



# 2018 Value of IT Certification Survey:

*Results & Key Findings*

The survey targeted candidates who earned a certification from Q4 2017 through Q3 2018.

**10,000+**

responses from **138 countries**

**32**

certification programs participated:

Arcitura Education  
BCS  
Check Point  
Cisco Systems  
Citrix Systems  
CIW  
CompTIA  
Dell EMC

EC-Council  
Ericsson  
ESRI  
ETEC  
F5  
Facebook  
GIAC  
Hitachi IT

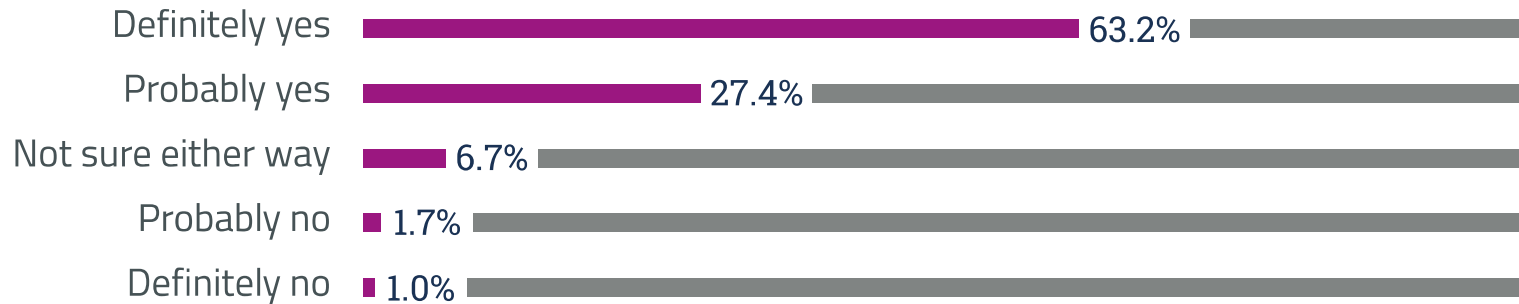
HPE  
IBM  
(ISC)2  
Kintone  
Linux Professional  
Institute  
Microsoft  
NetApp  
Oracle  
Palo Alto Networks

PCI Security Standards  
Council  
Pegasystems  
Qlik  
Software Certifications (QAI)  
Symantec  
Unity  
VMware



## Key findings: Reasons for becoming certified


# Would you recommend certification to a friend or colleague looking to begin or advance their career in a technology-related field?




 **90%** would recommend certification.

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## What was your driving force for earning a certification?

 **76%** Professional ambitions were the initial catalyst

 **24%** An academic program or enrolled course was the initial catalyst

# What were your specific personal reasons for becoming certified?



**74%** indicated that they 'completely' or 'mostly' accomplished their personal objectives for becoming certified.

A man and a woman are in a server room. The man is holding a laptop and pointing at a large digital display on the wall. The woman is pointing at the display. The display shows various icons like a globe, a folder, a cloud, and a gear. The background is a server rack with blue lighting.

## Key findings: **Benefits from certification**

# Candidates reported the following benefits from becoming certified:



Greater self-confidence in abilities



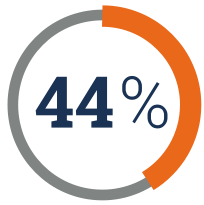
Increased job satisfaction



Knowledge has been transferrable to real work situations



Salary/wage increase

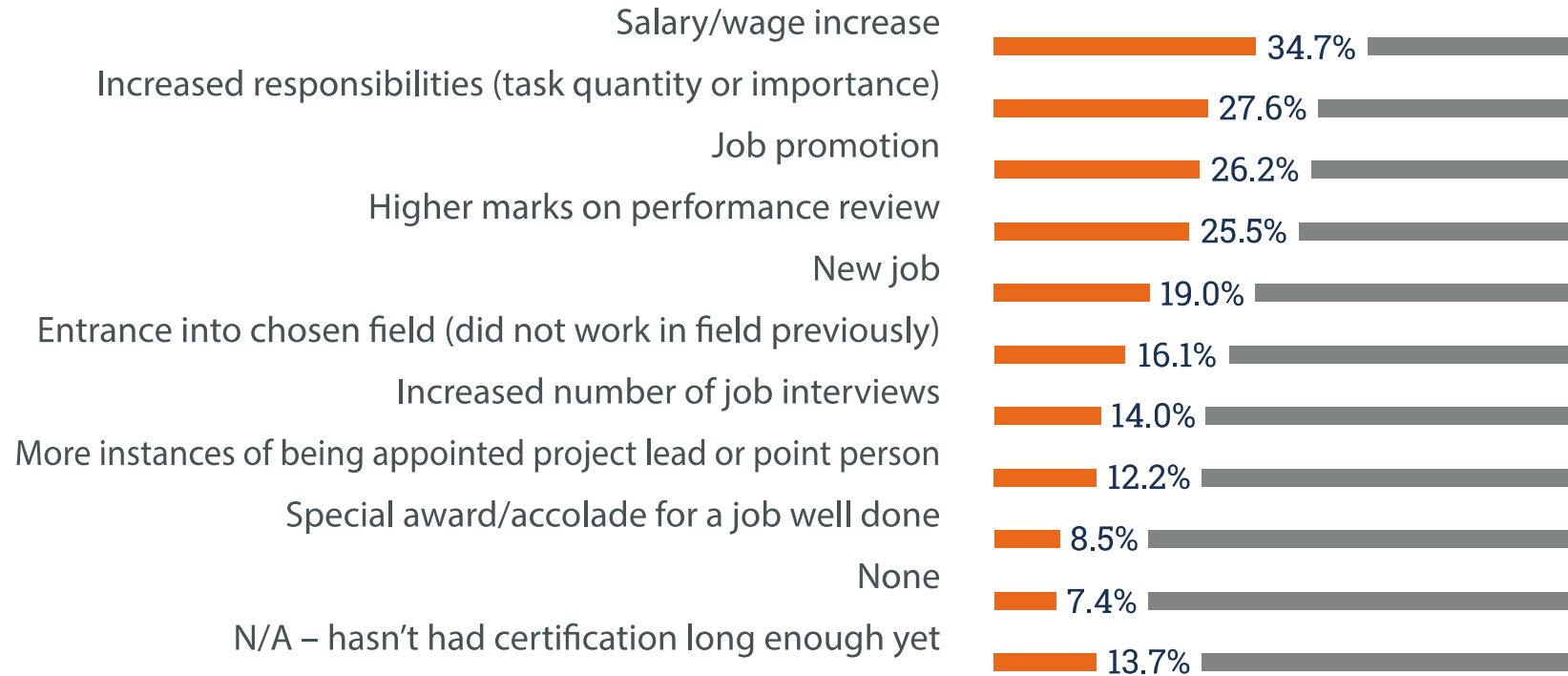


Higher quality work output



Increased responsibilities (in terms of task quantity and importance)

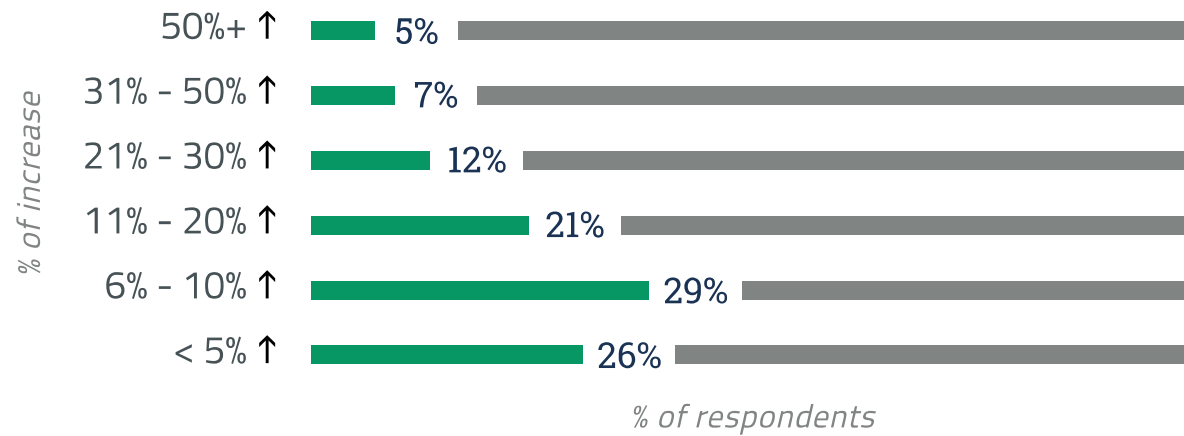
# Extrinsic (tangible) benefits



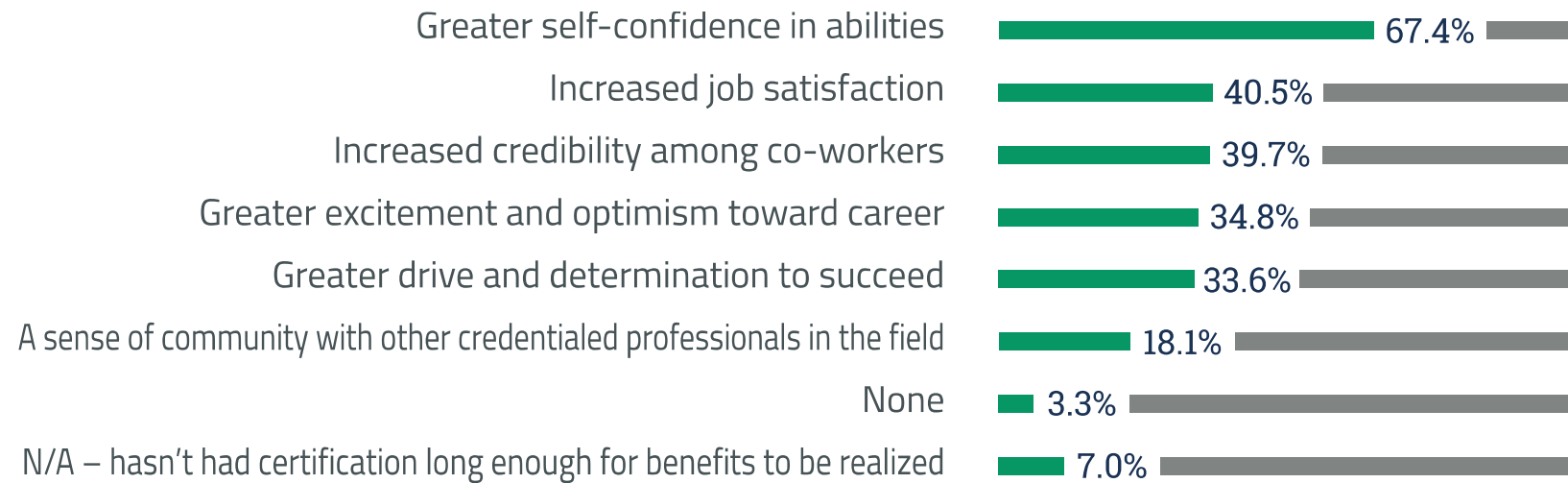
**65%** reported realizing the first benefit within 3-4 months!



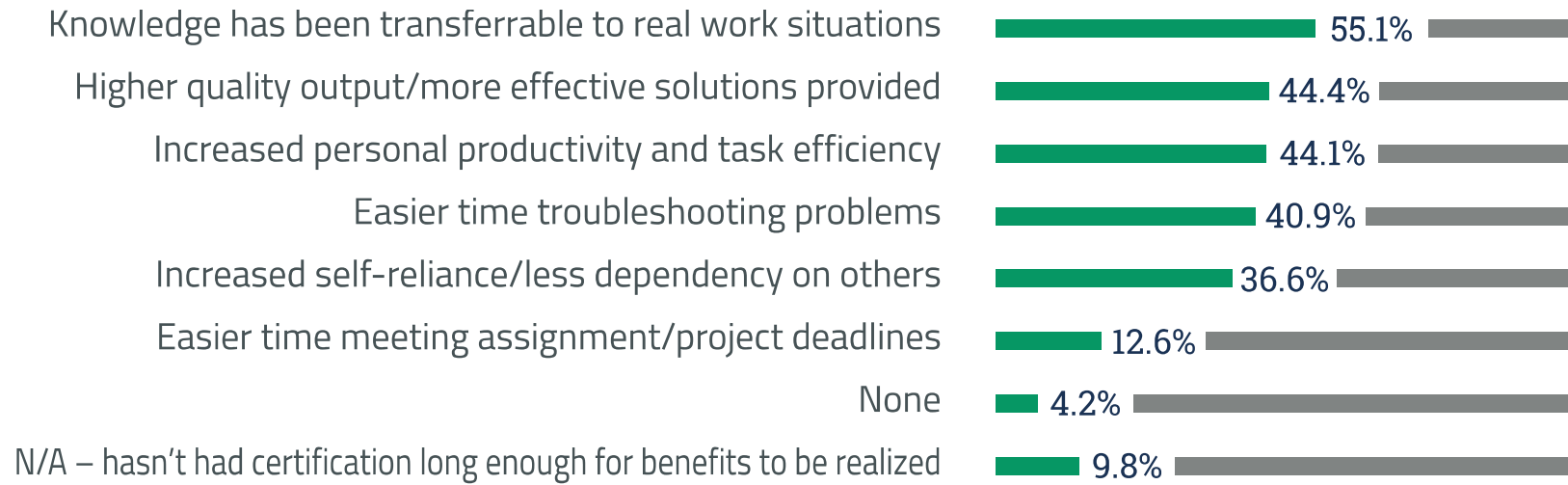
# Salary/wage increase due to earning certification



# Intrinsic (personal) benefits



# Practical (on-the-job) benefits





**Key findings: Certification and training**



Respondents who agreed that certification is better than training alone stated that certification...



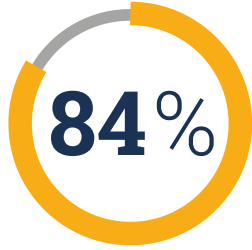
"Gives me more professional credibility with those I interact with on the job"



"Provides greater motivation for me to keep my skills up to date"



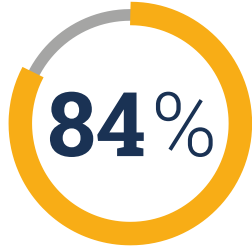
"Is more effective at preventing or reducing gaps in my learning"



"Helps me retain acquired knowledge over a longer period"



"Makes me more valuable to my employer"

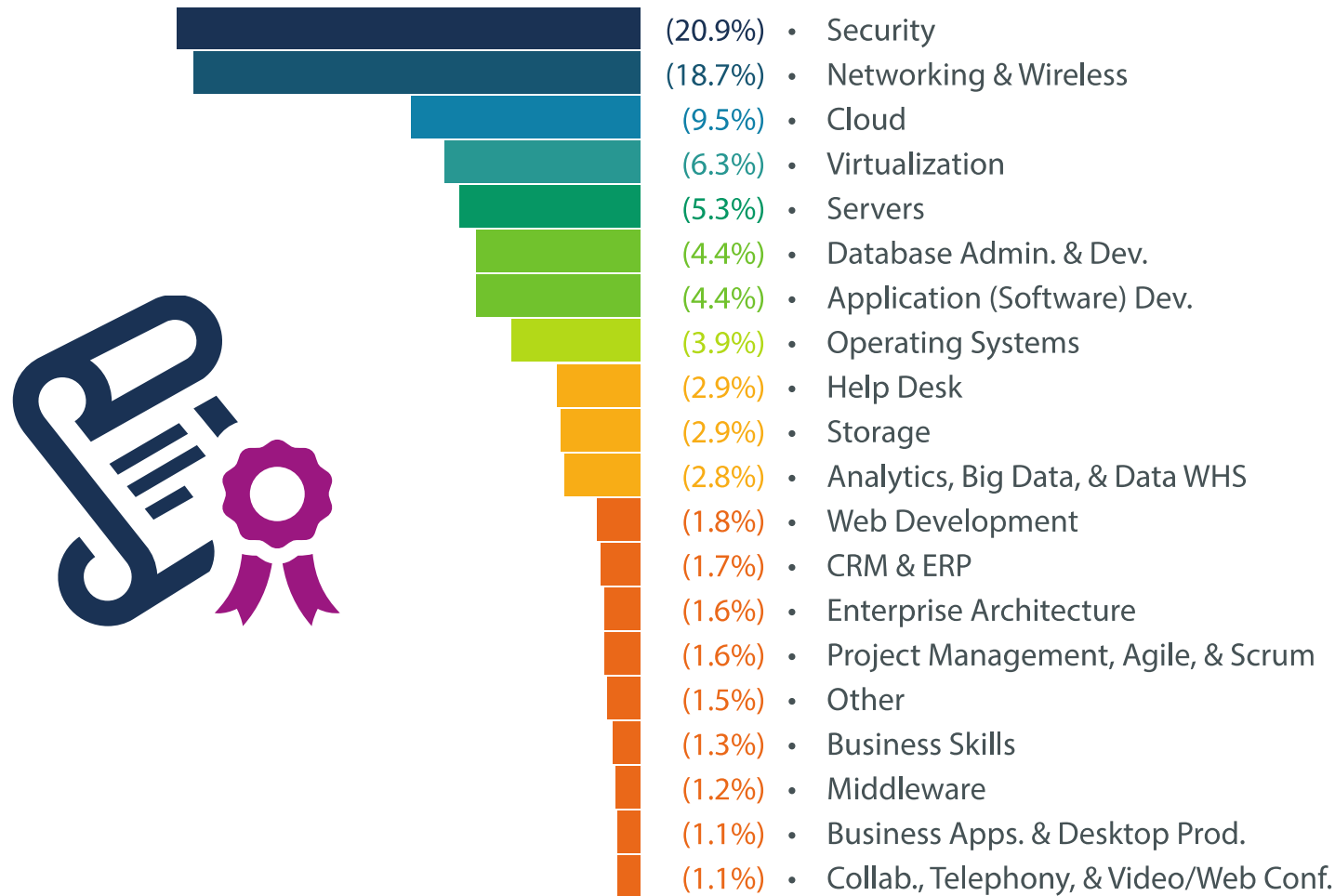


"Helps me better see how different concepts are connected within a larger subject domain"

# Comparing enrichment activities for the top 10 IT providers

Technology association/provider	Certifications	Training	Self-study
	% of respondents (rank)		
Cisco	32.8% (1)	27.4% (1)	29.5% (1)
CompTIA	25.6% (2)	22.3% (3)	23.4% (3)
Microsoft	25.6% (3)	20.6% (2)	19.3% (2)
VMware	13.7% (4)	13.2% (4)	12.3% (4)
Oracle	10.8% (5)	9.6% (5)	9.4% (5)
(ISC) <sup>2</sup>	6.5% (6)	5.4% (7)	5.0% (7)
AWS	6.1% (7)	5.6% (6)	6.4% (6)
ITIL	5.8% (8)	5.1% (8)	2.9% (8)
IBM	5.2% (9)	4.8% (9)	4.3% (9)
LPI	4.9% (10)	4.1% (10)	4.4% (10)

# Specialty area of most recent certification exam



# Who paid for your most recent certification exam?

Employer	53.5%
Self (person taking test)	31.5%
School/college/university	5.0%
Government program	3.7%
No charge	2.8%
Other	1.8%
Declined to answer	1.4%
Did not know	.3%





# Did you purchase your exam separately or bundled with training?

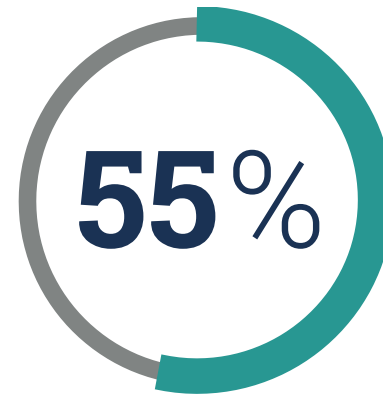
Exam and training bundled together	51.3%
Exam voucher sold separately	48.7%



Exam bundled  
with training

# If you paid for your exam, where did you purchase the voucher?

Website used to schedule exam	28.6%
Training course provider	26.6%
mindhub.com	15.1%
Other	11.3%
e-Commerce site of program sponsor	8.8%
Amazon	4.4%
Did not know	2.8%
Employer	2.2%



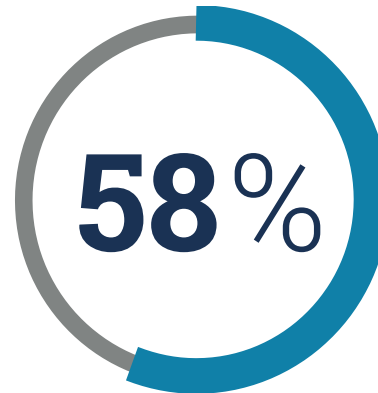
Respondents purchased via place of exam registration or training provider

A photograph of a modern office hallway with large windows. In the foreground, a man in a blue suit and glasses is talking to a woman in a light blue suit who is holding a white document. In the background, another man in a dark blue suit is walking. The scene is brightly lit with natural light from the windows.

## Key findings: Training methods and learning materials

# Who paid for your most recent instructor-led training (ILT) course?

Employer	57.7%
Self (person taking test)	25.3%
School/college/university	5.8%
Government program	4.3%
No charge	3.6%
Other	1.5%
Declined to answer	1.4%
Did not know	.4%



Employer covered cost

# If you paid for your ILT course, where did you purchase it?

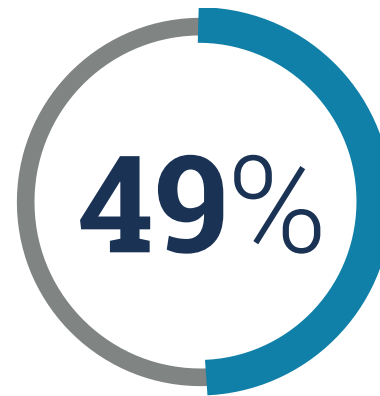
Training course provider	40.3%
Other	17.6%
Website used to schedule exam	13.2%
mindhub.com	8.4%
Amazon	6.7%
e-Commerce site of program sponsor	5.6%
Employer	4.6%
Did not know	3.6%



Respondents purchased via training provider or place of exam registration

# Where was your ILT course delivered?

Place of employment/work	48.5%
Commercial training center	31.4%
School/college/university	13.4%
Government-run facility	5.3%
Other	1.1%



Course delivered  
at work

# Learning materials used during previous 12 months

Instructor-led training, used with...



1. Practice tests	46.6%
2. Instructor-developed text content	38.8%
3. Practice lab/work simulation tool	38.5%
4. Interactive media (online or software)	37.2%
5. Instructional videos	36.7%
6. Published textbook – digital format	34.9%
7. Published textbook – print format	28.2%
8. Work-based learning/cooperative education	18.3%
9. Other	1.2%

# Learning materials used during previous 12 months

Self-directed study, used with...



1. Practice tests	43.9%
2. Published textbook – digital format	30.5%
3. Practice lab/work simulation tool	28.9%
4. Published textbook – print format	27.6%
5. Web content from technology provider <i>(e.g., Microsoft, Cisco, CompTIA)</i>	27.1%
6. Online videos	26.9%
7. Fee-based online learning portal <i>(e.g., Lynda.com, Udemy, Pluralsight)</i>	26.4%
8. Other website (third party)	15.5%
9. Massive Open Online Course (MOOC)	8.0%
10. Other	1.5%





## Key findings: **Future ambitions**

# What enrichment activities will you focus on in the next 12 months?

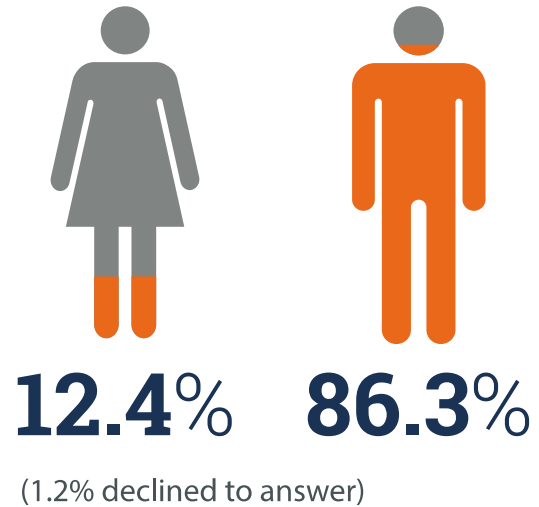
Specialty areas	Certifications	Training	Self-study
	% of respondents (rank)		
Cloud	18.1% (3)	9.7% (1)	20.7% (1)
Security	21.4% (1)	8.5% (2)	15.3% (2)
Networking & Wireless	18.8% (2)	6.7% (5)	14.4% (4)
Virtualization	11.7% (4)	8.0% (3)	15.2% (3)
Servers	10.9% (5)	6.6% (6)	12.9% (9)
Operating Systems	8.6% (6)	5.7% (13)	13.6% (5)
Analytics, Big Data, & Data Warehouse	5.5% (11)	6.5% (7)	13.2% (7)
Storage	7.7% (7)	6.0% (9)	11.2% (12)
Application (Software) Development	5.6% (10)	5.7% (14)	13.4% (6)
Database Admin. & Dev.	6.1% (8)	6.0% (11)	11.1% (13)

A woman with voluminous curly hair, wearing a brown blazer and a red necklace, is smiling while looking at a tablet. She is standing in a modern office environment. In the background, two other people are seated at a white desk, working on laptops. The office has a dark grey wall and a white shelving unit.

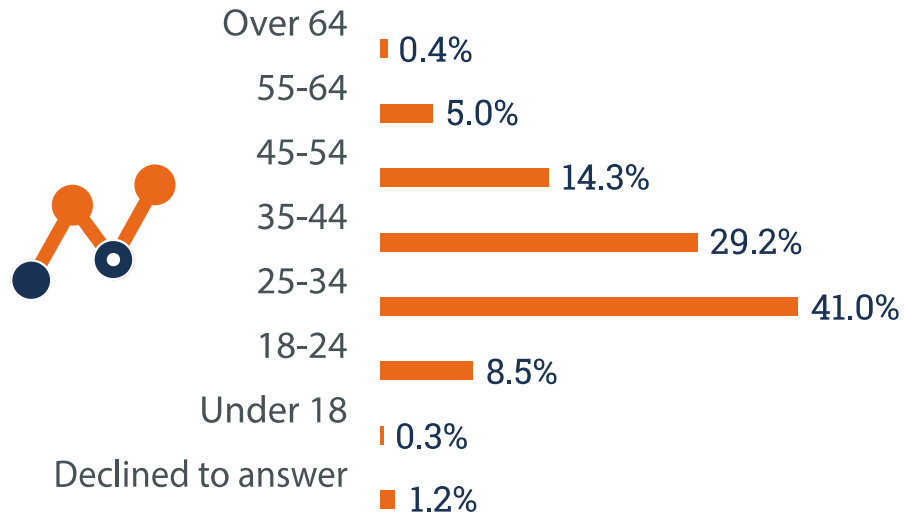
# Demographics

# Demographics of respondents

## Gender

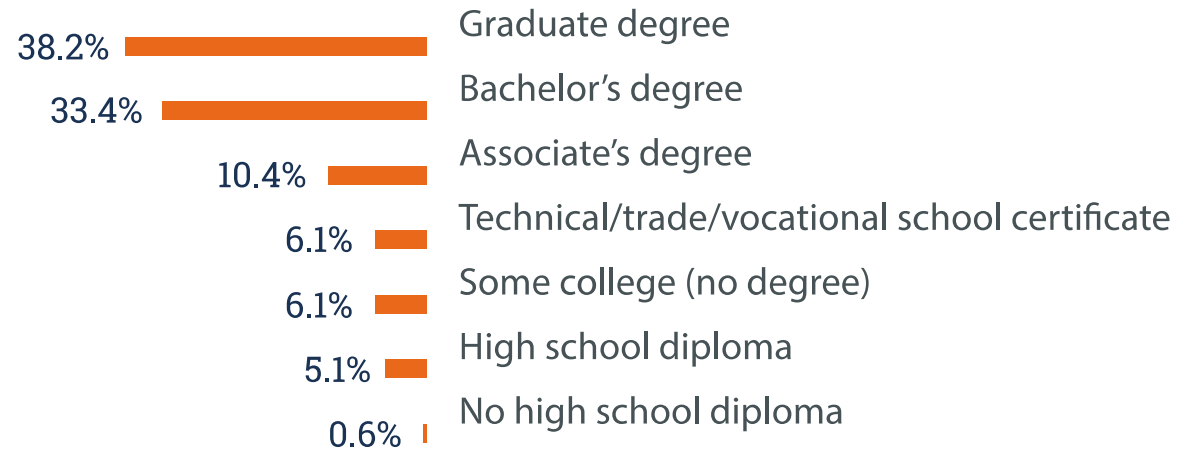


## Age



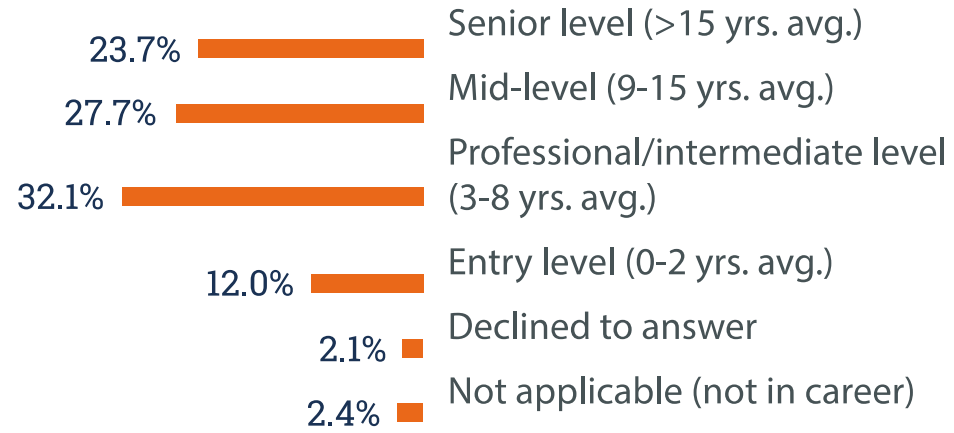
# Demographics

## Education level



# Demographics

## Career level

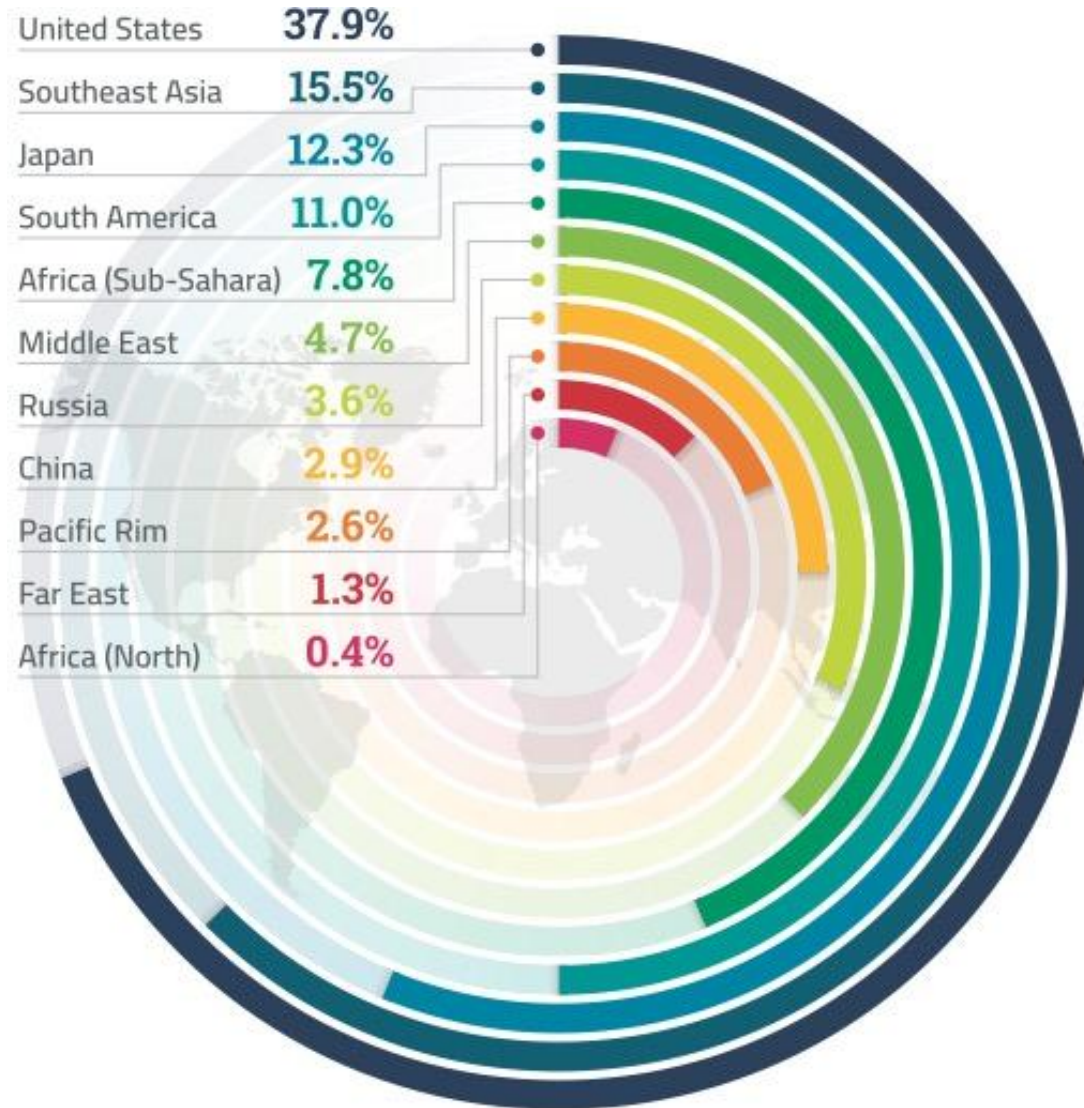


## Median number of certifications earned (all time)

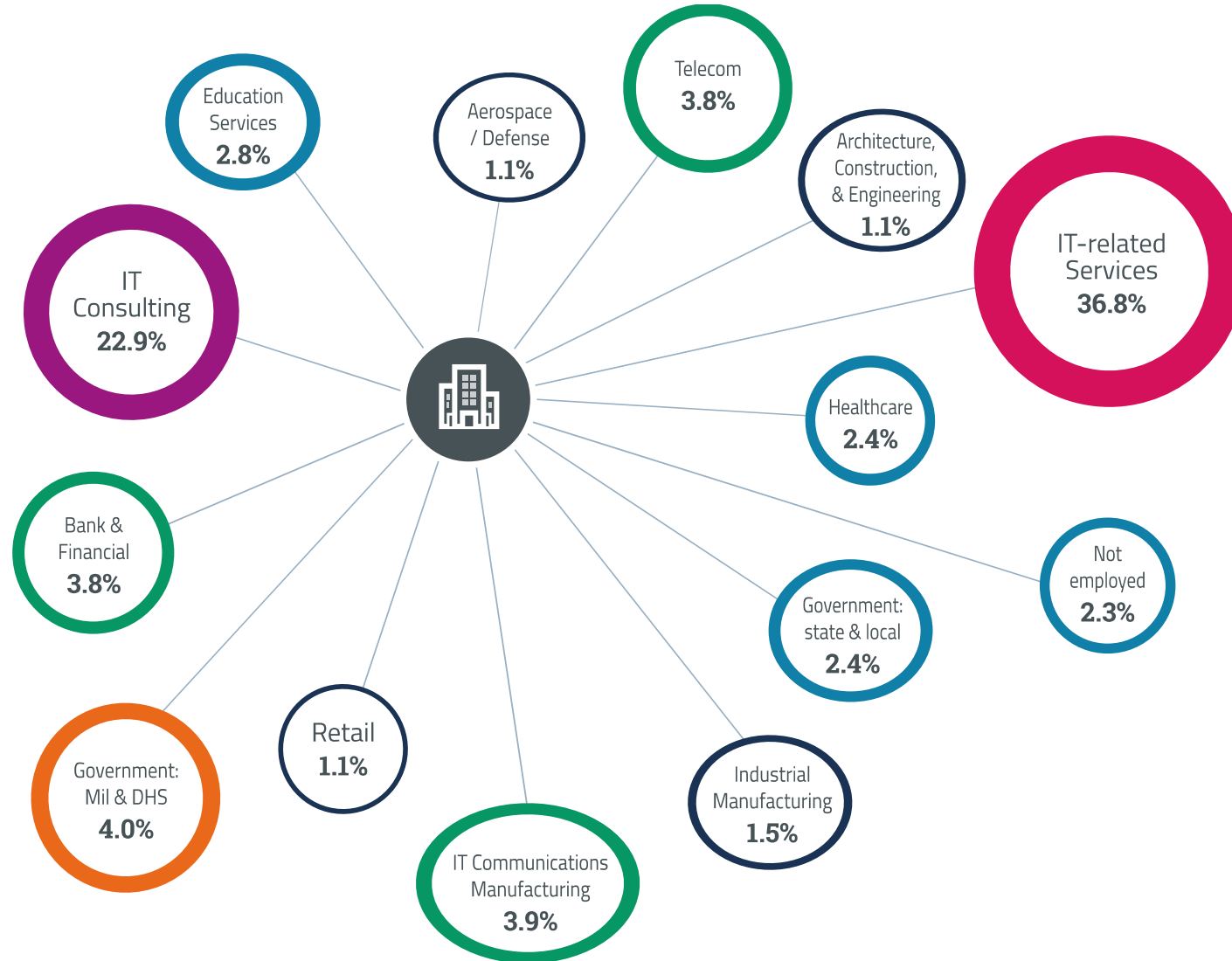


4-5

# World regions of respondents



# Industries represented





# Employer size in terms of headcount

