

# RETHINKING IT CERTIFICATION

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TESTING SOLUTIONS



**“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?”**



# WHERE WE STARTED

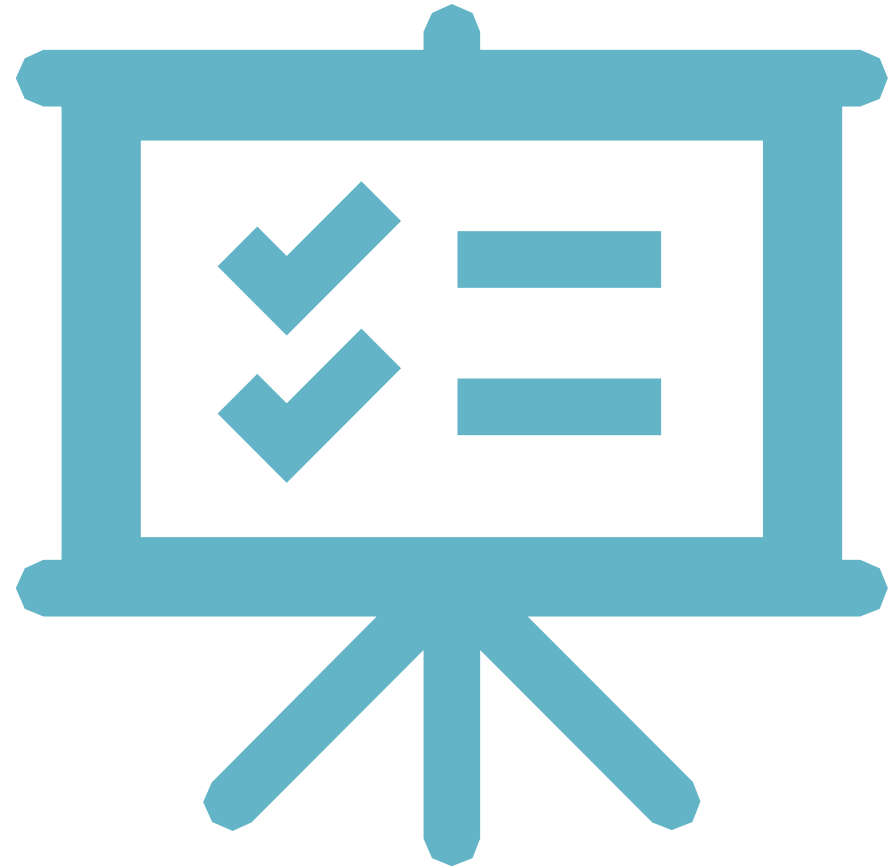
- **What is the focus for the sponsor?**
  - “certification” (proof of KSA/competency)

*or*

  - enablement/engagement/learning path?
- **What is the end goal?**
  - Certification as a destination

*or*

  - State of being (e.g., continuous learning and enhancement of KSA/competency)?





Life is a journey...

**Is certification?**

# BUSINESS DRIVERS

- Skilling workforce
- Maintaining expertise
- Economic impact for people seeking entry employment
- Economic impact for sponsor
- Why do you have a certification program?



# HOW CERTIFICATION RELATES TO:

## Driving desired behaviors

- Feature/function adoption
- Efficiency/elegance of solutions
- Quicker time to desired outcome (solution, implementation, etc.)

Revenue generation  
(growth)

Nature of support needs

Demand in job postings

Perceived value by  
stakeholders

Unintended consequences  
(good and bad)



HOW IS CERTIFICATION  
PROGRAM DRIVING  
BUSINESS OUTCOMES?



WHAT'S THE PURPOSE OF  
"RECERTIFICATION"?



HOW DO WE DRIVE 100%  
VOLUNTARY  
"RECERTIFICATION"?

# **VALUE OF CERTIFICATION: SPONSOR EXPECTATIONS**

# SUMMARY TAKE-AWAYS



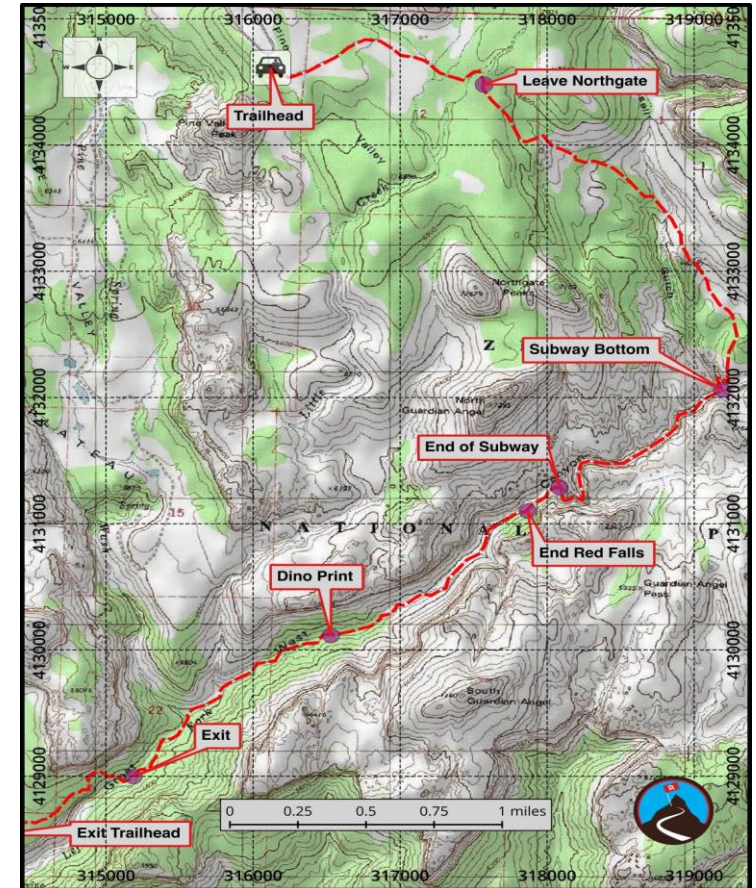
Value of certification is being challenged but...



Evidence of need for “proof” not just “participation”  
Countered with education



Data-driven evidence to support value is real





# What opportunities do you see for our industry?

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

asynchronous item  
development and crowd  
sourcing

data  
conversion

alternate means to  
assessing  
competency



# SETTING THE STAGE



“In Experience” / “In Work” skills assessment



Determining if someone is qualified based on the work that they do every day



Why make people take a traditional exam if they are performing the skills as part of their job role?

# CHANGING HOW WE DEFINE COMPETENCE



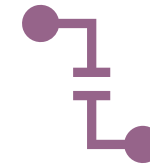
## Identify relevant tasks to measure

Access and assess empirical data  
Address how to handle “missing” data  
Emerging tasks/skills  
Important but Infrequent tasks



## Decide which tasks matter

Varying approaches possible  
Empirical, Survey, Committee-driven



## Decide what to measure for each task

Speed  
Elegance (steps followed)  
Efficiency  
Outcome  
,,etc,  
Couple empirical data with SME input

# HYBRID APPROACH TO “ITEM DEVELOPMENT”



Platform data from real world and/or sandbox environment

Potential shift in who we consider experts in “exam” development  
Start small and aggregate as necessary to evaluate skill



Replicate/augment platform data with performance tasks (tests)

Live  
Simulated  
Hybrid environments



More traditional item types augment platform data and performance tasks

Measure knowledge and/or lower cognitive complexity level skillsets

# OTHER/RELATED QUESTIONS



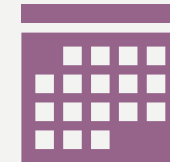
**Could task harvesting from a platform help us identify and define domains/roles?**

What analyses could be utilized to organize and prioritize tasks?



**Is lag between features/functions in platform and what is defined/measured as competent acceptable?**

Good?  
Bad?



**What is acceptable cadence for domain analysis and content specification?**

Point-in-time work on routine schedule or continuous/on-the-fly updates?

# PSYCHOMETRIC CHALLENGES

Reliability calculation doesn't make sense

- Does guessing apply? Are tasks truly independent? Do they need to be?

What about measuring:

- Elegance of solution
- Efficiency of solution
- How they completed the task?

Does the task completed REALLY matter if it maps to the higher order skill?

What psychometric assumptions no longer apply?

How do candidates demonstrate skills that are not allowed/required in workplace?

How does job analysis change in this world?

# DISCUSSION, EMPHASIZING THE X IN “TLX”



**What is the focus for the sponsor?**

“Certification” (proof of KSA/competency)

or

Enablement

Or

Engagement

Or

?????



**What is the end goal?**

Certification as a destination

or

State of ongoing relationship (e.g., continuous learning and enhancement of KSA/competency)?



**What additional questions come to mind?**



**What steps are organizations taking to supplement certification exams with behavior assessments?**