



NEWS RELEASE

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PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS ARE A VALUABLE ASSET FOR JOB SEEKERS AS ECONOMY RECOVERS

Credentials are an effective way to advance within the fastest growing professions

Washington, DC – Attaining professional credentials from an accredited credentialing body can help job seekers take advantage of recent positive employment forecasts and the continued economic recovery. The industries with the highest projected growth over the next decade offer greater opportunities for professionals with valid credentials.

President Obama stated in his [weekly radio address](#) on February 26th that investments in education are critical for our nation's future. The same rings true for Americans as individuals: investments in continuing education and attaining professional credentials will be critical to secure jobs and advance in their careers. This conclusion was supported during the first meeting of the President's Council on Job Creation and Competitiveness, where executives of companies like GE, Intel, Comcast, and others met to discuss strengthening employment in the United States. Leaders at the February 24th meeting agreed that the return of jobs to the US will rely on a workforce with the right skills, from the factory floor to the board room.

"An individual's ability to show he or she has specific skill sets and experience may lead to a new or better job," said Melissa Murer Corrigan, President of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE). "Attaining professional credentials provides an immediately recognizable indication that a candidate has demonstrated the skills necessary to meet a standard of quality set within the industry. In so many situations, credentials provide that ever-important foot in the door."

According to the US [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), the greatest job growth over the coming decade will be in health care, science & technology, educational services, and construction. Health care and social assistance will generate more than four million new jobs between 2008 and 2018. Professional, scientific, and technical services will generate more than 2.6 million new jobs, and educational services will generate more than 1.6 million jobs in this same time frame. Each of these industries calls for professionals with highly specialized skills.

For example, employment of clinical laboratory technicians is expected to grow by [14 percent](#) by 2018. This is a field that is projected to have more jobs than jobseekers. For those who continue their education while gaining experience in this field, there are excellent opportunities for advancement. When hiring or considering promotions, many employers of clinical laboratory technicians strongly favor workers certified by a recognized professional association.

"Having the right skills, experience, and following proper procedures are all critical attributes that help medical laboratory technicians make consistently correct diagnoses," said Christopher Damon, Executive Director of American Medical Technologists. "When mistakes in the lab can mean the difference between life and death, clinics and hospitals must be completely confident in their medical technicians. Proper credentials are the first thing these institutions look for when hiring new employees and making promotions."

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Across the country, the economic and employment outlook for [2011 is looking positive](#), even if moderately so. Speaking before the House Committee on Financial Services earlier this year, Brookings Institution senior economist [Donald Kohn](#) testified that, "The headwinds [of the economic crisis] seem to be abating and many economists, myself included, expect that the pace of growth will pick up a little this year and the job market will improve somewhat."

A recent [CareerBuilder study](#) validates this projection, showing that 24 percent of employers plan to hire full-time employees in 2011, an increase of four percent over 2010. Economists surveyed by [CNN Money](#) have predicted an average of 2.3 million jobs added in 2011, more than twice the 2010 hiring rate.

During this slow but steady recovery period, the job market will remain highly competitive as many unemployed and underemployed seek to fill newly available positions. The relative success of this recovery period will largely depend on the right people finding the right opportunities. Credentials from an accredited institution make it much easier for job seekers and employers to find a good match.

Obtaining credentials can also be a helpful advancement tool for those who are currently employed. Employees should talk to their supervisors about reimbursement for work-related education. In this age of frozen salaries, [CareerBuilder](#) has found that 21 percent of employers are willing to invest in training to retain employees. Once attained, many industry credentials offer a bridge to higher income. In a 2010 study, the [International Economic Development Council](#) showed that Certified Economic Developers earned an average of \$26,100 more than their non-certified colleagues.

Individuals seeking a new job or a way to advance their career can visit the ICE Web site, www.credentialingexcellence.org, to explore obtaining credentials from an NCCA-accredited credentialing body within their industry.

About the Institute for Credentialing Excellence

Established in 1977, ICE (formerly the *National Organization for Competency Assurance*) is the leading international membership organization representing the credentialing community. ICE fulfills its mission through the delivery of education and training programs, in setting quality standards for credentialing, and by providing accreditation services through its accreditation division, the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). The ICE membership is composed of credentialing organizations, testing companies, and individual professional development consultants. Through its annual conference, Webinars, and publications, ICE serves as the source for information on the latest trends and issues of concern to practitioners and organizations focused on certification, licensure education/training and workforce development. ICE and NCCA are based in Washington, DC. For more information, please visit: www.credentialingexcellence.org.