ATP 2019
Innovations in Testing
Orlando, FL

Challenge.
Transform.
Evolve.

INNOVATIONS IN TESTING
20 YEARS
ATP CONFERENCE 2019

Badges AND Certifications

Opportunities in all Credential Formats

Speakers

- Russell W. Smith, Ph.D.
  - VP Assessment Services
- Tiffany Powell
  - Director, Trailhead Credentials | Salesforce
- Mac McConnachie
  - Sr. Director, Trailhead Credentials | Salesforce

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Challenge. Transform. Evolve.

The Current Zeitgeist of IT Credentialing

zeit·geist
/ˈtsīt͵gīst,ˈzīt͵gīst/
noun
noun: **zeitgeist**
1.the defining spirit or mood of a particular period of history as shown by the ideas and beliefs of the time.

- Russell W. Smith, Ph.D.
  - VP Assessment Services
  - Alpine Testing Solutions

20 YEARS

"We are living in the dinosaur age"

"This is my grandparent's exam"

"Why do I need to take a long exam? Are there other ways you can assess my competency?"

What are the biggest problems/challenges for IT certification?

- Security
- The user experience
- Value proposition
- Relevancy
- Agility
- Credibility

all in the face of

constant change

How is your program currently addressing or planning to address those problems?

- Security
- The user experience
- Value proposition
- Relevancy
- Agility
- Credibility

- Constant refresh/republication

- Constant evaluation of the program
- Rapid adjustments/decrease development time/innovations in development
- Education/marketing/promotion

We need to increase adaptability without sacrificing basic principles

How are those changes being communicated internally and externally?

Meetings, presentations, web page updates, emails

None of these plans have been communicated, yet

social networking

Poorly

It's a **challenge** with a **small team**

How is your program currently using badges?

A certification gets a badge; 1:1

We LOVE our new digital badge program that rolled out with (our vendor) this past fall!

We aren't.

Badges are earned for passing exams, earning certs, and as part of a learning path (gamification of learning)

We aren't, but plan to.

Our vendor is very much about promoting their brand over ours and other cert bodies

How do or how might badges fit within your certification program?

Nicely

Very well if they are free or low cost

Marketing/ promotion of skills

Extend to achievements

Verification of cert

Future of badging?

We're considering blockchain participation/integration

Roll out for partner organizations who support the program

We're very skeptical about the value of badging – no employers are asking for them (still)

Verification of cert

Recognize SMEs and SME participation

What are test takers and employers really looking for from your program?

Candidates want to get a job, this is a means to an end

Verification/ validation

Employers want more information on the value of certification

What steps, if any, is your program taking to be more flexible?

…our program is fairly flexible and is willing to try new workflows, technologies, etc., almost to a fault

Adding test delivery options

item development structural innovation

I don't see a need to be more flexible. Certification programs should be rigorous. No participation badges.

Changing our exam format

What trade-offs/sacrifices do you expect to make to drive innovation in your program?

My sanity

Unless something changes, we may have to start sacrificing some of the integrity of the exam development process in order to speed up the process; otherwise, while the exams continue to be highly valid, they will be irrelevant in the current marketplace

Cost

I've definitely had to make some psychometric compromises to be agile and flexible in keeping our exams up to date

What opportunities do you see for our industry?

So as long as we can keep up, the opportunities will be many.

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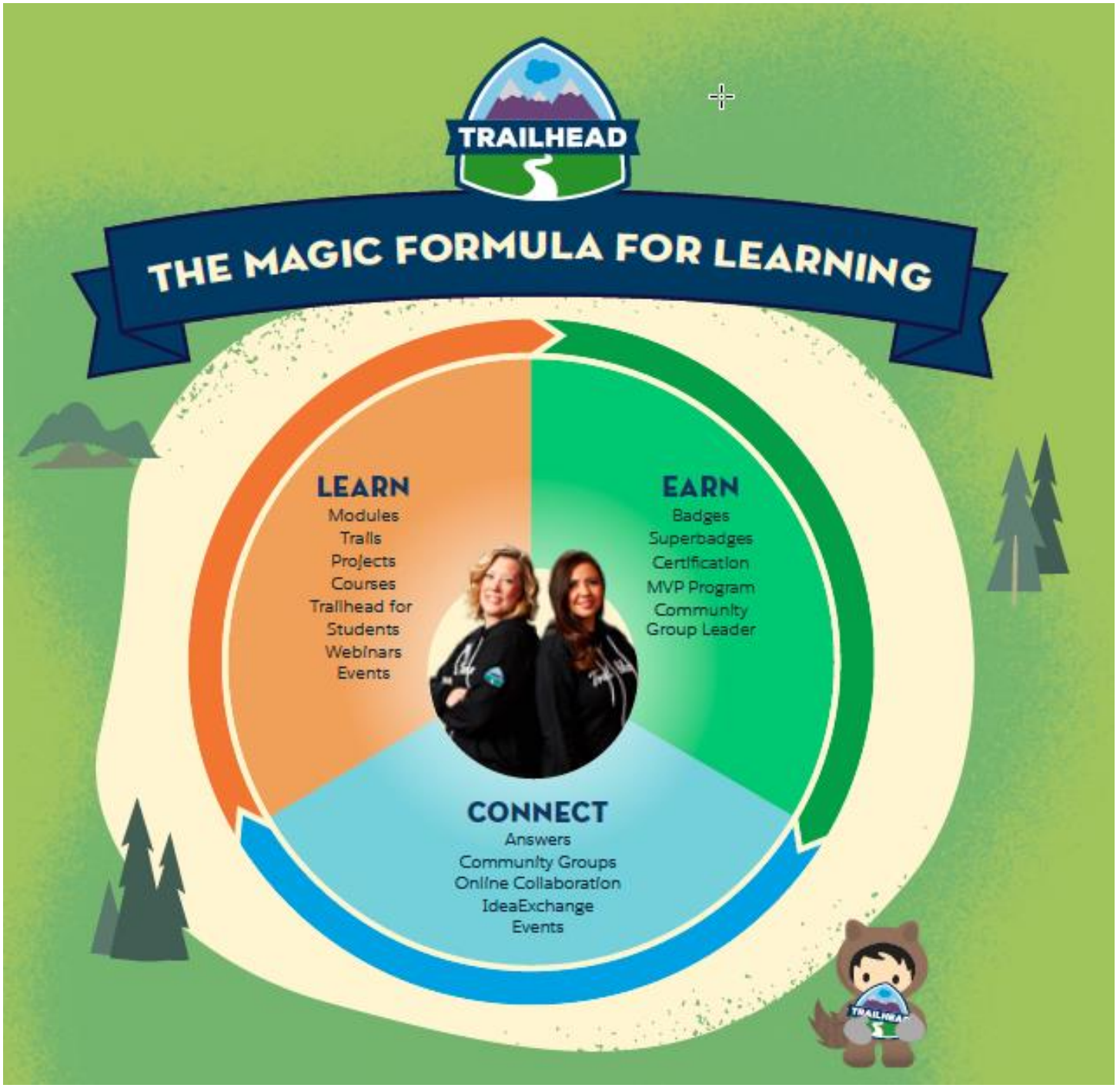
alternate means to assessing competency


TRAILHEAD
THE MAGIC FORMULA FOR LEARNING
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EARN
Badges
Superbadges
Certification
MVP Program
Community Group Leader
CONNECT
Answers
Community Groups
Online Collaboration
IdeaExchange
Events

Bringing Everyone Along in the Fourth Industrial Revolution

Technology

Reduce bias in innovation and increase access to technology

Workforce

Train all with the skills needed in the Fourth Industrial Revolution

Education

Empower the future workforce

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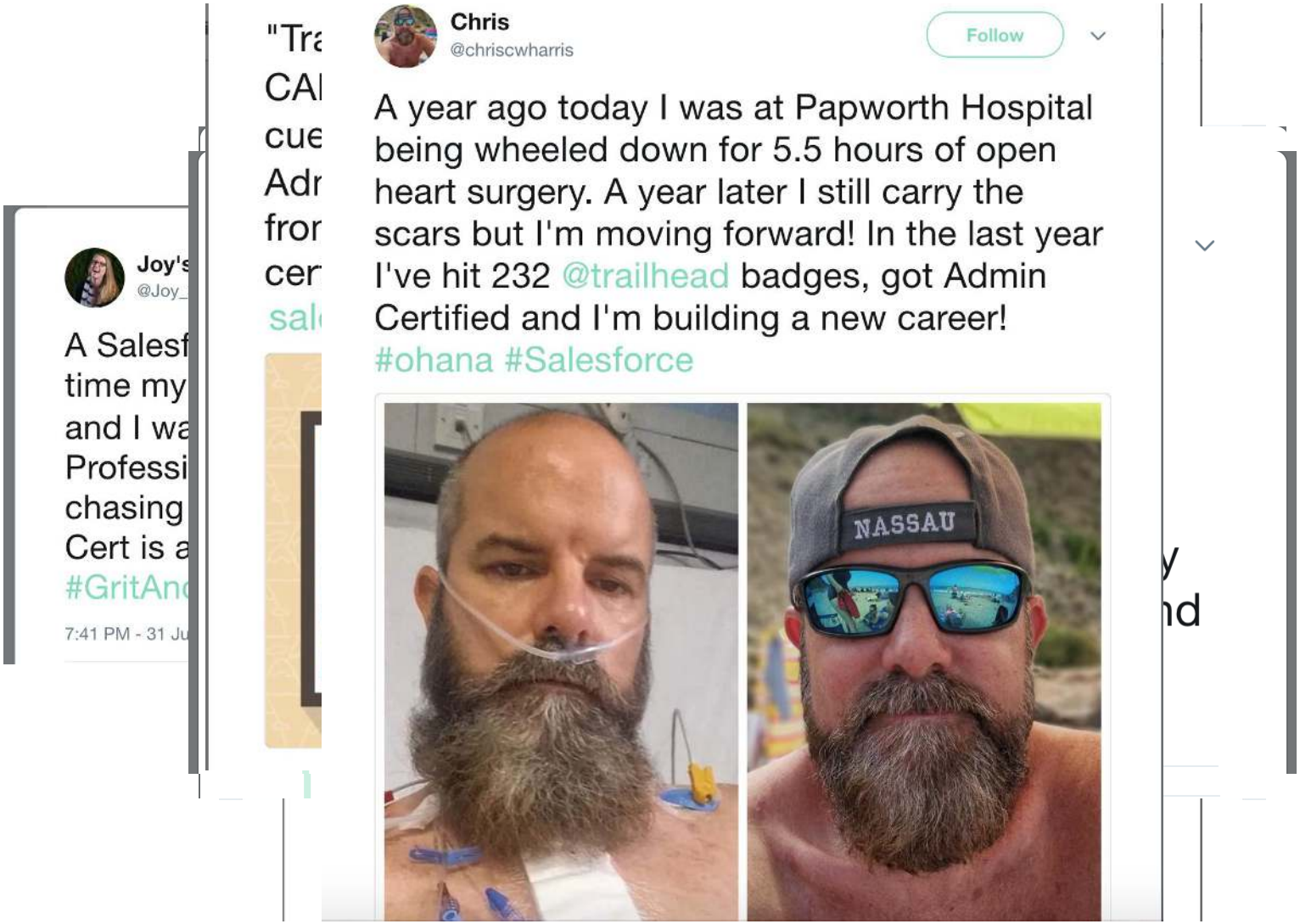
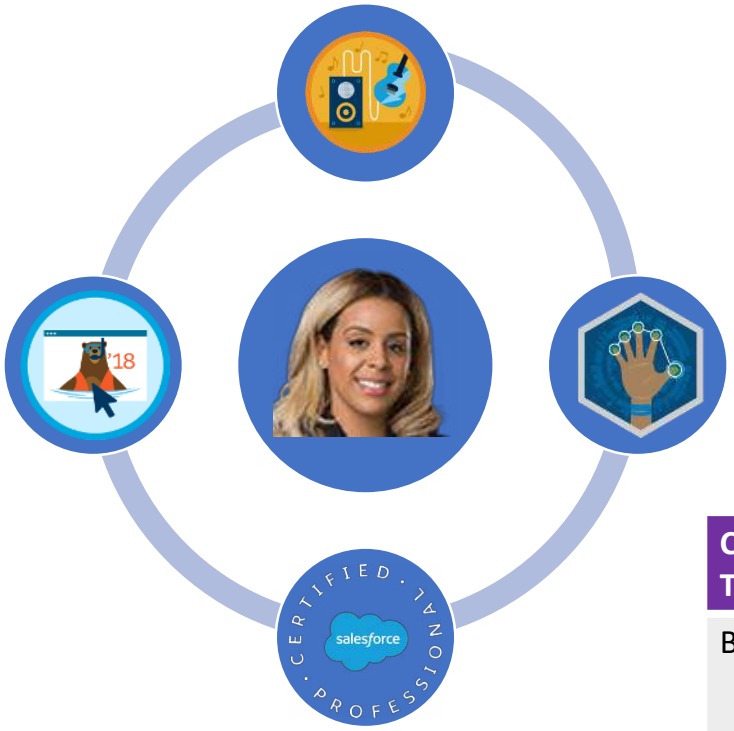
What Our Customers Tell Us



Badging and Credential Types

Building a Taxonomy That Builds and Rewards



Credential Type	Purpose	Format	Stakes
Badge	Learning	Text, Video, Simulation, Performance-based	Low
Superbadge	Learning+ Credentialing	Performance-based	Medium
Certification	Credentialing	Selected-response, Performance-based	High

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Trailhead + Certifications

New users --

New users felt that Trailhead was fun and easy to use. More importantly, Trailhead was a way to help with learning for the cert, with more use cases to practice.

Some new users had problems identifying which Trails to use to find the right training.

Employers--

Employers appreciated Trailhead for getting new hires up and running very quickly on Salesforce. Some required Trailhead badges within 30 days of employment and felt the skills acquired was easily extensible to other solutions. Other employers said that they internally use Trailhead for competition and gamification. Currently, employers felt that Trailhead lacked a recruiting element.

Partners--

Similar to other groups, Partners liked Trailhead for the ease of use, the gamification and the community.

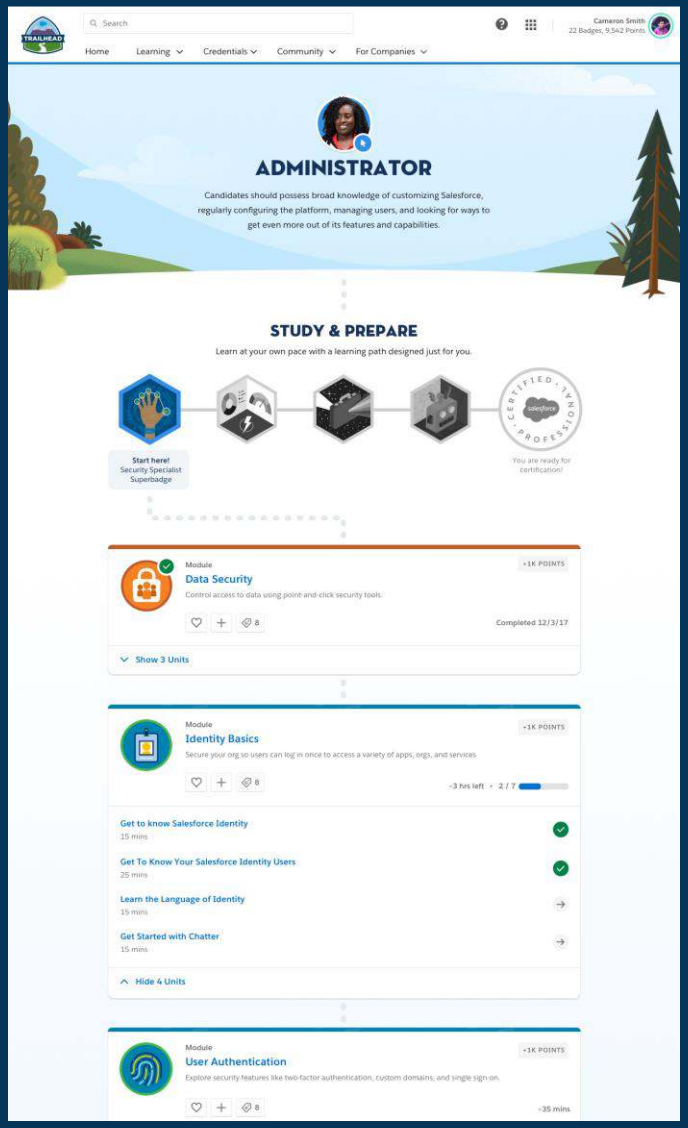
However, some partners felt that badges were “fluff” and were not rigorous enough.

MVPS--

MVPS were all very positive about the Trailhead model and felt that Trailhead learning and HOC appropriately demonstrated skillsets Only two MVPS held Superbadges

One MVP felt that Trailhead should not be held as the industry standard for learning skills.

What Our Customers and Audience Said

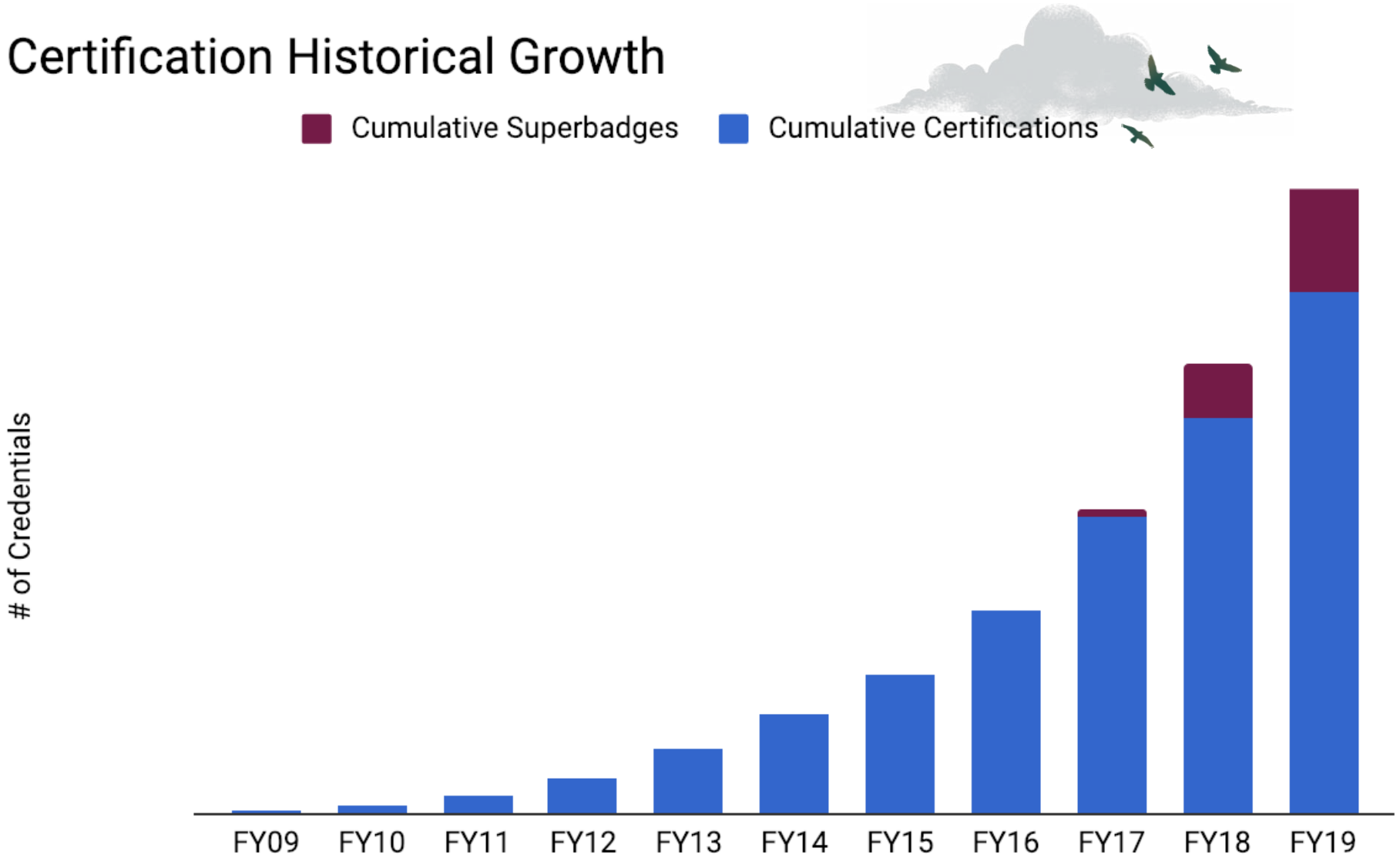


- **Positive about using Trailhead for role-level training -** Interviewees liked the idea of a guided role-based training using Trailhead and Hands on challenges.
- All believed Trailhead HOCs did a good job in demonstrating both time invested and skill levels within the "real-life" contexts.

"Exams have more clout, but Badges showcase experience"
--New User

"I love Trailhead, but it's hard to find the right trails to get ready for my cert.
--New User

Proof Is in the Data



Q&A

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