

Certifiably Cleared

In a recent ClearanceJobs.com and Dice.com study of technology professionals, workers with active government security clearance earn an average salary that is 12 percent higher than their non-cleared counterparts. In Washington D.C., that premium jumps to 20 percent.

It still pays to be a security-cleared tech professional. But considering the DoD now formally recognizes cyberspace as a new domain of warfare, it really pays to be both cleared and certified.

The issue? [Cybersecurity](#) and cyberwarfare are relatively new fields and evolving rapidly. Moreover, with many of the most skilled cybersecurity experts residing in industry rather than government, finding top talent is difficult at best. To make finding qualified cybersecurity professionals even more of a challenge, all government employees and contractors with privileged access to Federal computer networks must be certified, per [DoD directive 8570](#).

Analyzing the top ten certifications held by technology professionals with security clearance, it's all networking, all the time. CompTIA's Security+ certification is the mainstay of cleared network defenders and a DoD favorite. This certification is held by one in five (21%) security-cleared professionals who hold any certifications. Both A+ and Network+ round out the top three (10%), with both being the solid foundation of any network technician.

Originally a product of the U.K. government, the [Information Technology Infrastructure Library](#) (ITIL) is used by governments and companies worldwide as best practices for technology management. At number four on the list, cleared professionals with ITIL certification show the DoD's adoption of this framework.

Also recognized by the DoD as 8570 compliant, the popular [CISSP](#) credential is known as a standard for expertise in network security. Five years of experience in information security are needed before a professional can earn this certification.

By earning the [Project Management Professional](#) certification, technology professionals prove they have the knowledge and skills necessary to shepherd projects to a successful conclusion, on-time, on-budget, and using the resources allocated.

Deputy Secretary of Defense, William J. Lynn, III said, "It currently takes the Pentagon 81 months to field a new computer system. The iPhone was developed in just 24 months. That is less time than it takes us to prepare a budget and receive Congressional approval for it."

TOP 10 Most Frequently Held Certifications by Technology Professionals with Security Clearance

1. Security +
2. A+
3. Network+
4. ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library)
5. CISSP (Certified Information Systems Security Professional)
6. PMP (Project Management Professional)
7. MCSE (Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer)
8. CCNA (Cisco Certified Network Associate)
9. MCP (Microsoft Certified Professional)
10. MCSA (Microsoft Certified Systems Administrator)

Project Management is particularly important today, when we need systems completed as cost-efficiently and quickly as possible and according to Mr. Lynn, that gap has to close.

Microsoft's certifications hold the number seven, nine and 10 spots on the list. The [MCSE](#) is for professionals who spend their time maintaining the basic platforms on which so much business is conducted and is sought by systems engineers, technical support engineers, system analysts, network analysts and technical consultants. The [MCP](#) allows developers, trainers, system architects and other tech professionals to spotlight their expertise with a range of Microsoft technologies. And the [Microsoft Certified Systems Administrator](#) certification allows tech professionals to show off their expertise in systems administration and troubleshooting networks that use the Windows Server operating environment.

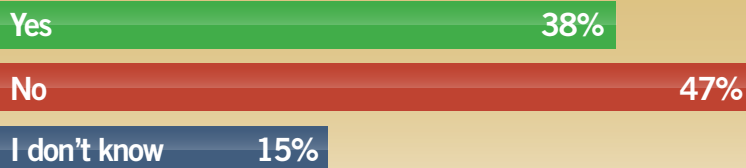
Finally, [Cisco Certified Network Associates](#) demonstrate their

ability to install, configure, run and troubleshoot medium-sized routed and switched networks.

Certifications help security-cleared candidates demonstrate their skill in a particular technology. Interestingly, more than one-third (38%) said not only did their certification make them a contender, it helped them land a new job.

Evan Lesser
Founder & Managing Director
ClearanceJobs.com

Has your certification helped you earn a new position?



Based on responses from 1,630 security cleared technology professionals

