

Revitalizing & Expanding Credentialing Programs:

Strategies for Growth & Engagement



ASAE Webinar

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Three Phases of Revitalizing a Program

Phase 1 Analysis and Retrospective

What is working/not working?

Phase 2 Evolution and Implementation

What can or needs to evolve?

Phase 3 Evaluation & Realignment

How can you monitor engagement and assess for continued viability?

Phase 1 Analysis and Retrospective: What is working/not working?

Program Metrics & KPIs Review

Begin with quantitative data to understand performance trends.

Key metrics include:

- Candidate volume trends (year-over-year growth or decline)
- Pass/fail rates and their consistency across demographics
- Completion rates for modular or multi-phase credentials
- Retake rates, which may indicate issues with content clarity or readiness
- Time-to-credential, reflecting efficiency and accessibility
- Revenue and cost per candidate, to evaluate financial sustainability
- Consider benchmarking these metrics against industry norms when possible.



Phase 1 Analysis and Retrospective: What is working/not working?



Candidate Journey Analysis

Map the full candidate lifecycle, from discovery to renewal.

Evaluate:

- Where candidates drop off in the process
- Whether the registration process is intuitive
- The accessibility and effectiveness of prep materials
- Common support issues and themes in candidate feedback
- This analysis helps identify process friction and barriers to success.

Phase 1 Analysis and Retrospective: What is working/not working?

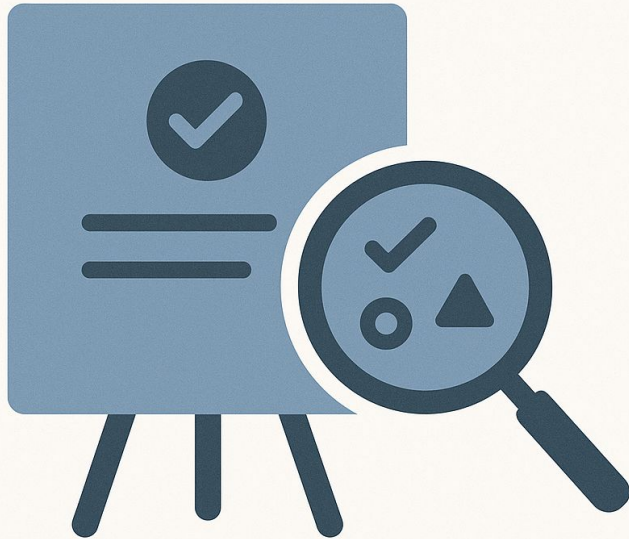
Stakeholder Feedback Loops

Engage with the people who interact with your program:

- Candidates: through surveys, interviews, or focus groups
- Employers: to assess alignment with hiring and workforce needs
- Instructors or proctors: for on-the-ground observations
- Credential holders: to determine real-world impact and value
- Make feedback collection a continuous practice, not a one-time effort.



Phase 1 Analysis and Retrospective: What is working/not working?



Content & Competency Audit

Review your exam or program content to determine if it is:

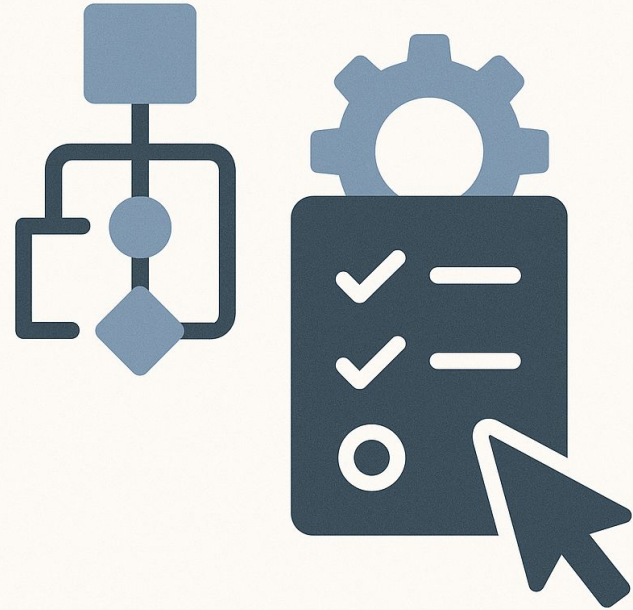
- Aligned with current industry standards and practices
- Clearly mapped to job roles and real-world competencies
- Inclusive and free of unnecessary cultural or language bias
- Complementary or stackable with other industry credentials
- Involve subject matter experts to ensure technical accuracy and relevance.

Phase 1 Analysis and Retrospective: What is working/not working?

Operational Workflow Assessment

Examine the internal workings of your program:

- Are systems (LMS, CRM, proctoring, etc.) well integrated?
- Are staff performing repetitive or inefficient tasks?
- Are there opportunities for automation in reminders, scoring, or reporting?
- Optimizing operations can free up capacity for growth initiatives.



Phase 1 Analysis and Retrospective: What is working/not working?



Renewal & Recertification Trends

If renewal rates are low, investigate potential causes:

- Is the credential still perceived as valuable?
- Is the renewal process too burdensome or expensive?
- Are you clearly communicating the ongoing benefits of renewal?
- Analyze recertification behavior and use that insight to refine your approach.

Phase 1 Analysis and Retrospective: What is working/not working?

Competitive & Market Position Analysis

Assess your program's place in the broader credentialing ecosystem:

- What alternatives exist in your field?
- How do their pricing, delivery models, and features compare?
- What differentiates your offering?
- Understanding your market position can highlight opportunities for expansion or repositioning.



Phase 1 Analysis and Retrospective: What is working/not working?



Alignment with Organizational Goals

Ensure the credentialing program aligns with your broader mission:

- Does it support organizational goals or workforce development initiatives?
- Are internal stakeholders actively invested in its success?
- Is there a clear narrative connecting the program to strategic priorities?
- Alignment improves long-term viability and internal support.

Phase 2 Evolution and Implementation: What can evolve?

The results of phase 1 provide data to:

- Identify potential opportunities
- Inform decision-making regarding these options
- Present a path to evolve a struggling program



Phase 2 Evolution and Implementation: What can evolve?



Strategies to Evolve a Struggling Credentialing Program

- Re-align to meet audience needs and level
- Increase access to exam
- Develop support resources
- Update recertification model
- Add credentialing options
- Engage expertise
- Build strategic partnerships

Phase 2 Evolution and Implementation: What can evolve?

Strategies to Evolve a Struggling Program

- Re-align program to meet audience needs and level
 - Align program design with audience needs
 - Align content with level (entry, advanced, specialty)
- Increase access to exam
 - Re-consider unnecessary barriers to certification
 - Expand testing opportunities while maintaining security



Phase 2 Evolution and Implementation: What can evolve?

Strategies to Evolve a Struggling Program



- Develop support resources
 - Expand training opportunities
 - Consider the development of practice exams and other tools
- Update recertification model
 - Consider the candidate experience
 - Ensure recertification requirements align with purpose, scope and level
 - Remove unnecessary barriers in the recertification process

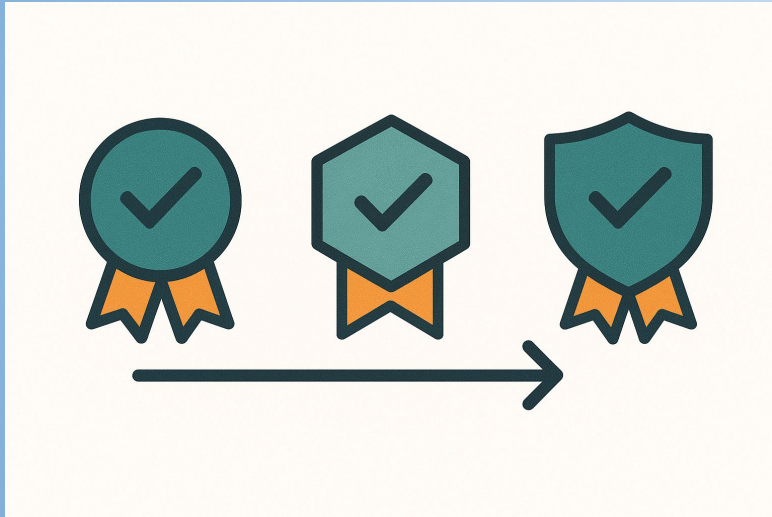
Phase 2 Evolution and Implementation: What can evolve?

Strategies to Evolve a Struggling Program

- Add credentialing options
 - Consider audience needs before and after current program
 - Investigate micro-credentials or skills-based additions for current program
- Engage expertise
 - Consult with credentialing experts
 - Investigate options with psychometricians
- Build strategic partnerships
 - Consider aligned organizations and associations in the industry and ecosystem



Phase 2 Evolution and Implementation: What will it take to implement something new and/or different?



- Continue to understand the audience's needs
- Make purpose driven decisions
- Rely on evidence to inform programmatic changes
- Engage credentialing experts to inform decision-making and implementation
- Carefully manage change

Phase 3 Evaluation & Realignment: How can you monitor engagement and assess for continued viability?

A credentialing program is an ever-changing, evolving entity. This evolution necessitates continued monitoring and management. To effectively keep your program relevant:

1. Use the power of data!
2. Build relationships with industry stakeholders
3. Be relevant
4. Know your competition
5. Promote the value of certification
6. Commit to Self-Analysis and Assessment



Phase 3 Evaluation & Realignment: How can you monitor engagement and assess for continued viability?

1. Use the power of data!

Begin with the data you have access to:



- Collect and monitor demographic data at the initial certification and recertification stages
- Reach out to certified persons via surveys or focus groups at conferences for feedback
- Create opportunities for outreach with routine communication, e.g. blogs, chats, to obtain feedback on specific services
- Ask for feedback on the candidate and certified person journeys
- Assess what changes you can make based on feedback
- Ask if your services align with the needs of your candidate and pool of certified persons
- Assess your resources and ability to start implementing program revisions
- Use data to generate content

Phase 3 Evaluation & Realignment: How can you monitor engagement and assess for continued viability?

Identify sources of data to collect from end-users of certification:

- Survey employers regarding needs of the workforce
- Survey employers about gaps in skills
- Look for opportunities to fill gaps, e.g. micro-credentials
- Seek input on what is changing in the workforce and why, e.g. the job one is certified to do; the skills and knowledge required; the expectations of employers
- Review your program for alignment with workforce needs and expectations
- Determine if your certification program is still relevant or in need of revision



Phase 3 Evaluation & Realignment: How can you monitor engagement and assess for continued viability?



2. Build relationships with industry stakeholders

Leverage the strengths of the certification and other credentials you offer:

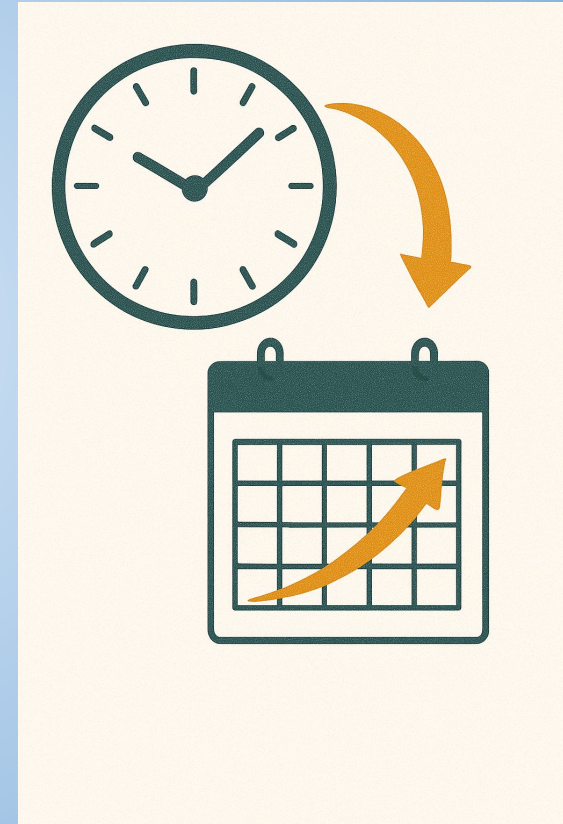
- Determine if there are opportunities to align your program with education and training programs, e.g. embedding your certification, reaching out to students to seek certification as the next step after graduation, for prerequisites/eligibility
- Seek opportunities to provide credentials to fill in gaps not provided in education and training that would benefit students and graduates; this may not be a full job but skills or knowledge needed to better perform on the job, e.g. micro-credentials
- Find opportunities to partner with stakeholders, e.g. prerequisite options, recertification credits
- Engage stakeholders, e.g. employers, regulators as SMEs (if appropriate)

Phase 3 Evaluation & Realignment: How can you monitor engagement and assess for continued viability?

3. Be relevant

Stay in touch with the needs of current and prospective certified persons:

- Determine if processes align with the demographics and characteristics of your certified persons, e.g. maintenance of certification
- Determine if processes align with the demographics and characteristics of your pool of prospective certified persons, e.g. at application, for test administration, for communication and outreach
- Implement strategies that will enable your certified persons to maintain their certification over their life-time of work, e.g. provide useful information on industry trends, salaries, C.E.
- Check-in with industry stakeholders for alignment with workforce needs and expectations and to find out what is changing in the industry or profession



Phase 3 Evaluation & Realignment: How can you monitor engagement and assess for continued viability?



4. Know your competition

Analyze other offerings in your industry or profession:

- Find other credentials in your industry or profession
- Conduct an analysis of offerings, e.g. full-scope certification; credible examination development processes; impartiality in decision-making; accredited
- Conduct a cost-analysis of services to determine how your program compares
- Articulate what separates your credential from others, e.g. certification vs certificate
- Seek opportunities for collaboration or other efficiencies, e.g. joint research; mutual recognition if applicable

Phase 3 Evaluation & Realignment: How can you monitor engagement and assess for continued viability?

5. Promote the value of certification

Tell your own story:

- Be the keeper of metrics
- Certification is a moving target—get in front of trends and lead the discussion
- Give back to the industry or profession with information, e.g. results of survey data, research
- Reinforce the tenets of program credibility, e.g. in exam development process, enforcement of ethical standards, maintenance of credential
- Reinforce why certification is an integral part of an industry or profession and how this is relevant to the work of certified persons and the public they serve
- Highlight tangible benefits of certification, e.g. employer satisfaction, preference in hiring, job advancement & promotion, better qualified persons



Phase 3 Evaluation & Realignment: How can you monitor engagement and assess for continued viability?



6. Commit to Self-Analysis and Assessment

Mission Relevance:

- Review the mission of the certification program for alignment with industry/profession needs
- Review the governance structure for effectiveness
- Review committee structures for effectiveness
- Conduct an audit of policies for currency and relevance

Resources

- Workcred, an affiliate of ANSI
 - <https://www.workcred.org/>
- ISO/IEC 17024:2012 (E) Conformity assessment
 - General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons
 - <https://anab.ansi.org/>
- NCCA Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs
 - <https://www.credentialingexcellence.org/>
 - <https://www.credentialingexcellence.org/Accreditation>
- Professional Testing, Inc.
 - <https://www.proftesting.com/>
 - Visit [Our Blogs](#) and [Our Store](#) for papers on micro-credentials
- Navigating Credentials: A Guide to Developing a Successful Program
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