something really bad happens. It's a tough job, but somebody's got to do it. Here are a few tips that might help:

>> Part 4 of this book is devoted entirely to the hapless network administrator. So if you're nominated, read the chapters in that part. If you're lucky enough that someone *else* is nominated, celebrate by buying her a copy of this book.

>> In small companies, picking the network administrator by drawing straws is common. The person who draws the shortest straw loses and becomes administrator.

>> Of course, the network administrator can't be a *complete* technical idiot. I was lying about that. (For those of you in Congress, the word is *testifying*.) I exaggerated to make the point that organizational skills are more important than technical skills. The network administrator needs to know how to do various maintenance tasks. Although this knowledge requires at least a little technical know-how, the organizational skills are more important.

What Have They Got That You Don't Got?

With all this technical stuff to worry about, you may begin to wonder whether you're smart enough to use your computer after it's attached to the network. Let me assure you that you are. If you're smart enough to buy this book because you know that you need a network, you're more than smart enough to use the network after it's put in. You're also smart enough to install and manage a network your-self. It isn't rocket science.

I know people who use networks all the time. They're no smarter than you are, but they do have one thing that you don't have: a certificate. And so, by the powers vested in me by the International Society for the Computer Impaired, I present you with the certificate in Figure 1-2, confirming that you've earned the coveted title Certified Network Dummy, better known as CND. This title is considered much more prestigious in certain circles than the more stodgy CNE or MCSE badges worn by real network experts.

Congratulations, and go in peace.