 and that ACCSC denied that due process. The District Court judge went through a four-day bench trial, received depositions and live testimony during the trial, and included detailed information regarding his disagreement with the ACCSC's accreditation standards in the District Court's memorandum opinion dated April 17, 2014. Moreover, the District Court awarded PMTC more than \$400,000 in damages and reinstated PMTC's accreditation. ACCSC filed an appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. Given that the District Court ruling could establish problematic precedent against other accrediting organizations, 22 accreditation organizations submitted a joint amicus brief in support of ACCSC on appeal.

In its opinion, the Fourth Circuit ruled that the District Court erred in not providing deference to the decision of the accreditation agency. In analyzing PMTC's due process claim, the Fourth Circuit affirmed the standard of review for common law due process claims against private accreditation associations. That is, the court is authorized to consider only whether the decision of an accrediting agency is arbitrary and unreasonable or an abuse of discretion, and whether the decision is based on substantial evidence.

The Fourth Circuit held that ACCSC did not act in an arbitrary and capricious manner for a number of reasons. First, the Fourth Circuit noted that ACCSC provided PMTC with significant procedural opportunities over the course of two years prior to the revocation of accreditation, including issuance of a probation order and an appeal procedure before an independent appeals panel. Second, the court noted that ACCSC measured PMTC's performance against substantive standards embodied in the Standards of Accreditation. In addition, the Fourth Circuit ruled that ACCSC's denial of PMTC's accreditation was supported by substantial evidence, including the documented discrepancies concerning PMTC's operations and constant turnover and questionable qualifications of PMTC's management staff. Further, the Fourth Circuit pointed out that the District Court conducted an impermissible de novo review by holding a multiday bench trial as the primary investigator and fact-finder, then overturning the judgment and expertise of ACCSC that rested on a supportable basis.

In regards to PMTC's claim that there was bias against PMTC on the part of ACCSC's staff, the Fourth Circuit cited a Supreme Court case, *Withrow v. Larkin*, 421 U.S. 35 (1975), which reasoned that the probability of actual bias would be high if the adjudicator has a pecuniary interest in the outcome, and if the adjudicator has been the target of prior personal abuse or criticism from the party before him. Noting that neither situation was present, the Fourth Circuit rejected PMTC's claim that frustration and dislike of PMTC's owners by the ACCSC staff influenced the record on which the commission relief when casting its vote for revocation of PMTC's accreditation.

In conclusion, the Fourth Circuit determined that ACCSC did not act arbitrarily or capriciously and grounded its revocation on substantial evidence. As such, ACCSC did not deprive PMTC of its right to due process of law. The appeal was affirmed in part concerning the District Court's dismissal of PMTC's claims based on tort and contract theories; reversed in part concerning the due process claims; and remanded to the District Court with directions to enter judgment in ACCSC's favor on PMTC's due process claim and to dismiss the case.

This is an important decision clearly confirming prior judicial precedent that accrediting organizations do have legal obligations to confer accreditation in a fair and reasonable manner consistent with common law due process principles. The decision also confirms that courts will defer to accreditation bodies unless their conduct is arbitrary, capricious or not based on adequate evidence. This decision can be seen as also supporting judicial deference to proper decisions of certification organizations.



Jefferson C. Glassie, Esq., FASAE, is a partner and co-chair of the Nonprofit Organizations and Associations practice at Whiteford, Taylor & Preston LLC. Glassie represents associations and nonprofit organizations on a wide range of legal matters, including antitrust, tax, certification, accreditation, contracts, employment, merger, intellectual property and corporate issues. He has concentrated on the field of nonprofit membership organizations for over 30 years.



Dorothy Deng, Esq., is an associate at the law firm Whiteford, Taylor & Preston LLP. She is part of the firm's nonprofit section and has substantial experience in assisting nonprofit organizations and associations on a variety of legal issues, including governance, intellectual property, social media, general contract and dispute resolutions.

How Do You Successfully Transition into Global Markets?
By Peter Holtmann, President and CEO, Exemplar Global

Going global is not without its risks, but there are ways to make the jump easier. Like many of us, the desire to try our success on foreign soil can be a siren song. For others, the call leads to the rocks of despair, with the lure of easy market entry dashed against the intricate local customs and business, legal and financial culture.

But risk, like all things, is in the eye of the beholder. The risk of entering new markets can be prevented, controlled or eliminated with some careful planning and access to the experience of others who have boldly gone before.

Within ICE, there are very good examples of the bold and the brave making successful transitions into foreign markets. ICE intends to tap into these experiences, good and bad, and create educational and reference materials that other members can access.

In 2015, ICE enlisted a group of members to form the International Working Group, an international mix of members who have experience in the global market. This group is commissioned with discovering these international learnings and references for the ICE membership to utilize.

In order to better understand these global experiences, the working group is commissioning a survey of members. The questions applied in the survey are focused on two groups of members: those who have globalized and those who are seeking to.

In the survey, we are trying to elicit the information that best facilitates a successful entry into new and foreign markets. This could take the form of legal sources; trade facilitation groups; demographic or trade data; bank, investment and insurance; accreditation and certification; and collegiate bodies.

We are also trying to better understand what steps toward globalization were the most effective or efficient for member bodies, which could provide necessary information for others on how to proceed or, more importantly, when to proceed.

In terms of mitigating risk, the working group is eager to learn from those global members, understanding if they launched their full suite of business into new countries or if they performed a gradual and incremental release of product or service. If the latter was the case, what drove this decision?

We understand that with every country there are potentially new conditions that would alter how a member body engages. What we are looking for are the key takeaways: How did you navigate around language barriers and translate for local use; did you formally register a new entity or could you trade from your USA incorporation?; did you trade in multiple currencies or did you remain with the US dollar? These sorts of answers would be useful.

In my own experiences going global, I try to understand as much of the local markets as I can — through partners or collegiate organization conversations — before making the next steps to engage. I have had

some experiences in which the momentum of market entry slowed to a creep because the market found the organization “too foreign” or the type of service offered was unknown or “exotic.”

Throughout my experience, I learned not to be too innovative in new markets. Often the surest route is to go with what you know best and build familiarity. The analogy I use is selling left-hand-drive cars into a right-hand-drive market. It’s still a car, people know what it is, but they won’t purchase it because it’s not fit-for-purpose. You need to make new markets “educated” or risk-ready before leading with your ace product.

If you are interested in taking your certification program global or if you currently have a global certification program, we kindly ask for your participation in the survey by Monday, July 20. The data will ensure we have a more complete picture of the barriers and successes involved in globalization, and we will work from the collected works to arrive at our goal of a collection of references and guides to going global.

[Take Survey](#)

We look forward to your participation.



***Peter Holtmann** is passionate about being a global leader of organizations that want to drive innovation and inspire communities with passion for a cause, vision and mission. He uses risk management processes to manage programs on a global scale from the highest levels of governance to the daily pursuits of individuals. Holtmann has over 15 years of experience in the service and manufacture industries, 10 years in the certification industry and five years as the chief executive of a global credentialing organization.*

Don't Be Caught Off Guard with Inadequate Insurance Coverage
By Stacey L. Pine, Esq., Associate Whiteford, Taylor & Preston LLP

The work of certification organizations provides invaluable benefit to those they serve, as well as the general public, by helping to set performance and competency standards for those in specific professions and motivating certificants to increase their personal knowledge in a particular practice area. Unfortunately, the activity of certification organizations also put them at considerable risk for legal claims due to the organization's self-regulation of its constituents. This is especially true in the areas of antitrust and due process. Additionally, today's business environment has become extremely litigious, and certification organizations are susceptible to defending against legal claims initiated by allegedly aggrieved employees or third parties that were harmed by one of the certification organization's certificants. Because there is no way for certification organizations to prevent an employee or third party from suing the organization, these organizations must ensure they have the proper insurance to protect against liability for a wide variety of claims.

While the specific policy requirements vary from organization to organization, this article discusses the types of policies every certification organization should have as well as a few of the key provisions that organizations should ensure are included in their policies. To determine whether these provisions are included, organizations must look beyond the declarations pages of their policies and look at the actual policy provisions and any endorsements.

General Liability Insurance Policy

General liability insurance should protect a certification organization against claims for bodily injury, property damage and various other types of personal injuries, such as defamation. While general liability policies do not provide coverage for bodily injury or property damage from the provision of professional services, these policies do protect the organization from claims such as those in which a person walks into a lobby or meeting room and slips on a wet floor.

Unlike automobile insurance, which provides coverage up to a certain dollar amount per accident, general liability insurance policies are usually written so that the policy limit is based on the aggregation of claims. For example, the organization's policy may state that the organization has \$1,000,000 in coverage for all aggregate claims. This means that regardless of whether the organization has a single claim or 10 separate claims in a particular year, the insurance company will only pay up to \$1,000,000. Once the insurance company has paid this amount, the certification organization will be responsible for any amount in excess of \$1,000,000. It is not uncommon for other policies, such as the directors and officers (D&O) and errors and omissions (E&O) policies to also contain aggregate limits. It is important for certification organizations to know their policy limits and whether those limits are per incident or aggregate.

Employee Dishonesty Provision

A key general liability policy provision is coverage for employee dishonesty, which protects the organization from loss incurred due to embezzlement by employees. While insurance policies may

include such a provision, the coverage amount may be minimal. For instance, a recent insurance policy review revealed a \$10,000 limit for loss incurred as a result of employee dishonesty. Employees who embezzle money from an organization are usually quite good at hiding their activity and often embezzle tens of thousands of dollars before being caught. The amount of coverage for this type of activity will vary from organization to organization and will depend on the number of employees who work for the certification organization as well as the number of employees who have access to organizational credit cards or funds. We encourage our clients to carry more than \$10,000 in coverage, and recommend that certification organizations discuss this issue with their insurance brokers.

Directors and Officers Policy

D&O policies do not provide coverage for bodily injury or property damage, but do serve to protect the organization, as well as officers and directors, against claims for alleged wrongful acts, omissions, misstatement or misleading statements, or breach of duty by a director or officer while carrying out his or her duties for the certification organization. Employment-related claims such as discrimination, harassment, wrongful termination, retaliatory actions or mismanagement of the organization's assets are the most common claims asserted under a D&O policy. While D&O policies generally cover these types of claims, we have seen D&O policies that exclude employment claims, and certification organizations should confirm that the organization's D&O policy includes employment claims, paying careful attention to the definitions section of the policy to determine exactly what types of claims are covered. Also, be sure to carefully review endorsements, as an endorsement may specify that employment claims are not covered.

It is also important to determine who is covered by a D&O policy. Typically, D&O policies cover officers and directors, as well as the executive director, key staff, other volunteers and the organization itself. Some policies, however, exclude staff or the organization itself and only cover the volunteer officers and directors. Certification organizations should ensure that the organization is covered for acts or omissions by all of the aforementioned parties.

Antitrust Provision

Developing and implementing a professional certification program requires competitors to collaborate, which may result in the exclusion of certain professionals from the marketplace if they are denied certification or their certification is revoked. This makes certification organizations susceptible to allegations of violating antitrust laws, and defending against an antitrust law suit can be quite costly. For this reason, it is not uncommon for insurance policies to exclude or limit antitrust coverage. A D&O policy, therefore, should include coverage for defending against such claims. Pay special attention, however, to the policy limits for the defense of these claims, as the limits may be inadequate.

Errors and Omissions or Professional Liability Policy

Most general liability policies exclude coverage for bodily injury or property damage that arises from the provision of professional services. E&O insurance policies, therefore, serve to protect the organization against the organization's acts, errors, omissions or negligence relative to the services the organization

provides to applicants or certificants. E&O insurance is usually narrowly tailored to a particular profession or a particular service. A common insurance exclusion, however, is one for standard setting and certification activities, because such activities are generally viewed as activities that are at high risk for claims. This is a must-have provision for all certification organizations, and the policy must protect against allegations of due process violations and allegations, such as tortious interference with business.

Certification organizations should also ensure that the E&O policy adequately defines the services the organization provides. Again, due to the unique work of certification organizations, insurance companies aren't always certain how to categorize the work of the organization and may incorrectly categorize the services provided. In our practice, we have seen insurance companies use the general categories of consulting or education. Usually, this is not an accurate description of the certification organization's work. An inaccurate categorization of the services puts the certification organization at risk for having a claim denied because it does not fall within the scope of coverage.

Cybersecurity and Data Privacy Breach Provision

A cyber-attack puts an organization at risk for law suits and may also result in the organization incurring considerable expense relative to notifying those whose personal identifiable information was breached and defending against breach of privacy claims. Unfortunately, many insurance policies do not protect against breach of privacy claims resulting from a cyber-attack. If the certification organization maintains personally identifiable information, generally defined as a person's name in combination with their Social Security number, driver's license number, bank, credit or debit card number, or taxpayer identification number, then the organization's policy should cover expenses incurred in notifying individuals about the loss of personally identifiable information and defense costs associated with defending against suits for the loss of personally identifiable information.

Finally, it is important to determine whether your policy protects the organization for loss or damage to the organization's technology infrastructure resulting from a cyber-attack. Many insurance policies do not provide this type of coverage, but, again, it is well worth the time to discuss this issue with the organization's insurance broker to determine whether this coverage is included or available.

Most, if not all, certification organizations have general liability insurance, directors and officers insurance, and often also have errors and omissions insurance. The insurance coverage provided to these organizations, however, doesn't always fully cover the unique work of certification organizations or doesn't provide adequate policy amounts. For these reasons, an insurance review is critical to the organization's financial security.

For more information on this topic or for a review of your insurance policies, please contact Stacey Pine at spine@wtplaw.com or 202-689-3157.



Stacey Pine, Esq., is an associate at Whiteford, Taylor & Preston LLC. Pine counsels for-profit and nonprofit organizations on a variety of business, tax, regulatory and legislative matters. Prior to becoming an attorney, she was a lobbyist and spent 13 years representing the legislative interests of for-profit and nonprofit entities before Congress and the administration as well state and local governments. Pine earned her undergraduate degree from Methodist University, and also holds a an MBA from Fayetteville State University. She graduated with honors from American University's Washington College of Law, is admitted in Virginia, and is pending admission in the District of Columbia.

***Meet the Authors of Score Reporting: Where Policy Meets Psychometrics
Featuring Susan Davis-Becker, PhD, and Jeff Kelley, PhD***

This year, ICE published a white paper offering guidance on designing and evaluating score reports by Susan Davis-Becker, PhD, Director of Professional Credentialing at Alpine Testing Solutions and Jeff Kelley, PhD, Vice President of Psychometrics at the National Center for Competency Testing. This recently released publication joins six other white papers that are complimentary to ICE members. We spoke to both authors about their experience in the credentialing industry as well as the specific topics they address in the white paper.

ICE: How did you get into the credentialing industry?

Susan Davis-Becker: During my career as a psychometrician, I have been fortunate to work in a variety of testing industries, including higher education assessment, K-12 assessment and credentialing. Although I enjoyed working in each of these areas, I found credentialing the most engaging personally. Every profession is different as to how candidates become credentialed, and I enjoy helping programs design solutions that meet the needs of their industry. I have also found myself able to learn a bit about the content as I become engaged with a program, which is really fun.

ICE: How would you define your role at your organization?

Davis-Becker: I wear two hats in my current role at Alpine. First, I am a senior psychometrician and have the opportunity to work directly with a number of programs, providing them with psychometric consultation. Second, I serve as the director of professional credentialing and help grow our business in the credentialing space as well as oversee all the work that our team is doing for a large number of credentialing clients.

ICE: Why did you volunteer to author a white paper specifically on the topic of score reporting?

Davis-Becker: At Alpine, we really value the importance of service to our professional field. We all need to ensure we are all working to continually improve the science and practice of testing. Score reporting is a very important topic, and I have encountered a number of programs that were looking for practical advice on how to develop their score report or evaluate their current approach. Our goal with this paper was to keep it at an applied level with practical advice and examples that readers could draw from.

ICE: As a psychometrician, what is the most frequently encountered mistake on score reports?

Jeff Kelley and Davis-Becker: Without a doubt, we would say the most common mistake would be providing unreliable or misleading feedback to failing candidates. It is common practice that programs get to the end of their test development process, start working on their score report design, and feel pressure to report some type of feedback to failing candidates from numerous sources (e.g., candidates, trainers, employers, professional standards). Given the stage in the development process, they are often left with very few options in this area and may report some type of performance evaluation that is based on very little information (e.g., too few items) or is representative of only the form of the test

they experienced (if the difficulty of the test forms is not balanced as the subscore level). We have all had experience composing the disclaimers that can be found alongside this information acknowledging the limitations of the feedback, but realistically we know that candidates are using this information to inform their preparatory practices.

ICE: Your white paper is filled with numerous tips for improving score reports. If you could leave *ICE Digest* readers with one takeaway that would have the biggest impact on their organization, what would it be?

Kelley and Davis-Becker: Start planning early! We encourage programs to engage in a thorough test design process, which will include planning each step of the test development process, including score reporting. When decisions are made early in the process regarding goals for providing feedback, decisions can be made regarding test structure, test form assembly/pre-equating, scoring and standard setting strategies that will allow for meaningful and reliable information to be reported.



Susan Davis-Becker, PhD, is a Senior Psychometrician and the Director of Professional Credentialing at Alpine Testing Solutions. Susan is responsible for providing psychometric advice and consultation to a variety of testing programs and her areas of expertise include test design, standard setting and validity research. Susan received her doctoral degree in assessment and measurement from James Madison University and has published numerous journal articles, book chapters and presented research at regional, national, and international conferences.



Jeff Kelley completed a PhD in educational measurement at the University of Kansas in 2004. He joined the National Center for Competency Testing in 2012 as Vice President of Psychometrics, charged with development, validation and security for seven allied health certification tests. Before joining NCCT, Doctor Kelley worked as Director of Psychometrics for six years at Ascend Learning dealing with nursing education and allied health certification testing. Prior to that, he worked for nine years in licensure and certification testing as a research associate and as a program director with Applied Measurement Professionals. His research interests include item writing, test security, and test score reliability.

5 Critical Mistakes that Blunt Leadership Effectiveness

By David Waits

Since 2000, less than one-third of workers in the United States are engaged in their work, according to numerous national surveys that measured workers' involvement, enthusiasm and commitment to their work. If you simply reflect on your most recent encounter as a consumer at your local retail store, restaurant or government agency, your own experience will likely validate the reality of this startling statistic.

Leaders account for as much as 70 percent of the variance of employee engagement. A Gallup study of 7,272 adults in the United States revealed that one in two had left their job at some point in their career to improve overall quality of life by getting away from a manager. People don't leave jobs; people leave people!

Effective leadership requires not only doing the right things, but also understanding what not to do. Here are five mistakes to aggressively avoid.

Critical Mistake #1: Failing to schedule time for learning conversations

You do what you schedule. When you listen, you learn. Leaders should only be doing what no one else can do, and no one can listen to your team members like you.

Schedule regular opportunities to ask clear, concise and clarifying questions to your team members, and then discipline yourself to actively listen. This will provide you with vital intelligence to implement two of the main functions of a leader:

1. Remove obstacles.
2. Provide resources.

How can you know the true obstacles that are impeding success and the actual resources needed by your team if you aren't consistently scheduling highly interactive learning conversations?

Critical Mistake #2: Failing to consistently affirm

As a leader, are you encouraging, are you an encourager or are you neither?

One of the most powerful -- if not the most powerful -- tool to embolden, motivate and energize your team is the incredible power of affirmation. Affirming is simply catching people doing things right and telling them about it. Don't just think it; express it.

The effective leader is always on the lookout for opportunities to answer the team members' soul-felt questions: "Do I matter?" and "Does what I do around here matter?" Answer those questions by being specific about your team members' positive actions. Always tie the positive action you observed to the beneficial business outcome.

Being encouraging is something that you do, but being an encourager is something you are. If you are an encourager, then affirmations will emanate from your lips regularly.

Critical Mistake #3: Misdiagnosing

When you visit the doctor, the doctor always asks a succession of questions, and many times follows up with a battery of tests before ever prescribing any action design to remedy an illness. Why? For the safety of the patient and for the critical business benefit of avoiding a malpractice lawsuit. The exception to this would be in an emergency situation where time is of the essence.

If you are always making decisions in business as if you live in the emergency room, then the health of your business is going to be in a constant state of trauma. A proper diagnosis of the “ailments” of your business is required to make the decisions necessary to have a healthy and prosperous business. This necessitates gathering appropriate and accurate information, much of which can be ascertained by avoiding Mistake #1, before randomly moving ahead with activity, which might or might not produce the desired results.

Many business owners or executives seek to bring in outside help to “treat” a problem that has been improperly, inadequately or incorrectly diagnosed. Before formally seeking assistance, leaders should answer the question: “What do you want to accomplish?” When the leader answers this simple question, then he or she can decide how to quickly and effectively achieve the desired outcome.

Critical Mistake #4: Wearing the wrong hat

Vision caster. Trainer. Monitor. Cheerleader. Fixer. Disciplinarian. Which hat do you wear? All of them and more!

This dilemma is further augmented by the maturity, or immaturity as the case may be, of your team. The challenge is in knowing what hat you are to wear and at what time.

If your team is newly formed, it’s important to be participatory in your leadership style regardless of the hat you are wearing. As your team develops and establishes appropriate parameters, your style can shift to being a more hands-on leader. You can then transition to a benevolent dictator as you ensure the appropriate focused action of your team. When your team matures and is highly functioning, your style can finally shift to employ free-rein leadership as you equip the team to be self-sustaining.

Your style shifts. Your hats change. Your leadership flexibility is regularly challenged.

Change hats as often as the fluidity of circumstances dictates and be cognizant of the leadership style required based on the developmental maturity of your team.

Critical Mistake #5: Not taking responsibility

There are things you cannot control. Stop wasting time and precious emotional energy on these things. There are things you can influence. Stop being passive on the things you can influence. There are things you can control. Stop making excuses for the things you can control. Get busy and act! Take

responsibility for your own actions, attitudes and words. Leverage your influence as a leader. Lead by example.

Avoid these five common critical mistakes and leverage your powerful positive influence as a leader. As you do, instead of people withdrawing, disengaging or leaving, they will passionately follow you. You are the most important element of the success of your team.



David Waits, founder of Waits Consulting Group Inc., is a consultant, speaker and author. As a proven expert in developing powerful initiatives that revolutionize culture, Waits helps his clients create a thriving organizational environment that facilitates rapid growth, innovative development and ongoing profitability. He has worked with clients in all 50 states, including Quest Diagnostics, General Dynamics, Major League Baseball, Walmart, Walt Disney World and numerous other organizations. For more information, visit www.DavidWaits.com.

CEO Profile: Cynthia Miller Murphy, MSN, RN, CAE, Executive Director, Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation (ONCC)
Interview by Susan Davis-Becker



If you ask Cyndi Miller Murphy for the first piece of advice that she wants to share, she'll reply: "You can never communicate too much." Miller Murphy has learned this lesson during her long tenure as the leader of the Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation (ONCC). When you have questions, she suggests looking to a great network of resources in our professional community to find answers. To get started in this field, attending conferences like ICE Exchange is a great way to build your network and meet individuals you can reach out to when you need help.

Miller Murphy sees being a CEO as a three-part role: visionary, communicator and facilitator. She helps the ONCC board of directors to envision the future by providing them with meaningful information from which they can make solid decisions. She is responsible for communicating the board's direction and vision to the staff to inspire their passion and put the board's vision into action. Ultimately, she facilitates this implementation through mentoring, coaching and providing resources to her team.

Miller Murphy is responsible for a substantial amount of activity in her role as CEO. ONCC currently has eight certification programs and two certificate programs. Her team has grown over the years. Although it originally comprised just Miller Murphy and one other staff member, they now have a team of 15. Under her supervision, directors and managers oversee operations, program management and marketing/PR communications. Together, they have more than 60 years of experience in credentialing.

ICE Digest recently spoke with Cyndi Miller Murphy to learn more about how she has achieved success as the CEO of ONCC.

What is your professional background? How did you get into credentialing?

Like most in this field, my path was not a direct one into credentialing. My background is in nursing. I specialized in oncology nursing, and while I was working as a clinical nurse specialist, I also volunteered for our professional group. That experience led to me transitioning to the role of education director for the Oncology Nursing Society. During that experience, the certification group was being formed by the membership society, and I applied for the job as director of certification [of ONCC]. I found that I loved credentialing! I have worked in leadership for this credentialing organization for 26 years.

What challenges are you currently facing (or anticipate facing) with regards to your certification programs?

Our organization is tackling several major challenges at this time. First, we are working on data integration. We have numerous data sources available, and our goal is to integrate all of this information to inform our decision-making process. Second, we have recently made substantial changes to our recertification program, and we are busy trying to implement this change as well as communicate this to our stakeholder groups. Some people always see change as bad, and it is our job to highlight the positive side of changes like this. Third, there are some other less rigorous programs that call themselves "certification" in our specialty area. Trying to communicate the difference in quality of programs and differences in certifications within the same space is a challenge but one that is important for our

organization. Finally, we are constantly challenged with trying to keep our programs current and relevant by maintaining the meaning of the credential from one generation to the next. We have engaged in more communication with our constituents through social media to have them tell us what the certification means to them.

What different types of outside QC/evaluation/input does your organization monitor?

There are two major sources of quality control and evaluation. First, we survey our constituency — everyone who takes a test or recertifies gets a quality assurance survey. Respondents are asked about their experience with things like customer service, the website and test administration procedures. We typically have a decent response rate and have made changes to our program services based on these findings. For example, we have changed our score reports because test takers did not understand them. Second, we are NCCA accredited, which provides an external evaluation on our program structure and testing practices.

How is your organization adapting to changes in the credentialing world? Do you feel your organization is structured in a way where you can adapt quickly if you need to?

We are more nimble than we used to be. This change was made by ensuring we have the right resources and staff and also making the best of the technology that is part of the processes that we employ, such as item-writing software. We have added new certification and certificate programs recently, and my role as CEO is to ensure the infrastructure is there to support what we want to do and how we want to grow. This is accomplished by identifying the correct resources, providing training for the staff and ensuring they are prepared to help navigate the changes.

What three questions is your organization asking as it plans for the future?

1. What is the best solution to integrate all of the data we collect from the credentialing process and our membership organization and turn it into meaningful findings?
2. How can we best communicate the value of certification to stakeholders?
3. What is the best way to ensure continued competence?

What industry trends do you believe we in the field should pay closer attention to as we plan within our own organizations?

Our mantra has become “provide the best customer service in order to make the pathway as easy as possible, while still maintaining high standards for certification and recertification.” Our subject matter experts and members are busier than ever before, and that must be considered as we plan how to maintain our programs and grow our business. Other industries have set high standards for responsiveness and access -- think Amazon with next-day delivery. We have to keep up with these changing expectations or we will lose the engagement that is important in this industry.

Security concerns and cheating are also key issues for credentialing programs. To date, ONCC has not experienced any of these issues, but it is important to keep our awareness of these threats very high. This brings up the technology issues, and it is important that programs have the right resources available to continue to monitor for indications that there is an issue.

What are the benefits of being involved with ICE?

Everything! All the knowledge I have about certification comes from this community — what other organizations are doing and what problems they are solving. When I have a problem that I am trying to solve, I go to my ICE network of colleagues and their experience in this area. The network is invaluable!

The volunteer opportunities within ICE allow members to make a difference, learn something new and have fun. When you get involved and volunteer, you dig a little deeper and learn more than just going to the conference. You also get to know others and build your network while making a positive impact on the industry.