

Certification versus Certificate

How to understand the differences

By setting and enforcing standards for certification, the **Certified Electrical Professional (CEP)** seeks to assure the public that those holding the credential from CEP possess the knowledge, skills, and competency for quality in electrical distribution sales. Unlike certificate programs, the CEP is experience based. It is not intended to teach individuals how to become sales professionals. Rather, it is designed to measure an individual's "knowledge-in-use" – the application of knowledge and skills by those with real-life experience in this role.

The following chart may be helpful to better understand the differences between certification and certificate programs.

Certification	Certificate
Results from an assessment process that recognizes an individual's knowledge, skills, and competency in a particular specialty	Results from an education process
Typically requires professional experience	For newcomers and experienced professionals
Awarded by a third-party, standard setting organization, typically not for profit	Awarded by educational programs or institutions often for profit
Indicates mastery/competency as measured against a defensible set of standards, usually by application or exam	Indicates completion of a course or series of courses with a specific focus (different than a degree granting program)
Standards set through a defensible, industry-wide process (job analysis/role delineation) that results in an outline of required knowledge and skills	Course content determined by the specific provider or institution, not standardized
Typically results in credentials listed after one's name, i.e. CEP-OS or CEP-IS	Usually listed on a resume detailing education
Has on-going requirements in order to maintain, holder must demonstrate he/she continues to meet requirements	Demonstrates knowledge of course content at the end of a set period of time

Certification generally refers to an earned credential that demonstrates the holder's specialized knowledge, skills, and experience.

Certification differs from a certificate program, which is usually an educational offering that confers a document at the program's conclusion.

To learn more about NAED certification or certificate programs, contact John Kiso at jkiso@naed.org or 314-812-5303.

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NAED provides both certification and certificate programs. Following is a difference between the two using NAED programs as examples:

Certification - CEP	Certificate - EPEC
<p>Results from an assessment process that recognizes an individual's knowledge, skills, and competency in a particular specialty</p> <p><i>CEP conducted a job analysis and industry survey for inside and outside sales</i></p>	<p>Results from an education process</p> <p><i>EPEC is a training program</i></p>
<p>Typically requires professional experience</p> <p><i>CEP-OS requires five years industry experience and two years in outside sales.</i></p> <p><i>CEP-IS requires 18 months industry and inside sales experience.</i></p>	<p>For newcomers and experienced professionals</p> <p><i>EPEC has no requirements</i></p>
<p>Awarded by a third-party, standard setting organization, typically not for profit</p> <p><i>CEP, LLC. awards CEP-OS and CEP-IS</i></p>	<p>Awarded by educational programs or institutions often for profit</p> <p><i>Awarded by Foundation</i></p>
<p>Indicates mastery/competency as measured against a defensible set of standards, usually by application or exam</p> <p><i>CEP exam tests against skills and knowledge defined during job analysis and survey</i></p>	<p>Indicates completion of a course or series of courses with a specific focus (different than a degree granting program)</p> <p><i>EPEC certificate is awarded upon completion of all modules, projects, and final exam</i></p>
<p>Standards set through a defensible, industry-wide process (job analysis/role delineation) that results in an outline of required knowledge and skills</p> <p><i>Over 700 industry professionals and 130 companies participated in the CEP job analysis and survey</i></p>	<p>Course content determined by the specific provider or institution, not standardized</p> <p><i>EPEC course content developed by industry subject matter experts</i></p>
<p>Typically results in credentials listed after one's name</p> <p><i>Joe Smith</i></p> <p><i>Certified Electrical Professional–Outside Sales</i></p>	<p>Usually listed on a resume detailing education</p> <p><i>Joe Smith is an EPEC Gold Graduate</i></p>
<p>Has on-going requirements in order to maintain, holder must demonstrate he/she continues to meet requirements</p> <p><i>CEP requires 30 continuing education units (CEUs) over a three year period</i></p>	<p>Demonstrates knowledge of course content at the end of a set period of time</p> <p><i>EPEC requires no additional continuing education</i></p>