

QAI CSTE / CSQA Certification / Re-certification Strategy

Presented by: Edwin Chan



About the Speaker

Edwin is a Specialist in Deloitte Inc., a global business and technology consultancy.

He is one of the active members in the Firm's Quality Assurance Practice.

Edwin has been in a QA Lead position in a variety of large scale implementation projects in different industries including telecommunications and financial services.

Experienced in the HP/Mercury Interactive tools Quality Center (Test Director), QuickTest Professional (QTP), and LoadRunner.

Some of his certifications include:

- **CSTE (Certified Software Tester) from Quality Assurance Institute (QAI)**
- **Foundation Certificate in IT Service Management (ITIL).**

Agenda

- About QAI
- QAI Certifications and Recent Trend
- Journey of Certification
- Understanding the Curriculum, Exam Format
- Certification Strategy
- Re-Certification Strategy

About QAI

■ **QAI Global Institute, formerly known as QAI (Quality Assurance Institute)**

■ **Headquartered in Orlando, Florida. Found in 1980. Focus on training, seminar and certification.**

■ **Administers the Certifications to be discussed in this presentation.**

■ **Services include:**

- Software quality training courses
- Assessments of an organization's testing and quality processes
- Host and organize special events and conferences (QUEST)
- Administers software certifications (CSTE, CSQA)

Certifications administered by QAI

Inventory of QAI Certifications

- **CASQ – Certified Associate in Software Quality**
- **CAST – Certified Associate in Software Testing**
- **CSQA – Certified Software Quality Analyst**
- **CSTE – Certified Software Tester**
- **CMSQ – Certified Manager of Software Quality**
- **CMST – Certified Manager of Software Testing**
- **CSBA – Certified Software Business Analyst**
- **CSPM – Certified Software Project Manager**
- **CQSPE – Certified Quantitative Software Process Engineer**
- **CSPE – Certified Software Process Engineer**

The two most popular certifications are CSTE and CSQA.

Certification Drivers

Driving Forces of Certification

Employer

Career Growth

Industry Trend

Recognition

Better Pay

Recent Trend in Certification

According to a recent article from Forrester Research, more and more companies are leveraging certified software testers, certified QA manager, to build their QA organizations.

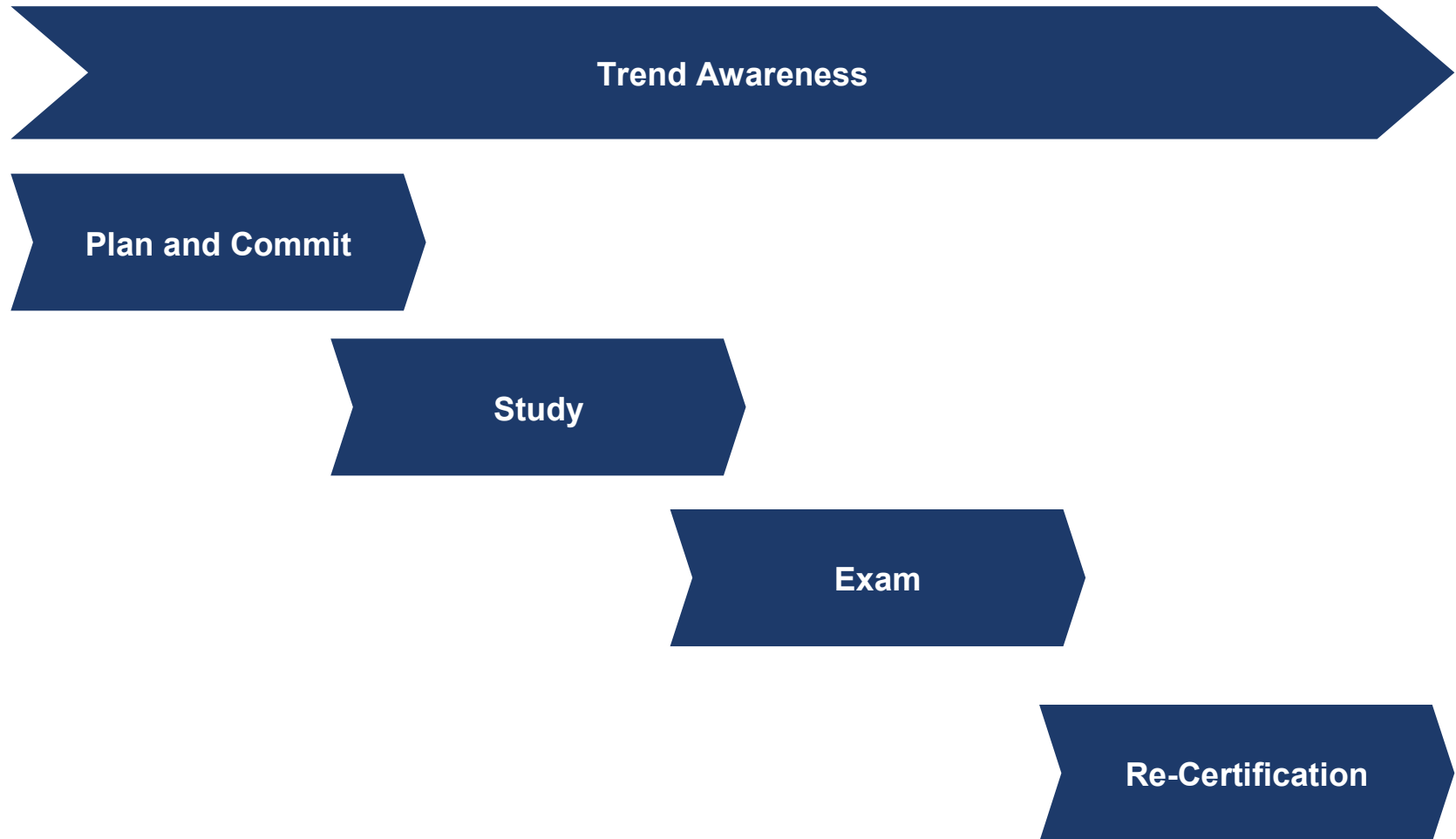
Certification is increasingly becoming a nice-to-have credential versus necessary job requirement.

QA / Testing certification is growing as a requirement for hiring companies, also offers an opportunity for career growth for individuals.

Benefits of Certification

- **Certification identifies an individual as a quality assurance leader.**
- **Certification earns the candidate the respect of colleagues and managers.**
- **Software Certifications has become recognized worldwide as the standard for information technology quality assurance professionals.**

Certification Journey



Commit and Plan

Commit

- Certification is a big step; a big decision
- Requires significant time commitment and dedication
- Discuss with your significant other
- Explain to your family members
- Seek their support
- Make sure they understand your commitment

Plan

- Understand the Exam format
- Set target for exam date
- Avoid exam cram
- Devise study plan
- Think about re-certification after you pass the exam

QAI CSTE/CSQA Exam Format – The “Must-Know”

4-part exam in 4 hours

2 multiple choice parts and 2 essay / short answer parts

Multiple choice and essay parts taken in an alternating fashion

15 minutes breaks between parts

Starts in the morning, extending to mid-afternoon, with lunch break in between - a tiring and exhaustive day

Can be scheduled through Prometric since early 2008

Strongly advised NOT to schedule the exam during the winter (esp. January or February)

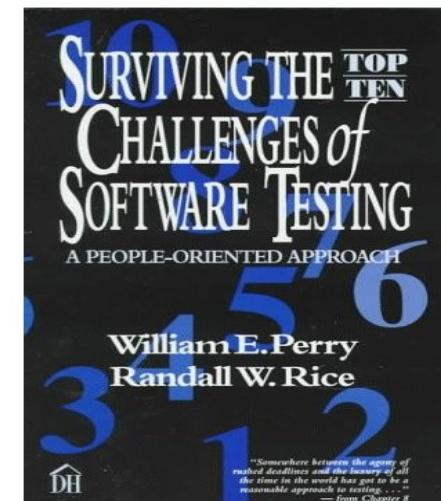
Passing mark is 75% (average of 4 parts); Must pass all 4 parts

QAI Exam Curriculum

Common Body of Knowledge (CBOK)

Other Important References:

- Effective Methods of Software Testing, by William E. Perry
- Surviving the Top Ten Challenges of Software Testing, a People-Oriented Approach, by William E. Perry and Randall W. Rice



Important things to know about the curriculum/exam

Studying just the CBOK is NOT enough to pass the exam.

If you have prior experience in QA / Testing field, you should have no problem passing the essay portion but the multiple choice portion could be an issue.

A certain portion of the CBOK is based on the book “Effective Methods of Software Testing”.

Sample questions available in CBOK.

Answering essay questions in point forms with key phrases and concepts.

Study

Study alone is not easy

Study groups are often effective; Take initiative to form a study group in your company

Make use of the training plan if certification is driven by employer

Budget minimum three months in your study plan

Track your progress against plan

Consider taking Test Prep Courses

Requires determination and perseverance

What to Focus on Studying – sample ONLY

PDCA (Edward Deming)

Fishbone (Ishikawa / cause-and-effect) diagram

Cost of Quality

Quality Assurance versus Quality Control

Top Ten Challenges in Software Testing

Testing Cost Curve

V-Model

Test Planning

Defect Management

Test Reporting

Day Before the Exam

Ensure you are well-rested, relax, sleep early

Prepare snacks and lunch for the Exam Day

Pack your writing instruments and other belongings ahead of time

Bring your proper ID required by the Exam Center

Make a checklist of the items to be brought with you on the exam day

On the Day of Exam

Be calm and relax

Go through your checklist prepared the night before

Allow sufficient time for the travel to the exam centre

Arrive 30 minutes early for registration

Make sure you bring your ID with you

Follow the instructions of the proctor

Pace yourself when answering questions – don't rush

Take advantage of the breaks to relax

Re-Certification – after you pass the exam

CONGRATULATIONS! YOU'VE ACHIEVE A SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE

Re-certification required every three years

Two choices:

- Achieve through re-certification journal with CPE (Continuing Professional Education) credits
- Take the exam again for re-certification

Maintain a journal of the CPE's – note what counts and what doesn't count – [starting from Day One after you pass the exam](#)

Journal entries can be now entered through the Software Certifications Customer Portal (<http://www.softwarecertifications.org>)

Use the resources available to acquire the CPE credits required

Re-Certification – Details about CPE

- Re-certification required every three years on the anniversary date (i.e. expiry date, usually your exam date)
- Common CPE categories:
 - Attended a conference
 - Read a journal/magazine article (1 per each article read)
 - Attended a course/seminar/tutorial
 - Read a book (5 per each book read)
 - Learned a software tool (5 per each tool learned)
- Beware of maximum credits allowed in each category
- Total of 120 CPE credits within 3 years (average 40 CPE credits in one year)
- Submit your CPE journal early before the expiry date
- Will not lose time or expiration date reset by submitting CPE journal early (e.g. You submit a journal October 1, 2008 for January 1, 2009 expiration. Your CSTE will be extended 3 more years to January 1, 2012.)

Re-Certification – Maximum CPE credits allowed

CPE Category	Maximum # credits allowed in 3 years
Attended a conference	80
Read a journal/magazine article	30
Attended a course/seminar/tutorial	60
Read a book	60
Learned a software tool	30

Re-Certification – Other CPE categories

- Education
 - Completed a Formal Self-Study Course
 - Participated in a Formal Study Group
- Publishing / Teaching
 - Presented at a Conference
 - Taught a course / seminar
 - Authored a book
 - Authored a journal / magazine article, presentation, or white paper
 - Led a Formal Study Group
- Professional Experience and Development
 - Contributed to the success of a professional organization
 - Lead a major process / program change at place of employment

For More Information / Questions

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QUESTIONS?

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