

## **Becoming an ICA Certified ToP Facilitator: Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Where can I be certified?**

ICA holds certification events all over the world. In the USA there is a certification assessment event prior to each of the ToP Network meetings. The next event will be on Jan 6, 2012 in Sacramento, CA.

Want to certify closer to home? Don't hesitate to let the Certification Coordinator know if you believe you have several candidates (at least 4) for certification in close proximity to one another.

### **When is the next certification scheduled?**

Our certification calendar is updated constantly. Your best source of current event information is an email to our Certification Coordinator, [marilyn.oyler@gmail.com](mailto:marilyn.oyler@gmail.com)

The cost of the certification process is US \$1200. A portion of this fee, \$100, is payable at the time of application. The remaining \$1100 is due prior to the assessment event. Candidates are expected to cover the cost of transport to the event location, and any lodging/food for overnight stays.

### **How long does it take to certify?**

The certification process begins when you download your Certification Guide/ Application. The Certification Guide can be acquired on the ICA-USA website [www.ica-usa.org](http://www.ica-usa.org) or by contacting the Certification Coordinator, [marilyn.oyler@gmail.com](mailto:marilyn.oyler@gmail.com). You will find that the Guide contains complete certification information including a Process Overview. This process generally spans several months or years. At the Assessment Event, the process takes two hours. Candidates typically arrive the day prior to the assessment, and depart in the evening following the assessment.

### **How much experience do I need to certify?**

You will be asked to provide a portfolio of examples of how you apply the core competencies in your work. The certification process is meant to assess competency in a broad spectrum of skills and knowledge required to successfully facilitate a variety of sessions and display the set of skills, knowledge, and behaviors that ToP facilitators must have in order to be successful facilitating in a wide variety of environments. For more information on facilitator competencies and requirements, please see *Certification Guide*,

[www.ica-usa.org/resource/resmgr/top/topcertificationguide.pdf](http://www.ica-usa.org/resource/resmgr/top/topcertificationguide.pdf)

### **Is training part of the certification process?**

Certification is not a "training" process, but an event at which experienced facilitators display the basic set of skills, knowledge and behaviors outlined in the *Certification Guide*. We assume that candidates for certification have taken ToP Facilitation Methods, ToP Strategic Planning and any other needed advanced training and/or experience prior to application. For more information on ICA's ToP Training please go to: <http://icausa.memberclicks.net>

### **Who do I contact regarding certification? Where do I send my Application?**

Please contact the Certification Coordinator, [marilyn.oyler@gmail.com](mailto:marilyn.oyler@gmail.com) for certification information. The application/information materials are available immediately via email. If you decide to apply, your application materials can be returned to Marilyn Oyler, 4208 N 25<sup>th</sup> Street, Phoenix, AZ 85016.

### **When must I submit my application and still make my desired event?**

Applications are typically closed two months prior to a specific event.

### **Can my assessment be scheduled for a specific time of my choice?**

We try to honor requests for date and location on a first come/first serve basis when at all possible. Please make any preference known when you mail your application.

### **We have several facilitators at my location or in my vicinity who would like to certify. Can we hold a certification at my location?**

Yes! We will be happy to talk with you about arranging a "private" or "semi-private" event for groups who have four or more qualified facilitator candidates to certify. We can hold these events on your premises or in a location in the vicinity. These local assessments provide the benefit of reduction in cost of transport to the event location, and any lodging/food for overnight stays.

### **What happens on the assessment day?**

The assessment day includes a 2 hour interview with two assigned assessors, at the end of which you are given your result and offered immediate verbal feedback. All candidates are either certified or deferred at the end of the assessment. Deferred candidates are given specific feedback about requirements which must be met for them to become certified.

**Additional Questions and Answers regarding specific requirements noted in the Certification Guide.**

**When selecting Co-facilitators: can the co-facilitator be non-ToP trained or Can the co-facilitator be a person trained in ToP years ago but hasn't really developed his or her use of the methods?**

The intent of the requirement is to have the experience of co-facilitating or working as a team. The co-facilitator can be non-ToP trained though our preference would be to have a ToP trained co-facilitator. If the person is not ToP trained, they may not count as one of the Observer Surveys required under On-site Observation.

**Is there a special reflection sheet to be completed by the co-facilitator?**

Please complete the current reflection sheet on page 18 of the Certification Guide.

**What is ICA referring to when saying Learning Styles?**

The competency 3.0 Evoke the Creativity of the Group best describes what we are looking for in the category of learning styles. Looking particularly at 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3, it describes the indicators we are looking for. In the MToP we introduce Social Styles, Multiple Intelligences and Gregorc Thinking Styles. It is not our intent to limit the experience of a candidate to those styles but offer them as examples for ways to assess differing needs of participants.

**What is included in the Mentor Observer and Client Surveys and where can I find that?**

The surveys that are sent electronically to each of the observers and the 5 clients are in the file cabinet of the MToP Groupsites. As you can see the observers and clients are asked about all 7 competencies even though they may have only witnessed your facilitation of two methods.

The mentors can also use a more specific observation form to provide specific feedback to you as a candidate. These forms are available for the mentors in the Assessors file cabinet on the TTN Groupsites.

As soon as you pay your application fee, the electronic surveys are available for your clients and observers. Please contact the Certification Coordinator, [marilyn.oyler@gmail.com](mailto:marilyn.oyler@gmail.com) to request that the survey be sent. The client and/ or observer will return the survey to the Coordinator. You will receive a summary of the surveys after the assessment event is complete.

**On-site Observation: Our new Certification Guide indicates that 2 observers are needed with each observing 1 session where 2 methods are used. Can one observer come to 2 separate sessions, seeing 1 method in each? yes**

**Rather than having and paying the observer to be there throughout the whole meeting could the observer come in, go, come back? yes**

- **Additional notes:** "Observers" fill out the survey for all 7 competencies, for the CTF assessment. Specific feedback on the observed facilitation process happens directly at the time, with the facilitator.
- The observations need to be two completely different on-site situations, with different clients - and two different observers. However, the observations can include the use of the same methods or different methods than the other observation.
- Observations need to be working with 'real clients'...not MToP or Training Track experience..
- If you choose to do observing via video: The observer needs to see the whole thing (not some teeny clip) - needs to have a person videoing the event, so you get more than just the person at the front of the room, but what's going on in the rest of the room as well, so it is AS IF the observer were in the room.

### **What is needed to complete the Personal Journey Chart?**

Please respond by describing what would be helpful for assessors to know?

1. Objective level data - a list of facilitation ...i.e. last 3 years
2. Plus...a choice - one from the following list (this is not exclusive)
  - \* Wall of Wonder - last 3 years (chapter titles represent your journey)
  - \* Graphic facilitation depiction
  - \* An essay...your journey ...change over time
  - \* a video clip...telling your journey

**Do I need to have my mentor sign off on my portfolio before it is presented to the assessors?** Yes, it is our preference that you do so.

**How many reflection sheets must be included in the portfolio?** One for each required event included in the portfolio.

**How many strategic plans are required in the portfolio?**

The certification requirement is just one strategic planning and it requires that you do all the parts. If you are working with a co-facilitator that means that you will need to do more than one to accomplish "all the parts". In our work with

mentors we suggested that it might be helpful for candidates to do at least 3 strategic plans so that they get a real sense of how it works. They are quite different depending on the group you are working with. However the requirement is still just one.