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# CyberSecurity Devils Newsletter

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NOVEMBER 2020

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# Certifications: Background

## Why certs are important in IT

Your undergraduate degree is an important first step to beginning your professional career. Certifications are official documents that show that you KNOW what you are doing.

**The demand for competent employees in the STEM field is higher than ever.** Earning your bachelor's degree is an important first step in having a career that you love.

A college degree is a signal that you have developed critical thinking which is the foundation of innovation. You think digitally and have a passion for learning.

You have seen the job postings for “New Grads” that require “4+ years of SQL, Javascript, and Systems Administration experience”. This can be a frustrating contradiction to see when searching for jobs.

**This is where certifications can make the difference!**

**Companies want someone that has specific and practical experience.**

Certificate states you have completed amount of training in preparation for a specific job.

Certifications listed on your resume and your LinkedIn page will increase your opportunity to be escalated to the top of the hiring list.

**According to TechRepublic, certifications in the cloud sector have soared.** As of June 2020, the demand and learning time on “Azure’s learning development platform is up 800%” (Combs, 2020, para 4).



Cyber security professionals have to master a wide range of technologies. “In 2019, the Cybersecurity Workforce Study from the International Information System Security Certification Consortium estimated the US had 804,700 cybersecurity professionals but needed 500,000 more” (Ross, 2020, para 3).

The best way to land one of these highly sought-after jobs is by having at least one certification on your utility belt.

# Top Certifications by Profession

The best certifications to jumpstart your career

If you are reading this, chances are you are a member of the Cyber Security Devils. This section will break down the top certifications depending on your field within IT.

**If you are shooting for a career in cyber security, like a Cyber/Information Security Analyst or Engineer, you have a neat set of certifications that can lead you on that path.**

**CompTIA is one of the most well-known associations that offers the fundamental certifications for IT professionals.** Their three core certification tracks for professionals include the Network+, A+, and Security+. They offer a most directed learning track per job, including the CySA+ for security analysts, and PenTest+ for white hat pentesting professionals.

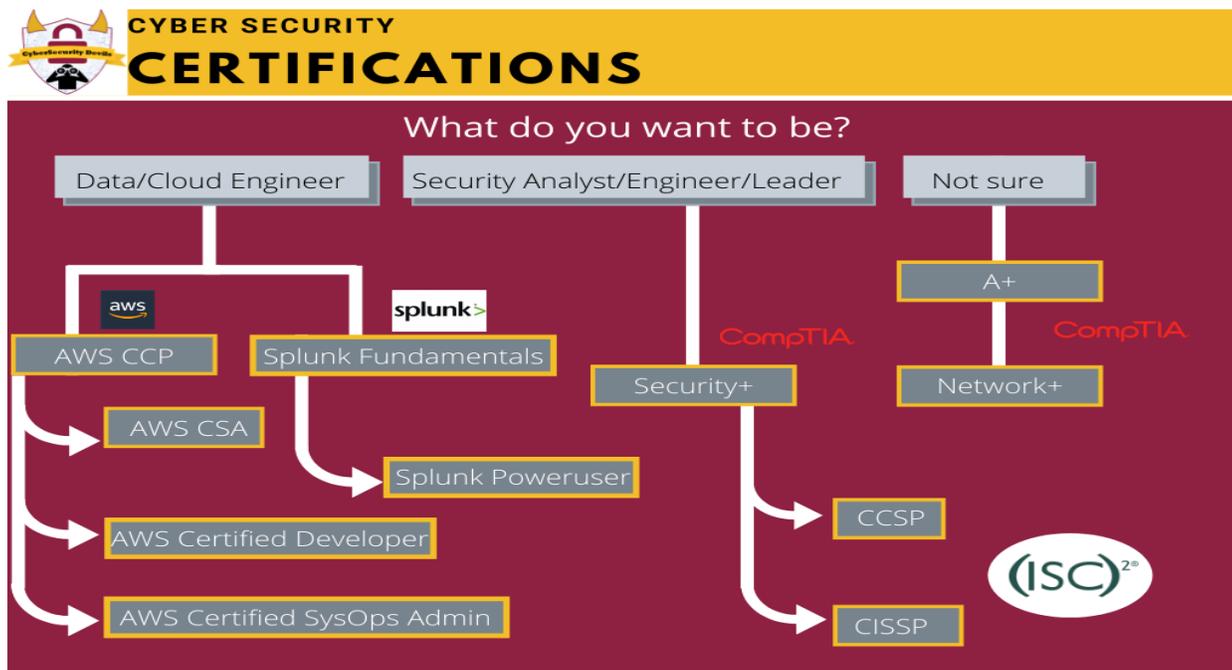


**After earning your chosen core certifications, you should always seek more opportunities to learn and add value to yourself as a professional.** Earning certifications CISSP from ISC<sup>2</sup> will make you an asset to yourself and future employee.

**This doesn't mean that you have to only pursue security certs.** As IT professional, you have opportunity to work in many fields of expertise, consider earning a cloud certification, AWS CCP.

# Certification Tree and Resources

How to navigate the obstacle course of certifications.



This is not an all-inclusive chart but it does provide a decent roadmap for those that are new to the field. The certifications the are listed higher are the core certs that are cheaper and require less experience. We recommend reading the "Objectives" section of each certification to see what the issuers recommend for studying.

Organizations can help. Being a member of the Cyber Security Devils is a great start and joining other organizations like the ones listed below can be beneficial to you and can offer discounts on certifications. **You can get student discounts on a lot of these certification exams for being a member.**

**Don't stop there, if you are unsure where to start, remember that professionals in the InfoSec field are a close-knit group.** If you don't want to pay anything to get certified right now or join an organization, you can still attend events to grow your network and see some cool stuff.

- [CactusCon](#)
- [Splunk .conf](#)
- [ISSA Phoenix](#)
- [ISACA Student Membership](#)
- [\(ISC\)<sup>2</sup>](#)



We reached out to **Ricky Martin** who is a **Senior Cyber Security Engineer** with McKesson, a healthcare wholesale company currently ranked #8 on [Forbes Fortune 500 List](#).

“Focus on something you enjoy doing and are interested in for certifications, if you don’t like Data don’t go after a Splunk certification because it is in demand, try and focus on areas you are interested in, and build experience, then branch out. As an example if you like security as we are mainly focused on that, get your entry level certs like the Security+, but it never hurts to compliment that with an A+ or Network+ to make you a more well-rounded engineer. Having an understanding of complimentary practices can help you to troubleshoot as well as understand concepts when they come up.

The other thing I would say that is key especially from a career perspective, is to not only focus on the technical side, also on the “soft skills”, it is a lot harder these days to find people that are comfortable presenting or speaking in group settings. Try to get out of your comfort zone and maybe take a public speaking class. Also one thing that is great is to get involved in the community, there are a lot of groups that focus on different topics, find one you like and get out and meet people and share your story, and learn to listen to others.”

Stay tuned for more awesome articles from our CyberSecurity Devils!

If you have questions, comments or would like to contribute content to your Newsletter.

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