



ITAM TRAINING CREDENTIALS MATTER





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About Accredited Training Organizations
Accredited Training Organizations (ATOs) are authorized by IAITAM through APMG to provide world class training and education of IAITAM content. IAITAM ATO's go through a rigorous process to obtain accreditation and surveillance to ensure the highest level of quality and ensure the vendor neutrality that IAITAM possess. ATO's allow IAITAM to increase it's global reach thus exponentially strengthening the profession for us all.

To learn more about the value of IAITAM certifications contact:

Phone:
+1.330.628.3012

Email:
info@iaitam.org

You have a lot of work to do but you take time out to plan for training – your own and the team around you. You are thinking ahead about ways to be more effective by learning more and also validating your own experiences. You know that a refresh is good even for the most experienced person where immersion in daily details can crowd out the bigger picture. You also know that your management team values expertise and that credentials add weight to your remarks and actions. And the bonus round is that if you should need to find another position, you have certifications from accredited training companies that are recognized globally.

This entire happy scenario rests on the shoulders of the training. How can you make your selections wisely and as rapidly as possible? You don't want to become an expert in training company characteristics, just in IT asset management!

Begin with Accreditation

Anyone can whip up a website that looks good. To identify the best choices, use accreditation, the mission and goals of the organization and the role of the organization in the industry to hone your list of choice.

Basically, accreditation is a quality assurance process similar to an audit where the training organization is evaluated. The accrediting body (always external) evaluates the management systems, training materials and the trainers against appropriate and established standards. Accreditation identifies those with quality materials that successfully deliver the knowledge laid out in the syllabus, with instructors worthy of teaching professionals in the subject area.

For IT asset management, all organizations delivering the training developed by the International Association of IT Asset Managers, Inc. are evaluated by the well-known accreditation organization of APMG-International. The APMG-International accreditation is the quality mark for training in many technology-related fields, including IT asset management. When choosing ITAM training, look for organizations that are Accredited Training Organizations (ATOs) before investing any time into their catalog of services.

Examine the Mission of the Training Developers

Another indicator that can enhance your comfort level with specific training is to consider the investment of experience and expertise that the training developers have. What goals does the organization have and how are they prioritized? Where does your profession and educational needs fit with those priorities? To judge experience and commitment, consider if the organization:

- Publishes articles, white papers, magazine, news bureaus, etc. frequently in the specific area that you wish to be trained in
- Illustrates a broad scope of understanding in the topics that are part of the profession (Eliminate overly focused groups, either to one aspect of the field or one set of products)

Training development organizations should be knowledge providers. Organizations that do not put providing knowledge across the profession in their mission statements are not going to be an ongoing, dedicated resource for you.

The concern in technology is that training may be presented from a specific viewpoint that limits the effectiveness and applicability. For instance, unless you are looking for training on a specific product, it would seem smarter to avoid the training delivered with a vendor-specific purpose. Another concern about viewpoint is to observe any arbitrary limitations you see on the scope of the training development. For instance, you may be in need of training on software license management, but you know that this process is



only one aspect of software asset management and that software management is in turn part of the broader scope of IT asset management (which includes hardware and mobile management). Eliminate from your consideration any organizations developing training that are disproportionately focused on one specific area to the exclusion of other types of assets or structures. Carrying that bias into your work limits the scope of what you can achieve even within software.

ITAM is particularly susceptible to limited viewpoints because the business processes for ITAM are not conducted by a single department or within a specific organizational structure. The ITAM program and the training required to support that program needs to be process-focused and consider many environmental concerns such as security, disaster recovery, accounting and many more. Asset type-specific maturity models may look good on paper, but the practical application from those models can be difficult to map out.

The Role in the Industry

How involved are the training authors in your profession? This step is not a popularity contest nor does it simply rely on longevity. The best choice is an organization with a broad set of relationships with consultants and product providers of numerous types. For instance, professionals in IT asset management may work with:

- Software publishers offering products to help manage IT assets
- IT Asset Disposition vendors for disposal processes
- Consultants offering licensing advice and negotiation services
- Outsourcers taking on any or all of IT asset management
- Software publishers for your organization's portfolio of software
- Mobile device management
- Asset identification and tagging vendors
- Hardware manufacturers and leasing companies

The more limited the interaction a training development organization has, the less opportunity for your instructors to learn from the different perspectives. The best case scenario is an organization with a wide and eclectic set of industry relationships that includes knowledge sharing rather than just a product to product handshake.

The final problem is how to judge the commitment to the profession itself. Certainly, the publication of educational materials, participating or hosting conferences and webinars are good indicators. But, these are good choices for any provider wishing to improve awareness. To judge commitment, take a look at community and academic linkages where there are positive steps being taken to build the knowledge about the profession so that the profession is more widely understood and valued.

Taking the Leap

The advantage of this decision process is that it does not require a large investment of time because you are using the extensive evaluation time spent by the accreditation organization and the time other industry bodies have chosen to invest in the training organization. You have examined what the training organization is investing time into before you even begin looking at course content and schedules. With this approach, you are applying the same types of strategies that management uses when making decisions.

