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Value of Accreditation Tied to Strategic Communication Management and Credibility, According to IABC Study

SAN FRANCISCO – Feb. 27, 2008 – Practicing strategic communication management and increasing credibility to organizations are two of the most valuable assets Accredited Business Communicators (ABCs) offer their employers. These were among the key findings in recent research conducted for the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC). The global Value of Accreditation study, sponsored by IABC/Chicago and L.C. Williams & Associates Research Group, was undertaken to provide insight into the value of accreditation to individuals, employers, clients and the communication profession.

“This is the first research directed to our customers—employers and clients,” said Anna M. Willey, ABC, chair of IABC’s Accreditation Council. “The findings offer insight into the value of accreditation from a professional development perspective and tie it into the value employers and clients place on strategic communication.”

Following are some of the research findings:

- Fifty-one percent of ABCs indicate they take a more strategic approach to the activities and processes in their organizations since becoming accredited.
- Fifty percent of supervisors and clients say the value of an ABC is the ability to communicate strategically.
- Sixty percent of ABCs perceive accreditation as giving more credibility to their department or organization.
- Sixty-nine percent of employers and 50 percent of clients perceive ABCs as giving more credibility to their department or organization.
- Seventy-five percent of ABCs say accreditation increases the credibility of the profession.
- Sixty-eight percent of ABCs say accreditation has increased their personal credibility.

According to ABCs, the accreditation designation is personally valuable in a number of other ways. Benefits most often cited are: accreditation has improved or enhanced their resumes (79 percent), increased their confidence (71 percent) or given them peer approval and recognition (65 percent). Two-thirds (67 percent) of respondents said being an ABC is very valuable or valuable.

Accreditation adds value to the advancement of the communication professional as well, ABCs said. Eighty percent of the survey respondents say accreditation provides a global standard, and 60 percent say it sets an ethical standard. Furthermore, 59 percent of ABCs say it reinforces the role strategic communication plays in achieving organizational goals while 57 percent say it increases respect for the profession.

The study benchmarks and begins to build a body of knowledge for the profession in which the value of accreditation and strategic communication is recognized by accredited members, their employers and clients. "Accreditation clearly supports organizations' needs, requirements and expectations of communicators," Willey said. "In other words, the strategic communication management process is what accredited business communicators have demonstrated they can deliver."

The Value of Accreditation executive summary with accompanying charts is available free of charge at <http://news.iabc.com/index.php?s=ideas&cat=28>.

About the study

Research for the Value of Accreditation global survey was conducted in three phases in late 2007: qualitative in-depth telephone interviews were conducted with nine ABCs in the U.S. and Canada; a quantitative web-based survey of ABCs with 356 from seven countries participating and web-based surveys with 27 supervisors and 19 clients of participating ABCs. For the survey of ABCs, the number of completions provides overall results that can be generalized to all ABCs with a margin of error of +/- 3.8 percentage points at a 95% confidence level.

About IABC

The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) is a global network of communication professionals committed to improving organizational effectiveness through strategic communication. Established in 1970, IABC serves more than 15,000 members in 70 countries and 100 chapters.

IABC's credential, the Accredited Business Communicator (ABC), is the global standard in organizational communication and provides communication practitioner's with a personal statement for their communication management abilities. The accreditation process measures the strategic abilities and technical skills of a communicator, and is a critical step in a communication practitioner's career growth. For more information, visit <http://www.iabc.com>.

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