

Why IT Pros Need To Remain Curious
A successful IT career requires constant learning and proving knowledge through IT certifications.

Many people got into technology because it held an aura of mystery. There is always something new and exciting, something to learn, and new solutions to bring to your company or customers. This is true today more than ever.



(Image: geralt/Pixabay)

Throughout my career I've noticed that the people who succeed are those with intellectual curiosity: A thirst for knowledge, a desire to learn, and a willingness to spend time to garner more knowledge. In fact, when interviewing potential co-workers, I always ask what they do to keep up on the industry and to gain more knowledge. To me, the answer to this question says a lot about someone's motivation and ability to succeed in IT.

Unfortunately, many times, the answers I get tend to be either that they are too busy, or they will look to the employer to provide training. While I agree that employer-paid training is essential, I also believe there is always time to learn and grow, and it need not take an extraordinary amount of time. So how do I do it?

Early in my career, a manager advised me to spend at least one hour a day reading and learning about technology. To this day, I try to stick to that advice. Some days I only have 15 minutes and other days I find a few hours, but every day I try to do something to learn. When time is short, I like to head to YouTube for a quick lesson on coding, Cisco ACI, Cisco Software-Defined Access, or even the Fermi Paradox. Okay, that last one isn't about technology, but it's an interesting video and who's to say you must always focus on technology topics in your quest to learn?

When I want to go deeper into a topic, I usually pick up a book or consult Google to find session content from industry conferences. Two of my favorites are Cisco Live and AWS re:Invent; both provide free in-depth video content of conference sessions, and are great for taking your knowledge to the next level.

Beyond constant learning and curiosity, there comes a time when you need to do something to prove to others what you know. While experience is the best ways to do this, differentiating your resume from thousands of similar resumes can really only be done in a handful of ways. For me, one of the most important differentiators are industry certifications.

This is not to say that getting a certification is the same as experience, but a certification proves two things: that you're committed to setting goals and seeing them through to completion, and that you know how to learn. Certification testing requires you to learn a specific technology and answer questions in a specific way -- maybe not always the "right way," but a specific way. This is analogous to process and procedure in many enterprises. You might not always agree with the way something is done, but many times you have to do things in a specific manner for compliance or business reasons.

So what certification should you choose? Honestly it doesn't matter, as long as the certification provides value to you, your career goals, or your employer. However, certifications focusing on security, networking, or software development are generally in demand and will enhance your knowledge and resume.

Technology is great because there is always something to learn, and technology is bad because there is always something to learn. But if you spend just a little time each day, and maybe get a certification or two, the ever-changing torrent of technology will be just a bit easier to manage. It all comes down to a little desire and a bit of curiosity. Contrary to what others may say about curiosity, I promise no cats will be harmed in the process.

Source: Networkcomputing.com By: Michael Edwards
[https://www.networkcomputing.com/data-centers/why-it-pros-need-remain-curious/513841750?](https://www.networkcomputing.com/data-centers/why-it-pros-need-remain-curious/513841750?elq_mid=81153&elq_cid=18880569&mc=nl_x_nwcr_edt_aud_nwc_x_x-updates-20171028&cid=nl_x_nwcr_edt_aud_nwc_x_x-updates-20171028&elqTrackId=ff9ee80f36db46499416a9c65a3ac0b4&elq=0a2599f0de3432cabe58311c157518d9&elqaid=81153&elqat=1&elqCampaignId=28515)

NASA Developing New Plane Design

NASA is best known for building rockets and spacecraft, but don't forget that "space" represents only one of the letters in the acronym. NASA also focuses on aeronautics, which means it's continually trying to improve the planes we travel in every day.



The most recent idea is called STARC-ABL, which stands for "Single-aisle Turboelectric Aircraft with an Aft Boundary-Layer propulsor." It's a terrible acronym, and for such a long-winded phrase you might expect something fancier than what it really is: an engine on the back of the plane. NASA is starting to work with industry and academic leaders to turn this dream into reality.

NASA's idea is pretty straightforward: place a large turbofan engine on the rear of a plane, where it will collect the slow-moving air traveling along the plane's body. This lets the wing-mounted turbofans be built smaller, which means less drag and a higher fuel efficiency.

That by itself would mean a minor improvement to fuel use, but NASA decided to go a step further. The engineers also added generators to the wing-mounted turbofans, and the electricity generated by these engines is used to power the tail-mounted one. This means that the rear turbofan that provides much of the plane's thrust doesn't require any fuel to operate.

According to NASA, this means that the plane's engines use 10 percent less fuel using these improvements, which will translate to longer ranges for aircraft like Boeing's already long-range 787 Dreamliner.

The agency issued grants to Boeing, the University of Georgia, and Liberty Works with ES Aero to develop working designs with the STARC-ABL concept. The long-term goal is to have a plane using this tech in the air within the next two decades, so you won't be seeing STARC-ABL on a working aircraft anytime soon. But this is an interesting glimpse into the future of commercial aviation, and NASA is appropriately leading the way.

Source: [NASA](#)

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