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Canada's Association of Information Technology (IT) Professionals

Resident Bloggers

Stephen Ibaraki
 Industry Analyst
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Barnaby Jeans
 IT Pro Advisor

New Professional Credentialing/Certification Paths for IT Workers

This news item energizes a dialogue: <http://www.cips.ca/news/national/news.asp?aID=2270>

New and Improved Designation for Tech Workers

Tech Association urges industry to reinforce professional standards

by Mylene Sajo

The [Canadian Information Processing Society](#) (CIPS) recently announced the revamping of a professional designation for Information Technology (IT) workers. The Information Systems Professional (I.S.P.) of Canada designation is being strengthened and is now available to academics, IT leaders and experienced IT professionals, three groups of IT workers that were not eligible for the designation previously.

"The need for an IT designation that acknowledges senior executives and educators as well as the broad range of IT experts in our profession is vital in meeting today's technology demands," said CIPS Past President Dennis Hulme I.S.P. "Considering the potential technology mishaps that can occur and may even endanger lives, these IT leaders need to take a leadership role in ensuring that those they direct and mentor act ethically and have the necessary education and experience to practice...and that they themselves are continuously keeping their IT knowledge current."

CIPS will officially launch the new I.S.P. designation program during [I.S.P. Week](#) (October 16 to 23, 2006). While CIPS puts the finishing touches on the program, the association started a campaign during the INFORMATICS 2006 IT symposium which was held in Victoria last month. CIPS wants to educate the industry about the benefits of the improved designation.

Other key improvements to strengthen the I.S.P. designation include the creation of a Body of Knowledge and the revision of the Code of Ethics.

- The CIPS Body of Knowledge is a tool to help employers to accurately assess the technical skills of IT workers. This will help companies to plan work assignments and help select the most appropriate employees for their needs.
- The CIPS Code of Ethics is a newly revised guide to professional conduct for today's standards. The Code is designed to help guide IT workers in maintaining the highest level of ethical conduct, standards of practice and integrity with respect to their IT activities.

"I believe the new and improved I.S.P. designation, the Body of Knowledge and Code of Ethics, will help address current compliance laws, encourage ethical behaviour, help mitigate technology risk, and ensure that best security practices are followed," said Kerry Augustine I.S.P., a Director at Great West Life in Winnipeg.

Under the enhanced I.S.P. designation, there will be three new qualifications for IT workers:

- **New Qualification #1: Established Academics** – This qualification is aimed at educators in Canadian universities or equivalent.
- **New Qualification #2: IT Leaders** – This qualification is directed to senior IT leaders who are responsible for IT strategies, resources, and operations at their organization.
- **New Qualification #3: Established IT Professionals** – This qualification is aimed at established IT professionals who possess professional IT experience but may not hold a traditional IT degree.

The new I.S.P. designation qualifications still maintain the high standards of the designation.

"We strongly urge chief technology and information officers to become I.S.P. holders under the new qualification #2: IT leaders. They need to lead by example. The designation is a way for them to demonstrate to their customers, clients and the public that their IT departments meet the highest of standards," added Hulme.

The I.S.P. is the only designation for IT professionals recognized by law in Canada. It was introduced in 1989 by CIPS, Canada's association of IT professionals and is legislated as a self regulating designation in six provinces: British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Other provinces are working towards similar legislation through their provincial government.

Holders of the I.S.P. designation possess the education and experience to practice in the field of IT. Holders also abide by a Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice and are required to keep their knowledge current.

Kevin Brown I.S.P., a CIO for ENMAX Corporation, an energy firm based in Calgary stated that the company looks for IT professionals that either hold or are pursuing the I.S.P. designation. "The I.S.P. designation signifies to us that the successful candidate is committed to maintaining currency in their professional knowledge and skills."

For more information about the I.S.P. designation, Body of Knowledge and Code of Ethics, visit the CIPS National Web site at: www.cips.ca or contact: 1-877-ASK-CIPS.



John Oxley
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Comments

re: New Professional Credentialing/Certification Paths for IT Workers

Monday, June 26, 2006 6:17 PM by Adam Cole

For the benefit of those who are unfamiliar with the I.S.P., let's not forget the traditional path to the I.S.P. For most, to apply for an I.S.P. you need a combination of years of relevant academic experience (college or university) and relevant work experience. You will also need to agree to a code of ethics, supply two signed sponsors, commit to continuous learning, etc. Please see: <http://www.cips.ca/standards/isp/become>.

The I.S.P. is not a simple designation to obtain. The good news is that those who do obtain their I.S.P. continue to demonstrate the expertise and professionalism reflected in a professionally-oriented designation.

The I.S.P. is maintained by CIPS, a non-profit, volunteer-based, vendor neutral organization. CIPS has been around since 1957 ... 50 years! As such CIPS is the oldest IT association in Canada. CIPS is ideally positioned to promote an industry-wide Professional designation. (The I.S.P. is the only legislatively recognized IT designation in Canada.)

If you are serious about your career; if you wish to demonstrate to your current and future employers/clients that you are committed to professionalism and best representing their interests; if you believe that the IT industry requires a self-regulating professional body like the engineers, doctors, lawyers, accountants, etc.; then, I strongly encourage you to consider pursuing your I.S.P.

Best of luck!
Adam Cole, I.S.P.

***** Stephen, please feel free to tweak this message. *****

re: New Professional Credentialing/Certification Paths for IT Workers

Tuesday, June 27, 2006 4:03 PM by [Stephen Ibaraki](#),
[FCIPS,I.S.P.](#), sibaraki@cips.ca

Adam,

Thank you for filling in the gaps. In Vancouver, the user groups were permitted to give a short talk at EnergizeIT. I gave 3 minutes where I talked about the I.S.P. I couldn't believe the overwhelming positive response for this professional development message at the event and afterwards. People made a point of indicating their high interest and the value they got from the talk :-). There is definitely a compelling message in being professionally credentialed. And with recent support from corporations, the federal government, provincial legislation, international backing, and examples such as the Ontario School Board system, it is obvious, the I.S.P. is hitting the mark with IT workers. Even in the blogs here in CIM, the career development, and professional development ones receive the most traffic and interaction which is what the I.S.P. is all about. Moreover, I.S.P. holders represent the leaders in industry plus dedicated and top entrepreneurs today so IT workers/managers have an opportunity for mentorship, networking, and career development by pursuing one.

Cheers,
Stephen Ibaraki, FCIPS, I.S.P.

re: New Professional Credentialing/Certification Paths for IT Workers

Thursday, June 29, 2006 6:11 PM by [KI](#)

Seeing more of this and liked what I saw at the Energize event.

re: New Professional Credentialing/Certification Paths for IT Workers

Friday, June 30, 2006 2:53 PM by [Stephen Ibaraki](#),
[FCIPS,I.S.P.](#), sibaraki@cips.ca

It's clear, that there is a compelling reason for IT professionals to seek a legislated professional designation. I'm glad that you found the information useful!

From Mylene Sayo....

There is an article in Thursday's issue of the Globe and Mail newspaper, "Dearth of certifications isn't helping IT industry" by Shane Schick (Thursday, June 29, 2006, Report on Business - Section B, p. B11), that encourages the IT sector to strongly consider the I.S.P. designation as a way to identify individuals "who collectively work to keep the standards of the profession high."

John Boufford I.S.P., CIPS President, and Kerry Augustine I.S.P., CIPS Director were quoted in the article.

Best regards

What do you think?

Title *(required)*

re: New Professional Credentialing/Certification Pat

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