

What is Competency Certification?

Briefly, competency certification is an independent verification that the set of competencies or work skills required to perform a particular job are in fact present.

Why Competency Certification?

Presently, any individual can claim to be an “expert” in floor measurement. But for both practitioners and building owners, quality assurance is vitally important. By the calls received in the BOMA Calgary office, it is apparent that the level of expertise in floor measurement leaves room for improvement. BOMA Calgary now offers a Certificate of Competency that assures practitioners and building owners alike that persons professing to carry out measurement according to recognized Standards, can actually do what they claim they can do. When someone presents a course completion certificate, a diploma, or a degree it verifies only that someone has passed an exam. It does not necessarily mean they possess all the skill you require. And, if the pass rate for an exam is, say, 70% of the 30% the person didn’t get right, how much is critical information? You as an employer or recruiter just don’t know making the hiring process something of a crap shoot. By comparison, competency certification is a process by which you can verify that all the required skills necessary are present. In other words, you have a better tool to determine if an individual is “work ready”.

How does it work?

In any occupational category, such as building operator, security officer, lease administrator, etc., a panel of subject matter experts, or persons with experience, meet together with a facilitator and arrive at a consensus standard as to what is the set of competencies necessary to perform all the tasks expected from a person in that category.

There are three types of competencies:

- a. *Critical* – essential to the task, may be of a life-safety nature. If this is not present, the individual can not do the job.
- b. *Important* – non-critical.
- c. *“Nice”* – these are nice to have by not important to the task.

A competency may have a long or a short “shelf-life” dependant upon its nature. For example a competency may be “proficiency in one of the official languages”. Something like this has a long shelf-life since once you know the language it is often a life-long skill. Competency in a complex technical process may by comparison have a shorter shelf-life, after which a refresher course is required.

An individual must have ALL the critical competencies to be certified, together with 80% of the important competencies. An individual can still be certified with 80% or more of the important competencies, it means merely that the person requires some supervision for those aspects of the overall

function. It is expected that through additional training, the individual will work through to 100%.

The object of the competency certification process is to help people to attain positions that they seek rather than from holding them back. It is a process of evaluation, facilitation and encouragement.

Once a competency set is established for an occupational classification, the competencies are posted on a web facility (that can reside via a link to your website). An individual may access this web area and the self evaluation against the competencies. In this self evaluation, the person is asked if they have performed these particular tasks and when. At the applicants choice, the online system is locked and this triggers the independent validation, which if successful leads to the certification. This remains in effect for 3 years. However, if there is a change affecting any of the competencies, especially critical ones, the individual is required to re-certify only for that competency that has changed. The person is then certified for 3 years going forward from that point.

[How Do I Get a Certificate of Competency?](#)

In simple terms, a person can carry out an online self-assessment against the established competencies. When they are ready, they can trigger the validation process. The validator and the individual schedule a time when the applicant demonstrates their practical skills in a controlled environment. This process may take about one hour. When the applicant receives certification, the validator notifies BOMA Calgary which then issues the certificate. There is a fee for certification.