

# CAPacity

Newsletter for the ISA Certified Automation Professional® (CAP®)



October 2006

## In this issue:

CAP® Profile – Jacob Jackson	1
Certification Compliance	2
Testing Windows for ISA Certification Electronic Exams	3

## CAP® Profile – Jacob Jackson



As co-owner of a start-up software company, Jacob Jackson values the credibility offered by ISA's Certified Automation Professional® (CAP®) designation. Recently, one of his customers told him that his certification helped the start-up receive preference over another vendor. As a result, his company won the contract to install energy management controls in a large Atlanta, Ga., residence.

"The CAP helps our start-up be seen as a credible source of knowledge and information," said Jackson, who with his business partners started Synpros in August 2005.

Synpros is a professional software company dedicated to furthering the state of software automation in the controls industry. It offers programming for the Crestron family of products to the high-end residential market and maintains its own innovative, highly configurable, distributed software platform for controls in the commercial building and industrial markets.

As a co-owner of Synpros, Jackson is primarily responsible for customizing software to operate with hardware from a variety of vendors including GE, Honeywell and Siemens. Prior to starting Synpros, he worked for Watchtower in New York City for 11 years. He joined Watchtower as a computer programmer but quickly moved into the controls department, where he held a variety of positions from junior controls technician to most recently controls coordinator.

It was while he was working for Watchtower that his boss recommended the CAP program to him. "He told me it was the highest accreditation in the industry and recommended I pursue it," said Jackson, who took the exam and received his certification in 2005.

Jackson believes it was worth the effort as using the CAP on his business card has received attention from both potential clients and vendors. "The certification is very new, but people see it and ask me what it means," he said.

In response to industry requests, ISA established the CAP program in 2004 to recognize and document the specialized knowledge, education, and experience of automation professionals. CAPs are responsible for the direction, design and deployment of systems and equipment for manufacturing and control systems.

To prepare for the exam, Jackson downloaded the outline from the ISA Web site. He researched all the topics in the outline that were not familiar to him. "I created two notebooks of relevant materials, tabbed by topic, and used them to study," he said, noting that the notebooks have turned out to be helpful references on the job. Additionally, he purchased and studied a number of books.

For those considering the exam, Jackson's advice is to "study, study, study. The exam covers such a broad body of knowledge it would be hard for anyone to be well versed in everything that is on it without studying beforehand," he said. "Read all you can on the domains and look for weak areas. When you find a weak area, find a good book and read up on that area."

CAPs must renew their certification every three years. This is accomplished by earning Professional Development Points (PDPs) by working, training, and continually gaining knowledge in the field. Jackson plans to renew his certification in 2008.

## Certification Compliance

When inquiries are sent in from certification candidates, and CAP, CCST, and CIMM certified individuals regarding renewal, I gain a fresh perspective on the information that ISA provides to help in the certification process.

Each month I receive emails from the National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA), of which ISA is a member, and the National Certification Commission (NCC). NOCA promotes excellence in competency assessment for practitioners in all occupations and professions, and NCC shares administrative and legal issues to help better the practices of all certification program staff. Information in several recent emails, as well as comments received from ISA certification candidates brought to the forefront the importance of codes of conduct.

In an email article by Richard Jaffeson, Executive Director of NCC, titled Content Within Codes of Conduct, he states, "The vast majority of certification programs, approximately 85%, have codes of conduct or ethics statements for their designates which are signed and dated as part of the initial candidate application. Most of these codes are concise, generalized references addressing positive practitioner behaviors, although some are often specific, outlining procedures with accompanying enforcement provisions."

Below is the compliance statement included in the Certified Automation Professional® application.

I certify that the information I have provided in this application is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief. I authorize ISA to contact my current and any former employers and educational institutions to verify the provided information, and I waive any and all rights of confidentiality or privacy with regard to the release of all employment or educational information relevant to my application to ISA for recognition as a Certified Automation Professional.

I hereby waive and release ISA, my current and former employers, and any educational institutions I have attended, and their respective officers, directors, and representatives, from any claims arising from the disclosure of such information to ISA for the purposes of ISA evaluation of this application. I understand that ISA will reject any application that contains false or fraudulent information, and that, in that event, I will not receive reimbursement of any fees paid, nor credit for any examinations taken. If the fraud is discovered after certification is awarded, certification can be revoked.

The CAP program provides recognition and documentation of a professional's knowledge, experience and education in automation. Certification status does not guarantee a level of performance by a professional in a particular situation, and ISA does not guarantee the competency or performance of any certified individual.

I understand and agree that any certification granted by ISA does not constitute licensure to practice or provide services, whether for a fee or not, when required by federal, state, or local law. I further understand and agree that I must apply for any state required licenses for practice in the specialty field only through the applicable state agencies.

I understand that all material submitted related to this application becomes the property of ISA upon receipt and that none of the materials will be returned to me. ISA will release no information contained in the application materials to any third party. I understand that the policy and procedures for appealing a decision of the Certification Board are available upon request.

I understand that any certification by ISA is limited to a three year period and must be renewed in a timely manner in order to continue as a CAP.

I have read the CAP Handbook and understand the requirements for the certification for which I am applying. I agree to follow the ISA Code of Ethics. I understand that if my application does not meet the requirements, I will automatically be rescheduled to the next available test date. I understand the application fee is non-refundable. If certified, I hereby request that ISA include me in any published listings of CAPs.

This statement details the importance of the paperwork that must be completed to be approved to take an ISA certification exam. The exams are performance based, meaning a person with certain levels of education and experience should be able to pass the exam because of the knowledge they have gained through that education and especially through work experience, not through memorization of codes and theory. They must be able to document their education and experience to be eligible to sit for an exam, which is why the application includes space for the details.

Each candidate should fully read the program handbook, which includes the ISA Code of Ethics (as referenced in the compliance statement). The code reads as follows:

### The ISA Code of Ethics

#### Preamble

As engineers, scientists, educators, technicians, sales representatives, and executives in an important and learned profession; and in order to safeguard public welfare; and to establish and maintain a high standard of integrity and practice; and as members of ISA, we hold to these Articles:

#### Article I

Members shall hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public in the performance of their duties, and shall notify their employer or client and such other authority as may be appropriate where such obligations are abused. Members shall hold in confidence facts, data and information obtained in a professional capacity, unless the release thereof is authorized by their employer or client, and shall not engage in fraudulent or dishonest business or professional practices.

### Article II

Members shall perform services only in areas in which they are qualified by education or experience, and shall endeavor to maintain their professional skills at the state of the art. Members shall practice their profession in a manner which will uphold public appreciation of the services they render.

### Article III

Members shall issue public statements only in an objective and truthful manner, and shall include all pertinent and relevant information in professional reports, statements and testimony. Members shall be honest and realistic in making estimates or in stating claims based on available data. Members shall offer honest criticism of work, and shall properly credit the contributions of others.

### Article IV

Members shall act in professional matters for each employer or client as faithful agents or trustees, and shall not participate in any business association, interest or circumstances which influence, or appear to influence, their judgment or the quality of their services. Members shall accept compensation, financial or otherwise, from only one party for services on or pertaining to the same work, unless otherwise agreed to by all parties; and shall not give or accept, directly or indirectly, any gift, payment or service of more than nominal value to or from those having business relationships with their employers or clients.

### Article V

Members shall use only proper solicitation of employments, and shall represent their abilities, qualifications, education,

technical associations and professional registrations without exaggeration and in accordance with the laws of the locations in which they practice.

### Article VI

Members shall pledge themselves to live and work according to the laws of man and to the highest standards of professional conduct, using their knowledge and skills to the benefit of all mankind.

The compliance statement also advises candidates that once certified, renewal is required after three years. A personal log is sent out to each CAP to track their Professional Development Points (PDPs) for use when completing the Renewal Application. All program information is available via the web at [www.isa.org/cap](http://www.isa.org/cap), or by calling ISA Customer Service at (919) 549-8411.

As you prepare to apply for certification, or to renew your certification, please know that by agreeing to and signing the compliance statement, and abiding by the ISA Code of Ethics, you help to maintain the credibility of our certification programs, and the importance of the credential you have earned or hope to earn.

If you have any questions or have comments you would like addressed by ISA, please feel free to contact me.

Kristy Becker, CMP  
ISA Certification Administrator  
919-990-9219  
[cap@isa.org](mailto:cap@isa.org)

## Testing Windows for ISA Certification Electronic Exams

Beginning 1 January 2007, ISA electronic certification exams will be available during three testing windows. Each exam testing window will have a deadline for applications to be considered for testing in that window. Eligible candidates will only be able to test during the testing windows.

The candidate eligibility window nine (9) months. Once your application is approved, testing must be completed within two exam testing windows. Your first exam testing date must be scheduled during the first available window after your application is approved. All rescheduling and retesting must be completed within the two consecutive exam testing windows within your nine (9) month eligibility period.

You may reschedule your exam once, and the rescheduled date must be during your first exam testing window. If you must retest, you must allow 30 days between your initial exam date and your retest date. If you are not able to schedule a retest in

the same window you took the initial exam, you can retest in the next available window. A total of two retests are allowed within your two eligible exam testing windows with each retest scheduled at least 30 days apart.

If you do not successfully complete the exam within the two exam testing windows within your nine (9) month eligibility period, you must reapply submitting another application and fee.

In order to schedule an exam, you will need to send your completed application by the specified application deadline for the exam testing window. The application deadlines and testing windows are as follows:

Exam Testing Window	Exam Application Postmark Deadline
W1: 1 March – 30 April 2007	Tuesday, 16 January 2007
W2: 1 July – 31 August 2007	Tuesday, 15 May 2007
W3: 1 November – 31 December 2007	Monday, 17 September 2007



**ISA**  
67 Alexander Drive  
P.O. Box 12277  
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

Non-profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Raleigh, NC  
Permit #1461

## Dated Material—Open Immediately!

**Please share this publication with others in your company:**

- Automation Engineer
- Control Systems Engineer
- Plant Manager
- Systems Integrator



### Does your Company Support the CAP Program?

ISA is compiling a list of companies who support the CAP program either by paying for exam fees and/or preparation, providing raises upon receipt of the certification, or incorporating the certification into their career development program.

If your company is doing any of these things – or supporting the program another way – please e-mail **CAP@isa.org** and let us know. We'll list the companies online at **www.isa.org/CAP**.

Founded in 1945, ISA ([www.isa.org](http://www.isa.org)) is a leading, global, nonprofit organization that is setting the standard for automation by helping over 30,000 worldwide members and other professionals solve difficult technical problems, while enhancing their leadership and personal career capabilities. Based in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, ISA develops standards; certifies industry professionals; provides education and training; publishes books and technical articles; and hosts the largest conference and exhibition for automation professionals in the Western Hemisphere.

---

### Certification

ISA certification provides an objective, third-party assessment and confirmation of a person's skills, and gives them the opportunity to stand out from the crowd and be recognized. ISA currently offers three certification programs: Certified Automation Professional® (CAP®), Certified Control Systems Technician® (CCST®), and Certified Industrial Maintenance Mechanic® (CIMM®).