

## WHAT IS CERTIFICATION?

The certification of specialized skill-sets affirms a knowledge and experience base for practitioners in a particular field, their employers, and the public at large. Certification represents a declaration of a particular individual's professional competence. In some professions certification is a requirement for employment or practice. Doctors, mechanics, accountants, professional secretaries, surveyors and many others are all required to go through a certification process of some kind. In all instances, certification enhances the employability and career advancement of the individual practitioner or employee.

Many organizations in today's competitive and challenging economy have recognized their workforce as their most valuable asset. Likewise, individuals, whether employed or self-employed, know that now more than ever before they must acquire and maintain more comprehensive skill-sets to ensure their own attractiveness and ability in the workplace.

The benefits of certification include:

- Higher wages for employees in the form of bonuses, education assistance or higher salary.
- A more productive and highly trained workforce for employers.
- Prestige for the individual and a competitive advantage over non-certified individuals in the same field.
- Enhanced employment opportunities.
- Assisting employers in making more informed hiring decisions.
- Assisting consumers in making informed decisions about qualified providers.
- Protection of the general public from incompetent and unfit practitioners.
- Establishment of a professional standard for individuals in a particular field.

Equal to the benefits of certification is the importance of establishing an underlying certification program based on best practices and recognized processes and procedures developed by the field of certification. NOCA serves as the member-based organization for the field of certification to enhance professional excellence and ensure the competency of certification