

Transformation Certification

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Hi it's Rob Llewellyn here and welcome to episode six of transformation management. Thank you so much for joining me today. As always I'm going to do my best to help you get better equipped to manage and lead transformation.

The strength of a transformation management certification is based on a fundamental trust that a person who receives that credential has proven that he or she possesses the required experience, knowledge or skills required in the profession or practice of transformation management. With certification, everyone (except the un-certified) wins as companies strive to thrive in a highly competitive digital economy, and professionals strive to secure the best roles and perform at their best.

Professional certifications remain one of the best and most effective mechanisms to assess the knowledge, skills and experience needed to perform a specific role. In fact it's even more important for companies as hundreds of thousands of people now exaggerate their experience and understanding of the latest digital economy skills. This leaves hiring managers sceptical about many candidates who make bold claims about their expertise. So certification helps verify the claims and suggestions that candidates make these days, in their CVs, resumes, LinkedIn profiles and social media comments.

Digital transformation certification is now separating amateurs from professionals in a discipline that has swept through organisations across the planet. As in other professions, digital transformation certification is become a key differentiator for those who aim to claim a place in the new digital economy.

Let's face it, transformation is not something that most managers and leaders have much, if any experience in.

So let's consider three reasons the best professionals get certified in digital transformation.

Reason #1. To secure a new transformation management role with another organisation

When you stay in the same organisation for a number of years, slowly but surely you lose touch with the outside world. Your field of vision narrows and you focus more on internal priorities, and less on the world outside your firm's walls. It's like being stuck in a goldfish bowl, and one of the biggest dangers of staying in a job too long is that you fall behind what's happening in the wider world. You might read about it occasionally online but you can't get involved in it because you're constrained by the company you work for.

Unless your company is very innovative and transformational, it'll be difficult or even impossible to give yourself the new transformation experiences you need to grow as a digital transformation professional. People in companies that don't transform often get stuck in a rut. They do the same

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operational activities over and over, with little to challenge them, so they don't get to grow. Their skillsets become out-dated and less valuable.

When people change jobs, they need to work much harder to learn fast in a completely different company than the one they became accustomed to working with. This explains why people who go in and out of many companies - such as consultants - learn so much. Consultants are very comfortable walking into new business situations and figuring out how to navigate the new landscape they've just been parachuted in to help.

You need to demonstrate to hiring managers why you're the right person to help them orchestrate their transformation. What sets you apart from the other people who also claim to be the best candidate? Three success factors that can separate you from the crowd are knowledge, experience and certification.

Reason #2. To perform better in a current transformation role

If you already have a transformation management role inside an organisation, chances are that you have, or will face, your fair share of transformation challenges, because they come with the territory. No one charged with managing or leading digital transformation will escape the hurdles that transformation puts in front of them, but how we clear those hurdles in the way an athlete does on a track, is what separates the skilled transformation practitioner from the one that keeps falling. Not because of lack of passion, effort or even a desire to succeed - but because of lack of experience, knowledge, and skills.

Most large firms are bursting with operational expertise, but this is made up from an entirely different set of skills found in transformational management professionals. The reason why so many digital transformation efforts are struggling is because of the false assumption made by executives that a senior operational IT or business leader can become an overnight digital transformation master.

When leaders begin to hear the noise coming from a troubled transformation, one of the first things they do, is evaluate whether the person charged with managing that transformation is suitably equipped. The question of whether or not they're the right person for that job to be done comes next.

This means that those who don't have the right capabilities, will eventually be side stepped as executives re-assign responsibilities to a safer pair of transformation hands. So it's vital that people charged with leading transformation equip themselves with the expertise they need to perform at their best and deliver what stakeholders are expecting.

Reason #3. To secure a better transformation role with your current employer

More and more executives are coming to terms with the fact that launching dozens of uncoordinated siloed digital projects is not the route to transformation success. So the search for the right digital transformation management capability begins inside the company.

Most organisations have been built on operational expertise, and so they're typically well-staffed with it in all functions. While most operational managers and leaders have spent many years maturing their own operational capabilities, most have little if any experience of transformation. It's fair to say that while most operational leaders with two decades of experience have a few projects under their belts, few have had the responsibility of orchestrating an entire transformation.

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This means that the opportunity for those that are prepared to educate themselves in digital transformation management are huge. The last thing any firm wants to do is bring in external consultants, so internal staff that are seen to have put themselves through transformation training and become certified, will have a clear advantage over their colleagues. An advantage that will enable them to work alongside leaders to ensure that all aspects of transformation are addressed.

People who take steps to become educated and certified in digital transformation give themselves a competitive edge that separates them from the majority of their colleagues. And provided they perform well in their first transformation management role, they'll be the natural choice for further promotion as their company becomes more ambitious with their transformation strategy and plans.

There are few smart professionals in the digital economy who turn their nose up at the prospect of becoming certified in transformation. Those that do often belong to the antiquated mindset brigade, with the notion that "they learned it all a decade ago". These are exactly the type of people that are liabilities for companies, and who'll eventually find themselves - and the companies they might be leading - irrelevant in the digital economy.

Certification also protects companies by enabling managers to identify and hire competent people who've taken steps to have their expertise verified. All things being equal, companies prefer to hire a certified candidate over one who isn't certified, and research has revealed that credentials are significant factors in decision-making when hiring new staff and consultants. Many businesses have hard data that certification impacts their bottom line, so there's a significant benefit when hiring transformation professionals with credentials behind them.

Transformation certification can also improve an individual's earning potential and studies show that those who with relevant credentials earn higher salaries than those who don't. Oracle University, for example, compared the average salary of individuals who held Oracle certifications versus those who didn't and found certified professionals earn 13.7% more than their non-certified colleagues.

A certification that requires little effort or knowledge, or one that everyone can earn is typically of lower value than one that demands real effort, experience, knowledge and skill. Acquiring a certificate for attending a 45-minute webinar provides little if any value to professionals nor companies. Whereas a rigorous regimen of training and assessment can provide a real competitive advantage to professionals - along with reassurance to hiring managers.

While brick and mortar located education has served the world well for centuries, we live in a digital economy. The need to travel to a building at a location and time that suits the organiser but not you, is now a thing of the past. In the way that we no longer need to inconvenience ourselves with visits to a library, as digital transformation professionals, we can now learn and become certified online. And we can do it at our own pace and in our own space - wherever and whenever we choose to! 24 x 7.

And when you've invested time, money and effort to earn transformation credentials, you shouldn't keep it a secret. You want to be able to easily show it to other people such as your peers, current and future employers and partners. You want to let these people know that you've learned a transformation management body of knowledge and that your knowledge has been verified by taking an exam.

With Blockchain technology, fake credentials should now be a thing of the past. By ensuring your certification uses the blockchain to store your credentials, you can reassure yourself and companies that blockchain technology is being used to verify your credentials.

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Every certification these days should be accompanied by a suite of powerful marketing tools, to help you promote yourself online. Powerful social sharing features can enable you to quickly promote your credentials across 100's of social media channels. So it's wise to ensure you get these kinds of powerful features from whichever certification you go with. The days of having to settle for a PDF and a piece of paper should be a thing of the past. Your certification should be digital.

Earning your certification is like having a key to a vast world of opportunities the transformation profession offers, placed in the palm of your hand. It can open doors you didn't even know existed, as your achievement of certification will make a powerful statement about the expertise you bring to the table.

Ultimately, earning digital transformation credentials will:

- Help you earn credibility and respect in your field
- Open more opportunities for advancement
- Increase your earning potential
- Enable you to pick and choose the roles you want
- Prove your willingness to invest in your own development
- Demonstrate your commitment to your profession
- Separate you from the crowd of uncertified amateurs
- Improve your transformation skills and knowledge
- Build confidence in your knowledge of the profession
- Help you manage large-scale transformation more successfully
- Position you to guide and advise senior managers and leaders

New digital transformation credentials can launch you on a high-potential digital economy career path.

As with any certification, digital transformation certification demonstrates an understanding and knowledge about the profession and it provides a basic licence to practice. But those doing the hiring and appointment of transformation leaders need to ensure that transformation certification is accompanied by adequate commercial experience, people-skills, and political intelligence.

If you're a hiring manager or leader in the digital economy, don't fall for the wild claims of expertise from the thousands who want a digital transformation role with your company. Look to see if and how their expertise has been verified, and whether they're a truly authentic digital economy manager or leader that your leaders could trust.

I appreciate you listening, and here's a quote to finish off the day from Warren Buffett; "Ultimately, there's one investment that supersedes all others: Invest in yourself."

How can you invest in yourself to engineer a more rewarding transformation career in the digital economy?

I hope you enjoyed this episode. Thanks for listening - Take care and I'll catch you in the next episode of transformation management. Bye.