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## ICE in Brief

### ICE Introduces ICE Central E-Blast

You spoke. We listened. In today's online world, we understand that you receive countless emails on a daily basis and that our many ICE announcements have added to your inbox clutter. In response to requests for consolidated email communications, ICE recently moved to a regular, once-weekly e-blast that will announce all relevant news and information related to ICE and the credentialing industry. Our goal is to make this single announcement your one-stop-shop for information about new publications, ICE Academy events, annual conference details, updates and more. Keep an eye on your inboxes and let us know if you have any feedback at [info@credentialingexcellence.org](mailto:info@credentialingexcellence.org).

### ICE Exchange 2013: New Conference Name

The Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE) is pleased to unveil its new annual conference name: "ICE Exchange 2013: Trends and Solutions for Leaders in Credentialing."

Formerly known as the ICE Annual Educational Conference, ICE Exchange reflects what is valued most by attendees each year. At the 2013 conference, held November 11-14, 2013, in Amelia Island, Fla., credentialing leaders will find more opportunities to network with peers and vendors, while also learning from forward-thinking experts during educational sessions.

For years, attendees have told us that they come to the ICE conference to interact with peers and learn how other credentialing organizations are succeeding," explained ICE Chair Denise Fandel. "The new conference name, ICE Exchange, echoes what truly takes place at the event. From CEOs to psychometricians, attendees come with challenges, meet others with similar issues, and identify practical solutions. This happens as much on the exhibit hall floor and other networking opportunities as it does during the educational sessions."

With the new name comes a change to the conference format. ICE Exchange 2013 will allow for more interaction among leaders in credentialing through more formal roundtable discussions, more time to meet with exhibiting partners and attendees, and innovative education tracks.

"Our new conference name reflects the unique opportunity to both share and learn about trends and practical ways to enhance our credentialing organizations," said ICE Program Committee Chair Shannon Carter. "This two-way flow of information ensures that the ideas and advice are always fresh. ICE Exchange 2013 will offer relevant takeaways to all credentialing professionals and leaders, including CEOs, board members, program directors, testing and assessment experts, and others."

Registration for ICE Exchange 2013 will open in July 2013. The most up-to-date information about the event can be found by visiting the [conference web page](#).

### Submit a Session Proposal for ICE Exchange 2013

Are you interested in sharing your industry expertise and success at ICE Exchange 2013? Credentialing professionals are also invited to submit session proposals to present on a variety of well-received topics including:

- Testing methodologies and exam development best practices
- Governance and legal issues

- Recertification and continuing education
- Organizational strategy and leadership
- Marketing and promoting the value of your credentials
- Working with lawmakers (local, state and federal)

All topics will be considered, and encouraging proposal submission to any colleague who has made advancements in his or her credentialing program is highly recommended.

The types of professionals who typically present at ICE conferences include:

- Administrative and organizational leaders
- Psychometricians and other credentialing professionals focused on assessment methodology
- Credentialing researchers and faculty
- Leaders who have worked with credentialing consultants to develop or enhance credentialing programs

[Submit a session proposal today.](#)

#### **Submission Details**

All submissions are due by 11:59 PM ET on Wednesday, April 17, 2013. Incomplete or late submission proposals will not be accepted.

For questions regarding proposal submissions, please contact Anne Nevel at [speakers@credentialingexcellence.org](mailto:speakers@credentialingexcellence.org).

#### **ICE Launches Membership Referral Program**

This year, ICE is implementing an exciting new referral program. If a current member refers a new member, and that member joins by April 30, the current member is provided with one complimentary webinar registration this year. More information on the program will be available soon.

If you have any questions about your membership status or need to know who your organization's primary contact with ICE is, please contact ICE Headquarters at 202-367-1165 or email [info@credentialingexcellence.org](mailto:info@credentialingexcellence.org).

#### **New ICE Academy Webcast Available**

A successful certification program is contingent upon the availability and involvement of quality subject matter experts (SMEs). Presented by Beth Kalinowski and Nancy Thomas, this webcast will discuss real-life efforts to recruit SMEs, train them on sound item development techniques and manage their work efforts.

ICE Academy webcasts are pre-recorded and available for a 30 calendar-day viewing period beginning immediately upon purchase. Webcasts are \$70 for ICE members and \$100 for nonmembers.

Visit the [ICE Academy](#) to see additionally offered webcasts, then purchase your copy through the [ICE Online Store](#) today.

## ICE Releases Two New R&D Reports: What the CFO Wants to Know, 2011 Ethics Survey to Certification Boards

### What the CFO Wants to Know

Did you know: The median annual revenue reported from credentialing industry professionals in a recent survey was \$1,805,500. How does your organization compare? Is this an increase or decrease from the 2009 survey? How were changes reflected in various revenue categories? Did the staff needs of organizations grow or shrink? Did financial reserves grow or shrink since 2009? Learn more about the business of certification in the newly released study, “What Your CFO Wants to Know.”

Download the [table of contents](#) or learn more by purchasing the full report from the research section of the [ICE online store](#).

For a limited time, if you purchase “What the CFO Wants to Know” and the 2009 “Industry Operating Ratios and Benchmarking Statistics” as a bundle, you’ll receive 25 percent off your purchase.

### 2011 Ethics Survey to Certification Boards

In early 2011, ICE’s Research and Development Committee convened a Task Force on Ethics to review the ethics processes and documentation for certification programs with the goal of determining whether commonalities exist in practices in this area. Download the [table of contents](#) for this report or purchase your copy through the [ICE online store](#) today.

## National Commission for Certifying Agencies Adds New Programs

The National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) recently welcomed the following new programs into the family of NCCA accredited certification programs. By achieving initial accreditation, these programs join the more than 270 programs that have been granted accreditation to date.

- American Board for Certification in Homeland Security  
*Certified in Homeland Security Level V (CHS-V) 12/31/17*
- American Board of Optometry  
*Diplomate, American Board of Optometry (DABO) 12/31/17*
- American Culinary Federation  
*Certified Executive Pastry Chef (CEPC) 3/31/16*
- Defense Security Service (DSS)  
*Security Fundamentals Professional Certification (SFPC) 12/31/17*
- National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters  
*Certified Medical Interpreter-Spanish (CMI-Spanish) 12/31/17*
- National Center for Competency Testing  
*Nationally Certified Phlebotomy Technician (NCPT) 11/30/15*
- Society of Certified Retirement Financial Advisors  
*Certified Retirement Financial Advisor (CRFA) 1/31/18*

## NCCA Annual Reports Available Online

Just as the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCAA) application has moved online, annual reports will be submitted through the same system. The reports, which are due every year on June 1, are available for each accredited certification program through the [NCCA Online Portal](#). Reports should

be submitted by the June deadline to avoid penalties. Notifications and reminders will also come through the online system to improve our communications and efficiency.

### ***ICE Digest* Summer 2013 Call for Content**

Submit Your Content by Monday, May 20.

ICE invites you to submit content for the Summer Issue of *ICE Digest*. This quarterly online publication is an opportunity to feature case studies, credentialing best practices, legal issues, industry news and member updates.

ICE Digest reaches more than 3,600 credentialing industry professionals and is available to anyone who visits us at [www.credentialingexcellence.org](http://www.credentialingexcellence.org). The Summer Issue will be distributed and made available on our website in June.

Eligible articles must complement ICE's mission and goals and be relevant to the credentialing industry. Submissions with blatant sales pitches will be disregarded. Visit the [ICE Digest web page](#) for a list of acceptable topics.

Please submit your contact information and complete article to Alexa Schlosser at [editor@credentialingexcellence.org](mailto:editor@credentialingexcellence.org). Articles should be submitted by Monday, May 20 to be considered for the Summer Issue of *ICE Digest*.

### **Business of Certification: Where Does Marketing Fit?**

*By B. Denise Roosendaal, CAE*

The economy for credentialing organizations seems to be in full recovery mode. This may be a bold statement, but it is supported by facts — proof obtained through the ICE Research and Development Committee's recent release "What Your CFO Wants to Know: Results of the 2011 Business of Certification Survey." The data (collected in 2011 and analyzed in 2012) point to increased revenue (for most revenue ranges, but not all), increased operating margin and greater staffing efficiency. In addition, the report points to enhancements in the gross margin (median) which rose from 2009 to 2011. Finally, the median percentage of reserves as a percentage of operating expenses increased quite impressively. These are just a few of the credentialing-related statistics revealed in the CFO study.

Making wide-sweeping conclusions can always be dangerous when looking at this kind of data because so much is dependent upon the dynamics of the profession your certification program serves. However, I am encouraged by the general stability of the credentialing business. The data demonstrate that the per program certificant population has increased (with large outliers removed.) There also appears to be a strong pipeline of new applicants and a sustainable renewal rate on average.

However, I am left to ponder one particular data point: On average, only 4 percent of expenses are allocated for public awareness/marketing purposes. Yet the echo in the halls of the ICE 2012 Annual Educational Conference suggests that organizations are struggling with articulating the value to their stakeholders more than ever. I am intrigued as to why this number is not higher as a percentage of total expenses. (As you might expect, salaries and benefits represented the largest allocation (more than 30 percent) with test administration and item/exam development following closely behind.) A conversation at the CEO SIG at the Annual Educational Conference indicated some frustration with determining what the right percentage of marketing expenses as a percentage of total revenue should be in order to attract new certificants or articulate value to a diversified stakeholder audience. Another aspect of this question is how to use a certification organization's own data to better market its programs.

According to the Small Business Administration, "small businesses with revenue less than \$5 million should allocate 7-8 percent of their revenues to marketing (assuming margins in the range of 10-12 percent)." This percentage could fluctuate depending upon a variety of factors, including scope and life cycle of the product/program. The cost of marketing might also be less if an organization is heavily involved in social media marketing.

How about your program(s)? How do your financial markers compare? Are you struggling with finding the appropriate balance of marketing within your budget? I would like to hear from you. Send me your comments at [dreesendaal@credentialingexcellence.org](mailto:dreesendaal@credentialingexcellence.org).

### **Integrate it! Design and Execute an Integrated Marketing Campaign for Your Certification**

**By Rory E. McCorkle, MBA, PhD**

Marketing is not typically core in the skill sets of many certification managers or directors. Facilitation skills, psychometrics understanding and an ability to juggle nine balls in the air might be — but not marketing. So it is not surprising that many certification programs do rather poorly at creating marketing campaigns. We figure, “Leave it to those creative types,” whether they exist in our organization or not. To make matters worse, we typically have miniscule budgets for marketing, if we have budget at all.

Many organizations I have worked with were lucky to have 1 percent of their gross certification revenue for marketing. In contrast, multinationals such as Proctor & Gamble or Unilever spend 9-11 percent of their gross revenue on marketing. Further, most certifications do not have a brand around their certification that is instantly recognizable. With these cards stacked against us, how can we expect to run a successful marketing campaign?

Part of the answer is to better integrate our marketing and communication efforts. A first step is to identify why certifications are different products to market:

- **Certifications have a longer purchasing cycle.** Instead of the days or weeks it might take to decide to buy a major household appliance (typically about the same price as a certification fee), our customers spend weeks, months or even years identifying the need for a certification and preparing to purchase it.
- **Certifications are not inexpensive products.** Think about the last time you replaced your dishwasher, water heater or another household appliance. You likely took some time to research, compare and examine different models before making a purchase. The average consumer examines four to five websites and spends four weeks doing their research. Again, certifications have similar price points, but these consumers spend significantly more time invested at understanding eligibility requirements, studying, completing applications, etc.
- **Certifications frequently involve a qualification process.** Many of our certifications have eligibility requirements. This means that the consumer cannot just wake up tomorrow and decide to get a certification.
- **Finally, certifications do not typically have instant gratification.** Earning most certifications does not immediately come with a raise or promotions; rather, it’s a longer cycle of reward. This motivator (or lack thereof) is an important factor to consider.

Once you understand how certifications differ from other products, we can then turn to a traditional marketing process.

### **Considerations**

Many marketing campaigns can be put in one of three categories: customer acquisition, pipeline maintenance and customer retention. Customer acquisition is self-explanatory: you target a campaign to acquire new customers. Pipeline maintenance is defined by quickening or increasing the “throughput” of customers at each process stage. For example, if you have an online application system, this might be targeted at increasing the percentage of candidates who both open *and* complete that application. Finally, customer retention for certifications could be multifaceted. These campaigns could

be centered on recertification requirements and increasing recertification rates, but it could also be focused on upselling additional certifications or certificates.

So ask yourself a few questions:

- Are you trying to expand to include new customers?
- Are you trying to better leverage your existing customers?
- Are you seeking to increase the number of paid applicants?
- Are you seeking to increase the proportion of those who apply and pay?
- Are you looking to boost recertification?

Once you have identified the goals of a campaign, you can identify your audience, expenses/resources required, channels and how you will measure the campaign.

### **Customer**

When you market in certification, one of the worst things you can do is expect a single communication or campaign to reach everyone in your market. It is not going to happen. Rather than reaching everyone, pick your target markets:

- In a product launch several years ago, I defined the primary, secondary and tertiary market by their geography, industry, level of organizational maturity and organization size. For example, the primary market was practitioners in the United States, working in the information and communications technology (ICT) industry, and working in large, mature organizations.
- Another example is on a recertification campaign. Assuming you can track recertification hours in an online system, if you are designing a campaign to target certificants in the last month of their certification period, you likely do not want to go after those who have not performed any continuing education. Rather, target those who only need one class or self-directed education activity to meet the threshold for recertification.

While you may not be able to define your target markets with such precision, narrowing down at least one or two factors will allow you to focus on where you can reach these individuals. In addition, it will better allow you to use your limited marketing dollars.

### **Channels**

Several traditional marketing channels are demonstrated in the table below. While space does not allow for a description of each of these, part of choosing your channels is knowing where your certificants spend their time. Also, consider other channels unique to our industry:

- Direct referral of candidates by current certificants (consider modeling a “refer a member” program)
- Examination preparation providers
- Self-preparation materials (e.g., study guides)
- Geographic grouping of members (e.g., membership chapters and sections)
- Strategic partnerships with other organizations or reciprocity schemas

More cost/user	Less cost/user
Traditional PR	Virtual
Business development	Social media
Lead generation	Email
Web marketing	Blogs
Radio	Search engine optimization
TV	Personalized URL (pURL)
	Search engine marketing (SEO)

### Change

As part of your goal setting, you should have determined metrics you can track. For example, a customer acquisition campaign is going to look at how many individuals made it through each stage of the process from exposure to an advertisement to starting a certification application. Typically, we look at three types of metrics:

1. **Exposure:** number of advertisement, blog, etc., views; number of emails opened
2. **Interest:** clicking through an advertisement, clicking through an email link, registering with you or providing contact information
3. **Conversion:** starting a certification application, paying a certification fee

In addition, it is important to track campaign-wide metrics, such as return on investment (ROI), conversation rates and marketing cost per certification sold.

### Integration

Finally, integrating your approach across a variety of different channels is the most important part.

Many of us have heard a bit about the Microsoft Surface®, a relatively new tablet. In November 2012, Microsoft began airing TV commercials for the product showing users snapping on the tablet keyboard and tossing the tablets here and there. It was a catchy commercial, but it was not enough. When the commercial aired, Microsoft also launched a YouTube channel dedicated to the Surface, substantial web presence with a dedicated product website, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, PR and media placements, and print advertisements.

Marketing experts have traditionally held that at least three exposures to a message are required for the message to be effective. Regardless of the veracity of this concept, we can probably safely say that one exposure is not enough. By integrating a message across multiple channels, you reinforce and support your messaging, while increasing the ability of your message to work and move people from awareness to interest.

## Summary

While this is not a cure-all, taking the patterned approach here and integrating your campaign can better leverage your marketing approach and dollars. By understanding what makes certification products unique and integrating your efforts, you can better target key stakeholders and ensure your message is heard. Overall, by creating a greater focus on marketing within your organization, you can expand your organization's reach and continue making progress toward the realization of your organization's mission and goals.

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**Rory McCorkle, MBA, PhD**, is the president of *International Credentialing Associates (ICA)*, an organization specializing in expert consulting services for credentialing organizations in test development, market research and marketing. He specializes in the product management, new product development, marketing, globalization and portfolio management aspects of the certification industry. McCorkle has worked with more than 50 associations as a consultant since beginning his career in the industry in 2003, including working at *Prometric* and the *Project Management Institute (PMI)*. Rory serves on the board of directors for the *Certification Network Group (CNG)* and has served on volunteer committees for the *Association of Test Publishers (ATP)*, *American Psychological Association (APA)* and *American Evaluation Association (AEA)*.

## **Upgrading Your Code of Ethics and Disciplinary Procedures: Practical and Legal Considerations** **By Sara Blair Lake, JD, CAE, and Jefferson C. Glassie**

A key aspect of any professional certification program is a code of ethics and the code's accompanying procedures. A code of ethics, sometimes referred to as a code of professional conduct, is a critical feature of a certification program both for the promotion of the safety of the public and the integrity of the program's credential. For those programs seeking or maintaining the coveted National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) accreditation, a mark of quality for certification programs, disciplinary policies and procedures are required. (See the *Responsibilities to Stakeholders* section of the NCCA Standards, Standard 6.)

Organizational guiding documents, such as a code of ethics together with accompanying procedures, should be reviewed periodically and updated appropriately as a matter of best practice. If your certification body is about to embark on a periodic review of these important documents, what issues should you consider?

### **Outside Review**

A constructive beginning to the process could include a review by those not intimately familiar with the documents or even familiar with the certification program itself. Several pairs of "fresh eyes" can be a great start, along with legal counsel. It's important to ask "Is the code understandable and accessible?" If the code is so complicated that only lawyers can follow the required steps, it has less value. It is critical that volunteers to the certification body, including those charged with enforcing the code, understand its key features.

Also, a code of ethics is meant not just for the certificant community, but for the public as well. If, throughout the years, an organization has simply tweaked its existing code, it may even be time for a complete revision. Over time, organizational policies, key terms or acronyms, or even the profession itself may have changed significantly. If so, a full rewrite may be in order.

### **Document Streamlining**

If, after a careful review, a completely fresh start is not necessary, another important consideration is "Can the document(s) be streamlined?" As documents are revised, editing and periodic "fixes" can result in lengthy, unclear or even internally inconsistent codes or procedures. As you are evaluating these documents, continually ask the following questions:

- Is this necessary?
- Is this clear?
- How does this section relate to the whole?

Once your organization has crafted a new code — or updated its existing one — it is advisable to disseminate it to stakeholders for a period of public comment. Not only is this a best practice, but such widespread distribution will undoubtedly garner good will, increase organizational credibility and, as a result of constructive feedback, likely lead to a better final product.

### **Legal Defensibility**

Turning to the legal aspects of such updates, it is important that the focus of a code be on the *conduct* of the certificant. While codes of ethics are important from both the public and business perspectives,

ethical discipline — including public or private reprimand, suspension or revocation of the credential — by a certification body could give rise to a variety of legal claims, including antitrust, defamation or tortious interference, so it is imperative that a code and the accompanying procedures be balanced, carefully crafted and legally defensible.

What elements are required for legal defensibility? First, confidentiality is key. Procedures should make clear that confidentiality is required as part of the process. Knowledge of a pending matter should be strictly on a need-to-know basis at both the volunteer and staff levels, and any discussion held should be limited strictly to the facts of the case and not extraneous or irrelevant matters.

Secondly, procedures should contemplate the possibility, and the appropriate management, of actual or potential conflicts of interest. By way of example, a member of the organization's ethics committee should not be involved in a disciplinary matter involving one of his or her colleagues or staff. It is important that procedures be in place for the disclosure of actual, or potential, conflicts of interest.

### **Procedural Due Process**

Finally, due process is probably the key legal consideration for disciplinary procedures. Substantive due process (meaning fairness in the basic requirements for certification) is important, but the focus in disciplinary procedures is on *procedural* due process. Procedural due process is grounded in "common law fairness" and requires that those whose conduct is challenged in a disciplinary matter receive notice of actions or requirements and have the opportunity to be heard, and also that the decision-making process is fair and impartial. In this regard, an important feature of due process is avoiding duplication of roles that might lead to conflicts or bias in the determination. In other words, the investigatory and adjudicatory roles should be separate and distinct so that there is no overlap of "deciders," and that the same people who make an initial determination also do not hear an appeal.

One common misconception related to the legal defensibility of ethical procedures is that due process requires a "live" or in-person hearing. This is not the case. Rather, the due process requirement of the right to be "heard" may usually be satisfied by a paper-based proceeding.

In a related vein, a legally defensible set of ethics procedures also requires consistency in implementation. It is critical to follow ethics procedures to the letter. This will ensure that all parties to ethical proceedings will be treated similarly and fairly.

### **Conclusion**

To summarize, legally defensible ethics procedures require confidentiality, appropriate management of actual or potential conflicts of interest, procedural due process and consistency in implementation. Observing these practical and legal considerations while upgrading and implementing your organization's code of ethics code and associated procedures will go a long way toward ensuring your ethics program is fair, balanced and legally defensible.



**Sara Blair Lake, JD, CAE**, currently serves as the executive director of the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE), a certification program accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) that includes more than 26,000 certificants in 94 countries around the globe. She also currently serves on the International Section Council of the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) and as vice chair for the 2013 Program Committee for the Annual Educational Conference of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence. Lake has held senior positions with credentialing and association organizations for the past 15 years and previously served as chair for her own certification governing body, the Certified Association Executive (CAE) Commission of ASAE.



**Jefferson C. 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. Glassie is co-chairman of the Nonprofit Organizations and Associations practice group at Whiteford, Taylor and Preston, LLP. He is the author of the "International Legal Issues for Nonprofit Organizations" and the co-author of "Certification and Accreditation Law Handbook" and "Intellectual Property for Nonprofit Organizations and Associations."

## **Psst! Do You Know Privacy?**

**By Dick Soule, CIPP/US, CIPP/E**

Advances in technology are allowing more sensitive data to be stored and collected than ever before. Thus, privacy is growing in the marketplace and around the world. In fact, the International Data Corporation (IDC) predicts digital content will grow to 2.72 zettabytes (ZB) by the end of the year, up almost 50 percent from 2011 and on its way to 8 ZB by 2015. This new outpouring of data is providing us with great value, including new ways to connect with friends and family, as well as have constant access to information.

In the association world, we collect and use personal information every day about members, certificants, clients, prospects, job candidates and employees. We use IT systems to process personal information. But with the collection and handling of all of this information come significant risks. If you look at the [Daily Dashboard](#), the International Association of Privacy Professionals' (IAPP) free daily e-newsletter that summarizes top privacy news stories, you'll find instances of data incidents being reported in the headlines almost every day. And associations have not been immune. Throughout the past few years, several major associations have endured data breach incidents:

- The American Pharmacist Association (APhA) was hacked for 28,000 sensitive member records in April 2012.
- The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) left 100,000 member records exposed on an unprotected file server in September 2012.
- The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) lost a portable data drive containing more than 300,000 member records in May 2006.

In each of these examples, the member records included sensitive personal information such as names, Social Security numbers, account passwords and email addresses.

The consequence of not managing privacy is not only financial, but a disastrous loss of trust as well as potential legal liability. The examples above demonstrate that membership organizations are every bit as vulnerable as any businesses. And because we depend especially on our members' trust, privacy is an issue we must all understand.

### **What Exactly Do We Mean by Privacy?**

Privacy has many different meanings. It could mean bodily privacy, territorial privacy or communications privacy. And each of these meanings has different interpretations depending on context, age, social identity, geographic location and even personal perception. In the United States, these concepts of privacy are captured both within the U.S. Constitution and different federal laws. However, in this context, we're referring to the more recent concept of information privacy — the discipline of managing sensitive personal data or content that is exchanged between or among individuals and organizations.

As organizations of all types and sizes continue to collect, store and use increasing amounts of data, this dynamic has prompted policymakers, academics and consumers to question the contours around what we consider appropriate collection and use of data. What is private and what isn't? Who owns your information? What should happen when your data is stolen or misused? How should companies and governments explain what they're doing with personal information? And, in an era of globalization, how do we set new norms that square with diverse social and legal expectations?

## **What Does All This Mean for Your Organization?**

With all this information and the questions being raised about data management, it pays to prioritize privacy — and to educate your staff and your members about their rights and responsibilities regarding personal information.

The path to privacy protection at your organization can be started with a few simple but comprehensive steps:

### **1. Analyze the personal information that you collect and know where it flows.**

Information security is one of the most critical elements to privacy protection. You can have security without privacy but not privacy without security. It is critical to ensure the integrity of personal information and prevent unauthorized access to the information.

### **2. Understand the privacy laws that apply to your organization.**

Although the United States does not currently have an overarching privacy law, there are some federal laws that address privacy in relation to specific business activities. For example:

- CAN-SPAM prohibits unsolicited commercial email messages to consumers.
- The Telemarketing Sales Rule (TSR) prevents telephone solicitations.
- The Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) restricts websites from marketing to children under age 13.

Several U.S. states also have information privacy laws. For example, California has its own online privacy protection law and Massachusetts has one of the nation’s most stringent personal information protection laws for residents.

Additionally, almost all of the states have data breach notification laws, which require businesses to inform their customers in the event of a breach of sensitive data and advise them of their options and rights.

### **3. Assess your level of risk and vulnerability based on outcomes from the first two steps.**

For example, if you store credit card information, your risks are substantially higher and you have greater responsibilities. If you do not have a comprehensive information security program protecting the data you hold, you are more vulnerable to data breaches from both internal and external threats.

### **4. Develop and post a privacy policy that mitigates these risks and advises members of your policy.**

The simplest way for an organization to communicate privacy practices is a privacy notice. Although there is no federal law requiring privacy notices, many states require them. A typical notice includes: the effective date of the policy, the scope of the policy, what types of personally identifiable information (PII) are collected, and how the data may be used or disclosed. It offers individuals choices about their data and access to their data.

Organizations are advised to post privacy notices not just on their home page but on every place on the website where a consumer’s personal information may be collected.

## 5. Educate your employees about information privacy.

Every day, there are people in your organization making decisions about how to handle, manage and use data. They make key decisions around defining processes and selecting technology — perhaps without even knowing how it impacts privacy. And people are involved in most data breaches.

Many times, the breach is caused by an employee either losing or unknowingly misusing information — a lost laptop with unencrypted data, sensitive information being sent to the wrong email address or fax number — resulting in a data breach or other privacy incident.

You can mitigate that risk by 1) having IAPP-certified individuals in your organization that have the expertise to manage privacy and identify potential problems; and 2) ensuring all staff in your organization have awareness of privacy so they don't make preventable mistakes.

### What is the IAPP?

The International Association of Privacy Professionals (IAPP) helps practitioners develop their careers and organizations manage and protect their data as the largest and most comprehensive global information privacy community and resource. Founded in 2000, the IAPP is a not-for-profit association with more than 12,000 members in 70 countries. The IAPP helps define, support and improve the privacy profession through networking, education and certification.

The IAPP is responsible for developing and launching the first broad-based credentialing program in information privacy, the Certified Information Privacy Professional (CIPP). Developed and launched by the IAPP with leading privacy subject matter experts, the CIPP is the world's first broad-based global privacy and data protection credentialing program and remains the most sought-after and acknowledged credential in the profession.

If you are interested in learning more about IAPP membership or certification, visit the IAPP website at [www.privacyassociation.org](http://www.privacyassociation.org).



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*Prior to joining the IAPP, Soule was the business development executive for several certification and testing organizations, including Heuristic Solutions, Schroeder Measurement Technologies, Assessment Systems Inc. (now Promissor) and CTB/McGraw-Hill.*

## **Open Source Technology Offers Certification and Licensure Organizations Flexibility, Eliminates Software Licensing Fees**

***By Kate O'Connor, Breakthrough Technologies, LLC***

Despite the prevalence of open source software tools available for website development and online reporting, what's missing has been a complete, consolidated open-source option that addresses the many needs of the assessment, certification and licensure markets.

Open source, defined simply, is software that's available on the web for anyone to use. Open source grants organizations access to versatile, inexpensive software — there are no licensing fees — and a huge, knowledgeable and evolving technology community. Open source software platforms, such as TAO, Linux, Drupal, Jaspersoft and others, allow for use of their programs without any licensing fees and offer software code openly available for customization. The altruistic concept of open source is that the community of developers using the product will contribute any — or at least most — of the programming enhancements they make back to the rest of the community for their use.

Open source software technology innovations being developed for the K-12 market are now being leveraged by the certification and licensure markets. TAO is a prime example of this. The TAO system is widely used internationally through the large-scale deployment of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) exams in the education space through a partnership with Educational Testing Service (ETS). These exams are given every three years to eighth-grade students in more than 60 countries.

Recognizing the value and advantages of employing open-source software, the K-12 market is making a strong push for its use. Educational consortiums funded through the Race to the Top initiative, such as Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) have made the use of open-source software a requirement in the development and delivery of their new assessments.

A longtime provider of technology for certification, licensure and education organizations,

Breakthrough Technologies, LLC, has developed everything from item banking systems to online and offline test drivers, innovative item types, and web-based registration and reporting tools. When Breakthrough's managing partner Doug Wilson saw a demonstration of the TAO system at the Association of Test Publishers' 2012 annual conference, he believed he'd found the first open-source option that drew together in a single cost-effective platform a multitude of solutions for the education and assessment community.

"For years I've been approached by organizations disappointed with their current item and test management solutions and caught between two alternative options," Wilson said. "An off-the-shelf proprietary system might be affordable at \$20K to 70K per year in licensing costs. But, ultimately, you're one of hundreds or thousands of users on a platform whose future is not in your hands. The other alternative is a custom solution. That offers complete flexibility but carries lots of risk and a price tag as high as \$700K. Add in ongoing costs of maintenance and ownership and organizations simply can't afford it. TAO strikes the right balance of affordability and flexibility. Organizations get a core platform for free and only spend incrementally on customizations."

The TAO system already provides a product that covers the entire item and test development process, including the ability to publish exams for online delivery using the TAO driver or to the Question and

Test Interoperability (QTI) standard format for third-party delivery. Functionality includes numerous item types, from basic multiple-choice to drag and drop, hot spot and even complex simulations. The flexibility of the system also allows the creation of custom item types using the Open Web Items (OWI), and provides the ability to manage users, test takers and groups through secure login and role-based access.

With the growing acceptance of such powerful and versatile open-source software, Breakthrough Technologies foresees that credentialing entities that adopt the TAO system will want to explore enhancements and seek assistance in developing custom item management dashboards, e-commerce functionality, custom workflow processes, custom psychometric and item performance reports, and additional publishing formats. The TAO platform also can be tightly integrated to an organization's existing learning management system or credential management system — another area of development and expansion worth considering.



***Kate O'Connor*** has worked in the testing industry for more than 15 years in varying capacities. Her experience includes working with clients in the IT, medical, corporate and educational fields. She has managed computer-based testing programs from inception through completion, developing scope of work, business rules, written documentation, test production details and timelines. O'Connor was also the liaison between her clients and the technology team, creating software requirements based on client needs. She also organized and ran large volume testing events at clients' annual conferences.

*O'Connor joined Breakthrough Technologies in 2012 as the business development manager for the certification, licensure and education markets. She uses her testing and education industry expertise to work with clients to assess their technology needs, negotiate contracts and assure that client implementations run smoothly.*

## Six Ways to Motivate Top Talent in Demotivating Times

By Brad Remillard

To retain your top talent, it is absolutely critical to ensure they are motivated. In difficult times, this is often not high on the priority list of managers or CEOs. Most people are working long hours and doing the job of two people, stress is at an all-time high, fear of layoffs is a reality, salaries are frozen, pay cuts have been implemented — and forget about a bonus. For many companies, this is the current culture.

So how do you motivate your top talent to achieve the company's goals?

How do you keep them from contacting recruiters?

How do you keep them passionate about coming to work?

How do you keep them engaged day after day?

The answer to all of these is “culture.” Even in difficult times, top talent, by definition, will always rise to the occasion. They will always strive to be the best. If they don't, they aren't top talent. However, even top talent can burn out, get frustrated, not see the light at the end of the tunnel or wonder if they are really contributing.

It is the role of all CEOs and managers to ensure these things don't happen. There seems to be a consistent theme as to what great managers do in difficult times to hold on to and even attract top talent.

The following are six areas managers must focus on to ensure they keep their top talent motivated:

**1. Emphasize a performance-based culture.** Even in difficult times, there must be clearly defined goals for the company. These goals must cascade down to your top talent. They must have quantifiable objectives that motivate them, so, when reached, they feel a sense of accomplishment. Providing specific time-based goals with achievable results clarifies exactly what is expected of your people. Your best talent will embrace the goals and not stop until they reach the goal. Employee engagement is critical to retaining your best people.

**2. Steer clear of a dysfunctional culture.** This is probably the biggest reason top talent gets nervous and begins to think outside your company. Do you know your company's culture? Can you define it? Will your executive staff define it the same way? Will the in-the-trench worker bees define it the same way? If not, this is the time to begin working on it.

Once the culture is well defined, do the behaviors match the culture? Do managers from the CEO on down demonstrate this culture day-to-day in how they deal with the employees, customers and vendors? You can't claim to have a culture of teamwork if the manager's idea of teamwork is, “As long as we do things my way, without any questions, you can be on my team.”

**3. Promote respect and appreciation.** This is probably the least expensive and least used method to motivate and retain top talent. Small things can make a big difference with top talent. Respecting their contributions, listening to them, including them in the decision-making process, and asking for their thoughts and ideas all make them feel respected and appreciated. Consider building a culture that respects your top talent so they feel appreciated. Top talent does not want to be taken for granted.

**4. Provide consistent feedback.** This could be considered a subset of number three, but it's more formal. This includes regular and structured one-on-one feedback sessions. Not standing in the hallway

conversations, but actually sitting down and focusing on them. Giving them feedback, encouraging them, listening to what their needs are (even if you can't meet them, just listening), taking an interest in their career and building a shared bond. This makes them feel their manager cares about them as a person, not just an employee.

**5. Offer praise.** You may have experienced a manager with this philosophy: "That is what they get paid for. Why should I thank them? They should thank me for having a job." How did you like it? Compare that to a manager with this philosophy: "Thanks! I know it is just part of your job, but I appreciate the pride you take in your work. It helps everyone in the department." How did you like that? A little praise goes a long way to motivate people.

**6. Provide opportunities for education and growth.** Top talent insists on getting better. They know once their learning curve flattens out, future opportunities can become limited. Top talent does not like to have their growth potential limited. Giving your best people the opportunity to take some additional classes, lead a project outside their normal job, challenge them with new opportunities, give them a chance to serve on a cross-functional team or take an online class will ensure they are becoming better. Offering these opportunities not only ensures your top talent is growing, but also makes them a more valuable employee.

Consider these six areas as a way to motivate your top talent. Your best people will appreciate this more than most managers realize. The increase in productivity by having motivated employees is the best ROI any company can receive.

***Brad Remillard** is a speaker, author and trainer with more than 30 years of experience in hiring and recruiting. Through his corporate workshops and industry association speaking engagements, he demonstrates how organizations can effectively attract, interview, hire and retain top talent. Remillard is also the co-founder of IMPACT HIRING SOLUTIONS and co-author of "You're NOT the Person I Hired: A CEO's Guide to Hiring Top Talent." For more information on Remillard's hiring training programs or speaking, please visit [www.bradremillard.com](http://www.bradremillard.com).*