

The Certification ROI Scorecard

WORKSHEET 5 OF 11

If a certification cannot survive five honest questions, it does not deserve your month of evenings.

Certification being scored

Date

Fill in only after the Paradox Ledger (Ch 1) says a certification serves you, and with a real Local Demand Scan verdict (Ch 6) in hand.

1. Total cost

Scores 5: Someone else covers the whole bill and the study time fits your life, or the total - money and time both - is trivial against your monthly budget

Scores 1: The all-in number would genuinely hurt

score 1-5

because...

2. Salary evidence quality

Scores 5: Strong evidence AND the measured population looks like your future self AND it does not rest on a self-selected survey alone

Scores 1: A spectacular figure measured on a population you will not resemble for years

score 1-5

Self-selected survey data that matches you scores 3 or 4 - a 4 when it is measured squarely at your market and level, a 3 when it also leans on a raise-after-certifying claim. No published salary data yet? Score 3 and note the gap - absent evidence is not bad evidence.

because...

3. Employer demand

Scores 5: Named in 10+ of your 20 postings

Scores 1: Named in 3 or fewer

Scores 1, 3, or 5 only - imported from your scan verdict line: $10+/20 = 5$, $4-9/20 = 3$, 3 or fewer = 1.

score 1-5

because...

4. Decay risk

Scores 5: Mentions rising or stable across your scans

Scores 1: Your market is visibly walking away

Cannot tell yet? Score 3 and write the date; your next scan moves it.

score 1-5

because...

5. Prerequisite fit

Scores 5: The certification renames what you already do

Scores 1: Passing would require becoming a different professional first

score 1-5

because...

TOTAL (5-25):

19-25 • PURSUE - take it into the Sequence Builder (Ch 10).

13-18 • BORDERLINE - name the weakest dimension and what would raise it; re-score next quarter.

5-12 • SKIP - write what the money does instead.

THE VETO: A score of 1 on **employer demand** or **prerequisite fit** ends the evaluation, whatever the total.