Top 10 IT Certifications of 2018

2018 is your opportunity to build new skills, expand your knowledge and get certified – but how do you decide what certifications you should achieve?

Using Firebrand Training's insider industry knowledge, we've identified the most in-demand and valuable certifications available this year. These are the top 10 IT certifications of 2018:

1. EC-Council Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH)
2. (ISC)2 CISSP
3. Cisco CCNA (Routing and Switching)
4. The Open Group TOGAF 9.1 Certification
5. (ISC)2 Certified Cloud Security Professional (CCSP)
6. GDPR Practitioner
7. Certified Data Protection Officer - CDPO
8. Microsoft MCSE: Cloud Platform and Infrastructure
9. AXELOS PRINCE2 Foundation and Practitioner
10. ISACA CISA

Read on for an in-depth look at the top 10 certifications of 2018. This list (in no particular order) covers certifications across cyber security, data protection, networking, cloud technology and project management.

1. EC-Council Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH)

To beat a hacker, you need to think like one. That means learning how to hack and then using those skills to safely secure vulnerabilities in a business.

EC-Council's Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH) is one of the few certifications to teach real hacking tools and techniques. Achieve it and you'll learn how to write exploit codes, perform privilege escalation and identify common hacks, like SQL injection and more.

Practical experience is key to ethical hacking and on official CEH courses you'll even get access to over 2,200 hacking tools and 140 real-world labs.

As massive hacks continue to devastate businesses, ethical hacking and penetration testing knowledge is now in high-demand. The average salary for a Certified Ethical Hacker is £53,375 and contractors command an average daily rate of £500 (ITJobsWatch).

Achieving the CEH is your first step towards a career in penetration testing. Next, continue to build your knowledge by taking on the follow-up ECSA, further specializing your penetration testing skills.

2. (ISC)² CISSP

At a time when businesses are aggressively competing for the top security talent, the CISSP certification proves you're among the elite.

Global I.T.'s Monthly Thought Provocation

Tomorrow, is the first blank page of a 365 page book. Write a good one."

- Brad Paisley

Special Points of Interest In This Issue of 'JobPrep'

- **Top 10 IT Certifications for 2018**

- **The Economy in 2018**

- **I got the Job!**

- **IT News for 2018**

- **And much more!**

The CISSP proves the highest level of knowledge, experience and credibility within information security. It also builds the skills needed to design, engineer, implement and manage information security programs.

Despite the rising popularity of the CISSP, there's only approximately 100,000 of them around the world (compare that to over two million CompTIA certifications issued). But with a challenging exam and demanding prerequisites, it's easy to see why the CISSP remains the gold-standard IT security certification.

3. Cisco CCNA (Routing and Switching)
As one of the most respected networking certifications, the CCNA (Routing and Switching) certification is ideal for entry-level network engineers working with Cisco technologies.

You'll learn skills needed for network support positions, the starting point for any successful careers in networking. Plus, achieving a Cisco certification is highly recommended (and often required) for any professional working with Cisco kit.

Becoming CCNA certified will place you within Cisco's certification program, which provides you with professional credentials from entry-level to Cisco Certified Architect (CCA).

4. The Open Group TOGAF 9.1 Certification
Demand for Enterprise Architecture (EA) surged in 2017, as one of the skills that is now the "most scarce", according to a recent HarveyNash & KMPG survey.

The Open Group Architecture Framework (TOGAF) is now the most popular EA framework and thousands of organizations now use it to build a complete view of their strategy, process, information and IT assets.

To properly implement and maintain the framework, businesses rely on TOGAF certified professionals. Achieving the TOGAF certification marks years of experience and requires months of studying to pass the two challenging exams.

5. (ISC)2 Certified Cloud Security Professional (CCSP)
Migrating to the cloud often reveals unforeseen security vulnerabilities. Because of this, businesses are increasingly focusing on better cloud security; the cloud security market is expected to reach £7 billion by 2019 and there's now a massive demand for professionals with these skills

The second certification from (ISC)2 to make this list, the Certified Cloud Security Professional (CCSP) validates cloud security skills at the highest level.

6. GDPR Practitioner
Over 50% of European businesses are unprepared for General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which comes into effect in 2018. GDPR skills are already a top priority for organizations and demand is set to peak in 2018.

While there is no official GDPR certification, there are a number of widely-supported credentials available for professionals to build and prove their knowledge of the data protection regulation.

Firebrand's accelerated GDPR training will introduce you to the regulation in just three days. You'll study GDPR's relationship to current data protection and privacy legislation and learn the multi-jurisdictional consequences imposed by GDPR.

Whether you're an auditor, risk practitioner or contractor aiming to capitalize on the demand for GDPR skills, this is the year to get GDPR certified.

7. Certified Data Protection Officer - CDPO
Before GDPR becomes law, organizations may need to appoint or train a Certified Data Protection Officer (CDPO) to monitor GDPR compliance. Beware: SMEs are not exempt from the requirement to appoint a DPO.

8. Microsoft MCSE: Cloud Platform and Infrastructure
One of Microsoft's latest additions to their massive certification portfolio, the MCSE: Cloud Platform and Infrastructure builds and proves your knowledge of Microsoft cloud and data center technologies.

2018 may be your best opportunity to achieve this pinnacle cloud certification; hiring companies increased their searches for Azure at a year-over-year rate of 62 percent, according to a report from job website, Indeed.

Microsoft's new MCSE certifications are attainable through a wide range of electives – from Azure to big data analytics. This means professionals can achieve this MCSE in any way they want. For Azure specialists, this certification can be achieved by passing just three Microsoft exams.

9. AXELOS PRINCE2 Foundation and Practitioner
Demand for project managers is high and it's now expected 15.7 million new project managers will be needed across the globe by 2020.

Complete your projects on time and within budget with skills gained from the PRINCE2 certification- the most popular project management framework in the UK.

The skills gained by achieving the PRINCE2 will ensure your projects have a common and consistent approach, regular reviews or progress against plans and the assurance that projects must have a business justification.

10. ISACA CISA Certification
At a time when cybersecurity breaches are hitting headlines daily, recognized information security certifications are becoming increasingly desirable for organizations and professionals.

The CISA is a world-renowned certification for those who audit, control, monitor and assess information technology and business systems. Achieving this unique credential proves you're capable of assessing vulnerabilities, reporting on compliance and instituting controls within enterprises.

What to expect from the U.S. economy in 2018

The end of the year is a good time to look back at the economy for 2017 and, more importantly, to look ahead to 2018. In a conversation on NPR, I took a look back at the economy in 2017, what we learned, and what to expect economically in 2018. Here's a summary of the discussion:

THE U.S. ECONOMY IS ENDING 2017 IN PRETTY GOOD SHAPE

The U.S economy got off to a soft start in 2017, but it's been growing at a reasonably healthy pace lately. Third-quarter growth came in at a 3.2 percent inflation-adjusted annual rate; fourth quarter growth looks to be somewhere between 2.5 percent and 3 percent. The unemployment rate has fallen from 4.7 percent at the end of last year to 4.1 percent at last count. The last time it was this low Bill Clinton was president; that was 17 years ago. The U.S. has added 2 million jobs in the past year, all of that in the private sector. Government employment has fallen a bit. We've drawn a lot of people into the job market who had been on the sidelines. Inflation is low. The stock market has risen 19 percent over the past year. Interest rates are up but still low by historical standards. Both consumer spending and business investment are accelerating. In short, we're going into 2018 with substantial momentum.

BEST GUESS FOR 2018? MORE OF THE SAME

Barring some big disruption like a shooting war with North Korea, a trade war with Mexico, or a constitutional confrontation between President Donald Trump and Congress

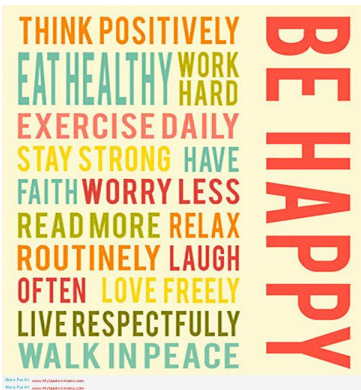**We accept Veterans/GI Bill Post 911 benefits.**

over the Russia investigation, we'll see more of the same in 2018. The economies of the U.S. and those of our major trading partners are strengthening. The big tax cut plus expected increases in federal spending will give the U.S. economy a boost in 2018, although some of that depends on how businesses and rich folks choose to use their tax savings. Most economists see unemployment falling towards 3.5 percent in 2018, which is remarkable—and this extremely tight labor market should, at long last, push up wages. The Fed is on track to raise interest rates three or four times in 2018 from still-low levels. But the economy and the markets seem strong enough to absorb that.

HOUSING IS COMING BACK

A decade after the housing bust, housing is coming back. Sales of existing homes have been strong. Builders have picked up the pace of new construction. Nationally house prices are up about 6 percent over the past year, according to the just-updated S&P Case-Shiller measure and now are above the pre-recession peak. And thanks to those rising home prices, only 5 percent of homeowners with mortgages owe more than the value of their homes, way down from a few years ago—though more homeowners are still underwater in hard hit places like Las Vegas; Chicago; Miami: Scranton, PA; and Akron, OH. The tax bill does curtail some tax breaks for home-ownership, and that may slow the pace of at which housing prices climb, particularly in high-income, high-housing-price states.

GIT Wellness Corner
Seven Dimensions of Wellness

Wellness is much more than merely physical health, exercise or nutrition. It is the full integration of states of physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. The model used by our campus includes social, emotional, spiritual, environmental, occupational, intellectual and physical wellness. Each of these seven dimensions interact in a way that contributes to our own quality of life.

Career Guidance Column

"Andrei - The good news is I got the job. The bad news is I'm worried I might be settling for a position that isn't the right fit for. So where do I go from here?"

Look, the honest truth is there are times when you'll have to take any job you can get, even if you know it's a bad fit. Maybe your house is about to be foreclosed on, you can't make rent, or you have a family depending on you for income. I completely understand there will be times when finding ANY job is a priority over the PERFECT job. My advice is to keep your resume out there and looking for that perfect job - but in the mean time grab the experience and pay some bills!

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Global Information Technology
28600 Southfield Road
Suite 103
Lathrup Village, MI 48076

Phone: (248) 557-2480
Fax: (248) 557-8650
info@global-itech.com

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BA - 10	Security - 5	PowerPoint - 21, 28
Ethical Hacker - 31	SQL - na	SharePoint - 6, 17
CCNA - 20	Web Pro - 2	XHTML - na
ASP.Net - 13	Network+ - 21, 31	Photoshop - 8, 15
Java - 10, 18	MCSA - 13, 31	Flash - 27
Linux+ - 13, 16	Outlook - na	Software Q& - 6, 10
Excel –5, 14	PMP– 24	NEW!....CCNP
MSSA - na	Word - na	NEW! SQL Server 2012 - 5
CISSP - 10	CCNP - 12	

"I've got the job, now what??'

It might take about three months to feel like you've got the hang of your job responsibilities, but the first week is when you make your first (and lasting) impression and begin making new office friends. **US News** published a list of "42 Rules For Your First Week," and GIT has chosen five, one for each work day, that we think are most important .

1. Show up on time. This is especially important on day one because someone else is likely working you into her schedule. The person who shows you around and gets you situated has her own job to do, too. **2. Remember coworkers' names.** Even if you're not out to make work friends, it's crucial that you remember the names of colleagues in order to begin establishing a respectful rapport. **3. Assume the training will help you do your job.** Training can be terribly boring, particularly if you tend to learn better through hands-on experiences, but approach any training processes with the mentality that you'll get something out of it. You're likely to take away at least a couple of pointers, and it's a great opportunity to ask questions before being thrown into your daily grind. **4**. **Observe first—then speak.** It's easy to feel overwhelmed and nervous when beginning a new job, so to stop those nerves from making you say something that isn't the smartest, step back before you step in. **5**. **Ask for work.** Be proactive from the start and keep yourself busy to show what kind of worker you are, which is particularly important during your first weeks when opinions are being formed about you.

If all else, remember that your first few months on the new job will set the tone for what

Technical Advice

This month no advice, but a heads up for what's in store for 2018 - starting with your home. The Internet of Things (IoT) has, for some time, suggested the interconnectivity of otherwise separate devices and ecosystems; connected devices improving the practicality of our day to day lives. 2018 will see the IoT come to a domestic setting in a big way – with connected devices pulling the idea of the smart home sharply into focus. Thanks to prospective pushes from the likes of LG and Samsung, the smart home market looks set for sudden growth. The industry drive may mean surges in home sensor and security products (accessed and controlled via a smartphone). But it will also mean more smart devices aimed at monitoring utilities and home systems, aiding productivity and delivering entertainment.

10 Hottest tech skills for 2018

Are your assets bankable in 2018? Hiring managers say they'll seek out these skills most in the New Year. Scott Zulpo is facing stiff competition. He's adding a senior project manager, a network analyst and a help desk worker to his 55-member IT staff at BCU, a Vernon Hills, Ill.-based credit union where he is vice president of IT. He plans to add even more people in 2018 to keep up with an increasing demand for tech-driven innovations.
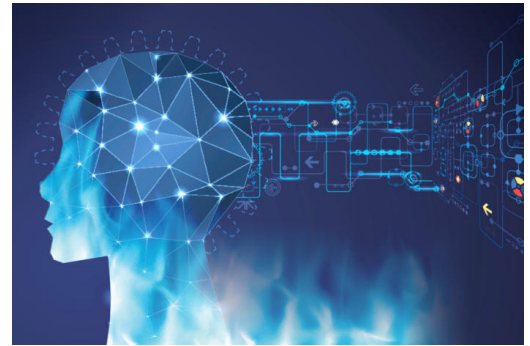
"The challenge is twofold -- first finding talent, and then determining if that talent has the skills, experience and personality to thrive in the position," says Zulpo, who's mindful that "the cost and impact of not hiring an 'A' player is huge."
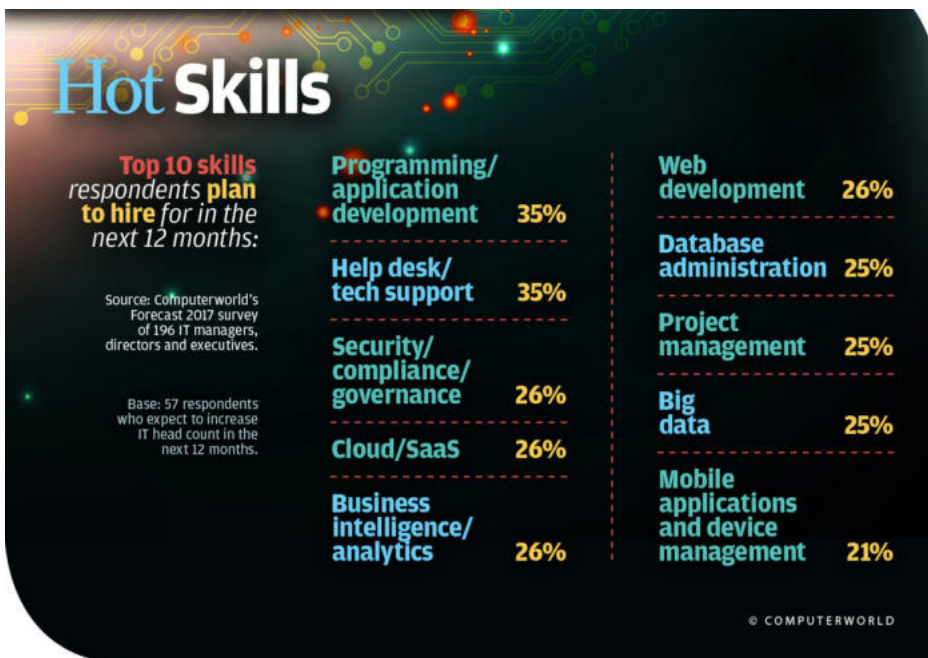
Zulpo has his work cut out for him. He's hiring at time when few IT professionals are out of work, so competition for tech talent is fierce. The unemployment rate for tech workers is about 2%, according to reports on recent data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Moreover, Zulpo is seeking the same skills that many of his fellow IT leaders also need. Computerworld's Forecast 2017 survey of 196 IT professionals found that both project management and technical support were among the top 10 most sought-after skills among survey respondents who said they plan on adding head count in the new year.

The IT labor market is still very hot. The candidate is very much in the driver's seat," says Jason Hayman, market research manager for IT staffing firm TEKsystems.

Hayman cites a government report that estimates that 500,000 to 1 million IT jobs go unfilled every year, but notes that some analysts say the figure is closer to 2 million. He says there's a classic supply-and-demand scenario working here, with demand for talent far exceeding supply. "The takeaway is there aren't enough of these workers," he says.

Here's a look at the top 10 most in-demand tech skills, as determined by the 29% of respondents to Computerworld's Forecast 2018 survey who said they plan to increase head count in the next 12 months.

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Global Information Technology
28600 Southfield Road
Suite 103
Lathrup Village, MI 48076

Phone: (248) 557-2480
Fax: (248) 557-8650
info@global-itech.com

Visit us on the web at
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Hot Skills

Top 10 skills respondents **plan** to hire for in the next 12 months:

Source: Computerworld's Forecast 2017 survey of 196 IT managers, directors and executives.

Base: 57 respondents who expect to increase IT head count in the next 12 months.

Skill	%
Programming/application development	35%
Help desk/tech support	35%
Security/compliance/governance	26%
Cloud/SaaS	26%
Business intelligence/analytics	26%
Web development	26%
Database administration	25%
Project management	25%
Big data	25%
Mobile applications and device management	21%

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