

Certificering, heeft het nu waarde of niet?

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Translated by Huib Schoots as part of blogpost: Does certification have value or not?

There is a very savage debate going on about whether certification has value for testers. I would like to give my opinion on this.

There are various certification programs for testers, such as ISTQB, TMap or CAT. And if I can count the numbers, those programs are very popular. The proponents claim that you prove to have a foundation in testing with certification, you possess certain knowledge and it supports education. The opponents say that certification only shows that you have learned a particular book, it says nothing about the tester's skills and it may be even counterproductive because the tester is trained to become standard tester.

Who, in my opinion, is right? Both I think. To explain that, I would like to make the comparison with a driving license. Does a driving license show anything? Well, at least you have studied the traffic rules well and know them. And, while driving, it is quite useful if we all use the same rules. If you doubt that, you should drive a couple of rounds in Mumbai. A driver's license also shows that you have had driving lessons and, at least, at any time, can could drive reasonably. Does a driving license guarantee that you are always a good driver? Certainly not. Other things are also important, such as physical and mental fitness, alertness and such. And driving a license will certainly not make you drive like Max Verstappen. But Max Verstappen does have a driver's license. Just like a truck driver, a bus driver and taxi driver (although I doubt that sometimes). Logical, right?

And what about testers? I think that they should also be certified. From someone who calls himself a professional tester we may expect some basic knowledge and knowledge about certain methods? But everyone else must realise that a certificate does not make the person a professional tester! To be a professional driver you have to do a lot more, such as additional training and especially a lot of experience. And that is even more important for Max Verstappen!

Is the criticism of opponents of certification nonsense? No, they do have a point. Many of the well-known certification programs originated when IT projects looked very different and, in my view, these programs did not grow with the developments. So they train for 'the old world'. The CAT certification is an exception to this. Another point where the opponents have a point is the value purchasing departments or intermediaries attach to certificates. In many of the purchasing departments and intermediaries, the attitude seems that if someone has a certificate, it is also a good tester. And to say that, more is needed.

In short: I think that we may expect a professional tester to obtain the necessary certificates. But I also think that its value should not be exaggerated. Thirdly, I think some certification programs need to be modernized. It would be nice if the purchasing departments and intermediaries realize that the value of these programs has fallen considerably in recent years, perhaps then the people behind these programs realize that they need to modernize.

P.S. Another short word about Squerist in this, because this blog is on the Squerist website and has been written by a Squerist employee. Did I then state the 'official position' of Squerist? No, because there is none. Squerist assumes self-control and, as a result, there is room for different opinions. I feel that pluralism is very refreshing and it gives room for discussion. Awesome.