



White Paper

Executive Guide to ERP Certification



Introduction

Enterprises considering having their staff certified in the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) environment, or which find themselves exposed to companies offering certification programs, often question the tangible value and return on investment that will be gained.

This quandary is not without foundation. The value of certifications has been a contentious topic in the ERP industry – and many other industries – for some time. Understandably, organizations are looking for candidates with both professional qualifications and practical knowledge. Without a doubt, there are definite pros and cons to obtaining an ERP certification.

With 35 years' experience in the ERP industry, SYSPRO is ideally positioned to provide guidance around what to look out for when it comes to becoming ERP certified. Here is a high-level overview of the pros and cons.

ERP Certification – The Pros

- When employees register to become certified in a particular ERP module or business process, they are exposed to features and functions that they may not know about. This may help them to improve in their current roles or make it easier to transition to another role.
- Knowing more about a module enables employees to maximize the use of the ERP system, increasing its ROI.
- Knowing more about business processes within an ERP context makes employees aware of their impact on others and on the business itself within that process, which could, in turn, change behavior.
- Having an ERP certification in a particular module or business process indicates that candidates have a certain level of knowledge. This can help them get their first foot on the career ladder and put them ahead of other candidates who don't have ERP certification.
- Achieving a certification in an ERP module or business process indicates employees' commitment to keeping their knowledge up to date, which could have a positive impact on promotions, advancements and increases.
- Obtaining an ERP certification indicates that employees are capable of earning and that they have the resources to resolve problems.
- Vendors may be required to maintain minimum numbers of certified employees to participate in various partner programs. They may also benefit from having ERP-certified employees, as it improves customer confidence in the vendor's employees.



ERP Certification – The Cons

- Although being ERP certified indicates that employees may have had enough knowledge to pass the exam, it is not a reliable indicator that they have retained the knowledge.
- Certifications often have a limited shelf life and employees are therefore required to keep up to date with the latest version of the ERP system. This can be time consuming and costly.
- Having an ERP certification does not necessarily mean that prospective job candidates have the required experience levels and soft skills (communication skills, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, ability to work within teams) to be able to perform a job effectively.
- If certification exam questions do not differ significantly from one exam to the next, individuals may be able to cheat the system with the help of someone who has taken the exam previously. This means the certification may not indicate that an individual even has the knowledge that the certification claims they have, let alone the experience and soft skills.
- In many cases, the purpose of the certification exam is to assess an individual's ability to answer knowledge-based questions, and does not extend to assessing their ability to use the ERP system to solve real-world problems. The challenge in assessing at an application level is that there may be many efficient and effective ways to resolve a problem and multiple choice questions restrict the individual's options to three or four possibilities.

In conclusion

Once an organization is aware of these issues, it becomes easier to address them with your business systems partner and make decisions based on your particular requirements and objectives. At SYSPRO, we agree that certification has its pros and cons; however, a reputable certification program optimizes the pros and minimizes the cons. A good certification program should be appropriate, cost-effective, timely, holistic, trusted, and contain criteria-based measures.

The SYSPRO Approach

SYSPRO is committed to ongoing improvement and optimization of all aspects of its certification, including its partners, and how it develops its people and software. This is done to ensure that the SYSPRO ERP solution meets and exceeds the stringent industry requirements, to provide customers with the peace of mind that they are using the best possible solution for their unique needs.

"Certification should not just be an internally inspired requirement that an organization commits to, but it should have an external focus that strengthens how existing and potential customers view the company."

- Louise Thompson, Corporate Services Director, SYSPRO



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