

**Press Contacts:**

Margaret Brown +1 703-898-9445

[Margaret.Brown@hrci.org](mailto:Margaret.Brown@hrci.org)

Bennie Johnson +1 703-535-6132

[Bennie.Johnson@hrci.org](mailto:Bennie.Johnson@hrci.org)



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**For Immediate Release**

## **Study Shows that HR Professionals and Employers Place Value in Professional Certification, Consider Certified Professionals as Assets to Business Profitability**

*Study reveals that employers consider professionally certified HR personnel more knowledgeable and committed; feel they have a positive impact on engagement and profitability*

*HR practitioners choose professional certification for life-long learning, help with career advancement*

**SHRM Annual Conference, San Diego, Ca. – June 27, 2010** – A survey of more than 1,500 human resources (HR) professionals practicing around the world has shown that HR employees rate professional HR certification as being very highly valued because it reflects the practical and professional experience of the certificant, shows a commitment to lifelong learning and helps with career advancement. The survey also showed that 62 percent of the U.S.-employer and 82 percent of Outside of U.S.-employer respondents consider professionally certified employees to have a strong impact on a company's profitability and that most professionals and employers feel that the demand for professional certification in the HR field will grow in the next three to five years.

The objective of the research, conducted by the HR Certification Institute and B2B International, was to understand the awareness, perceptions, and value of HR and other professional certifications, certificates, and degree programs by organizations of varying sizes from the United States and outside of the United States.

“Staying abreast of the opinions and values of HR professionals and business leaders around the world is a key objective for the HR Certification Institute,” said Mary Power, CAE, executive director. “In this survey, we focused on value – to the professional, to organizations and to business. As we all know, in a weak economy the candidate pool is, unfortunately, much bigger. Employees and employers must find critical differentiators to help sort among job candidates, so we wanted to see where the value of professional certification fell in the spectrum of differentiators.”

Key findings of the survey include:

- Professional certification is a **highly valued credential**. While employers are more willing to pay for certificate programs and professional certification, professional certification is considered as better value for the money spent.
- **Reputation of the awarding body**, as well as experience-based exams, recertification and continued education are the key factors that make certification valuable.
- **Increases in employee engagement, employment satisfaction and productivity** are the top ways of measuring the value of professional HR certification, as are reductions in staff churn, training and recruitment costs.

## **Employers**

Employers see **increasing and updating employees' knowledge** and **demonstrating their commitment** as the key advantages of professional HR certification. From an employer's perspective, having employees gain professional HR certification brings numerous advantages to the organization, and 97 percent of respondents believe that it is important for people in HR to be professionally certified. In addition, the survey found that:

- More than half (56 percent) of respondents who are in charge of an HR department believe that having professionally certified employees has a **positive impact on the profitability** of their organization.
- 96 percent of employers feel that an HR certified candidate applying for a job would have **an advantage over a non-HR certified candidate**.
- 69 percent of employers state that an HR certified person being considered as an independent consultant for an HR department would have a 'very significant' advantage over a non-certified individual.

Employers also felt that professional HR certification increases employees' confidence in their ability to do their jobs and increases an organization's reputation and demonstrates that it takes HR seriously.

## **Employees**

From an employee perspective, professional certification offers value for numerous personal and professional reasons, according to Alexandre Bouché, global business development director for the HR Certification Institute.

"Of the four types of credentials that an HR professional might hold – an undergraduate degree, a graduate degree, a certificate or a professional certification – the professional certification was felt to be by far the most beneficial," Bouché said. "The research revealed the advantages of this type of credential because it offers the most value for its cost and return on investment, it is highly flexible and customizable, it is the most practically and professionally oriented of the choices and it is the most experience based.

"Choosing to work toward a professional certification also provides the best networking opportunities according to respondents," Bouché concluded.

## **Recertification**

In terms of recertification, which requires certified HR professionals to complete educational and work-related activities every three years to prove that their knowledge base is up to date, 90 percent of both employers and employees felt that recertification is positive. According to respondents, recertification:

- Keeps knowledge current,
- Allows for ongoing education,
- Keeps certification relevant and valid,
- Keeps skills sharp, and
- Allows flexibility in achieving necessary credits.

The online study, conducted for the HR Certification Institute in May 2010 by independent market research specialist B2B International, sought the views of 1,592 HR professionals in 37 countries worldwide. The findings are being presented today at the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) 2010 Annual Conference & Exposition in San Diego.

A white paper detailing further findings from the survey also will be available at the conference. To request a copy of the paper, **contact Alexandre Bouché at [abouche@hrci.org](mailto:abouche@hrci.org)** or at +1.703.535.6419.

The HR Certification Institute is a strategic partner of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and awards three core credentials: Professional in Human Resources (PHR®), Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR®) and Global Professional in Human Resources (GPHR®). There are more than 108,000 in certificants in 70 countries. In 2011, eligibility requirements for certification will become more stringent and require additional years of professional experience to qualify at each level. For more information about testing in 2010, visit [www.hrci.org](http://www.hrci.org).

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**About the HR Certification Institute**

[www.hrci.org](http://www.hrci.org)

*HR Certification Institute is an internationally recognized leader in HR certification, having been certifying HR professionals for more than 33 years. The HR Certification Institute has awarded more than 108,000 credentials in over 70 countries to HR professionals who have passed rigorous exams to demonstrate their mastery and real-world application of forward-thinking HR practices, policies and procedures. The HR Certification Institute is a strategic partner of the Society for Human Resource Management.*

**About B2B International**

[www.b2binternational.com](http://www.b2binternational.com)

*B2B International is a specialist business-to-business market research consultancy that provides customized b-to-b market research and intelligence studies on a global scale. In the last decade alone, it has carried out over a thousand surveys in almost every industry for corporations, [government](#) departments, [educational institutions](#), and [medical specialists](#) alike. With 30 years' experience in business-to-business market research, B2B International has offices in North America, Europe and Asia.*