IT certification: Demand, characteristics and integration into traditional university MIS curriculum.

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Abstract

The value of IT certification is a subject of debate. IT magazines suggest that certifications can provide opportunities for new positions, promotions or salary increases to existing employees. Research suggests that IT certification can boost a fresh graduate’s profile to garner the attention of a hiring manager. That certification, education and experience are complimentary factors in the future job prospects of a candidate. For years, educators have been suggesting to include IT certifications in the traditional computing curricula of colleges and universities. However, due to a dearth of knowledge and commitment, faculty members have been reluctant to follow the suggested route. In this paper, we report the steps of integrating several IT certifications in the graduate MIS curriculum of a U.S. university over a period of six years. Certifications from the leading vendors such as Microsoft, Oracle, and Cisco were integrated into the programming, database, and networking courses. A Survey of past and present students suggests that almost all believe that IT certification can help them build a better career and they were prepared well for the certification exams. We recommend that educationists who have been faced with the dilemma of whether or not to adapt IT certifications in their computing curricula, should take the steps and do so. That will bring IT departments up to the par with IT industry standards.
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