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# OCCUPATIONAL ALERT

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Occupation:	Information Technology (IT) Certification Trends

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Update: An April 25, 2006 study found that for the first time since 2000, bonuses paid for IT certifications have decreased compared with those paid for the underlying skills. The *Q1 2006 Hot Technical Skills and Certifications Pay Index from Foote Partners*, a New Canaan CT, IT compensation company, suggests that this is a major shift.

David Foote, chief researcher for Foote Partners offers that, "Eighteen months ago, it was all about certifications for IT workers as employers stumbled out of the wreckage of an economic recession, looking to start hiring again." The report concludes that employers are not placing the same emphasis on certification that they once did because they are finding other qualities of IT professionals more critical to their businesses moving forward. Among "cooling" certified tech skills, the study lists nine, including **MCDST** (Microsoft Certified Desktop Support Technician); **CISA** (Certified Information Systems Auditor); and three Novell certifications: **CNE** (Certified Novell Engineer), **MCNE** (Master CNE) and **CNA** (Certified Novell Administrator). This is reinforced by a June 13, 2005 article in *Computer World* that reports on a study of 48,000 IT workers in the U.S. and Europe which shows that compensation for those who lack technical certifications increased by 2.8% in the first quarter of 2005, while pay for workers with certifications increased by only 0.6%. And for the full year that ended April 1, 2005 workers without certifications enjoyed an average pay increase of 3.6%, while those with technical certifications saw an increase of 2.9%. If O'Connell's Razor holds any merit, it appears that IT employers are beginning to show certifications are not the full measure of competitive value in the workplace - skill, experience, and real-world problem solving ability are mattering more and more.

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Select References:	Rothberg, Deborah. (May 8, 2006). News & Analysis: Economic IT Trends. <i>Eweek</i> , 23(19), 33.
	Tennant, Don. (2005, June 13). OPINION: Wages and Salaries. <i>Computer World</i> , 39(24), 18.