



## Becoming CBIP Certified

An interview with Jennifer Hay,  
TDWI Education Services

*Jennifer Hay discusses TDWI's popular Certified Business Intelligence Professional (CBIP) certification, her experiences becoming certified, the most frequently asked questions about the program, and how to prepare for taking the exams.*

**Q: When did you first become involved with the CBIP program at TDWI?**

I began working on CBIP when I joined TDWI two years ago. I came from a customer-focused business intelligence background, so it was decided that I would help to guide people through the certification process.

**Q: What prompted you to become certified?**

Many of the questions I received centered on how to prepare for the exams. For people who have been out of school for quite some time, concern about test-taking can span the gamut from high anxiety to butterflies, at the very least. I quickly realized that to truly be of assistance, I had to go through the certification process and become certified myself.

**Q: What CBIP certification do you currently hold?**

I'm certified at the Practitioner Level with a specialty in Business Analytics.

**Q: What was the certification process like for you?**

For me, becoming certified was a public event. Taking the exams seemed daunting at first, because everyone in the office knew I was testing. The congratulations were great when I did really well and the encouragement was appreciated, especially when I didn't do as well as I had expected.

**Q: How did you prepare for the exams?**

Like most, I tend to procrastinate when the tasks seem unpleasant, so I decided to start with a study plan rather than using free-form information discovery—otherwise known as “stalling.” Using the CBIP Examination Guide, I highlighted those areas in each exam outline where I thought I might need additional education or work experience prior

to testing. Taking the sample exams in the guidebook and on the CD confirmed my review and pinpointed the primary areas where I needed to focus my efforts. Based on these results, I actually developed three separate plans, one for each exam.

To pass the Data Warehousing exam, I decided that I needed additional study and work experience primarily in design/methodology and data quality. I'd already begun working on a data quality project; struggling over duplicate customer records and incomplete fields was making data quality very near and dear to my heart. To increase my understanding of different methodologies, I decided to retake the TDWI Data Warehousing Architectures course plus several other courses that cover the design, deliverables, and roles and responsibilities for specific methodologies.

Preparing for the Core exam was more of a challenge, since my roles in IT have not been extensive. The exam is very broad-based IT, with questions that can range from business value to source systems. I decided to take a less traditional study approach: I asked my friends for help. I was encouraged to find that most people were happy to sit down and sketch out answers even though each solution always leads to more questions. For the Business Analytics exam, I spent very little time preparing. I thought

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“My road to certification was filled with many twists and turns, not unlike Dorothy's adventures to find the Wizard of Oz, but with less singing and dancing.”

—Jennifer Hay

## TDWI 2006 World Conferences

Dates	Location
February 19–24	Las Vegas
May 14–19	Chicago
August 20–25	San Diego
November 5–10	Orlando

Visit [www.tdwi.org/Education](http://www.tdwi.org/Education) for more information.

## Introducing Philip Russom



The Data Warehousing Institute is proud to announce that Philip Russom, a veteran BI industry analyst, has joined TDWI as senior manager of research and services.

Philip comes to TDWI with more than 15 years of industry experience. Philip previously held a position as the principal analyst at Forrester Research, covering data integration. Prior to that, he was a research director at Giga Information Group, a freelance BI consultant, and director of the Data Warehousing and Business Intelligence Knowledge Center at the Hurwitz Group, Inc. Philip has also been a contributing editor at *Intelligent Enterprise* and *DM Review* magazines.

Philip will be working to deliver TDWI Members in-depth reports and industry commentary. He will manage the TDWI Report Series and the BI Strategies program as well as assist in providing a range of new Member services. ■

“Philip’s keen understanding of the business intelligence industry, his pragmatic approach to solving business and technology problems, and his sterling reputation will make him a tremendous asset for TDWI and help us grow our research and services to better meet the needs of BI professionals worldwide.”

—Wayne Eckerson

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my somewhat antiquated business degree was enough. The lack of preparation explains why I certified at the Practitioner Level rather than the higher Mastery Level.

### Q: How can certification help your career?

I believe that managing your business intelligence career requires the same dedication and focus as managing other projects. It has been my experience that advancement rarely if ever happens by accident, and that career goals without a defined strategy are impossible to achieve. How can a company be clear on what you bring to the table unless you are able to demonstrate your distinguishing skills and knowledge?

To become a valuable member of a BI team, you need the right combination of education, experience, and credentials. Being a jack of all trades is no longer sufficient to fulfill the requirements of these roles. If you would like to learn more about the BI disciplines, and how to choose BI roles and develop BI skills, I would recommend visiting [www.tdwi.org/Career](http://www.tdwi.org/Career).

### Q: What advice would you give to those preparing to test?

Try not to worry about taking the exams. Fear of testing can drive you crazy. Determine whether you need additional study or work experience, and then design a study plan that works for your time and energy. Even if you do not achieve the Mastery Level, you can retake the exams at a later time. After testing, you’ll receive a performance evaluation so you’ll know how you scored within particular areas, and you can use this information to be better prepared the next time around. ■

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