

HOMEGROWN IS NO LONGER THE ONLY SOLUTION TO BLOCKCHAIN TALENT ACQUISITION

EC-Council subdivision IIB Council looks to become the “gold standard” in blockchain certification and education.

BY JARED COSEGLIA

Blockchain is a word that most have heard but few actually understand and can define. Yet, in a recent internal study conducted by IIB Council, over 70,000 working professionals across the world self-identify as blockchain professionals.

That may seem like a lot of human beings working in blockchain, but a recent report from TechCrunch found that for every 14 job openings focused on hiring blockchain expertise, there was on average only one qualified professional to fill the role. While the demand for blockchain professionals, especially in the legal market, may not be as explosive as in disciplines like cybersecurity and privacy, the supply remains paltry in comparison to demand, resulting in an unsustainable talent ecosystem of high demand, low supply.

Irene Dima, a director at IIB Council, has observed firsthand that the “only people for the jobs are the people in the jobs” when it comes to blockchain. A new certification from IIB Council aims to establish the global standards in the blockchain industry while simultaneously creating the next generation of blockchain pros by offering skills that cannot be validated elsewhere.

“Unless you are homegrown, it is very hard to get blockchain education,” says Dima. “People have been trained in-house, like at IBM, but few have clear standards for explaining their job or an understanding of how to interview or be interviewed for a job in blockchain. We are trying to bridge that gap by getting talent the validation they need to compete and fulfill these open jobs.”

IIB Council is a division of the International Council of Electronic Commerce Consultants, also known as the EC-Council, one of the world’s largest cybersecurity technical certification bodies. The EC-Council is most famous for the CEH or Certified Ethical Hacker designation, a staple in the certification portfolio for offensive security professionals. IIB Council boasts two other exclusive certification programs, the C/DM or Certified Digital Marketer and the C/PM or Certified Project Manager. The C/BP or Certified Blockchain Professional is the newest designation available from IIB Council, and there is something in it for everyone.

To actually achieve the IIB’s blockchain professional certification, an individual must be a programmer, developer and coder. “In order to get



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the cert you have to do it all,” says Dima. “You must be technical.” The Full Stack Developer track of the C/BP requires a five-day course training, which provides a 100 percent hands-on overview of blockchain technology and its implementation in the real world. This includes coursework on blockchain fundamentals answering these questions: What are blocks? What are transactions? What is hashing, tokenization and mining versus forging? What is the difference

between DLT (distributed ledger technology) and blockchain? What are cryptocurrencies and ICOs?

A full day is spent on bitcoin education and Hyperledger, including a deep dive into frameworks like Burrow and Sawtooth as well as tools like Cello, Quilt and Caliper. Another full day is spent on ethereum and AI for blockchain. Despite covering a wealth of specific tools in the program, IIB advertises technology agnosticism when delivering C/BP training.

“We’re not just teaching Hyperledger, which is owned by IBM,” says Dima, “but rather a broader non-tool-specific set of skills that will allow individuals to develop solutions that address the business needs, in addition to the technology needs, required for blockchain project implementation.”

The technical demands on the Full Stack track may make a large percentage of legal technologists, especially attorneys, hesitate about pursuing this certification; however, part of the certification program has been separated from the curriculum in its entirety and is offered as two specialized side courses. A two-day track is available focusing on educating business tech executives. This training and education is targeted for decision-makers, specifically unit leaders, growth management executives and technology innovators who may be tasked with oversight on blockchain projects in corporations or law firms. There is also a one-day program for government officials who are policymakers, regulators and compliance officers assigned to blockchain-related cases.

The content for these offerings is far less technical. Topics covered in the short programs include blockchain’s impacts on specific industry

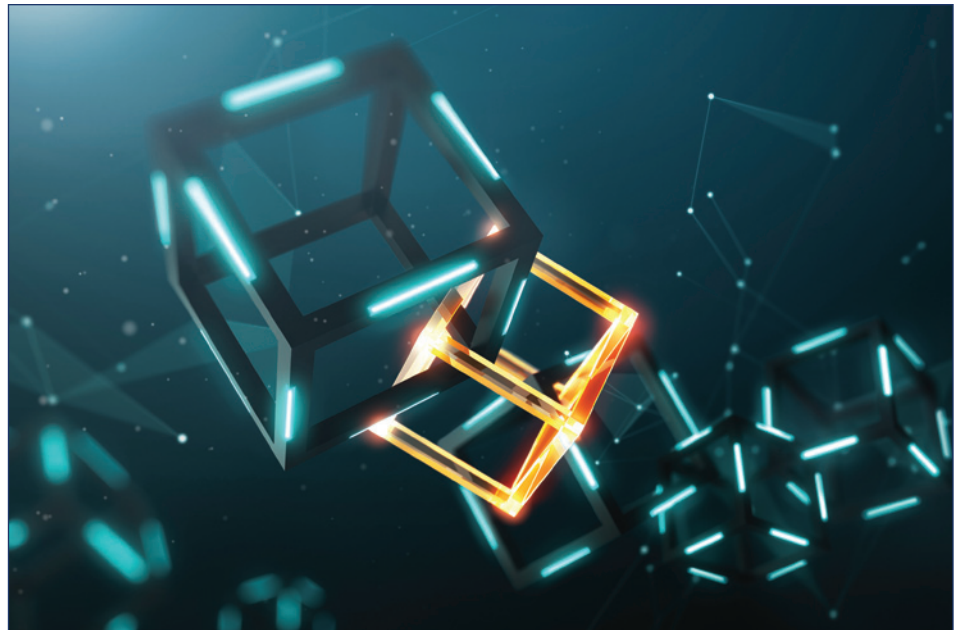


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verticals including media, financial, health care and others; industry use cases including supply chain, identity management, IoT and blockchain; security and privacy in blockchain; blockchain-as-a-service (BaaS); smart contract creation projects and more. While business and government executives who take these trainings will not walk out with a C/BP designation, they will have “the confidence to work with and talk to those who do hold the certification,” says Dima.

The IIB and EC-Council have over 700 training partners at 800 universities around the world in over 145 countries. Students can reach out to their training partners in their own geography to register. They have an open enrollment policy, which can be administered through any partner. Students can also go online to register. Classes are offered online and live. Registration for the program comes with a one-year access to prerecorded classes online as well.

Blockchain is slowly inserting its presence into all aspects of life,

including the legal marketplace. For professionals at a variety of levels of authority and execution, blockchain is quickly moving from a curiosity to a necessity in order to compete within the changing landscape of the business of law. Early adopters could have a distinct competitive advantage from getting this education now, whether for themselves as business leaders or for their technical staff who will do the heavy lifting.

Dima concludes by admitting that the goal for IIB is simple: “We want to be the gold standard for blockchain certification in the world.” For more information on the C/BP can be found on IIB’s website.

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