

Letters after your name spell success

An official designation provides a platform for career growth

BY GRANT WING

Armed with an extensive education, a raft of work experience and a briefcase brimming with contacts in their respective fields, one thing remains clear: professionals can still reap the benefit of a professional designation.

But what does it take to get one and what are the implications? We sought insight from a range of Lower Mainland professionals who've taken that extra step.

Within the burgeoning information technology sector, the **Canadian Information Processing Society (CIPS)** grants the **Information Systems Professional (ISP)** designation, the only professional IT designation recognized by law in Canada.

IT professionals qualify for ISP certification through education and work experience or through academic, industry leadership and professional recognition.

CIPS vice-president Stephen Ibaraki said the ISP designation provides a gold standard, certifying that professionals have been measured by a body of



Denise Buchanan: achieved top marks in the first national knowledge exam when she took her CHRP designation

much of the recognition and credibility he has received as a noted IT expert, writer and educator.

"It's probably one of the most significant things I've done in my life ... it's helped me many, many times, not only in this country but working internationally," said Ibaraki.



Best Buy's Christian Codrington: holder of CHRP designation since 1999 and re-certified three times

Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) designation.

Candidates must be a member of the BC HRMA and pass exams covering knowledge and practical application of the association's core competencies. CHRPs must also re-certify every three years by accumulating professional development points.

"I think it is very worthwhile. It gives you a very credible, portable, nationally recognized designation"

-Denise Buchanan, director of human resources, White Spot Ltd

knowledge, adhere to a code of ethics and have demonstrated professional competence.

He credits his ISP designation for

Practical application

Within the sphere of human resources, the B.C. Human Resources Management Association (BC HRMA) grants a

An entry into high-profile discussions

Best Buy senior HR manager Christian Codrington has had a CHRP designation since 1999 and has been re-certified three times.

He values the BC HRMA roundtables and courses he has participated in to maintain his designation.

Education

CIP (Chartered Insurance Professional)

Requirements: This comprehensive, 10-week course designation program is a premier property and casualty insurance program with a focus on applied career specific knowledge with streams for brokers/agents, underwriters and adjusters. Students are required to take five compulsory and three applied professional courses, as well as two electives chosen from more than 25 available courses taken in-class or via distance education.

Cost: Approximately \$510 to \$575 (includes tuition, exam fees and text materials).

Administering Organization: The Insurance Institute of B.C. (www.iibc.org)

Management and Human Resources

CHRP (Certified Human Resources Professional)

Requirements: Successful completion of the National Knowledge Exam (NKE) and the National Professional Practice Assessment (NPPA). Both cover expertise in eight core human resources areas.

Cost: NKE \$265, NPPA \$530 (both inclusive of taxes)

Administering Association: BC Human Resources Management Association (www.bchrma.org)

CIM (Certified in Management), P.Mgr. (Professional Manager), F.CIM (Chartered Manager)

Requirements: CIM: Completion of an eight subject study program in effective management. Students complete six mandatory and two option courses. The following courses are offered through universities and colleges affiliated with the Canadian Institute of Management, or can be taken through a Distance Education Program: Managerial Communications which examines communication theory, written and verbal communication skills; Canadian business law, which provides an overview of business law and basic legal terminology with an emphasis on contract law and types and uses of contracts; managerial accounting which focuses on the basic concepts and procedures of financial accounting for both internal and external reporting; managerial finance, which provides an understanding of the financial function as it relates to business objectives, capital management and capital budgeting in the short and long term; strategic policy analysis which provides a general management perspective in decision-making and an analysis of general management problems. As well, courses on either organizational behaviour or human resource management. Options courses are offered by a local branch to meet local and regional needs covering the following: introduction to management, managerial marketing, management information systems, quality management, international studies, economics and project management.

P.Mgr.: Business graduate holding an MBA, MPA or equivalent degree and three years' experience in a management position of individual responsibility; or university graduate holding a baccalaureate degree including a business degree, supplemented by an accepted program in management and five years' experience in a management position of individual responsibility; or graduate of the institute's four-year

program holding a CIM designation or other recognized certificate and seven years experience in a management position of individual responsibility; or a person with 10 years' experience in a management position of individual responsibility with a municipal, government, charitable or private corporation or personal business.

F.CIM: Provides individuals an opportunity to complete an advanced level program of study beyond the CIM program of study, through the completion of an additional 12 courses at an advanced level. Applicants that have already completed an advanced level degree, a master's or PhD in business or related area of study may apply for the F.CIM based on their completed academic standing.

Cost: Fees vary.

Administering Association: The Canadian Institute of Management (www.cim.ca)

CMC (Certified Management Consultant)

Requirements: Candidates must possess at least an undergraduate degree or equivalent. They must be members of the association and have completed and signed a declaration that serves as their bond to abide by the association's Uniform Code of Professional Conduct. They must then find two current CMCs in Canada to sponsor them and attest to the candidate's experience in management consulting. In addition, candidates must complete the required courses of study, a written comprehensive examination and an oral assessment.

Cost: Annual CAMC membership fee: \$395 prior to receiving the CMC designation; \$495 upon becoming a CMC. Additional fees are assessed for courses of study and examinations.

Administering Organization: Canadian Association of Management Consultants (www.camc.com) through its affiliate institutes.

PHR (Professional in Human Resources), SPHR (Senior Professional in Human Resources), GPHR (Global Professional in Human Resources)

Requirements: At least two years of exempt level HR work experience. Eligibility to write exams for the two designations requires candidates to demonstrate that at least 51 per cent of their daily activities are within the human resource function and that those activities are at the exempt level. The GPHR is intended for HR professionals who develop and implement global HR strategies, manage HR operations overseas and oversee international assignment management.

Cost: Exam costs range from \$250 to \$425

Administering Organization: Human Resource Certification Institute (www.hrci.org)

PMP (Project Management Professional)

Requirements: The Project Management Institute (PMI) sponsors a project management credentialing program which fosters the development, maintenance, evaluation, promotion and administration of a rigorous experience- and examination-based education, culminating with the issuance of a globally recognized professional credential.

Eligibility criteria: High school diploma or equivalent; minimum five years / 60 months unique non-overlapping project management experience during which at least 7,500 hours (accrued within the last eight years) are spent leading and directing project tasks; 35 hours of project management education. PMP certificants must demonstrate ongoing professional commitment to the field of project management

by satisfying PMI's Continuing Certification Requirements (CCR) program.

Cost: Varies

Administering Organization: Project Management Institute (www.pmi.bc.ca)

Technology

ISP (Information Systems Professional)

Requirements: An applicant must provide documented evidence that he or she is able to meet or exceed the established criteria for academic qualifications and relevant experience. Experience must be in a role requiring the use of a significant level of IT knowledge where a high level of independent judgment and responsibility are exercised.

Cost: Application fee: \$275; annual membership fee: \$200 to \$300

Administering Association: Canadian Information Processing Society (www.cips.ca)

Sales and Marketing

CSP (Certified Sales Professional)

Requirements: Canadian Professional Sales Association (CPSA) membership; formal training course based on identified competencies (consultative selling); written and oral exams; at least two years of sales experience; adherence to CPSA Sales Institute's Code of Ethics.

Cost: Courses range from \$300 at a community college to \$2,000; CPSA offers professional sales training for \$1,245; certification fee, \$445.

Administering Association: CPSA Sales Institute (www.cpsa.com)

Supply Chain Management

CPP (Certified Professional Purchaser)

Description: The national CPP accreditation program is the leading professional education program in supply chain management in Canada. Called the Strategic Supply Chain Management Leadership Program, it has been redesigned for 2007 to meet the evolving needs of the market. It is now the most comprehensive program available. Offered through the Purchasing Management Association of Canada (PMAC), the program is instructed by distinguished academics and senior practitioners.

Combining supply chain management knowledge and broad business skills, the CPP program is designed to be taken over 36 months concurrent with full-time employment. The program has eight modules to cover the foundations of supply chain management. It has six interactive workshops to address high-level business skills.

It includes a week in-residence session which integrates knowledge from modules and workshops. It includes a final written examination which tests knowledge acquired throughout the year. The program also has a practical experience requirement of a minimum of three years' progressive supply chain experience.

Requirement: A business degree or diploma from a Canadian university, college or technical institute. Other individuals must complete specific business courses at a post-secondary institution.

Administering Association: BC Institute of Purchasing Management Association of Canada (www.bci-pmac.bc.ca) ■